

Gabrielino High School



Chapter Three Progress Report

Building Upon the Strengths, Talents and Passions of All Students

Gabrielino High School (GHS), located in San Gabriel, California, is truly a school that is "aiming high" in preparing its students for life in the 21st Century. Among the school's accomplishments are being named as a 2001 and 2009 California Distinguished School, receiving its second six year clear WASC accreditation in October of 2006 and being named by "U.S. News and World Report" as a silver medal school in its publication of "America's Best Public High Schools" four years in a row. In addition, the school has been the Southern California Speech and Debate League Champions for 14 straight years, won the 2008 L.A. County Mock Trial Championship, and has won numerous league championships in various sports. Our yearbook was recognized as one of the best in the country, and our school's newspaper has also earned national recognition.

Describe any significant developments at the school since the last WASC visit and what impact, if any, they have had on the school or specific curricular programs:

The quote by John Knowles in his novel, "A Separate Peace", the more things change, the more they remain the same" may best describe Gabrielino High School. We have remained true to our belief that all students can and will succeed if provided a nurturing, engaging environment that fosters powerful teaching and learning. As a result of meeting the 2007 -2008 school year API growth targets for all sub groups, Gabrielino High School was named a statewide nominee for California Distinguished School status, and was ultimately selected. However, we remain true to our mission of constant and never ending improvement and to our new vision statement of "Building upon the strengths, talents and passions of all our students."

Since our accreditation report in October of 2006, the most significant change for Gabrielino High School was the death of Principal Dr. Gene Murphy, who had provided such strong leadership for the school for the previous 8 years. David Crist, an assistant principal who had been with the school since its opening in 1994, was appointed principal with the goal of providing a transition from the strong leadership of Dr. Murphy. While honoring and grieving Dr. Murphy, the school continued to grow. In 2008, David Christ retired, and Sharron Heinrich was selected to lead the school. Ms. Heinrich was a founding member of the faculty who left to pursue other opportunities, and returned to us as an Assistant Principal in 2008. In addition (including those who were promoted or took advantage of opportunities for advancement elsewhere) 10 assistant principals have served Gabrielino High School since the last accreditation visit. Despite this turnover in leadership, the faculty and staff have continued to abide by our mission: A Commitment to Constant and Never-Ending Improvement.

Significant changes, aside from becoming a Title I school, are as follows: (1) Implementation of the Aeries online software program which tracks student attendance and grades (2) Addition of a part time EL counselor to identify and service ELL students at risk of not passing the CAHSEE, (3) Embracing the use of Data Director to analyze student data to inform instruction, (4) Implementation of the Read 180 program for all ELD 3 students, (5) Implementing the AVID program beginning in the 2009-2010 school year, (6) The hiring of a 5th counselor cutting the counselor to student ratio from 1 to 450 to 1 to 360, (7) The hiring of a female campus supervisor to augment the two existing male campus supervisors, (8) The implementation of an integrated digital format web-based campus security camera system that allows access from any internet ready terminal, (9) The stabilizing of the special education teaching staff and in turn a renewed commitment to the “Language! Literacy” program as well as an articulated writing program, (10) The infusion of an information literacy program into the Freshmen Seminar class, (11) A professional development focus on differentiated instruction targeting “best practices” to address the needs of diverse learners, and (12) The addition of new computers and/or computer labs in the Media Center, computer programming, music and art classes, and in the general and special education classrooms.

However, the current budgetary situation has had a visible impact on the program at Gabrielino High. The Freshman Seminar program has been eliminated as a cost-cutting measure; Health & Safety and the French Language classes have also been eliminated. Gabrielino High has lost several gifted teachers and significant support staff as well. Despite these challenges, the school still remains committed to offering the students the best educational opportunities possible.

Describe the school’s procedures for the implementation and monitoring of the School-wide Action Plans. Include how annual progress reports, as well as this third year report, have been prepared.

Since our last WASC accreditation in the fall of 2006, Gabrielino High School has continued its momentum towards school-wide improvement through a collaborative effort of school personnel, district administration and support staff, students, parents and community

stakeholders. Three key areas of focus (“Success for all Students”, “Technology” and “Learning Environment”) have been the foundation for: (1) professional development, and (2) the writing of the Single Plan for School Achievement. These have also provided focus points for discussion in the development of the District’s Educational Master Plan. The monitoring of these plans has been the task of the department chairs and school cabinet, our School Site Council, and our school administration.

