

Visiting Committee Report

for

The Accrediting Commission for Schools
of the
Western Association of Schools and College

for

LIBERTY RANCH HIGH SCHOOL

Galt, California

April 13-16, 2013

Visiting Committee Members

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Chapter I – Student-Community Profile and Supporting Data and Findings

Liberty Ranch High School in Galt, the second and newer high school in the Galt Union High School District, serves both a rural and suburban population for an agricultural area of southern Sacramento County. The campus of Liberty Ranch High School was proposed in an area of increasing home construction and rising student population. With the world-wide recession, home construction in the area was slowed and the school is currently surrounded on three sides by farmland. Even though enrollment was declining, the District's Board made the decision to honor its promise to the community by opening Liberty Ranch High School on August 18, 2009 with an initial enrollment of 589 students (345 9th-graders and 244 10th-graders. LRHS graduated its first senior class in 2012 and currently has a 9-12 population of just under 1200.

Liberty Ranch High School has a diverse student population. Students enrolling in Liberty Ranch High School as freshmen enter from one of three feeder schools from three different elementary districts: Arcohe, New Hope and McCaffrey. LRHS students come from varied backgrounds and housing: living on farms and dairies, living in nearby rural small towns, or living in a suburban area near the school. The students reflect the diversity of the community. In 2010-2011 with 48% White, 42% Hispanic/Latino, 2% Asian, and 1% of 3 other ethnicities. (Galt HS has 33% White, 58% Latino and 1% of the other nationalities.) Students receiving free and reduced benefits was 44% (499 out of 1145) during the 2010-2011 school year. (63% at Galt HS.)

LRHS operates a modified, traditional year calendar with 177 days of instruction in a six period day (8:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.) beginning in August and ending in late May/early June, which allows students to finish the first semester before winter break. There is a Collaboration-Release Day every Wednesday which allows students to be released at 2:00 P.M. and teachers to collaborate as a staff or in departments. A Collaboration Minimum Day where students are released at 12:15 and staff collaborates from 1:00-3:00 occurs if months have a fifth Wednesday which usually occurs about four to five times a year.

“LRHS has developed a strong relationship with the community. The LRHS website allows students, parents, and the community to view updated information about the school: important events, test results, calendars, staff directory, grades, newsletters, bulletins, athletics, boosters, and much more. Parents are encouraged to use Power School and MyBigCampus for grade and assignment information, or call the office where full-time, Spanish-speaking classified staff and counselors will actively provide information to parents. Parents also have the opportunity to connect with the school through IEPs; parent/teacher conferences (SSTs); open house and back to school nights; art, drama, and sporting events; the PTSA and booster clubs, and service clubs that provide opportunities for not only parents, but the community as a whole to be involved in the school. The parents and community have also given the school continuous support in fundraising activities and donations. Students and staff of LRHS, along with other members of the community, took part in creating the Galt Youth Master Plan and the LRHS Single School Plan. Both can be accessed by all stakeholders on the LRHS website.”

Liberty Ranch High School is undergoing its first full accreditation report and visit. The school and its various constituencies express pride in and support for the school. The school states that all stakeholders have a clear vision of the school's mission, purpose and expectations.

The Mission Statement:

“It is our mission at Liberty Ranch High School to provide personalized educational opportunities in a safe, positive learning environment for all students empowering them to reach their full potential as productive, responsible citizens.”

The School's Motto:

- Instilling PRIDE in our Community One HAWK at a time by-
- Promoting
 - Respect,
 - Integrity,
 - Determination, and
 - Excellence

Beliefs and Establishment of the Expected School-wide Learning Results-

“In 2009, Liberty Ranch High School developed its ESLRs. Staff, student, and parent groups established and reviewed these learning results which were posted in every classroom and available on the school website. Up until 2009, ESLRs were included next to each standard in all written course curriculum for the district. With the establishment of LRHS and new ESLRs for each high school, these have been eliminated on the curriculum.

According to comments from our initial WASC review, the teacher, student, and parent groups for this WASC self-study revised the ESLRs in 2011-2012. The groups now believe that the ESLRs are relevant, teachable, learnable, and measurable for each student.”

NEW:

Liberty Ranch High School - Expected School-wide Learning Results

The commitment of Liberty Ranch High School is to promote life-long learning, effective communication, and respect for self and others.

Liberty Ranch High School students are expected to be:

Healthy Individuals who-
Make healthy lifestyle decisions and establish positive relationships with others.

Academic Achievers who-
Demonstrate a mastery of academic standards through critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication.

Well-rounded Citizens who-
Understand global issues, respect diverse cultures, and contribute to the improvement of their school and community.

Knowledgeable Individuals who-
Apply learning and 21st Century skills to their daily lives and future experiences.

Self-motivated Individuals who-
Persevere through challenges and progress towards their short term and long term goals.

Enrollment

The 2011-2012 school year saw the school's first time with 12th graders. The enrollment reached 1145. This year the school reached 1200. The open enrollment policy of the district has helped Liberty Ranch grow while the district has lost more than 100 students over the last 3 years. Ethnic percentages have been quite steady at Liberty Ranch (White population down 2%, Latino up 2%.) Special Ed students have increased significantly while EL's and Migrant Ed students have been stable,

Enrollment in both AVID and AP courses has increased over the last 2 years (In AP in 2012, 189 exams, up from 118 the year before). However, no program has increased like the agriculture program. The school report notes:

“Although we do not have an agriculture academy at LRHS, the agriculture program is thriving by adding new teachers, students, and classes each year. Since our inception, LRHS has grown by approximately 100 students per year to now almost 550! The program not only consists of academic classes during the school day, but also encourages students to be a part of FFA and other outside corresponding activities such as projects and speaking competitions. Ag welding students won the state championship last year, and parli-pro has placed in the state the last two years. We had two students elected to

serve the central region this coming year and five students were selected to lead state committees at the state conference in April. We have received over \$10,000 in outside funding to build a community garden where food will be harvested for the local food bank and LRHS has partnered with the local elementary schools to teach them about agriculture by having them plant seeds and by having a 3rd grade agriculture day.”

