

Chapter 3: Progress Report

Significant changes that have impacted the school since the last full WASC visit:

Student Population Since our last full WASC visit, student population numbers have maintained. In 2005 we had 1566 students and in 2010 we had 1520. The student demographics distribution has seen a gradual increase in the percentage of Hispanics from 44% to 49% while the Filipinos have decreased from 20% in 2005 to 4% in 2010 and White, not Hispanic, has decreased from 14% to 6%. (Qualifier: “2 or more races” box has been available for the past 2 years and we have 355 students in that category skewing the data.)

District level changes Beginning with the change of District Superintendent in the summer of 2009, many changes in the district have affected SSFHS, including budget cuts that limited support for technology, district-directed staff development days, and district staff changes that have resulted in a significant change in the administration of the district. 2009 through spring 2011 also saw a high turnover at the district and school site administrator levels. Our school site in particular has both a new principal and a new assistant principal of curriculum and counseling.

In January 2009, the district decided to implement an instructional coaching program, focusing on English/Language Arts and math. By May 2009, ten coaches had been hired and training began. There is one ELA Coach and one math coach for the high schools, with SSFHS being the primary focus school. This is the second year of receiving coaching services to ELA and math departments and, occasionally, to other academic areas as well.

School Site Changes

Violence Since 2009, South San Francisco has lost 2 students to gun violence. The community and city of South San Francisco is suffering from an increase in gang-related violence and our school's youth is being impacted, as much of the violence is occurring in their own neighborhoods. Because of this, there has been a shift in our school culture. Administration has reached out to parents and community members who have come together around this recent wave of violence.

WASC Visits:

SSFHS last conducted a full self-study in 2006/07. This was an honest self-reflection of our school and was used as an opportunity to improve student achievement. The follow-up visit occurred three years later in 2009. In the 2006 self-study, the school identified two critical academic needs, which in turn became the two main goals and four action plan goals of the WASC action plan.

(Note: The action plan goals listed in the mid-term report and this progress report do not seem to match the action plan goals in the 2006 WASC report. However, with that being said the goals listed in the mid-term report are very relevant to the needs of the school.)

Critical Areas of Need (CANs), WASC Self-Study 2006/07

1. To improve the achievement of underperforming sub-groups.
2. To increase the number of students enrolled in higher level math and science classes, especially in the under-represented subgroups

Action Plan Goals, WASC Self-Study 2006/07

1. To improve the achievement of underperforming subgroups in mastery of the standards based curriculum.
2. To increase the number of students enrolled in higher level math and science classes, especially in the underrepresented sub-groups.
3. Promote and support collaborative strategies between faculty to improve the delivery of standards-based classroom instruction.
4. Expand the school's relationship with parents, students, and community members to strengthen the school's academic and extracurricular programs.

Accomplishment of the School-Wide Action Plan Goals:

In each year following the self-study, the faculty dedicated staff development time to one of the two CANs or one of the action plan goals attached to the CANs. Goals and procedures for implementation were monitored through Administrative Council and Site Council via the Single Plan for Student Achievement

Action Plan Goal 1: To improve the achievement of underperforming subgroups in mastery of the standards-based curriculum.

2008 API: 698; 2009 API: 722; 2010 API: 764; 2011 API: 785

- a. Standards-based benchmark assessments: In the fall of 2006, benchmark assessments were introduced to the faculty as a whole. Teachers read a professional journal article about formative assessment, and watched presentations of benchmark examples from colleagues. Some staff members created a benchmark assessment for their course and analyzed student outcomes using a common tool during this semester. In the spring of

2008, the entire faculty dedicated a week of early-release time to administering, grading and analyzing results from mid-quarter benchmark assessments. Administrators and representatives from each course met to review the results and discuss the process. In subsequent years, benchmark assessments were given at regular intervals across subject areas. Professional development time was allotted to the data analysis process.

