

Focus on Learning
Self-Study Report
2014-2015

Chapter II



Progress Report

Chapter II Progress Report

Recent WASC Accreditation History

El Camino High School last conducted a full self-study in 2009-2010. The follow-up visit occurred three years later in the spring of 2012. In the 2009 Self-Study, the school identified two critical academic needs, which in turn became the two overarching goals of the WASC Action Plan:

Goal 1: Increase the percentage of students who are ready for post-secondary study (i.e. UC/CSU, community college, and vocational education).

Goal 2: Narrow the achievement gap among under-performing students within specific student populations (i.e. ethnic, socio-economic, and gender) as measured by CST scores, CAHSEE initial passing rate, and accumulation of credits

Section I: Significant Changes Since the Last Full WASC Visit

Since the last full visit, both El Camino High School and South San Francisco Unified School District have seen profound change. While the demographics of our student population have remained largely the same, changes to leadership, staff, funding, standards, assessments, and even the physical campus have altered El Camino significantly.

Over the last six years, the South San Francisco Unified School District has had three superintendents. The titles, duties, and persons filling the assistant superintendent positions have also changed several times in the last three years. El Camino's administration has also continued to have a high incidence of turnover. Since 2009, El Camino has seen three different Principals, plus an Interim Principal for the 2014-2015 school year. Also since 2009, we have had eight Assistant Principals in varying positions. Teacher turnover has remained high, with roughly 17% of teachers leaving each year. This is discussed further in Chapter II, Section V.

With the onset of the implementation of the California Common Core State Standards, the school district has begun to undergo a major pedagogical shift. In 2008, the school district made sweeping policy changes to implement pacing guides, CST-based common embedded assessments, district-wide Common Embedded Assessments, and classroom visits by teams of school district and site administrators. Now, six years later, the school district is engaged in an action plan to ensure all staff understands the instructional shifts with the Common Core State Standards and how to implement the curriculum in the core academic areas. In 2013-2014, all SSFUSD sites administered the pilot Smarter Balanced tests. In spring 2014, ECHS did administer the CST and EAP as an optional assessment for grade 11 students with minimal student participation.

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

On November 2, 2010, South San Francisco voters passed the Measure J Bond. The first project was in collaboration with Chevron, in which Measure J monies were used to build solar panels over the student parking lot. This project was completed over the summer of 2012. Ground broke on our new Science building in fall of 2013 and it was completed in April 2014, biology and chemistry teachers moved into their new classrooms over spring break of 2014. During the summer of 2014, retrofitting began to turn the old science classrooms into the new math wing. Measure J also funded a new football field and track that opened for use in early 2014.

Additionally, campus safety has been improved through other funding sources. ECHS used site-level discretionary funds to purchase two golf carts and a \$50,000 camera system throughout the campus. Over the summer of 2014, the city of South San Francisco installed Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) and a new crosswalk to ensure safety for students and staff who use BART and SamTrans.

In 2013, ECHS established a collaborative relationship with Genentech to support our science program with access to 21st century learning for our students by utilizing experts in the biotech industry. Genentech has committed to support and fund several initiatives at El Camino High School including: annual field trips for every science classroom; two \$50,000 annual STEM scholarships; donations of technology including tablets and computers; a financial literacy program with Glow Foundation; and a Donor's Choose program for all teachers at El Camino High School. In addition to these initiatives, Genentech is partnering with the school and has made a significant commitment to develop a state-of-the-art biotech pathway that will prepare students to pursue careers in the biotech industry. To support this endeavor, Genentech is funding a full time science teaching position to develop the curriculum, train teachers, and serve as a liaison with Genentech employees. Lastly, the most significant commitment Genentech has made is to fund the construction of a new Biotechnology facility on the El Camino campus to support the new Biotech Career Pathway.

Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, SSFUSD has moved from a discretionary funding model to the Local Control Funding Formula and the Local Control Accountability Plan. These changes are reflected in our 2014-2015 SPSA.

Prior to 2009, grade 9 Math and English classes were capped at about 20 students. The state removed the incentive for smaller class sizes and class size has increased by a minimum of 45-50%. Other core classes throughout the curriculum have experienced double-digit growth. As a result of this change, there is greater teacher load and less time to spent on individualizing instruction.

Section II: Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-Up

Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow Up from 2009

1. Increase the percentage of graduates completing the A-G requirements for the CSU/UC system.
2. Remove structural challenges in the school that impede rigorous academic curriculum and provide a system for academic mentoring.
3. Develop a comprehensive professional development plan for all staff members that provides time for collaboration, reflection on teaching practices, analysis of student achievement data to improve instruction and effective use of technology.
4. Create more staff involvement in decision making at site and district levels.
5. Strengthen academic counseling.
6. Utilization of certificated teachers to improve instruction and raise the rigor of courses.
7. Creation of common benchmarks, standards and ESLR assessments.
8. ECHS needs to address the achievement gap between certain socio-economic and ethnic sub-groups.
9. Provide incentives to retain teachers in the district
10. Active commitment to the WASC follow-up process
11. District-supported collaboration time

Critical Academic Needs

Goal 1: Increase the percentage of students who are ready for post-secondary study (i.e. UC/CSU, community college, and vocational education).

Goal 2: Narrow the achievement gap among under-performing students within specific student populations (i.e. ethnic, socio-economic, and gender) as measured by CST scores, CAHSEE initial passing rate, and accumulation of credits

2008 Expected School-wide Learning Results

1. Every student will read, write, speak and listen effectively and critically.
2. Every student will demonstrate critical thinking skills.
3. Every student will work effectively with others, displaying appropriate skills in large and small group situations.
4. Every student will be socially aware, responsible, and tolerant with respect to self, others, community and global concerns.
5. Every student will demonstrate competency in information and technological literacy.

Section III: Ongoing Follow-Up Process

The Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) has been written and approved by the School Site Council with input from all departments in order to achieve the specific goals related to student achievement. Our SPSA has focused on providing support for students who are under achieving in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics. In addition, we have identified critical need areas for additional support to ensure our students who are English Language Learners and Students with Special Needs have a greater level of success in their participation in general education classes. The SPSA continues to support the acquisition of updated materials for our library as well as the technology equipment such as laptop carts to increase the access for our students to improve their computer literacy skills. The SSFUSD changed the technology policy to allow students to bring their own devices to school and our teachers are taking advantage of this increased opportunity to integrate technology in their classes.

The administrative team sets aside time during staff meetings throughout the school year to review the WASC goals. There have been changes in our school district to increase collaboration that promotes the staff working together to address the WASC goals.

Section IV: Progress, Evidence, Impact on Student Learning for Action Plan Goals

Goal 1

Increase the percentage of students who are ready for post-secondary study

Task (Academics 1)

Add an additional UC approved math class to increase the numbers of students taking three or four years of math.