The EL/Language Proficiency program at Liberty Ranch is a significant one:

“The information below shows that English Learners made up 3% of the school population, while Fluent English Proficient made up 16% of the total population (885) in 2010/11 In 2011/12, 3.8% was designated English learner while 21% of the total population (1145) were fluent-English proficient. To support its English Learner population, Liberty Ranch High School has an EL coordinator and an ELAC parent group. This parent group meets monthly to discuss action plans for helping the EL students. From 2009-2011, LRHS used the EDGE program in a two hour block to help incoming students with little or no English skills and for students who were testing at least three to four years below grade level. The small class size, as well as a bilingual aide, helped the instructor focus on valuable English language skills. In the spring of 2012, after reviewing grade data for EL students, a one hour study/support class was created to help EL students with classwork and homework from other classes. Currently (2012-2013), because of lack of numbers, there is no EDGE class; however, EL students are still registered for the study/support class. Understanding the need to increase the number of students reaching the level of RFEP and how important it is for their future success, LRHS will be starting an ELD class for all students who have not been RFEPd and are not on the cusp of the redesignation. The focus will be in the two areas where this group has historically struggled: reading comprehension and writing. The plan for this class will be to begin in the 2013/14 school year. Some EL students are also served by the AVID class and by the migrant education program. Currently the migrant education coordinator is on campus one day a week. Special extra-curricular activities supplement the options for EL students, including the Latinos Unidos Club.”

Language Status

Year	English Learner (EL)	Fluent-English-Proficient (FEP)	Re-designated FEP (R-FEP)	Totals
2011-12	44 3.8%	250 21%	na	294
2010-11	43 3%	185 16%	14 1%	242
2009-10	na	na	na	na

Attendance, truancy, suspension and expulsions

Attendance has risen slightly; 2011/2012 figures show 94.8%. Suspensions dropped in the same year to 64 from 77 in 2010/2011; the truancy rate dropped by 9%; however, the school is working to lower the rate to under 30%. A truancy is determined when a student is unexcused or tardy on 3 or more days.

Staff

Liberty Ranch HS currently has 49 credentialed teachers, 2 counselors and 3 administrators plus a number of part time personnel. There are 3 instructional assistants and 1.5 campus supervisors.

The school and district make a notable effort to provide trainings, professional development, and in-service opportunities for staff. Wednesday at early-release for teacher collaboration, and every 5th Wednesday is a minimum

AYP – English and Math Results

English Language Arts (AYP (AMO) at or above proficient)

Groups	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
	% at or above Proficient	% at or above Proficient	% at or above proficient
All Students	55.9	64.8	59
African American*	NA	NA	NA
American Indian or Alaska Native*	NA	NA	NA
Asian*	NA	NA	NA
Filipino*	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic or Latino	39.8	57.5	56.2
Pacific Islander*	NA	NA	NA
White (not Hispanic)	66.1	70.1	60.8
Socio-economically Disadvantaged	41.3	54.4	39.4
English Learners	26.5	39.7	55.1
Students with Disabilities	17	19.4	12

	Met schoolwide AYP criteria	Met schoolwide AYP criteria	Did not meet schoolwide AYP criteria
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Mathematics (AYP at or above proficient)

Groups	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
	% at or above Proficient	% at or above Proficient	% at or above Proficient
All Students	61.7	60.7	59.9
African American*	NA	NA	NA
American Indian or Alaska Native*	NA	NA	NA
White (not Hispanic)	67.8	71.3	65.5
Socio-economically Disadvantaged	56.4	45.6	39.4
English Learners	49	334.5	52.9
Students with Disabilities	5.6	12.5	4
	Met schoolwide AYP Criteria	Did not meet schoolwide AYP Criteria	Did not meet schoolwide AYP Criteria

AYP Participation rate: 100%

*Fewer than 10 students in subgroup

CAHSEE results

California High School Exit Exam scores:

School	Tested or Passing	Subject	All Students	Special Education Students	English Learner (EL) Students	Reclassified Fluent-English Proficient (RFEP) Students	Economically Disadvantaged	Not Economically Disadvantaged
Liberty Ranch High	# Tested	Math	337	31	25	47	143	177
Liberty Ranch High	Passing	Math	296 (88%)	10 (32%)	14 (56%)	41 (87%)	115 (80%)	165 (93%)
Liberty Ranch High	# Tested	ELA	335	30	24	47	142	177
Liberty Ranch High	Passing	ELA	293 (87%)	10 (33%)	14 (58%)	41 (87%)	115 (81%)	164 (93%)

API test results:

Liberty Ranch High School API Growth 2009-2012

Year Category	All Students	Hispanic or Latino	White (Non-Hispanic)	Students With Disabilities	English Language Learners	Socio-Economic Disadv.
2011/12	762	728	780	515	703	695
2010/11	794*	751*	822*	503	708*	740*
2009/10	780	731	811	419	694	730

*Indicates that Growth Target was reached.

Liberty Ranch High School API Score Comparison by Ethnicity

	Student Numbers	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	Change 11 to 12
Schoolwide	886	780	794	762	-32
Black/African American	9	na	na	na	
American Indian	5	na	na	na	
Asian	18	842	861	820	-41
Filipino	4	na	na	na	
Hispanic or Latino	371	731	751	728	-23
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Is.	6	Na	na	na	
White	421	811	822	780	-42
Two or more races	50	773	857	815	-42
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	405	730	740	695	-45
English Learners	165	694	708	703	-5
Students with Disabilities	92	419	503	515	+12

The drop on 2012 from the previous year is troublesome to the school. They identify as the major issue the need to establish a stronger academic climate throughout the school-community. The expectations of students are not high; there appears to be a high priority for “raising the bar” and increasing student awareness for academic improvement/achievement.

All subgroups declined in 2012, Whites, Asians and SED students all by more than 40 points. Latinos dropped half as much and EL the least at 5 points. This is particularly disconcerting as the scores in 2011 showed a school on the brink of high achievement.