- b. Backward planning: In the fall of 2007, the faculty began the process of backward planning curriculum from standards in course groups. That year and in subsequent ones, course groups submitted final assessments at the onset of each semester.
- c. Formative/summative assessment: Professional development on the topic of summative versus formative assessments and the use of assessment for learning was conducted in the spring of 2007.
- d. Pacing guides: Course pacing guides and calendars were developed in a collaborative process across the district in the 2009-2010 school year. Representatives from the core subject areas (math, science, English and social science) from each school met to select embedded and final assessments and to create common pacing guides and calendars.
- e. Departmental analysis of student work: In the 2006-7, 2007-8, 2008-9, 2009-10 and 2010-11 school years, SSFHS dedicated professional development time to the disaggregation and analysis of student performance data by individual teachers and in course groups. A data analysis tool was created and used in order for teachers to examine assessment results by content standard. In 2010, the district acquired Data Director

software and supporting hardware. On September 14th, 2010, teachers received training in the use of Data Director to create, store and analyze assessments.

- f. School-wide data analysis: At the beginning of each school year, CST and CAHSEE results were presented to the faculty in order to reflect on the school's progress as a whole. Additionally, teachers accessed individual student results using Cruncher software in order to gain an understanding of their class' specific academic strengths and weaknesses.
- g. AVID path training: In the spring of 2010 and 2011, SSFHS hosted Path training events for AVID Region 4. In 2010, fourteen teachers representing all core areas attended trainings in their subject area, Critical Reading, AVID-style tutorials, and ELL. In March, 2011, twenty teachers attended the Path training. In the fall of 2011, two teachers attended the AVID ELL Path training.
- h. AVID summer institute: A total of 12 teachers and counselors have attended the AVID Summer Institute, receiving professional development in their subject areas, the implementation the AVID elective, college readiness for all, and culturally proficient instruction.
- i. Language Arts and math adoption & training: A new Language Arts adoption at all levels, including EL Learners, was completed. English and EL teachers were very involved in developing curriculum from the text, pacing guides and strategic coursework.

District-wide, all math and ELA teachers participated in three days of training on the newly adopted books. The trainings included:

- Day 1: Introduce the Institute, state-approved instructional materials, research related to instructional practice, the value of assessments and differentiated instruction to effectively address the needs of all students. Examine key components of the math and ELA programs with an emphasis on: Reading/Language Arts Reading Domain 1.0: Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development in ELA; mathematical reasoning, problem solving strategies and tools, and identifying patterns and structures in mathematical systems.
- Day 2: ELA—An in-depth look at the teaching of the Reading Domain 2.0 (comprehension) and 3.0 (literary analysis), the Listening and Speaking Domain as well as the Writing Domain. Math—Universal Access, Assessments, Components of a Balanced Program
- Day 3: ELA—Focus on Written & Oral English Language Conventions. Deepen understanding of program material that differentiates instruction to meet the needs of all students. Explore technology support. Examine summative and CST assessment resources. Math—Model Lessons, effective use of technology in the classroom, pacing and planning.

- j. EDI training: In the 2010-11 school year, administrators and teachers received professional development in the area of Explicit Direct Instruction, focusing on instructional practices such as the use of lesson objectives, effective checks for understanding, and student engagement.

Action Plan Goal 2: To increase the number of students enrolled in higher level math and science classes, especially in the underrepresented sub-groups.

- a. Course offering changes: Over the last 6 years, a number of lower level courses have been replaced by college-preparatory, higher level classes. Life science and algebra .5a/b were all low-level, non A-G approved courses that were eliminated. Also, we currently only offer one section of 11/12 General English for the students needing the extra support based on formative assessments. On the other hand, the number of sections for the following subjects has increased: chemistry, biology, advanced biology, honors/AP English, honors/AP history, geometry, algebra 2, and AP calculus. This has taken place in spite of the school's losing a total of 23 sections during the same period. (See Appendix)
- b. Strategic classes: Student whose standardized test scores and grades demonstrate a need for intensive support are scheduled in math and/or English support classes in addition to their regular core class. Those teachers work closely with the district math and ELA coaches.
- c. AVID: The school has focused on the development of its Advancement Via Individual Determination program as a means to support college readiness for its participants. It has further contributed to creating a more college-going culture on campus. In the spring of 2006, an assistant principal began to coordinate the program. In the fall of 2006, there were 66 students in three sections of the AVID class. In the fall of 2011, the program had grown to 195 student participants in seven sections. In the 2006-7 school year, there

were 7 AVID students in the senior class, four of whom completed A-G requirements. In both the 2009-10 and 2010-11 school years, there were 26 seniors, all but one of whom had completed A-G requirements.