- a. Addresses Critical Area 1; Goal 1 and ESLR 2
- b. In the 2009-2010 school year, Statistics was added as an upper-level math offering to increase the numbers of students taking three or four years of math in addition to the existing Pre-Calculus and AP Calculus A/B courses. The Math Department has offered this course continually since 2009-2010. In 2014-2015, ECHS offered an elective section of Computer Science as well and has applied for A-G approval. In 2014-2015, students have petitioned the administration to add an AP Calculus B/C course to the offering, and administration is exploring this request for the 2015-2016 school year.

From 2009-2010 through 2012-2013, ECHS offered district-mandated Strategic Algebra and Geometry classes. Those classes were removed in the 2013-2014 school year, due to a lack of standards-based curriculum and an increase in behavior problems. This class was replaced with Freshman Seminar as an elective. Honors Geometry was eliminated as well, in order to minimize tracking.

The Math Department has been participating in the Silicon Valley Math Initiative (SVMI) and Agile Mind trainings. In addition, the teachers are working together with the District Math Coach to further align curriculum and instruction with the Common Core State Standards. This new direction provides an exciting opportunity to better support our under-performing students, as identified by our most recent CST scores.

In addition to increasing our UC approved course offerings, our administration, along with our Math Department, has identified a need for additional support for our students who lack the math skill-sets needed to succeed beyond Algebra I in grade 9.

- c. Evidence: Master Schedules (Appendix), CST math scores (Ch I), CAHSEE math scores (Ch I), SVMI and Agile Mind curriculum materials (available upon request).

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

Task (Academics 2)

Expand use of CSU Expository Writing through all levels of English

- a. Critical Areas 1, 2; Goal 1; ESLR's 1-5
- b. In accordance with every ESLR, our English Department, along with the English Department of SSFHS, has adopted the ERWC curriculum for all college preparatory English classes at grade 12. Nearly every English teacher has been trained in the ERWC curriculum, and grades 9, 10 and 11 have implemented at least one module into the core curriculum every year.

Included in the ERWC and 4AP curriculum is the Senior Capstone Project. It has been renamed, re-structured and honed each year. Since the 2012-2013 school year, this district requirement has been better aligned between the high schools and made more purposeful and rigorous. ECHS has experimented with different forms of the presentation component and in 2014, had great success with our Capstone Project Exhibition Night on May 20. Our entire school became a showcase for the hard work of all of our seniors and was open to alumni, parents and the community.

This goal was determined because our school site realized the significant potential in the ERWC curriculum, and there was a strong desire to move away from British Literature at grade 12 and toward more practical English skills for our population. ECHS administration also considered this change as a way to offer college-level rigor to students who are not enrolled in an AP English class – since the curriculum is written by the CSU system. The ERWC curriculum has impacted learning intensely. We have moved away from textbook driven instruction and toward critical thinking, collaboration and problem solving, in addition to Close Reading and writing instruction. For this item, our department has exceeded our growth target and will continue to grow the program in the future.

- c. English Curricular Frameworks (available upon request); ERWC Modules (available upon request); Capstone Project Handout (available upon request)

Task (Academics 3)

All electives offer career education through guest speakers, field trips, business or community program partnerships and/or career projects.

- a. Critical Areas 2, 8; Goal 1; ESLR 5
- b. This goal was originally determined to increase community outreach opportunities, trade apprenticeship programs and to better prepare our students for career readiness. Many electives at our school have seen an expansion of career education opportunities, including guest speakers and field trips. These courses include our AVID, Computer Science, Foods, Health, and Work Experience classes. While we have had great success in a number of these classes, recent changes at ECHS and our partnering county programs have impacted our course offerings.

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

For the 2012-2013 school year, the San Mateo County Office of Education attempted to expand our Regional Occupational Program (ROP) course offerings with the Hotel Management and Hospitality class and a plan to implement another class (Culinary Arts). However, in 2014-2015, ROP funding was cut statewide at the high school level and the program abruptly ended. Additionally, due to low enrollment and teacher turnover, two of the career/tech classes, Autos and Foods, have been eliminated in the ECHS Master Schedule as of the 2014-2015 school year.

Historically, our Senior Exit Project (now called the Capstone Project) has required a community outreach component and is meant to foster both career and college readiness, aligned with the CCSS. While the Capstone Project falls under the purview of Senior English (not an elective) it has done much to build “business and community partnerships and/or career projects,” including requiring off-campus service hours, mentorship opportunities and guest-speakers. Additionally, we have built into our Freshman Seminar elective course, a companion piece called the Freshman Seminar Project. Students, through either a school club, sport or on their own, are required to perform service in the community and report on it in class.

As of fall 2013, we have a burgeoning partnership with Genentech, which involves collaborating on a new Biotechnology Pathway at ECHS. This is particularly relevant, given that we live in "The Heart of Biotechnology." Within the next two years, we will open a new Biotechnology Building, and in 2015-2016, plan to offer a completely new Biotechnology I/II elective class. Our goal is to increase our Biotechnology course offerings with a Biotechnology III/IV elective class. This will be a brand new career pathway for students, offering more electives in career education.

- c. See Master Schedule (Appendix), Course descriptions for AVID, Computer Science, Foods, Health, Freshman Seminar and Work Experience (available upon request), Capstone Project (available upon request), Communications with Genentech (available upon request).

Task (Academics 4)

Provide students with familiarity with various college placement tests within core classes.

- a. Critical Areas 1, 8; Goal 1; ESLR's 1, 2
- b. In connection to the above ERWC goal, this Action Plan item focuses on our EAP pass rates. The ERWC curriculum readies students for the EAP tests (formerly attached to the CST), we moved to adopt the curriculum at the grade 12 level. The test, however is given at the grade 11 level, before students take the class. From 2010-2013, English scores have consistently stayed above the state, but below the county averages. Math scores remain consistently below both.

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

In the 2013-2014 school year, as a Smarter Balanced pilot site, our administration chose to give students the option of taking the CST with the attached EAP and only 10 students chose to do so. We have, however, moved to implement other means of college-level assessment. Our AP test numbers have grown in enrollment dramatically over the past six years, and we have become both an SAT and PSAT testing site.

- c. EAP scores 2009-2014 (Ch I); AP scores 2009-2014 (available upon request); SAT scores 2009-2014 (Ch I)

Task (Academics 5)

Improve Reading Strategies Across All Curricula. Reinvalidate SSR.

- a. Critical Areas 4, 6 and 8; Goal 1; ESLR 1
- b. ECHS continued to administer a Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) program through the 2013-2014 school year. In 2014-2015, in accordance with Critical Areas 3 and 11, however, the Principal moved to change the bell schedule to allow for more teacher collaboration time (see Chapter II, Section V, Area 11). Thus, SSR was removed from the daily schedule. Even after a union grievance in October, when our bell schedule was readjusted, SSR was not reinstated. According to a fall 2014 faculty survey, only 33% of teachers "agree" or "strongly agree" that SSR was effective and should be reinstated.