The school also reports:

“In our first year of testing (2010) with just sophomores and freshmen, we established a base API score of 780. We were proud of this score, but also wary of testing the next year, because our juniors at the previous school had historically the lowest test scores. LRHS worked diligently to prepare students for the tests in 2011 and were excited to raise our API score 14 points to 794. We also met all the targets for each significant subgroup in 2011. In 2012, we were disappointed to find that our 2012 score dropped 32 points from 794 to 762. In light of this decline, in 2012, LRHS did not meet the targets for any major subgroup.

Although LRHS scores decreased significantly, there are still some positive aspects of our test results. Looking at the API scores of our two significant ethnic groups (white and Hispanic/Latino), the whites scored 780 while the Hispanic/Latinos scored 728. Although both scores need to improve, the Hispanic/Latino students scored higher than the state average of 700. Even the students who are classified as EL scored 703 for their base API which is higher than the state average for all Hispanics/Latinos.”

CST history - overall

2010-2012

CST ELA	2010		2011		2012	
	White	Hispanic	White	Hispanic	White	Hispanic
Grade 9						
Students Tested	158	126	139	128	127	110
% of Enrollment	45.7%	36.4%	43.6%	40.1%	41.1%	35.6%
Mean Scale Score	381.6	365	382.8	368.3	390.9	368.3
% Proficient & Above	74%	64%	73%	66%	75%	66%
Grade 10						
Students Tested	118	96	157	126	140	119
% of Enrollment	49.8%	40.5%	46.6%	37.4%	45.8%	38.9%
Mean Scale Score	354.7	332.4	368.4	347	351.4	345.2
% Proficient & Above	60%	40%	68%	48%	56%	51%
Grade 11						
Students Tested			104	81	144	113
% of Enrollment			48.8%	38%	47.1%	36.9%
Mean Scale Score			371.2	348.2	359.2	347.1
% Proficient & Above			62%	51%	64%	46%

LRHS CST Course History for Percentage of Students Proficient and Advanced.

*Students tested separated by year: 2010/2011/2012

Course	Students Tested*	2010	2011	2012
English 9	321/253/276	70	58	72
English 10	234/201/280	52	49	56
English 11	Na/215/286	na	50	57

General Mathematics Gr.9	31/20/30	16	0	3
Algebra 1 Gr. 9	205/180/176	24	20	26
Algebra 1 Gr. 10	54/51/61	7	4	2
Algebra 1 Gr. 11	Na/11/20	Na	9	0
Geometry Gr. 9	77/51/75	35	51	59
Geometry Gr. 10	96/99/148	8	11	12
Geometry Gr. 11	Na/57/61	Na	9	13
Algebra 2 Gr. 9	29/14/23	76	58	87
Algebra 2 Gr. 10	50/32/48	46	37	37
Algebra 2 Gr. 11	Na/58/94	Na	17	11
Summative Gr. 10	17/13/19	100	61	73
Summative Gr. 11	Na/42/83	Na	38	51

From the school's report on CST testing results:

“Our ELA scores for students scoring proficient or advanced in English 9, 10, and 11 were higher in 2012 than they were in both 2010 and 2011. Although the scores took a drop in 2011, they rebounded in 2012. In English 9 the percentages went from 70% to 58% to 72%. In English 10 the percentages went from 52% to 49% to 56%. In English 11 percentages improved from 50% in 2011 to 57% in 2012. Our significant cause of concern is following the same group of students from their freshman scores to their junior scores. In 2010 70% of the freshmen scored proficient and advanced. The scores for the same group of students in 2011 as sophomores were only 49% proficient and advanced. The students improved slightly as juniors in 2012 to 57% proficient and advanced. The mean scale of ELA 9th and 10th grade also improved each year from 9th grade 374.7 to 381.3 and 10th grade 346.2 to 351.3. In 11th grade the mean score dipped slightly from 362.1 to 355.5. A positive improvement in 2012 is that the 31 ELA students with disabilities taking the ELA CMA went up 22 points from 303 to 325.

LRHS has two major ethnicity subgroups: White (48%) and Hispanic/Latino (42%). LRHS has been committed to closing the achievement gap between the white and Hispanic/Latino students. In ELA 9, the Hispanic students scored between 7% and 10% lower than the white students with the most current result being only a 9% difference when analyzing the data for proficient and advanced students. Both groups remained steady or rose by 1 or 2 % from 2010-2012. In ELA 10, the Hispanic/ Latino proficient and advanced students rose from 40% to 51% while the white students dropped significantly from 68% to 56% between 2011 and 2012. Although this is closing the achievement gap to a 5% difference, LRHS recognizes that both groups need to advance for this effort to be successful. In ELA 11, the achievement gap difference was 11% in 2011 and 18% in 2012.”

Social Science Summary

A positive aspect of our scores is the social science improvement in proficiency the last three years. In world history, 48% in 2010, 49% in 2011, and 55% in 2012 scored proficient and advanced. In US history, 44% in 2011 and 60% in 2012 scored proficient and advanced. These are marked improvements in this category. The improvement continues in closing the achievement gap in world history. The number for advanced and proficient in 2010 and 2011 for Hispanic/Latinos was 15% and 17% lower than whites. However, in 2012 that gap had been reduced to 5 % with the Hispanic/Latino students steadily increasing and the white students only dropping slightly. In US history, the achievement gap holds at around 10%. In world history there is continued improvement in the mean score from 347 in 2010 to 355.3 in 2012; yet in US history there is a noticeable decline from 2011-2012 of 27 points from 388.9 to 361.5.

Focusing on the achievement gap, in world history for 2010/11/12, the white students maintained around 55% proficient. The Hispanic/Latino students made a significant increase from 39% to 50% in two years to close the gap to 5%. In US history, the gap remained about 10% in both 2011 and 2012.