- d. Counseling philosophy: In 2006, the counseling team articulated a philosophy that was used to help us change the school culture to recognize that high levels of achievement are attainable for all students with the appropriate support. We believe that all students should be treated equally and respectfully regardless of race, ethnicity, and educational needs. With this being part of our philosophy we encourage all students to continue to take math and science and never stop at the minimum requirement if they have met the prerequisites to move on. Also, we eliminated remedial classes—for example Algebra .5a/.5b and Life science—making students take algebra and biology with support classes to help them succeed.
- e. Hermanos/as: Since the last WASC self-study, SSFHS has partnered with Skyline College to offer a concurrent enrollment course for Latino/a students. The class focuses on building academic skills and creating a bridge to the college campus in order to increase students' success in community college and prospects to transfer to a four-year college. The tutoring, mentorship and camaraderie begun in the high school program continue on the Skyline campus.
- f. CSU Mentor: In the spring of 2011, counselors met with all sophomores and helped them create CSU Mentor accounts. This tool allows student to track their progress in completing their A-G course requirements and four-year college eligibility.

Action Plan Goal 3: Promote and support collaborative strategies between faculty to improve the delivery of standards-based classroom instruction.

- a. Backward planning/pacing guides at school: Beginning in the 2007-8 school year, subject area groups within departments have collaborated to create common assessments and benchmarks, and to plan course curriculum.
- b. Backward planning/pacing guides in district: District-wide collaboration took place in the 2009-10 school year in core subject areas in order to select common formative and summative assessments and to create common pacing guides.
- c. Data review at school: Beginning in the 2007-8 school year, teachers began to analyze data from their summative assessments in course groups.
- d. Data Director: The district acquired Data Director Software and hardware in the 2009-10 school year and conducted teacher training in the fall of 2010, allowing teachers to disaggregate student achievement on assessments by course content standards.
- e. Coaching: In the 2010-11 school year, teacher coach positions in the area of math and English Language Arts were created in the district. Each coach served both high schools and assisted teachers in matters related to instruction, assessment and data analysis.
- f. Walk-throughs: In the 2009-10 and 2010-11 school year, non-evaluative walk-throughs focusing on EDI strategies were conducted consistently. Teachers representing all

departments participated in short visits to their peers' classes to observe and gather school-wide data related to instructional practices.

- g. Professional Development Plans: Beginning in the 2007-8 school year, professional development plans created through a collaboration between the school site council and administrative team were planned backwards from intended outcomes. Yearly goals and calendars of professional development activities were distributed at the beginning of each school year to all staff.
- h. Benchmark debriefs: Following the initial implementation of benchmark assessments in the spring of 2008, administrators and teachers collaborated to review the benchmark and student performance results.
- i. Academic Conferencing: Professional development related to academic conferencing/student work protocols was conducted in the 2009-10 school year. A team of Algebra 1 teachers, supported by their peer coach, engaged in the academic conferencing protocol. This process involves analysis of common assessment data and collaborative planning.
- j. Book Group: A teacher-led initiative resulted in a voluntary book club, which read and discussed the book Whistling Vivaldi in the fall of 2010.
- k. Professional Learning Community (PLC): A cycle of formal collaborative meetings among grade level/course teachers was designed to deepen teachers' understanding of the

curriculum standards assessed and target instruction towards our sub groups and students' areas of greatest need. The cycle includes three parts: assessment preview, instructional planning, and data analysis. These PLCs have be facilitated by academic coaches in both math and ELA.

Action Plan Goal 4: Expand the school's relationship with parents, students, and community members to strengthen the school's academic and extracurricular programs.