In terms of Close Reading instruction, our district, starting with the 2013-2014 school year, has implemented a Common Core training through the San Mateo County Office of Education to increase Close Reading and writing skills, implemented as the "CCSS Train the Trainer" model. In this model there are a group of team leaders (3-6 teachers) who are trained to return to their schools to train the remainder of their staff. At four yearly Professional Development days, the district's choice of presenter teaches the teacher-leaders different strategies and ideas behind teaching literacy across contents. These trainers discussed what would work best for our staff and student populations and brought that training back to our campus. Those teachers shared strategies and ideas with the ECHS faculty and staff to support literacy instruction in the classroom. In fall 2013, the team attended four full day trainings at the district office in which they discussed the research behind reading, writing, listening and speaking in every discipline and will continue with four more trainings in 2014-2015. These trainings will focus on such strategies as: word family trees, concept maps, annotation, close reading, chunking, scaffolding difficult texts (across content areas) and the use of strategies such as exit tickets to check for student understanding.

The ECHS CCSS teacher trainers would like more time to implement these trainings to the staff. More time and exposure with these strategies would slow down the content for our teachers and allow them to take ownership over the standards as they begin implement them. However, our ability to collaborate within a professional development setting is dramatically impacted by our lack of collaboration time.

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

- c. Faculty Survey (Ch. 1); CCSS Teacher Training Materials (available upon request); CCSS Site Training Agendas, handouts and Power Points (available upon request), Bell Schedules (Appendix), Early Release Calendar (available upon request)

Task (Communication 1)

Provide information on community college transition work (course catalogues, deadlines, etc.).

- a. Critical Area 5; Goal 1; ESLR 4
- b. This goal was established to better prepare our students for the transition to community college and to increase the number of students who transition to post-secondary study - whether academic or vocational - at our local community colleges.

ECHS and the San Mateo Community College District (Skyline, Canada, and College of San Mateo) have a long-standing offering of Concurrent Enrollment. Students have the opportunity to take a college course for free while they attend El Camino; they can also make up credit or take classes not offered at ECHS. Purchasing textbooks is the only cost incurred for students. In choosing this option, students can start building a college transcript before they graduate.

Every year ECHS has a representative from each community college conduct an application workshop on campus for students applying to these schools. In addition, the Career Center at CSM offers a “Connect to College” workshop. During the ECHS Junior Parent Night, a representative from the community college system comes and presents.

ECHS College and Career Week promotes college awareness. Counselors speak to all Sophomores and Juniors about college readiness in their Social Science classes, while English classes visit the College Fair. The local community colleges are present at the College Fair as well as representatives from CSU and UC campuses, private colleges and trade school programs. Our counselors heavily promote the Northern Peninsula College Fair hosted at Serramonte Mall each year. Throughout the year, the Career Center hosts representatives from specific colleges to help with college applications, including: Santa Clara, Dominican, FIDM, UCSB, and Sacramento State.

Lastly, SSFUSD is moving toward a “Middle College” program with Skyline College to begin in 2015-2016 by recruiting 50-100 students in grade 11 to enroll in the program. The aim is to help students finish earning high school credits while as well as completing coursework for an Associate Arts degree. Further details will emerge in spring 2015, and our site will begin recruiting Sophomores to pilot the program.

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

- c. See Career Center Newsletters (available upon request), Career Fair Schedule (available upon request), Career Week counselor presentations (available upon request), Middle College communications (available upon request)

Task (Communication 2)

Institute Academic Excellence Campaign: Expand CSF, Increase college visuals, ECTV college and career segments, College Week and Career Week, Art Showcase

- a. Critical Area 5; Goal 1; ESLR 2, 4
- b. This goal was established as response to our desire to improve our CST scores, to advance post-secondary enrollments and to reward our high achieving students. Due to high administrative turnover, the responsibility of running this “campaign” changed hands several times and in the last three years, was not implemented as such, though many facets of the goal have manifested over the years.

Our CSF program has continued to grow and recruit student tutors who earn hours by volunteering to help other students, both on and off campus. Our campus hosts after school tutoring in the library and many CSF attend to assist with tutoring.

Before the shift to CCSS and Smarter Balanced testing, our staff administered STAR Chats before the 2011 STAR test, and generally, we noted gains in our scores. STAR Chats were a school wide program administered during SSR to raise student awareness, and the importance of, STAR Test scores. Because of changes in site administration and later changes to state testing, the STAR Chats did not continue.

As discussed in Communication Area 1 and 3, our Counseling Department has worked to develop our College and Career Weeks as well as make college visuals on campus more prominent. Additionally, the Freshman Seminar classes require a College Research Project, based on AVID curriculum, which requires students to research a state or private college and present to their peers. This was administered in fall 2014 for the first time during College Week. Typically ECTV, produced by the Video Art class, would run PSAs to help with college awareness throughout the school year. Because ECTV has had teacher turnover and technical difficulties in the past two years, it has not been aired at our site.

Since 2013-2014, we have hosted an Art Showcase in the teacher’s lounge by turning it into an Art Gallery once a semester and inviting students, staff and community to view the exhibition.

We continue to recognize academic Students of the Month, elected by each department throughout the year. They are presented with a certificate and a small gift at lunchtime or an after school ceremony (often with parents in attendance) and their pictures are posted in the Library window.

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

Our Leadership class, working with our Librarian has been instrumental in using our School Loop website to celebrate the academic, artistic and social achievements of our students. Weekly or bi-weekly, student photographs are posted on our website, celebrating student involvement in our many activities such as: the Gay-Straight Alliance during Pride Week activities, Homecoming, rallies, Students of the Month, Drama and Dance performances and Band concerts.

- c. CSF Agendas and rosters (available upon request), See Career Center Newsletters (available upon request), Career Fair Schedule (available upon request), Career Week counselor presentations (available upon request), Freshman Seminar College Research Assignment (available upon request), Art Showcase pictures (available upon request), School Loop homepage, Student of the Month board, nomination forms (available upon request)

Task (Communication 3)

Increase parent outreach: CSU/UC information on website, hold parent meetings, feeder school outreach

- a. Critical Area 5, Goal 1; ESLR 4
- b. This goal was established to help the parent community access, understand and support the process of college enrollment and achievement. Under 40% of our parent community has completed a college degree. Though this number is steadily increasing year to year, the parents in our community, as much as our children, need the education and support to access college and financial aid.

The counselors have continued to strengthen the practice of hosting a Grade 8 Parent Night for incoming middle school parents and in the past few years, the counseling department has conducted yearly class level parent meetings. They have re-vamped the counselor webpage on School Loop to streamline information for parents. Counselors send out credit deficiency letters twice a year and each student gets a progress report or report card at the end of each grading period.

Grade level parent nights inform parents of scholarship opportunities, UC/CSU requirements, and grade level requirements. Parent nights have been extended to include parents of grade 8 students who will be ECHS incoming freshmen. Over the last six years, El Camino increased the number of grade level parent information nights, including a Senior Scholarship Night and a Volunteer Fair.