Mathematics Summary

In some areas of math, we also continue to improve. Almost all courses increased in 2012 except for the Algebra I repeater courses and the juniors and seniors taking Algebra. At those levels, the positive aspects were that the numbers of repeaters dropped, but for those that remained, very few scored proficient or advanced. Once again our 9th grade students raised their scores in Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II. However, in 9th with the majority of the students taking Algebra I, our proficient and advanced percentage was only 26%. The 9th grade students in the upper levels of geometry scored incredible increases from 35% in 2010 to 59% in 2012 and in Algebra II, they moved from 76% to 87%. In 10th grade, the majority of the students took geometry. Although the numbers of proficient and advanced did increase slightly from 8% to 13%, these numbers are still very low. In Algebra II Grade 10 held steady at 37% while the students taking summative math in grade 10 improved from 61% to 73%. Students taking Algebra I, geometry, and Algebra II as juniors proficiency rates rose from 0% to 13%. Those 11th grade students in summative math increased their percentages from 38% to 51%.

Focusing on the achievement gap for the major tests that the majority of our students completed, the Algebra I students in 9th grade had a gap of 4% in 2011 which increased to 10% in 2012. Tenth grade students had a very low proficiency rate in Algebra I with whites dropping from 20% in 2011 to 3% in 2012 with 0% Hispanic/Latino students scoring proficient. In geometry, the 9th grade achievement gap was over 30% while the 10th grade was at 4%. In 11th grade, the Hispanic/Latino students scored 5% above the white students. In Algebra II the 10th grade Hispanic/Latino students scored 9% higher in 2012 increasing their proficiency rate from 29% to 40%. The scores in 11th grade for 2012 had a gap of 5% with the whites scoring 14%, a 10% drop from the year before, and the Hispanic/Latino scoring 9% with only a 1% drop from 2011.”

Student Surveys

The overall view of students is positive, with 84.7% indicating that they are satisfied with their overall experience at Liberty Ranch HS. Nine hundred fifty five student took an online survey in their English classes. Then all Focus Groups discussed the results. This resulted in some significant pieces of information.

The highest positive scores were regarding safety on campus and student-teacher relations and the student's overall view of teachers. They think administrators are fair (80+%). They feel safe, respected and that their academic goals are being addressed. They also have a positive view of each other.

Their lowest scores related to their own behavior, especially lack of motivation and effort of some students' part. 43% felt that they would benefit from more challenging courses.

Staff Surveys

All staff – 85 in all – took the survey. The dichotomy often seen in surveys “showed up big-time” here. Ninety-one % indicated that the campus is safe and orderly. Twenty-six% believe that they need more security; this was the areas of greatest need, as the 91% on “safe and orderly” was the highest in the positive area.

The staff also indicated strong support for and appreciation for each other. Ninety-three% think that staff are making an effort into making sure students learn. The lowest score - 26% - believe that administrators do not support all programs equally.

Among teachers themselves 91% felt that they and their colleagues were passionate about teaching; their lowest score – 55% - indicated that they overwhelmed with responsibilities and 50% felt frustrated and unappreciated in their job.

The areas of greatest need are: 1. technology – 87% (no further explanation)

2. class choices for students – 86%

3. department budgets – 76%

Parent Surveys

There were 91 completed surveys, which were given in both English and Spanish online. The biggest plus is that 87% are satisfied with their child's overall experience. 94% believe that Liberty Ranch is safe and orderly; 95% think it is clean and 97% believe that most students demonstrate pride in their school.

In addition 95% think that the teachers are knowledgeable, and 93% believe that administrators are visible on campus. The lowest number is that “only” 70% feel that there is adequate information about events at school.

Student Group Question Results:

Two different student groups met to answer a variety of questions about LRHS. The leadership class represented one group of 40 students. The other group was composed of random students from 9-12 with a variety of genders, ethnicities, and average grades. A summary is noted below:

Question #1: What are some good or positive things about LRHS?

Awesome sports	Cheer section is great
Principal cares about students	Very supportive staff
Teachers spend extra hours and are nice	We represent a community
Smart kids	Different cliques get along
So many clubs to choose from	Great AP program
Leadership is awesome	Art and music programs are great
Rallies are awesome	

Question #2: What are some areas of improvement for LRHS?

More bathrooms	Expand Science with AP
Focus on all sports (boys and girls)	Better class choices
Need lunch trays back expectations in AP	Better communication on

Teachers need to improve on classroom management:

24 believe 5% should improve; 4 believe 10% should improve; 9 believe 15% should improve

Teachers need to improve on teaching style:

20 people believe at least one of their teachers needs to improve

The groups discussed a number of key items, especially focused on improving student performance on tests.

Chapter II: Student/Community Profile - Overall Summary from Analysis of Profile Data

(The entire chapter is presented below)

“A comprehensive analysis of all pertinent Liberty Ranch High School data is summarized below in Areas of Strength and Areas of Need:

Areas of Strength:

- Attendance—LRHS’s ADA rate is consistently high at 94.8% in 2011/12
- Suspensions and truancies dropped 9%.
- Passing Rate for the 10th grade students on the CAHSEE compared favorably to the county and state passing rates
- Advanced Placement, AVID, and agriculture course enrollment has increased. More students are also taking the advanced placement tests
- Above the state average in overall ELA and Math scores for the CSTs
- Hispanic/Latino students scoring higher than the state average in the CSTs and raising their overall scores in certain areas to close some of the achievement gap.
- Increase in the students with disabilities CST scores (12 pts)
- Staff is fully credentialed, knowledgeable, and passionate about teaching and students.
- Parent/Teacher/Staff Surveys and meetings: Overall impression of the environment, administrators, staff, and school is very favorable.
- According to the surveys, the majority of stakeholders feel LRHS is safe and orderly.
- According to surveys, most parents are using Power School to track academics for students.
- Students, parents, and staff have pride in LRHS.

Areas of Critical Academic Need:

- LRHS’s API score decreased by 32 points with the biggest decrease in our white students, a drop of 42 points. There is an ever pressing need to instill a culture of academic success for these students.
- While 9th grade ELA scores continue to rise, as we follow the same group of students over two years, there is a dramatic drop between 9th and 10th grade scores.
- The scores for advanced and proficient students in 9th grade Algebra I and 10th grade geometry have low percentages; Algebra I (26%), geometry (13%).
- There was a significant drop in 10th grade biology (-23%) and 10th grade chemistry (31%)
- According to the stakeholders’ surveys, class choice and college and career readiness are somewhat of a problem at LRHS.
- Decrease achievement gap between the White and Hispanic/Latino subgroup.