The principal has continued to be the primary “gatekeeper” and has been responsible for reporting Action Plan progress to the school district and the Site Council. The site administration has also used student free professional development days on an annual basis, as well as the monthly meetings of the administration and department chairs to review and update our School-wide Action Plans. Written notices and newsletters to staff and parents have also provided information about annual progress on our School-wide Action Plans.

We feel that our follow-up process has facilitated the ongoing implementation of the Focus on Learning School-wide Action Plans and has kept all stakeholders apprised.

Gabrielino High School
A California Distinguished School

Focus on Learning: School-wide Critical Areas for Follow –up

1. Revisit the vision statement incorporating new and unique information to create an umbrella to unify curriculum at GHS.
2. Continue to separate Special Education classes for RSP and SDC students.
3. There is a need for more collaborative efforts between Special Education/ELL and general education teachers in order to meet the needs of special education/ELL students in general education classes.
4. Continue to recruit and support underrepresented students into AP and Honors classes and continue to increase the elective options for students.
5. Explore creative ways to identify financial opportunities for technology and professional development and research funding to acquire new technology. Provide ongoing technical support, training opportunities for staff, and equipment/software upgrades (including more desktop and laptop computers for staff and students).
6. The Visiting Committee recommends that GHS staff work closely with the district to address concerns related to the need for additional support in the areas of school safety and supervision.
7. The Visiting Committee recommends that GHS think “outside the box” and incorporate a site-based staff development plan that addresses needs related to assessment, articulation and curriculum development.

**WASC Visiting Committee Report
October 15 -18 2006**

Progress on Critical Areas:

Visiting Committee’s Critical Area for Follow- up #1.

Revisit the vision statement incorporating new and unique information to create an umbrella to unify curriculum at GHS.

Where We Are In 2011:

Recommendations for a new vision statement were presented to the faculty for a vote in March of 2008 and adopted by the cabinet in April of 2008. Using the book “The Art of Possibility” by Rosamund and Benjamin Zander, the school community created a vision statement that fits the following criteria: (1) the vision fulfills a desire fundamental to humankind, (2) the vision addresses a desire with which any human can resonate, (3) the statement leaves no one asking “what about me?”, (4) a vision is free standing, and (5) it points neither to a rosier future nor a past in need of improvement. Stakeholder groups such as the PTSA and the Site Council were involved in the selection process, and suggestions were welcomed from all areas of the campus community. In fact, the winning suggestion came from a student member of Site Council. The vision statement **“Building upon the strengths, talents and passions of all students”** replaced a two page statement that had been used since the opening of the school in 1994.

Where We Go From Here:

The vision statement speaks to possibility. The faculty is engaging in conversations that are much more transparent regarding how we reach out to all students and help them achieve their potential. Data is being analyzed with the use of DataDirector to close the achievement gap between our Asian and Hispanic students.

Visiting Committee’s Critical Area for follow – up #2.

Continue to separate Special Education classes for RSP and SDC students.

Where We Are In 2011:

A concerted effort has been made to establish a master schedule that to the best of our ability and budget separates the RSP and SDC classes. This had been accomplished in all Special Education English, Math and Science classes, but was not fully accomplished in Social Science where staffing and numbers have not made it possible to separate the two levels. Budgetary realities have made it increasingly difficult to separate RSP and SDC classes, even as it remains an important objective for the school. However, to see if we could better serve our students, we are testing a co-teaching model in two subjects, science and math, for RSP students in the 2010-2011 school year. If this model proves effective (based on empirical evidence) for our students, the co-teaching model will expand to all core subjects.

Where We Go From Here:

The administration, counseling and special education staffs will continue to evaluate and revise the process for identification and placement of students to ensure that a master schedule is created that honors the separation of RSP and SDC students. As was done this past year the department chair and the district Director of Special Education will be involved in the establishment of the master schedule.

Visiting Committee's Critical Area for follow-up #3.

There is a need for more collaborative effort between Special Education/ELL and general education teachers in order to meet the needs of special education/ELL students in general education classes.

Where We Are in 2011:

In the area of Special Education; the new District Director of Special Education and Assistant Principal have given us a stronger supervisory presence which has helped with both vertical and horizontal articulation. In addition, general education teachers are notified if they have special education students in their classes, and are given copies of special education student profile sheets. Each profile sheet contains the student's disability, discrepancies, deficits, accommodations and/or modifications, strengths, weaknesses, concerns, and effective strategies. Regular education teachers provide written input regarding each student's academic and behavioral progress prior to IEP meetings. Written input is also gathered from the general education teachers when a student receives a "D" or an "F" at the end of a grading period.