During our 2014 WASC Parent Night meetings, the subject of counselor availability outside of school hours was discussed. The counselors are contracted, as teachers are, to arrive 15 minutes prior and stay 15 minutes after the last bell. This means that students or parents who want to meet with a counselor in the morning or after school has very limited time to do so. With four counselors, the parent group suggested staggering the working hours of the counselors to make them available at least one day a week before and after school to provide better access for working parents.

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

- c. School Loop Counseling website, Parent Night agendas & materials (available upon request) ; WASC Parent Night minutes (available upon request)

Task (Support 1)

Create and implement a 4-year plan that broadens stakeholder participation.

- a. Critical Area 1, 8; Goal 1; ESLR 2, 4
- b. Counselors visit all English classrooms each spring to instruct students on scheduling for the subsequent year. During this time, they set goals and plan year-to-year, but currently, this takes place briefly during scheduling. The original vision for the Four-Year Plan was to begin from early on Freshman year, and build a plan. We do currently have the practices of :
 - Creating four year plans for all special education students as part of the IEP process
 - Present to AVID classes and go over four year plans.
 - Discussing the four year plan at grade-level parent nights and teach parents how to start that conversation with their student and create a four year plan together.

Freshman Seminar - Starting with the 2009-2010 school year, district-wide strategic support classes were established for core subjects of English and Math. With major implications on El Camino's elective program, and with little success in the GPA or standardized test scores of the low-achieving students involved, in 2013-2014, El Camino piloted a class called Freshman Seminar. Four sections of this elective *in lieu of* our "Strategic" math and English sections and offered support to the 100 most struggling grade 9 students.

Loosely based on the AVID model, which has seen great success at our school, students received homework help and social support from Peer Advisers, organizational and study skills and direct academic support in their most challenging subjects. In its second year from 2014-2015, Freshman Seminar will be expanded to 12 sections over two semesters (6 fall and 6 spring) and will house roughly 85% of all Freshmen to assist them in their social and academic transition to high school. Students who struggle academically will take the class for two semesters.

In the 2014-2015 school year, the Freshman Seminar classes collaborated with the counseling department to implement "4-Year Plans" for all freshmen. In addition to the scheduling visits, the counselors walk students through mapping out a plan for post-secondary goals and study.

- c. Counseling classroom-visit handouts (available upon request), AVID and Freshman Seminar Four-Year plans (available upon request), Parent Night handouts and agendas (available upon request), Freshman Seminar Syllabus and Course Description (available upon request)

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

Task (Support 2)

Restructure after school tutoring.

- a. Critical Area 2; Goal 1; ESLR's 1-5
- b. During the 2013-2014 school year, ECHS piloted a structured after-school tutoring program provided by certificated staff and student volunteers. The library was available after school for tutoring on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. In the 2014-2015 school year, the library is open for after school detention/tutoring on Mondays and Thursdays. While the system did have flaws (tutoring was coupled with detention and athletic study hall) it was a step in the right direction, though access teacher tutors is quite limit. With additional school site funding, this year we are offering tutoring four days per week which is one day more than last year.

We have an active California Scholarship Federation on our site, and they help with the tutoring. The CSF students are expected to tutor 2 hours. Many complete this by being in the library on the days it is open. This is a voluntary expectation; therefore, not all after school meetings had tutors there.

Our AVID program continues to recruit, pay and train highly qualified tutors on Tuesdays and Thursdays; this is unfortunately only available to AVID students. Our Freshman Seminar classes use upper-classmen as Peer Advisers in a tutoring capacity on Tuesdays and Thursdays as well, but their role is for social support, as well as academic.

Subject-specific academic tutoring is still an ongoing area of concern at our school site. Some ideas that have been considered are training students and providing academic credit for working as subject-specific academic tutoring after school, paying teachers to provide tutoring in classrooms, rather than the library and increasing the use of Khan Academy as a tutoring tool across math and science.

Task (Support 3)

Offer SAT/ACT Prep Class on site

- a. Critical Area 1; Goal 1; ESLR 4
- b. This goal was established to promote student participation and success on the ACT, PSAT and SAT tests. In the 2013-2014 school year, ECHS became a PSAT and SAT testing site, to promote this involvement. Since 2011, though we have seen a 9% increase in the number of students taking the SAT, our scores in the Reading, Writing and Math sections have continued to plateau.

SAT and ACT tutoring is offered through Snap Wiz and Schmoop on the school's library website. We do not currently offer classes on site. Our library does have a variety of SAT and ACT test prep books available for check-out. All of the SAT/ACT test prep comes through the actual testing websites. Our local library has an SAT test prep class but scheduling is inconsistent.

- c. School Loop Library Page, SAT statistics and scores (Ch1)

Goal 2

Narrow the achievement gap among under-performing students within specific student populations as measured by CST scores, CAHSEE initial passing rates, and accumulation of credits.

Task (Academics 1)

Align instruction, assessments and content standards.

- a. Critical Areas 3, 4, 6, 11; Goal 2; ESLR's 1-5
- b. When our 2009 goals were written, our “core” subjects of math and English were in the throes of CST data analysis and pacing guide creation. Few saw Common Core State Standards coming – and we did not anticipate how profoundly they would affect our curricula as teachers. At the time, we had district level directives and instructional coaches to help align our practices to better CST outcomes. And while many felt those practices were restrictive, they did help to closely align the practices of teachers.

Over the past two years as our state and district leadership not only grapple with what Common Core is, but with how to train us effectively, we have moved away from many of the Common Embedded Assessments formerly prescribed by the district. Teachers generally view this as a positive transition, as we had little input into what the tests would cover (the CST-based CEAs were given quarterly in math and English and were written by text-book companies). There were a few years when we had district level teacher-coaches, which teachers were held accountable and scores were loaded into Data Director. After two years, the district follow-through diminished. In 2014-2015, English and Math classes at both sites have been directed to give SBAC aligned CEAs at the end of the fall semester and enter them into Data Director.

We have since had dramatic turnover in our teaching staff, administrative staff, and have lost funding for our instructional coaches for math and English in a time when we desperately need stability. According to the March 14, 2014 Faculty survey, only 43% of teachers agree or strongly agree that teachers within their department have closely aligned curricula.

Officially, the English and math departments have adopted pacing guides and benchmark assessments. With the onset of CCSS, the district has moved away from the CST style benchmarks that were formerly administered in those subjects. The math department has undergone Silicon Valley Math Initiative (SVMI) and Agile Mind trainings to incorporate the Common Core. The English Department has been given great autonomy in amending the formerly strict “pacing guides” into curricular “frameworks” that allow for deeper learning and teacher autonomy.

This is clearly still an area for growth, especially in content areas outside of English and math. As more content areas receive CCSS standards, they will need to create assessments

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

and scope and sequence for the curricula, just as math and English have. Teachers will need a substantial amount of time and professional development, both at the site and district levels to accomplish this well. Additionally, departments that have more general frameworks need more time to collaborate, revise the scope and sequence and align grading practices and examine student sample work.