The following questions have been raised from the data analysis and related to the Critical Academic needs:

1. What can we do to motivate all our students to increase test scores, especially faced with the 2011/12 decrease in the white subgroup?
2. What is causing our sophomore ELA students to do so poorly when their scores are significantly higher their freshmen year?
3. How can we continue our success so the Hispanic/Latino students continue scoring above the state average and closing the achievement gap?
4. What other teaching strategies, programs, or remediation can we provide for our Algebra I and geometry students to help them be successful?
5. What other teaching strategies, programs or remediation can we provide for our biology and chemistry students to help them be successful?
6. We are offering many different programs at the 9th grade level (PASSAGES, Link Crew) to help students succeed; yet, our 10th grade scores in most subjects seem to be decreasing the most. What kind of programs can we offer to our sophomores to help motivate them academically?"

Chapter III - Progress Report - Progress Report Update from the Initial WASC Visitation

School wide Areas of Strength:

- The Administration and Staff for their excitement and energy in the creation of an academic culture that pursues innovative approaches to instruction.
 - The Administration and Staff for establishing 9th grade “houses” and incorporating such programs as Breaking Down the Walls, to meet the both the academic and social needs of a diverse student population.
 - The Administration and Staff for their ongoing endeavor to welcome students and parents, i.e. Student Orientation Day, Building Bridges.
4. An effective technology infrastructure that supports instructional strategies and facilitates communication between staff and community.

Critical Areas for Follow-up-From the Initial WASC visitation:

1. Establishing a clear distinction between Mission and Vision.
2. The ongoing development of an Action Plan/Single Student Plan that addresses the connection between ESLRs, the standards, and instruction.
3. Continuing to develop a systematic process to support struggling students both academically and socially.

April 2013 update: Liberty Ranch High School is currently experiencing its first full *FonL* self-study. The three areas above were the only areas indicated for growth in the Initial Visit, in 2009 The present VC believes that the school has done a good job on all 3 areas. Numbers 1 and 2 are thorough and well-done. Number 3, while being an on-going area, has been addressed rather successfully, and is continuing to be a focus for the school.

Chapter IV – Quality of the School’s Program - **Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership and Staff, & Resources**

A-1: To what extent does the school have a clearly stated vision or purpose based on its student needs, current educational research and the belief that all students can achieve at high academic levels?

To what extent is the school’s purpose supported by the governing board and the central administration, and further defined by expected school wide learning results and the academic standards?

Liberty Ranch High School has a well-defined stated vision and purpose based on its student’s needs. The guiding principles are further in the expected school wide learning results (ESLRs) and the school beliefs. Through a process of collaboration among several stakeholders, (staff, students and parents) the school has modified its original ESLRs and redefined them to meet their needs. The school slogan is: Liberty Ranch High School Instilling PRID in our community ONE HAWK at a time by promoting Respect, Integrity, Determination and Excellence. HAWKS is a representation of the main elements for their ESLRs: Healthy Individual, Academic Achievers, Well Rounded Citizens, Knowledgeable Individuals, and Self-Motivated Individuals. The ESLRs are coupled to its mission statements to encourage their students to high academic achievement and personal standards.

The District has a clear vision statement:

“The mission of the Galt Joint Union High School District is to ensure that each student graduates, achieves his/her goals and becomes contributing members of society through effective personalized educational programs and facilities in partnership with family and community.”

The district’s mission statement is further supported by the Liberty High School Beliefs:

- We believe that family and community are the foundation for the future.
- We believe that each individual is responsible and accountable for his/her own choices.
- We believe that each person is unique and has inherent worth.
- We believe that positive attitudes and positive actions foster positive results.
- We believe that an understanding of cultural diversity enriches our community.

A-2: To what extent does the governing board have policies and bylaws that are aligned with the school’s purpose and support the achievement of the expected school wide learning results and academic standards based on data-driven instructional decisions for the school?

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

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

The governing board of the Galt Unified High School District has policies and bylaws that are affiliated with the Liberty Ranch High School commitment of serving its students' needs and supports the achievement of the ESLRs and academic standards. The board provides flexibility to the site to create committees in different areas to monitor and provide guidance to the site. Among the different committees that are in place include The Leadership Team, School Site Council, ELAC, and Budgeting. In addition, the school has site representation at the District Committees: Technology, Curriculum, and Strategic Plan.

The school has embraced the process in place and developed a systematic way to include all stakeholders in the decision making process. The flow of information as a result of the site and district committees' outcomes is communicated back and forth. This allows for a uniform adherence to policies and expectations.

A-3: To what extent based on student achievement data, does the school leadership and staff make decisions and initiate activities that focus on all students achieving the expected school wide learning results and the academic standards?

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

The School Site Council is represented by staff member, students and parents. The Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) was developed the first year the school opened and it has evolved as the plan is revised every year. The plan adopted by the School Site Council and the Board of Trustees adopts it on an annual basis.

Liberty high school planning process is collaborative and has a commitment to include all stake holders in the process. Through a collaborative process, the staff disseminates data from multiple assessments including CST/STAR, CELDT, CAHSEE, and Benchmarks. They use their finding to identify areas of need then tailor their instruction to meet the needs of their students.

The articulation meetings during common planning also allows for teacher planning common pacing guides while aligning with the state standards.

Through the communication among the leadership team and the staff, they have been able to identified areas of concern and have address them by implementing effective teaching strategies. There is a need for implementing a systemic process in which the administration would visit classrooms consistently and provide specific feedback to the staff in the implementation of the effective teaching strategies they have identified in their staff development trainings and in the staff development that occurs during staff meetings.