During the 2007-2008 school year the Social Studies department began working with the Special Education department on modification of test items on summative assessments. The strategy has helped to build student confidence and achievement levels in social studies. To promote the practice school-wide, a professional development session on test modifications was presented to the staff in March 2008; other departments are adopting this practice, and have implemented it to different degrees based on subject-specific needs.

In 2010-2011, we began a pilot program of full inclusion for special education students. We added two classes led with a co-teaching model, one in Math and one in Science. Based on the results of this experiment, decisions will be made about the best way to serve our special education students in the future.

Where We Go From Here:

The Special Education and ELD departments have been a real area of focus for the Gabrielino High School staff. It has been common practice in any discussion for engaging students in the classroom to reference how to engage and meet the needs of these two subgroups. The use of DataDirector is informing instruction through a closer look at individual data, and teachers have become more aware of the importance of using re-teaching and mastery learning techniques.

Visiting Committee' Critical Area of Follow-up #4:

Continue to recruit and support underrepresented students into AP and Honors classes and continue to increase the elective options for students.

Where We Are In 2011:

This is a mixed bag for us. With all the success of the school, we have still made little progress in convincing Hispanic students to take and be successful in Advanced Placement and Honors classes. We began to implement the AVID program in the 2009-2010 school year. In addition, the PSAT test is being used to identify students who have the potential to take these classes. In an effort to get more students to take the PSAT, and thus be identified for AP and better prepared for the SAT, we have moved to a Wednesday administration. Furthermore, many AP teachers have actively begun to recruit historically underrepresented students into AP and Honors classes and have expanded the information available about AP and Honors classes. We have been far more successful at expanding enrollment in AP courses with few pre-requisites; additional sections of AP US History and AP Government have been added in addition to additional sections of honors courses with minimal pre-requisites such as English 3 and Biology.

The counseling department also provides assistance to underrepresented students through the facilitation and implementation of an SAT prep class on campus every spring. Counselors are meeting with students individually, and throughout the spring to give specific information to students related to their post high school plans, and encourage a rigorous course of study. Representatives from local colleges are here to regularly meet with students in an effort to recruit them into the 4-year college system. A few new electives, such as three levels of Mandarin, have been added to the master schedule. A statistics class was added for the fall of 2010, and AP Environmental Science will be added in Fall of 2011 despite the budgetary pressures the school currently faces. In addition, extra sections of AP United States History, AP American Government, AP Statistics, AP English, and AP Chemistry will be added based on student demand for the 2010-2011 school year.

Where We Go From Here:

The District Educational Master Plan (EMP) committee has identified both of these areas as a priority. EMP goals and objectives that focus on strategies and plans are being discussed and formulated to address the achievement gap and the need for additional electives at Gabrielino High School. At the site level, discussions regarding the need to shift the perception of AP courses among Hispanics have begun. Strategies for action steps will be formulated between the Assistant Principal overseeing instruction and AP teachers during the 2011-2012 school year. Additionally, AP and Honors teachers have begun meeting as a group and are

actively working on strategies to recruit more qualified students while maintaining the rigor of the AP classes.

Visiting Committee's Critical Area of Follow-up #5:

Explore creative ways to identify financial opportunities for technology and professional development and research funding to acquire new technology. Provide ongoing technical support, training opportunities for staff, and equipment/software upgrades (including more desktop and laptop computers for staff and students).

Where We Are In 2011:

This is an area of real growth for Gabrielino High School. Since the accreditation visit, the district has hired a District Technology Coordinator who has helped to address the need for vastly improved technology at the school and its implementation. The district has used a site block grant to purchase a computer for every classroom; computers were in place by December of 2007. The combination of classroom computers and staff training has enabled the school to utilize on line attendance and grade reporting. In addition, core subject area teachers have received training in the use of DataDirector. The program is being used extensively by the English and Math departments to analyze data to inform instruction. The Science and Social Studies departments received training during the 2008-09 school year and are utilizing and embedding the tool in the instructional planning process. The special education and ELD teachers have received additional classroom computers through the site block grant. The site block grant funded the purchase of 30 LCD projectors and additional computers for the Library/Media Center. (All teachers now have access to an LCD projector in their room, unless they have requested not to have the technology available.) The purchase of the LCD projectors has enabled teachers to utilize multi-modal teaching strategies to enhance their daily lessons and presentations and increase student engagement. The art and music teachers used the Art, Music and P.E. block grant to purchase technology for their programs. For example, the art department has expanded the curriculum to include the teaching of animation; this was made possible by the addition of a 10 computer lab equipped with animation software. An additional lab of twenty-six computers has enabled computer programming teachers to utilize current software to enhance their curriculum and instruction. Mobile computer labs were also purchased for classes utilizing the Read 180 Program. Document cameras are now in the classrooms of any teacher who would like one; these are used in conjunction with digital projectors.