Science is also beginning to be trained in the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Those standards are linked to the CCSS. We are expected to implement them in 2017; however, there are currently few resources to help guide the science department. Science teachers have been invited by the district to sign up for Professional Development (this district allocated \$315 per teacher for professional development in 2013-14 and 2014-15).

The school district, in addition to implementing the Train the Trainer model of increasing literacy across curricula, has also allocated \$315 dollars to each teacher to enroll in Professional Development of their choosing for both the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years. Teachers are encouraged to find CCSS-based professional developments to attend in the area and report back to colleagues afterward.

This is a step in the right direction, and is a significantly greater contribution than the district has made in prior years. However, for all subject areas, far more time needs to be spent developing aligned curriculum and aligned assessments, with a structured, systematic, on-going, year-to-year approach. This needs to occur at the site and district levels and speaks again to our need to build in more common planning time at the high school level.

- c. English and Math Curricular frameworks (available upon request), District SBAC Smarter Balanced Benchmarks (available upon request); Common Core State Standards

Task (Academics 2)

Create department ESLR Rubrics.

- a. Critical Area 7; Goal 2; Addresses all ESLRS
- b. With the onset of Common Core over the last three years, particular attention has been paid to aligning our curriculum to the literacy standards. Though some departments did develop ESLR rubrics in 2009 and though most teachers have the ESLRs posted in the classroom, ECHS has aligned its rubrics in other ways. Our aligned rubrics have instead focused on common practices like AXES paragraphing and Six Traits, or rubrics aligned to testing, like the CAHSEE, EAP and Common Core rubrics.

The Capstone Project (formerly the Senior Project) is now a district requirement, aligned with SSFHS and though its rubric used to be based on the ESLRs, it is now based on Common Core and 21st century learning. More work still needs to be done to align our common rubrics and the ESLRs across content areas and as a school site.

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

As of October 2014, an ESLR committee has worked to re-write our ESLRs to be more streamlined and to better reflect the CCSS standards. As of fall 2014, new ESLRs have been posted in classrooms around campus and shared with students. Moving forward, a similar committee will need to compose a generalized rubric that other departments can adapt to their own classrooms.

- c. See AXES Rubric (available upon request), Cornell Notes Rubric (available upon request), Six Traits Writing Rubric (available upon request), Common Core Writing Rubric (available upon request), Capstone Project Research Rubric (available upon request), CAHSEE Rubric (available upon request), EAP Rubric (available upon request), and new 2014 ESLRs (Appendix)

Task (Academics 3)

Improve instructional strategies and materials through AVID education, data analysis and collaboration.

- a. Critical Area 3, 6; Goal 2; ESLR's 1-5
- b. The success of our AVID program is something we are all very proud of at El Camino. Not only is AVID currently a 4 year program with increased sections at each grade level, but it has grown into a robust, district-aligned program. In 2013-2014, when districts lost funding for AVID at the state level funding became the responsibility of the sites. In addition, our principal allocated a .2 FTE position at our site as AVID District Director to align the programs between the two high schools, to improve recruitment into the program and to improve the AVID tutorial program.

Many improvements have been made to the program through the hard work of the AVID Site Teams. AVID funding, however still continues to be a major problem. With limited financial backing from the district, especially compared to the AVID programs in other local districts, our program continues to struggle financially. This has been even more difficult due to increasing limits on fundraising. Funding for teacher training, paid tutors and college field trips (especially our contractual over-night stipends and substitute teacher costs) has been extremely limited.

As part of our campus-wide effort to build literacy across subjects and to align school-wide practices, AVID methodologies have been built in to other subjects. During the summer of 2014, our site sent ten members of our staff to the AVID Summer Institute – effectively doubling the yearly number of teachers trained. This has been part of a school-wide effort to increase AVID strategies and methodologies across curriculum, including Cornell Note-taking, Socratic Seminars and Costa's levels of questioning. These methodologies have been implemented to the staff at large through our Freshman Seminar courses, new teacher meetings, our World Cafe staff development trainings and the teacher-directed CCSS trainings.

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

Lastly, with the 2012-13 construction and 2013-2014 pilot of our Freshman Seminar course, a significant effort was made to implement AVID strategies into a class that would build upon the study skills of our students. Freshman Seminar explicitly teaches Cornell Note-Taking, Socratic Seminars, Costa's levels of questioning, AXES paragraphing and AVID's WICOR (Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organization and Reading) method for learning and tutorial.

- c. AVID site plan (available upon request), AVID site team minutes (available upon request), teacher-training materials (available upon request), AVID Summer Institute rosters and materials (available upon request), Freshman Seminar Syllabus and Course Description (available upon request)

Task (Academics 4)

Expand AP enrollment, UC/CSU approved course enrollment across target groups.

- a. Critical Area 1; Goals 1 & 2; ESLR's 1 & 5
- b. AP course offerings have increased and enrollments have more than doubled in the past six years. AP English Literature has quadrupled the number of sections since 2008-2009 and we added the AP English Language course at the grade 11 Honors level, which filled three additional sections in the first year and four sections each subsequent year. We have added the AP course Macro Economics at the grade 12 level and AP Spanish. Classes that ECHS might explore in the future are AP Physics, AP Chemistry, AP Computer Science, AP Calculus B/C and AP Statistics.

Since 2009, all AP classes are open enrollment; entrance is not solely based on academic achievement, rather, a student may petition a teacher for entrance.

In the spring of 2014, the AP teachers formed an AP Teacher Committee to discuss issues such as: the effectiveness of open-enrollment, whether the test should be mandatory, where and how the test should be administered, registration practices, weekend and summer institutes, student support, due-dates and testing fees.

Further growth is still needed in vertically teaming at different grade levels to support the success of all students (especially the non-traditional AP students) and to effectively plan ahead for testing – which has been problematic in past years.

- c. AP teacher meeting minutes, course contracts, class schedule

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

Task (Academics 5)

Investigate improving reading and writing strategies across all courses

- a. Critical Area 3, 6; Goal 1; ESLR 1
- b. Significant growth has been made in expanding our school-wide reading methodologies (see the “Reading Strategies” section under Goal 1 and the AVID section above).

Our site has made progress on the goal for expanding reading and writing strategies in additional ways. First, the district implemented the previously mentioned Common Core training in the 2013-2014 school year that emphasized close reading, critical thinking and vocabulary strategies aimed at multiple disciplines.

Over six years the English department has grown and shared its practices of AXES paragraphing, Six-Traits Writing and annotation strategies not only across departments at ECHS, but with SSFHS and the incoming middle schools to help unify practice and language. The Common Core State Standards have facilitated district, site and individual growth in this area – though there is still more development necessary as Common Core evolves across content areas. Science is starting to implement CER (Claim-Evidence-Reasoning) conclusion statements in an effort to increase the reading, writing and communication skills for lab write-ups - this is a logical connection to the concept of AXES paragraphing (Assertion, eXample, Explanation, Significance)

Freshman Seminar classes have been working to help students with study skills in all of their classes, specifically in keeping an organized binder, using a planner each day and in using the cross curricular strategies like Cornell Notes, Socratic Seminar, AXES paragraphing and Costa’s levels of questioning.