The school has implemented two new programs, Link Crew and Passage. The link Crew program allows incoming freshmen to get acclimated to the site. A selected group of upper classmates work as guides to orient student and make them feel comfortable. The passage program focuses on those ninth grade students who have struggles. These students are high risk students who received specific support and strategies to help them be successful in school.

In our students interviews it was evident that student felt the link Crew program was very effective.

A-4: To what extent does a qualified staff facilitate achievement of the academic standards and the expected school-wide learning results through a system of preparation, induction, and ongoing professional development?

All staff members at the site either have a CLAD or BCLAD certification. The teaching staff received professional development from experienced staff members. Most recently, the staff has increased their effort in utilizing effective teaching strategies. A number of staff member have received training through BTSA, PAR, AVID. Most staff members also received staff development during their weekly collaboration meetings.

During the classroom visitations, it was noticed that some of the staff members are not consistent in the listing or posting their objectives and student engagement strategies; nearly all communicate their objectives/goals in some manner.

A-5: To what extent are leadership and staff involved in ongoing research or data-based correlated professional development that focuses on identified student learning needs?

One hundred percent of the teaching staff is CLAD or BCLAD credentialed. The school site supports professional development for all staff member to facilitate student achievement in the area of academic standards and the expected school wide learning results. Twenty eight of the teaching staff has and four administrators have received on elements of effective teaching by Dr. Ernie Stokowski. Furthermore, the four administrators received training on Focus Walks. Which include the following features: Objective, Anticipatory set, Tell of Objective, Purpose, Input, Model, Check for Understanding, Guided practice, and Closure. The administration perform walkthous and provide feedback to the staff to finetune their instrucion to meet the needs of the students. Futhermore, sonme staff members have received taining in theories of the International Center for Leadershp in Education. The taining is focucs in the Rigor and Relevance Framework which concentrates in addressing the Common Core Standards. Othe staff development consited of AVID taring,

Every week the school has early release. For approximately the teaching staff meets to collaborate and better meet the needs of the students. The different disciplines at the site, review students testing data and use the information gathered to “better align curriculum and instruction in order to reach desired outcomes.” The data comes from multiple assessments: STAR/CST, CAHSEE, CELDT, Benchmarks. Though this process the core subject and the Agriculture department engage in meaningful work to address the needs of their students.

A-6: To what extent are the human, material, physical, and financial resources sufficient and utilized effectively and appropriately in accordance with the legal intent of the program(s) to support students in accomplishing the academic standards and the expected school-wide learning results?

Through the discussions with leadership and staff it is evident there is a sound relationship between the decision making on allocating different resources (human, materials, financial, and physical) and the school's vision and purpose and the achieving of the expected school wide learning results. The school has established a systemic approach on how to allocate and spend funds. The whole staff has a say on how the funds will be spent.

The school is relatively new and the grounds are well kept. Based on the interviews with staff, students, and observations, Liberty Ranch High School is a safe and inviting school. The students speak highly of their teachers and feel appreciative to have a caring staff. The school has sound technology in place such as LCD projectors in every classroom, two computer labs, state of the art equipment in the Agriculture department and Woodshop Department. The school is a very clean and well maintained. There is no clear evidence of a plan for addressing the needs of the English Language Learners populations in the mainstream classes.

Strengths:

- **All departments in common curriculum areas work in collaborative groups.**
- **The administration has an open door policy for their students and staff. Teachers as well as students feel they have a voice at Liberty Ranch High School**
- **The Liberty High School staff has done an outstanding job in building relationships with their student.**
- **The school site uses an inclusive approach to allocate and spend funds.**

Areas of Growth:

- **Develop and implement a systematic approach to monitoring instruction and providing feedback to the teaching staff on a consistent basis.**
- **Develop and implement a systematic approach to address the specific needs of the English Language Learners population in the mainstream classes.**
- **Develop, communicate and implement a school-wide professional development plan**

Chapter IVB - STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: CURRICULUM

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

Liberty Ranch staff provides state and District aligned standards-based curriculum within each department. Voluntary and required collaboration occurs among teachers within grade level subjects and departments. The collaboration takes place weekly. There is a variety of technologies used within classrooms including Power Points, clicker assessments, and various software programs.

At-risk 9th graders are placed with common math, science, and English (PASSAGES) teachers with a support class. The AVID program supports students staying on track in high school and preparing them for a four-year college. Special Education students receive access to smaller core classes that are standards based. In the current school year special education staff and general education staff have implemented a team teaching program for some courses.

Liberty Ranch offers non-college prep classes, college prep, advanced placement, and special education classes. Teachers are following pacing guides and implementing district and site common assessments. Data analysis from benchmark exams is used to adjust curriculum and re-teach as necessary.

B2: to what extent do all students have access to the school's entire program and assistance with personal learning plan to prepare them for the pursuit of their academic, personal, and career goals?

There are multiple opportunities, provided by counseling and administration, for students and parents to work with staff to prepare students for academic, personal, and school-to-career goals. ROP, Work Experience, AVID, and the Technology and Agriculture Departments prepare students for careers and/or college studies. After school tutoring, *Link Crew*, IEPs, 504s, and academic and personal counseling assist students with learning and help prepare them for the future.

B3: To what extent are students able to meet all the requirements of graduation upon completion of high school programs?

Students are offered numerous avenues to support them in student success and graduation from Liberty Ranch. Migrant Education implements the PASS program for students to earn additional credits. AVID prepares students for a four-year college. Advanced Academics is a credit recovery system that can be taken during the school year. Summer school allows students stay on graduation tract and make room for electives in their

schedule. A variety of programs offer students a chance to interface with their community.

The district has been conscientious about providing Common Core professional development. The VC would encourage the district to continue this support as the new standards are implemented.

Strengths:

- **Common Assessments in all core classes**
- **Summer School courses allow students to remain on pace to graduate and to make room in their schedule for electives**
- **Real world experiences in classrooms**

Areas of Growth:

- **Implement specific teaching strategies for English Language Learners across disciplines.**
- **Identify and implement systematic support programs for the “at risk” and SED students across grade levels.**

CHAPTER IV.C - Instruction

CI: To what extent are all students involved in challenging learning experiences to achieve the academic standards and the expected school-wide learning results?