Where We Go From Here:

The district passed a construction bond in February of 2008 of which several million dollars has been designated to upgrade the technology infrastructure of all the district schools.

Visiting Committee Critical Area of Follow-up #6.

The Visiting Committee recommends that GHS staff work closely with the district to address concerns related to the need for additional support in the areas of school safety and supervision.

Where We Are In 2011:

In fall of 2008 a female campus supervisor was hired; this has been a very welcome addition to the campus community. In the process of hiring the campus supervisor, job descriptions were reviewed and updated. Two positions were re-designated as campus security requiring 24 Hour Post Training, and one position was retained as a campus supervisor. The two campus security positions are now hired with the understanding that they may be assigned different work hours on different days so that security can be available at high profile afternoon or evening events. Having three individuals, of which one is a female, has vastly improved the overall supervision of the campus and especially of the restrooms. Since the accreditation, the School Resource Officer has been assigned to the High School more frequently. The presence of the School Resource Officer is a tremendous support to the administration in the handling of the more difficult discipline situations. An upgraded campus security camera system has been installed that provides more complete video coverage of the campus and has allowed administration the ability to zoom in on individuals when an incident is brought to their attention. Using an outside contractor, random sweeps of the parking lot and campus for drugs and alcohol occur several times throughout each semester.

Given that school safety is also secured through a culture of acceptance, efforts have been made to promote student awareness and tolerance of all students, regardless of ethnicity, religious affiliation, gender, or sexual orientation. Clubs, such as the GLSBA (Gay, Lesbian, Straight, and Bisexual Alliance) have been instrumental in the process.

Where We Go From Here:

Campus safety remains a very high priority for the district. There is a strong desire to remain diligent in this area, and student input is essential to maintaining campus security.

Visiting Committee Critical Area of Follow-up #7:

The Visiting Committee recommends that GHS think “outside the box” and incorporate a site-based staff development plan that addresses needs related to assessment, articulation and curriculum development.

Where We Are In 2011:

Using a “trainer of trainers” model, staff has provided technology training for the faculty. Lead teachers were trained to use the ABI on-line attendance and grading system and in turn provided professional development training in November of 2007 for all teaching staff. Additional training was provided by an Assistant Principal in after school sessions for those teachers who needed additional support. In addition, the department chairpersons were trained to use DataDirector, and in turn have provided training for their departments. A special schedule was provided in October of 2008 when students were taking the PSAT test which provided a time frame for core academic teachers to participate in DataDirector training. The March 2008 professional development day was entirely teacher lead. Under the theme of “Success for All Students” lead teachers demonstrated 5 different best practices in a round robin format. Staff response was very positive and resulted in the same format being utilized at the January 2009 professional development day. The January training was also teacher lead with a focus on data analysis using DataDirector and the results of the first semester final exams and differentiated instructional strategies. The expectations for the January training were expanded to include a “pilot period” in which teachers tried a minimum of one strategy learned. Results were shared with department chairpersons and Cabinet members and requests for support and follow-up were discussed. The two-prong focus of analyzing student data to inform instruction, and the use of differentiated instructional strategies, will remain an area of continued growth for the school. Due to budgetary limitations, most professional development in the 2010-2011 was focused on preparing for our WASC accreditation visit. However, the plan for 2011-2012 is to return to a “trainer of trainers” model to continue to facilitate sharing of strategies and expertise among the faculty.

Where We Go From Here:

There has been very positive response for professional development that is provided by fellow teachers. The exchange of ideas and the sharing of expertise has been beneficial to all teaching staff and remains a model that will be encouraged in the future.