Our district currently subscribes to Turnitin.com: a plagiarism and writing program to make writing across the curriculum more accessible to teachers and students as well as facilitating more immediate quality feedback for students. It facilitates online grading with common rubrics, peer feedback and digital literacy.

- c. Six-Traits Rubric (available upon request), AXES handouts (available upon request), Annotation handouts (available upon request), Common Core Training power points (available upon request), turnitin.com

Task (Communication 1)

Increase communications of staff, parents and community.

- a. Critical Areas 5 & 8; Goal 2; ESLR 4 and School Mission Statement
- b. Our counselors, teachers and administration maintain teacher-parent-student communication via School Loop and Infinite Campus and posts notice of events on the marquis in the front of the school.

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

The school strengthened its use of technology to communicate. The school utilizes School Loop, as its main tool for communication with parents. As of spring 2014, 91% of teachers report using School Loop to post grades and communicate with parents. Loop Mail connects parents to teachers, counselors and administrators as well as to their child's homework and grades. We still widely use the automated phone dialer for informing parents of important information and we send home summer mailers with important information and paperwork for coming back to school. The PTSA recently made its own School Loop group, which has been an effective tool for online parent discussion forums.

Additionally, parents, staff and community members were also highly involved in our Capstone Project exhibition in May 2014, Back to School Night, sports and music boosters and our PTSA has 30-40 regular members. A group of nearly 10 parents compose our WASC Parent Group (and are part of the Focus Groups) and over 100 parents took the online WASC survey and gave positive feedback regarding their communication with the school.

While ECHS has done significant work to encourage parent involvement, there is still much room for improvement. Generally, the involved parents (PTSA members, Music Boosters, Athletic Boosters) are the parents of involved, high-achieving students; the parent community that is involved is not always representative of the demographics of our wider school population. We need to encourage parents from all backgrounds, languages and work-schedules to get involved in School Site Council, WASC reporting and our ELAC committee. We need to continue our outreach to our non-English speaking parent communities and the parents of our Special Education population to ensure they are properly informed.

As a result of our administrative changes, our Interim Principal hosted a "Coffee Chat" on October 17 to be formally introduced to our parent community. Feedback at the meeting indicated that more effort needs to be made to communicate with parents. Our Principal sends out weekly or bi-weekly newsletters directly to the parent community that includes updates on campus events, and news about student achievement and progress.

We are currently rebuilding our School Site Council because previous parent members had students who have now graduated from our school. The SSC has made a strong effort in past months to reach out to the parent community through School Loop, the Principal's newsletter and announcements to students in an effort to invite parent involvement.

The opening of our new football field in 2014 has fostered a community relationship - as the track is open to the public on evenings and weekends.

Lastly, over the last few years, our staff has discussed our back-to-school practices. Teachers have expressed a desire to have a "Colt Back to School Day" - before the start of school - to take care of logistics like picking up schedules, buying planners and locks, checking out books, taking pictures and picking up ID cards. All of these practices

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

currently interrupt class time during the first weeks of school, and could be paired with our Link Crew day on the Friday before school starts. This could also be a great opportunity to increase school pride and participation from the parents and community.

- c. 2014 Parent Survey, PTSA minutes and rosters (available upon request), SSC (available upon request), ELAC minutes and rosters (available upon request), Principal Newsletters (available upon request), Capstone 2014 Program (available upon request),

Task (Communication 2)

Restructure of Technology Committee

- a. Critical Area 3; Goal 2; ESLR 5
- b. With the hire of a new Library Media Specialist, who has additional responsibilities to support the integration of technology in the curriculum, ECHS formed a new Tech committee in the 2011-2012 school year. Many volunteers wanted to join and most departments were represented. While the committee had good ideas for the direction we wanted for technology it became clear early on that the committee had no significant leverage at a district or even site level. In 2012-2013 staff interest had waned and by 2013-2014 the committee had dissolved. By that point, the district administration felt that tech could move forward without the need for a committee.

There was something of an ad hoc committee gathered by the principal last year to assess teacher opinion regarding the school cell phone policy but it seemed like a one-time event.

At our October 2014 Staff meeting, our Library Media Specialist announced that the Tech Committee will be re-forming and invited the participation of staff.

The Tech Committee will provide direction to the administration for the site purchase of laptop carts, technology support and technology training. Additionally, our partnership with Genentech will bring a large number of refurbished MacBook Pros to our site to be used in the Science Department to support integration of technology in the science classes.

- c. Tech Committee Agendas and Minutes

Task (Communication 3)

Increase use of technology by staff and students: teacher personal proficiency, teacher classroom productivity, student proficiency.

- a. Critical Area 3; Goal 2; ESLR 5
- b. Over the past three years, the site has largely expanded its use of technology. Every teacher on campus now has an updated laptop computer, an LCD projector and a classroom

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

printer. Also, we now have the use of District-wide Wi-Fi Internet – with increasing bandwidth to accommodate the use of devices in all our classrooms and Smarter Balanced testing in the spring. Our District now uses Infinite Campus for scheduling and as of spring 2014, 91% of teachers report using School Loop to assign work, update grades and communicate with the parent community. We have added iMacs for our Video Art, Photo, and Art classrooms.

In the coming school year, we will be replacing the computers in Room 5 for our Computer Science and Yearbook classes. Two Chrome Book laptops will be purchased with site funds and the district is making effort to increase bandwidth and technology training.

In 2012, SSFUSD subscribed to a website called Turnitin.com to not only reduce plagiarism, but to elevate quality of student writing and ease of teacher grading – it has been used successfully in all English classes and teachers across content areas are using it more. Students have access to quality online databases and research tools (such as EBSCO Host, Noodle tools, GALE, Khan Academy, Prezi and Google Docs) and an increased amount of students are using them independently in the library. More teachers are requiring technology in their classrooms for assignments in their classrooms.

In 2014, we added an exploratory Computer Science course as an elective. ECHS hopes to build this program by adding additional elective sections and hiring trained teachers to support it.

Additionally, the District policy on the use of personal technology (Smart phones, personal laptops etc.) has been changed for the 2014-2015 school year. While our prior policy was very strict – teachers will now have the discretion to use the personal technology of the students in their classrooms. Each room will have a clear sign – red for when technology should be put away and green for when it is appropriate to use.

While many advances are being made in expanding our use of technology, our site has been “behind the times” for most of the last six years, especially considering that we are geographically located between San Francisco and the Silicon Valley. Our biggest tech need has been student computers. We have three PC labs, and they are quickly becoming out-dated. Teachers struggle to share the computer-labs during class time and even then, our computers are quite slow, especially when a whole class is working. Our district network is unreliable at times and our tech support is extremely limited.

Specifically, our science department needs a more consistent funding source from the district for its basic labs, in addition to purchasing up-to-date lab probe-ware to bring us into the 21st century to support the honors, physics, and AP courses. To be proactive in securing additional resource materials, the department has sought donations from organizations like Donors Choose and purchasing materials out-of-pocket.