Based on the student survey taken by the student body, students have a strong understanding of the academic learning expectations and the expected school-wide learning results. Discussions with student groups validate the expectations at the school with the understanding of how their work will be assessed for each individual subject.

Learning Objectives are posted and addressed at the beginning of each class period and (ESLRs) are posted in every classroom. To assist with the understanding of the (ESLRs), presentations are made in each classroom and a wallet card containing (ESLRs) are given to every student. Rubrics are used throughout the curriculum. All teachers, staff, and community members use common rubrics for all projects where appropriate. The students know beforehand the standards / expected performance levels for each area of study.

Students meet with counselors each year to update their 4-year plan, assist with scheduling and review graduation requirements. The 4-year plan includes plans after high school and the courses they need would need to take to move on to a college they so desire.

Students may challenge themselves by taking a wide variety of elective and AP courses. Counselors and teachers encourage students to challenge themselves, which led to 97.5% of seniors successfully meeting or exceeding graduation requirements.

Differentiated instruction is facilitated by discipline and grade level. The school's instructional staff members differentiate instruction and evaluate its impact on student learning. Honors classes are offered throughout the levels and AP classes start at the sophomore level. Benchmarks in the core classes differentiate instruction within group works as well as individually and provide for different types of assessment strategies.

C2: To what extent do all teachers use a variety of strategies and resources, including technology and experience beyond the textbook and the classroom, that actively engage students, emphasize higher order thinking skills, and help them succeed at high levels?

Some of the teaching strategies Liberty Ranch High School has implemented includes Socratic seminars, creating their own Greek plays, using graphing calculators, creating brochures, mobiles, and conducting debates and trials in social science. In most classes, varied assessments are used such as projects, notebooks, essays and research projects.

Peer observations by teachers allow teachers to observe and collaborate with others about best practices and what works best for kids. Staff on campus also works in extra-curricular roles to facilitate learning for all students. There are many on-campus sport coaches, class and club advisors, and those that provide supervision for students.

Students are able to take advantage of many extra-curricular activities and real world experiences provided for them through academic classes and clubs. Examples are simulations in social studies, working in the student store, producing the yearbook, newspaper, and *Hawk TV*.

Liberty Ranch also instills real world experiences through the recycling club and energy class. The art club has worked with younger students at the bird festival and is working to create murals for campus.

Students with an interest in architecture, construction, and engineering can participate in the ACE Mentor Club and compete in bringing home awards and scholarships as evidenced over the last for years.

Strengths:

- **High level of student engagement**
- **Teachers and students have an excellent rapport across disciplines**
- **Collaboration among teachers within departments**

Areas of Growth:

- **Need for technology training**
- **Need for computer access for all students**
- **Implementation of the Common Core**
- **An expressed need of teachers for interdisciplinary, cross-curricular collaboration.**

Chapter IV.D - Standards-based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability

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

Liberty Ranch High School uses a wide variety of professionally acceptable assessment tools to understand and report upon student performance to students, parents, community members as well as to other teachers. Multiple classroom assessments such as, "...interactive and cooperative activities, problem-based learning projects, hands-on projects, multiple choice tests, research reports, oral presentations, essay and open-ended exams, and standardized subject-matter benchmark and formative assessments" are used to report student progress. The results of these assessments can be seen on the online grading program, PowerSchool, as well as in eight yearly grade notices, of which the semester grade notices are mailed home.

Liberty Ranch also measures student performance through all mandatory standardized testing, as well as additional non-mandatory standardized tests such as Advanced Placement exams and the PLAN test, given to all sophomores. The results of these standardized tests are also shared with parents (mailed home) and discussed with the larger community through various parent organizations such as the School Site Council, PTSA, and ELAC. Additionally, Teachers have access to all assessment data through SchoolNet and the faculty seems committed to collaborating and using assessment data to improve student learning.

D2: To what extent do teachers employ a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate students learning? To what extent do students and teachers use assessment results to enhance the educational progress of every student?

As mentioned previously in section D1, teachers use a wide array of assessment strategies to evaluate student learning. It is additionally interesting to note that Liberty Ranch also has some district wide common assessments that are implemented in core classes. Once students have been assessed, the teachers and school staff use the results to help every student progress. Specifically, some teachers use assessment results to identify students for additional tutoring programs where they will be retested on specific learning objectives. School counselors use assessment feedback to help students understand how they are placed into classes, possible student inclusion into special preprograms like PASSAGE, individual student progress toward graduation, and post-secondary options, among other things. Furthermore, assessment results are used in Student Support Team goals, IEPs, and 504 plans.

D3: To what extent does the school with the support of the district and community have an assessment and monitoring system to determine student progress toward achievement of the academic standards and the expected school-wide learning results?

The major monitoring systems that are in place at Liberty Ranch High School seem to be the grade marking periods, of which there are eight per academic year and the online grading programs that are used by faculty, staff, students and parents of Liberty Ranch. Additionally, standardized tests results and grade print-outs are mailed home and phone calls, emails, parent-teacher conferences, and student awards activities monitor student academic progress. Another interesting monitoring system in place at Liberty Ranch involves the School Site Council in creating Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA). Student interaction with the expected school-wide learning results is monitored by teachers individually within each classroom.

D4: To what extent does the assessment of student achievement in relation to the academic standards and the expected school-wide learning results drive the school's program its regular evaluation and improvement and usage of resources?

The Liberty Ranch report cites many instances when teachers collaborate and discuss student assessment and how it can be used to influence improvements within the school. Not only do teachers work together and review assessment data in order to, “identify areas of strength, and to identify areas for reteaching” but the faculty as a whole in conjunction with the administration formally work to analyze assessment data in order to refine assessments and improve upon teaching strategies. Another interesting improvement to the school came about after reviewing the decrease in API score between the 2010/11 and 2011/12 school years. A new testing schedule will be implemented in the 2013/2014 school year that will have the CST test administered over a four week period as well as having student take the test with some of their own core subject teaches. Liberty Ranch hopes this new schedule will increase student motivation while decreasing student anxiety and result in raising the API score in the future.