Comment on any additional areas that were addressed with the action plan:

There have been a number of significant developments that have addressed specific goals of the Action plans. Under the overall action plan of **Success for all Students** several important developments have been as follows:

- A fifth counselor was hired which lowered that counseling ratio from 1 to 450 to 1 to 360. This has allowed counselors to give more time to students in supporting their academic success and addressed the goal of exploring strategies to help all students meet graduation requirements. Despite budgetary reductions, we are hoping to find alternate funding to continue having a fifth counselor on campus.
- The Read 180 Literacy program has been implemented at the ELD 3 level. This program is supporting the development of reading and writing skills for this group of students and

addresses the goal of assisting all low performing subgroups. In addition, Freshmen Seminar course was revised to allow 16 days in the Library/Media Center Computer Lab with the teaching librarian with emphasis on Information Literacy and the teaching of the "Big 6" research model so that all research projects have a uniform format. This program was used as one of the exemplary programs for the California Distinguished School application because all freshmen are given a uniform base of instruction for future learning in their academic classes. However, in an effort to deal with the budgetary realities the district faces, the school board voted to eliminate funding for Freshman Seminar and Health & Safety in the 2011-2012 school year.

- Intensive CAHSEE review sessions for Special Education Students have been offered prior to each testing date. Additionally, some IEPs now contain CAHSEE accommodations and/or modifications that are based on the students' current, unique needs and IEP team decisions. Furthermore; the Language! Program, which is a researched-based reading intervention, is being utilized in special education classes. Algebra 1 Rescue is being utilized as an algebra intervention. As a result, CAHSEE scores have been positively impacted and the passing rate for Special Education Students has increased.
- To address the goal of more core content area for ELD 1 and ELD 2 students two reading classes in the content area of social science and science were established. With its emphasis on academic vocabulary students are being prepared for future social science and science classes, in courses that emphasize language acquisition.
- To meet the goal of refining the individual personal learning plans, counselors worked very closely with the Freshmen Seminar teachers to develop a plan around a "career project" done in class. The plans are reviewed individually with students in a spring pre-registration counseling meeting. The District Master Plan committee is exploring the technology to have an online process for students to develop personal learning plans. Additionally, Economics teachers are experimenting with a personal finance curriculum that will utilize the career goals and information students provided in 9th grade, updating and revising the student's surveys and plans to reflect changing interests or academic realities. The loss of Freshman Seminar has thrown a wrench into the school's plans for individual personal learning plans, and alternatives are now being explored to try and mitigate this loss.

Under the overall action plan of **Technology** additional developments from those already mentioned include:

- The expansion of the Library/Media Center hours to 6:00 p.m. provided all students with access to the computer lab for extended time. This had been paid for through funds provided by the San Gabriel Education Foundation; unfortunately, funding was not available in 2011-2012, but we are hoping to locate and secure additional funding to restore the extended hours as students often request a return to the extended hours.
- The school website has been enhanced under the direction of staff member Harold Sanin;

who has been given a class period to upkeep the website and trouble shoot minor technology concerns. The school also created a Facebook page to help keep interested parties updated and informed about school issues.

- The automated “ConnectEd” system has been used to communicate much more frequently and extensively with parents in their home languages regarding school events and activities.

Under the overall action plan of **Learning Environment** additional developments from those already mentioned include:

- Several years of highly successful and well attended parent financial aid nights offered in five different languages by the career center. In addition as a means of communicating and enhancing parent involvement, there has been a concerted effort to translate communications with the home.
- A Spanish Speaking community liaison has been assigned to the high school and the district has hired an additional Chinese speaking liaison which has given the high school greater access to Chinese translations.
- The counseling staff has expanded workshops provided to juniors and seniors to help them explore post-secondary options. New workshops include a private school (Common App) workshop and additional opportunities to address financial aid questions.
- Counselors and teachers are expanding their use of e-mail to communicate with parents and students as well as link them to on-line resources. A pilot program to utilize AERIES’ on-line grading and parent portal is underway.
- Utilization of the Alumni Association to create a series of seminars and forums to help current students prepare for their future and encourage networking between previous and current classes.
- Creation of “Gab Week”, a week of activities and lessons designed to foster a stronger sense of community and inclusion and to help eliminate bias and bullying on campus.

C. Indicate what impact the action plan has had on the quality and level of student learning.

It is our belief as a school community that the accreditation process provided us with the challenge of continuing to fulfill our mission of “Constant and Never Ending Improvement”. The action plan provides specifics and this midterm report illustrates that there has been a strong effort to address areas of follow-up. The staff remains committed to creating a learning environment that is safe, secure and engages students as they fulfill their potential.