As mentioned in other Tasks, our science department has been fostering a partnership with Genentech, that has major implications for updating and increasing our use of technology.

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

The proposed addition of a Biotech Building will enable our students to work with state-of-the-art biotechnology equipment, including, but not limited to, Gel Electrophoresis, working with computer-generated molecular models, spectrophotometers, plant genetic engineering, genome sequencing, and much more. Additionally, our partnership with Genentech will bring a large number of refurbished MacBook Pros to our site to be used in the Science Department.

In October 2014, as “part of their ongoing commitment to local schools and science education,” Genentech gave every SSFUSD teacher the opportunity to benefit from a match offer for their classroom. Genentech provided this offering through DonorsChoose.org, an online charity that makes it easy for donors to support a classroom. Teachers post classroom project requests online, which range from microscopes for mitochondria to pencils for poetry. After individual donors have contributed the first half of the total project cost, Genentech fully funded the remaining 50%.” Teachers at our site have used this opportunity to pay for classroom Chrome Books, project-based learning and other classroom supplies.

There is little formal training or professional development related to instructional software for faculty and staff besides what teachers seek out themselves. Teachers are limited to exploring resources on their own and sharing our knowledge with each other informally.

For many years, ECTV was an effective communication tool for announcements and the Video Art classes produced them weekly to be aired on Fridays instead of daily announcements. We still offer Video Art as an elective, but due to staff turn-over and some problems with our closed circuit television system, we have not had regular ECTV for several years. The class now has updated computers and the TV system has been repaired. However, ECTV has not gone back “on the air.” Students and teachers currently hear announcements over the loudspeaker during third period; this practice is highly ineffective and out-dated. Announcements are hard to hear, cut into class time and students do not often pay attention to auditory announcements. Our student WASC discussion group expressed the desire to bring back ECTV, published on You Tube or emailed to teachers, rather than have announcements over the loudspeaker.

- c. School Loop, Infinite Campus, class schedule (Appendix), District Technology Policy (available upon request), turnitin.com, Donor’s Choose applications (available upon request), Genentech Communications (available upon request), Video Art course description (available upon request),

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

Task (Communication 4)

Institute Academic Excellence campaign and motivational strategies for CSTs.

- a. Critical Area 8; Goal 2; ESLR 4
- b. See comments above regarding Academic Excellence campaign. In 2014, we were a pilot site for the Smarter Balanced Assessments and did not administer the CST tests.

Task (Communication 5)

Institute Tolerance Campaign

- a. Critical Area 5; Goal 2; ESLR 4
- b. El Camino continues to have a strong GSA (Gay Straight Alliance), expanding its campaigns for National Coming Out Day, LGBT History Month, and Day of Silence. During national cultural awareness months, students address and acknowledge contributions of our diverse cultural populations during the morning announcements.

Our TLC club (Teen Leadership Challenge) was run by a counselor from 2009-2013. The counselor is currently on maternity leave. The TLC program conducts a retreat every year and a group of students attended with two counselors. Our Counseling Department organized a group of students to attend the TLC in the fall 2014 and have committed to follow up activities.

In 2013-14 teachers, parents and administrators organized a Cyber-bullying, Bullying and Empowerment Assembly for the freshmen and the SSFUSD, in collaboration with the SSFPD, hired an outside speaker to present to students about making positive choices. In 2014-15, school administration along with the PTSA, hired a motivational speaker to conduct an assembly for all students reminding students to treat each other with kindness and strategies for dealing with bullying.

- c. Evidence: GSA Agendas and Minutes (available upon request), TLC Retreat materials (available upon request), Anti-Bullying Campaign materials (available upon request), PTSA communications and meeting minutes (available upon request)

Task (Support 1)

Expand EL sections, teacher training and parent participation.

- a. Critical Area 8; Goal 2; ESLRs 1-5
- b. Over the summer of 2014, the district created a “New-Comers Program” housed at South San Francisco High School, and any student who is an EL I or II at El Camino was transferred to the program at the other high school. As a result, EL sections have

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

dramatically diminished at El Camino High School. Currently we have only one section of EL III; all of our EL students (IV/V) are otherwise mainstreamed.

The district-level employee in charge of the program is on medical leave, thus the program did not have the oversight it needed to get off to a strong start at the beginning of the school year. Students from El Camino were transferred over as the year began and as the teachers/counselors discovered grade 9 students were placed incorrectly. As of October 2014, teachers were still reporting EL students who have been misplaced. Significant concern still remains for the EL students who are not performing well in mainstream classes. A majority of higher-level EL students fail multiple mainstream classes every semester, specifically in Social Science and Science classes.

There is only one designated EL teacher and she has been to many EL trainings, including the AVID Summer Institute- EL strand English Language Learners Conference at San Mateo Office of Education, Teachers for Social Justice- EL strand, and the Educators for Fair Consideration Conference. Two of our English teachers will be attending the Kate Kinsella EL Academic Vocabulary workshop in South San Francisco this November.

Parent participation continues to be minimal. Because of language barriers, parent work schedules and availability, forming a consistent ELAC committee has been challenging.

- c. D/F rates for mainstream EL students (available upon request), Graduation rates for mainstream EL students (available upon request), EL enrollment numbers (available upon request), ELAC meeting minutes

Task (Support 2)

Increase intervention and support for targeted student populations: peer tutoring, More SST meetings, Access to computers, School loop, RFEP monitoring, Study Skills unit.

- a. Critical Area 8; Goal 2; ESLRs 1-5
- b. ECHS continues to RFEP students by looking over their grades and CELDT results. There continues to be little intervention or support for these students, even less than previous years because we have little district oversight or teachers in support positions for the students. The counseling department will be monitoring the students' progress and if they are not passing their classes, student will be recommended to attend tutoring after school. Other than that, there is minimal support and/or intervention for the students. In 2013-2014, we had an EL an EL Modern World History push-in class but that class does not exist anymore.

RFEP students are supposed to be monitored and progress assessed annually by the counseling department. Part of this assessment includes data gathered from each of the RFEP students' teachers designating classroom strategies used for the students. We need to monitor our ELs' progress, not just to see if we can RFEP them, but to check on their language and academic development and provide support in areas of need. We should be

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

better addressing such questions as: Are they increasing CELDT levels from year to year? How are they doing in their core content classes? How many of the students are passing the CAHSEE ELA? How can we better support the students in all of these areas? There is also a great need for social and emotional support as well as academic support in order for our ELs to do well in school.

In the 2013-2014 school years our principal created an EL Site Coordinator position for our one EL teacher. The position was a prep-period buy-out meant to support the intake and placement of EL students and to coordinate the program to help support the mainstream teachers who had “push-in” classes, which were new that year. This year, that teacher was not given a prep-period buy-out but was still expected to act as a coordinator in an unofficial capacity, CELDT testing and placing students and monitoring the nine students. Since the “new-comer” program has moved to South City, our EL numbers have greatly diminished, and the roles and responsibilities of the EL Site Coordinator are unclear.