- a. Class Scheduling events: In the spring of 2010, the counseling department conducted scheduling evenings in the evenings in order to include and educate parents in the process of their students' course programming.
- b. Peninsula Conflict Resolution (PCRC) Emerging Leaders program: In the spring of 2010, SSFHS partnered with the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center to develop student leadership in a group of young men affected by the violent death of a classmate. Following the eight-week summer program, student participants conducted a "fish bowl" activity as a form of professional development for staff.
- c. AVID: Along with its expansion, the AVID program has begun to conduct several activities throughout the school year involving parents and/or community members. Examples include an end-of-the-year banquet and quarterly community service projects.
- g. Hermano/as: Since the last WASC self-study, SSFHS has partnered with Skyline College to offer a concurrent enrollment course for Latino/a students. The class focuses on

South San Francisco High School Focus on Learning Report 2012

building academic skills and creating a bridge to the college campus in order to increase students' success in community college and prospects to transfer to a four-year college. The tutoring, mentorship and camaraderie begun in the high school program continue on the Skyline campus.

- d. Parent group (spring 2010) & PCRC grant: In response to the violence and the untimely loss of students over the past 3 years, we have created a Parent Institute for parents whose families were directly affected by the violence. The trainings, occurring monthly, provide not only support in the area of general parenting but also in the areas of advocacy and creating community influence. This program has also become a support group of sorts to open an avenue of conversation for parents. The program is presented by the PCRC and has been funded by an \$18,000 grant from Kaiser Permanente.
- e. Folklorico Program: This program is very involved with community events and participates in events such as the Fiestas Patrias celebration with Unidos of Sur San Francisco and with the Morelos Hall Association. Ballet Folklorico Alma De Mexico of SSFHS is celebrating its 20th anniversary. We have celebrated with a successful dinner/dance with parents, community and students at the SSF Municipal Building. This December 9th we presented the 20th Anniversary Concert with our students, community and faculty. There will also be a special performance with a Folklorico group from our Sister City, Atotonilco El Alto from Jalisco, Mexico.
- f. Parent Information Nights: In previous surveys, parents requested more training on subjects specific to the issues with which their students may be dealing with. We have

started these nights for all SSFHS parents centered on such topics as: Gang Violence, Substance Abuse, Cyber-Safety, Bullying, and Dating. The information is presented by school and local experts in the specific areas. The events also involve a question and answer period, to help meet specific needs if necessary.

- g. Spring Scheduling Night: This was established in 2009, allowing students and their parents to come together to select their courses for the next year. It has been very successful and is a great way to encourage parent involvement in their student's academic success and future. Parents come to receive information and sit with their student and help them make decisions on their schedules and goals for the following school year. This also allows us to have more one-on-one contact with the students as we set the event up like a career fair, with information about different classes offered at SSFHS, transcript review, graduation requirements, and 4 year eligibility requirements.
- h. Warrior's Path: A program providing safe passage to and from school, completely staffed with parents volunteers. Parents are given a specific location before and after school to supervise and contact either school or local authorities if concerns are raised.

Other Accomplishments and New Opportunities for Students

Though not formal goals, our school has experienced many new and exciting changes and improvements since the last full WASC Self-Study and visit. For example, during the past three years the Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) has gone from 10-15 members in 2008-09 to our current membership of 35 students. GSA-sponsored events, such as *Day of Silence* held annually each April, No Name-Calling Week, and the *Unity Day*, have all seen an increase in participation

South San Francisco High School Focus on Learning Report 2012

from students and staff alike. GSA officers have consistently attended YES, the Youth Expressions Summit, each December of every school year, to strengthen our club, expand our goals and objectives and learn from other schools' GSA's.

Our Community Service Class has expanded to 50 students who are donating a minimum of 80 hours each to our community via different schools and non-profit organizations. The most recent additions to the program are the afterschool sites of the Community Learning Center Tutoring Programs, the Public Works Department Office Support, the Family Service Agency of San Mateo County Preschool Program, and the Department of Parks and Recreation REAL Programs.

Experiences outside the classroom come in all different ways. For example, our moderate to severe special education program has many students participate in the Special Olympics and in the workability program, which prepares them for work outside of school. Another experience outside the classroom is when civil rights leaders speak to our students. These speakers have included Minniejean Brown Trickey in 2009 and Elizabeth Eckford in 2010, both of the Little Rock Nine, and Karen Korematsu in 2011. Due to speak to our students on February 8, 2012 is Anthony Chavez, grandson of Cesar Chavez.