Moving forward, at the district and site levels we need clear direction and job descriptions for positions regarding EL monitoring, better, more concrete intervention strategies for struggling ELs and much more support for our ELs and their teachers in their mainstream classes. ECHS needs far better teacher training across content areas to support our mainstreamed EL learners.

Some recommendations could include hosting an EL Seminar (like our Freshman Seminar courses) or at least an EL study hall so students can have a period of time to review their work and homework with an EL teacher.

- c. District Directives for EL support (available upon request), D/F rates for mainstream EL students (available upon request), Graduation rates for mainstream EL students (available upon request), EL enrollment numbers (available upon request), ELAC meeting minutes, Push-In enrollment numbers (available upon request)

Task (Support 3)

Standardized study skills curriculum.

- a. Critical Area 8; Goal 2; ESLR's 1-5
- b. Our Special Education Department has experienced the highest turnover of any department at our school. Over three years, our Special Education department has turned over all of its teachers. Special Education has had three teacher department chairs in six years and currently, an Assistant Principal is filling the role. Turnover has been high at the district level as well, with three Assistant Directors of Special Education Services in the last four years. The district has successfully appointed a former teacher of ours as a Special Education Teacher on Special Assignment to serve in a support role for our Special Education teachers. But hiring teachers with the proper credentials has proven difficult; currently three of our Special Education teachers are student-teaching interns and the remaining teachers have been here less than three years.

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

Special Education students continue to be our lowest performing demographic, according to our CAHSEE and CST scores. In 2013-2014, we began to pilot a “push-in” program modeled after the San Mateo Union High School District. While many schools find great success in this model, we struggled because of turnover, lack of leadership, lack of training and lack of mainstream teacher involvement; we did not officially continue the practice in 2014-2015, though there are still a few classes with high concentrations of Special Education students.

For the above-mentioned reasons, it has been very difficult to create standard, aligned curricula in our study skills classes.

Study skills across campus, however have been improving. As has been mentioned under other Action Plan goals, ECHS Freshman Seminar classes have been working to help students with study skills in all of their classes, specifically in keeping an organized binder, using a planner each day and in using the cross curricular strategies like *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens*, Cornell Notes, Socratic Seminar, AXES paragraphing and Costa’s levels of questioning. Many Special Education students have benefited from involvement in this class, specifically if they do not have a Study Skills elective class. This has been part of a school-wide effort to align study skills across curriculum. These methodologies have been implemented to the staff at large through our Freshman Seminar courses, new teacher meetings, professional development world cafes and the teacher-directed CCSS trainings.

District pacing guides have been instituted at all levels in math and English classes and are being developed in accordance with CCSS as standards are published. As we develop these curricula, teachers can be better aligned with study skills.

- c. New Teacher meeting minutes (available upon request), Special Education Department Meeting minutes(available upon request), CST and CAHSEE scores (Ch1)

Section V: Critical Areas for Follow-Up not currently in the Action Plan

Critical Area 9

Provide incentives to retain teachers in the district

Over the last six years, El Camino has retained only 39% of its teaching staff. 14 out of our 63 staff members are new hires in 2014-2015 alone. Also since 2009, we have seen three principals and one interim principal. For our three Assistant Principal positions, we have worked under 8 different APs and 2 Interim APs.

Some of the reasoning behind this can be assigned to pay and benefits. Since 2009, cost of living has increased dramatically all around the Bay Area. San Francisco rents, where many ECHS teachers live, have increased on average 13.5% since 2013 alone, and similar trends in rental prices are seen down the Peninsula. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, national inflation over the last six years is 11%. Since 2009, SSFUSD teachers have had a 1% raise (in 2013), and a 5% raise (in 2014). There were two separate off schedule bonuses (in 2013 and 2014) which have no long term benefit towards the salary schedule, retirement, or health care. The district has temporarily increased their contribution to our health care benefits; however this is only for two years after which their contribution will be significantly reduced. This year, we hope to negotiate an increase to our salary schedule as well as an increase to our benefits package that is not temporary.

As the second-lowest paying district on the Peninsula, SSFUSD loses many highly qualified teachers to neighboring districts that offer more competitive salaries and health care benefits. Additionally, the community no longer offers teachers incentives to buy local properties. In December 2014, neighboring urban district San Francisco Unified approved a contract that includes 12% pay increase for their teachers.

Other major factors that have contributed to high teacher turnover is the inconsistency of leadership at both the site and district levels, insufficient collaboration, planning and grading time (see below), a lack of quality professional development, increasing traffic and other factors that increase commute time.

Critical Area 10

Active commitment to the WASC follow-up process

Because of the high turn-over, especially at the administrative levels, the WASC process has been difficult to monitor over a six-year period. We have had different principals and WASC coordinators for the 2009, 2012 and 2015 reports, and this makes ubiquity difficult.

Remarkably, many aspects of our Action Plan items have been realized through the work of a very dedicated core staff. The goals that were grounded in teacher participation and that had high faculty buy-in saw improvement, such as: counselor outreach to parents, and

El Camino High School – WASC Focus on Learning Report 2015

ERWC, AVID and AP growth. Additionally, the Action Plan goals that aligned with directives from the District also made progress, like our monitoring of technology growth and our alignment of instruction with common assessments.

The areas where we still need to see growth are in developing CCSS aligned curricula and assessments, communication with students, parents and community and continuing to grow our technology program.

Our highest priorities moving forward should be working on intervention and support for our EL and Special Education populations, establishing a schedule that accommodates more planning and collaboration, providing systematic and high-quality professional development that fosters staff buy-in, and above all, recruiting and retaining talented instructors.

Critical Area 11

District supported collaboration time

In fall of 2014, in response to the teacher concern for lacking professional development time, ECHS and SSFHS implemented a common new bell schedule to accommodate 15 Early Release Wednesdays throughout the year. At the start of the 2014-2015 school year, SSR was eliminated and the passing periods shortened. Though some of those Wednesdays were designated to WASC concerns in early fall, the intention was to use future early release Wednesdays for department collaboration, cross curricular collaboration, vertical teaming and collaboration with our sister school, South San Francisco High.

In early October 2014, however, a union member grieved the changes (because of six minutes taken off lunch) and the lunch schedule was changed resulting in recouping instructional minutes and the loss of all but two early release days in the spring. This will allow for Early Release Wednesdays to continue through the fall semester, but there will be only two in the spring. This will significantly impact our ability to collaborate in the spring.

Our staff has expressed strong interest in building a schedule that allows for more collaboration time; however more planning and authentic conversation needs to be considered before moving forward. As of October 2014, a Bell Schedule committee has formed, in collaboration with South San Francisco High School to recommend schedules for adoption for the 2015-2016 school year. The priorities of the committee will be to build in more collaboration time for teachers and to better examine the learning needs, as well as the social/emotional needs of our students.