Enrollment in AP courses has increased and in the school year 2010-2011 88% of AP U.S. History students passed the AP exam with a three or better. Nine students received a five. New to the schedule is the Expository Reading and Writing Course (a UC/CSU Certified Course stressing college aptitude in rhetorical reading and writing across academic disciplines).

Follow-up Critical Areas Left by the 2006 Visiting Committee:

1. Maintain and update the school web page.
2. Employ various ways to communicate with parents, especially non-English speaking parents and parents who might not have access to Schoolloop.
3. School-wide, standards-based benchmarks across the curriculum are needed to demonstrate proficiency of standards and of attainment of ESLRs. Continue modification of instruction towards alignment with state standards.
4. SSFHS needs to develop a clearly defined school vision statement.
5. SSFHS should develop a comprehensive staff development calendar.

With regard to recommendation **number one**, our school website has been updated. The 2007-08 school year saw changes in SSFHS's website. SSFHS' relationship with the Schoolloop company led to the expansion of that use as we found the need to move to a more user friendly web publishing tool. School Loop had recently developed tools for the district level, and with the support of high school and district staff, we migrated to using Schoolloop for our school's website. As a school we had also purchased the SSFHS.COM url to have access to easy video upload for the video broadcasting course and the web design course, giving students and faculty access to more advanced features than the Schoolloop tool provided. Schoolloop continues to be the major vehicle to communicate with parents regarding student grades, attendance, and homework assignments. Currently, 751 households (parents) are registered for school loop. We also have useful information such as the school calendar, upcoming events, daily announcements; alumni contact information, or Warrior shout outs. There are also links to the Warrior Newspaper, local newspapers, and the "South City Source," which is our video arts class' daily video announcements.

With regard to **number two**, we use many different ways to communicate with parents. Contact information for parents is kept in Schoolloop so teachers have easy access. We use the auto dialer to remind parents of events coming up, such as testing, parent nights, or non-student days. This auto dialer is able to deliver a message in Spanish to parents who do not speak English. Each of the three offices (General, Attendance, and Counseling) has support staff that speaks Spanish, as do two academic counselors and one assistant principal. Our documents and letters sent home are translated into Spanish whenever necessary. Schoolloop emails are used to send information out to all registered parents.

With regard to **number three**, school-wide standards-based benchmarks across the curriculum were needed to demonstrate proficiency. Please see Action Plan Goal 1a and Action Plan Goal 3h for more detail.

With regard to **number four**, after the 2006 WASC report the school came up with the following statement:

The Journey of the Warrior is one of personal and academic growth.

The Spirit of the Warrior inspires respect for the dignity of all individuals.

The Mind of the Warrior thinks critically about the world it will inherit.

The Mission of the Warrior is to use these gifts to enrich their community and inspire others to do the same.

South San Francisco High School Focus on Learning Report 2012

During the 2011-2012 school year the staff revisited the statement and updated it to read:

The Journey of the Warrior is one of personal, physical, and academic achievement.

The Spirit of the Warrior inspires respect for the diversity and the dignity of all individuals.

The Mind of the Warrior thinks critically about the world it will inherit.

The Heart of the Warrior reaches for excellence in all that it does.

Therefore, the Mission of the Warrior is to continually use these gifts to enrich their community and inspire others to do the same.

With regard to **number five**, SSFHS developed a clearly defined professional development calendar during the first 3 years of the action plan. At the beginning of every school year, staff development was planned for the entire year—subject to change as needed—for the entire year keeping our subgroups in mind. The plan focused on benchmark assessments and backward planning, which allowed teachers to determine student achievement of the standards and re-teach when necessary. Other staff development foci can be seen through the accomplishments of our 4 action plan goals.

Response to 2009 Midterm Report

The midterm visiting committee made no further recommendations. They believed SSFHS to “have taken seriously its commitment to ensuring all students were prepared for life after high school.” The new programs, staff commitments, standards-based curriculum, and a school vision prepared students for success. The midterm team looked closely at the comprehensive staff development plan that “kept the staff focused on the school’s needs.”