Areas of Strengths:

- **Effective distribution of assessments**
- **According to parent survey 91% of parents use *PowerSchool* to track grades**
- **Common Benchmarks for core subjects**
- **Use of data to lead discussions at faculty meetings and collaborations**
- **Safe collaboration among teachers when sharing data**

Key Areas for Growth:

- **More time to analyze data/more training on the new data system**
- **Work on providing more motivation and incentives to students taking standardized tests**
- **Increase in API score and increase in all subgroups**
- **More across discipline - site collaboration**

CHAPTER IV.E - SCHOOL CULTURE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

E1. School Culture and Student Support Criterion

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

Liberty Ranch High School encourages and invites parent involvement before students enroll as 9th graders by hosting an 8th grade parent night. The 8th grade parent night allows incoming students and parents an opportunity to learn about the school, classes offered, programs available and a general introduction to the school environment. Parents of 9th graders are also invited back on the first day school reopens in August for a parent and student orientation where they are given more information about LRHS campus.

All parents are welcomed to LRHS campus for Back-to-School Night which includes a training on *Power School* and *My Big Campus*, both programs used widely by teachers and staff to share information about students' performance and grades as well as general school information. Parents are also welcomed back to campus in the spring for an annual Open House.

LRHS families and community members are invited to many celebrations at Liberty Ranch to celebrate student achievements. These include a school-wide Senior Awards Night and also department awards banquets for Athletics, Drama, Band, National Honors Society and FFA. All are also welcome to attend Honor Roll Assemblies at the beginning of each semester. Other great opportunities for parent and community involvement are Homecoming Week events, the Steak and Oyster Dinner and the Tractor Pull hosted by the Ag Boosters. Booster Clubs on campus that thrive on parent involvement are Ag Boosters as well as the Band Booster Club (GLUE), Drama Boosters and Athletic Boosters.

Liberty Ranch High School also makes use of school-wide mailings, phone dialers to student homes and the daily bulletin to relay information to parents. Liberty Ranch has Spanish speaking staff members who can assist the Spanish speaking parent population who visit school or call with questions. The website also has a translation tool to translate all information into any language needed by a parent or community member.

Liberty Ranch HS Students have many opportunities to connect to community organizations through involvement in curricular and extra-curricular programs including FFA, CSF, NGS, SWAP, LHS. Students have opportunities to work with community members and groups for fundraisers, blood drives, food drives, community service, county and state competitions and many ag-based projects including collaboration with local elementary schools to promote agriculture. The ag-department also works on a community garden which donates food to local charity. The floriculture class also has extensive interaction with the community through floral projects they propose to and complete for community members. Finally, community members are regularly invited to

be part of the Senior Project grading teams where seniors get to showcase their culminating high school projects.

E2. School Culture and Student Support Criterion

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

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

Students, parents and staff all report favorably about the safety of Liberty Ranch HS campus after being surveyed. 95% of parents surveyed report that LRHS is a safe environment and 94% report that it is clean. 90% of students surveyed report positively on feeling safe and secure while on campus. Campus safety is ensured by two full-time security officers, administrators who provide supervision before and between classes as well as teachers who receive regular training on student, campus and community safety. Staff development has included hot topics such as gang prevention, health issues and classroom/campus safety in case of fire, earthquake or intruder. Visitors are expected to check in upon arrival to campus and LRHS students, when out of class, carry passes so it is obvious they have a teacher's permission.

Liberty Ranch campus is clean and well cared for by a dedicated custodial staff. As a new school, Liberty Ranch is lucky to have classrooms and facilities that are up to date and well cared for. Students are encouraged to pick up after themselves and are expected to treat facilities with respect. The custodial staff works hard to keep the campus clean and inviting during school hours as well as at countless extra-curricular on-campus events. The custodial staff at Liberty Ranch demonstrates professionalism and dedication that makes a positive impact on the campus climate and atmosphere and is appreciated by students and staff.

Liberty Ranch staff WASC self-study groups collaborated on its mission statement which reinforces the importance of a safe campus with an atmosphere of trust and respect:

“It is our mission at Liberty Ranch High School to provide personalized educational opportunities in a safe, positive learning environment for all students empowering them to reach their full potential as productive, responsible citizens.”

They plan to measure whether they have achieved a “safe, positive environment” using data on disciplinary issues, fighting, suspensions, expulsions, SSTs and parent conferences. The students have also participated in a variety of presentations and projects that promote safety and respect including *Breaking Down the Walls*, *Rachel's Challenge*, *Every 15 Minutes* and an Elk Grove PD Distracted Driving Presentation (anti-texting).

Teachers and administrators meet regularly at LRHS for collaboration and staff development. Staff works together during common planning time to share best teaching

practices and use data from common benchmarks to guide teaching. Teachers share concern for their students' learning and success.

High expectations and concern for students is also evident by regular communication with parents. Administrators at LRHS encourage parent contact as an opportunity to share these expectations and/or concerns. Students in need of off campus programs have Home Instruction or Independent Study available to them. Teachers stay involved to make sure that students have the same opportunities to learn as those on campus. Staff involvement in SST, 504 and IEP meetings is also evidence of staff concern for students who are struggling during high school. Students in need of extra support who are struggling academically, socially or mentally meet with their counselors and teachers to develop strategies that will lead to their success at Liberty Ranch High school.

Students, teachers and staff overwhelmingly agree that there is a strong sense of family and support on campus. Students repeatedly report that they know their teachers care about them and want them to succeed. Teachers are available to students at a variety of times and in a variety of ways to support their academic, mental and social success. The words family, safety, security, support and caring were used to describe the LRHS environment and staff.

The classified staff at Liberty Ranch High School is another example of professionalism and respect on campus. The front office staff works the front lines greeting visiting parents and community members and handle this responsibility with great success and positive feedback from the staff and community. Campus-wide, the LRHS classified staff is a group of caring and dedicated professionals who are essential to the sense of community and family on campus and are committed to student safety and success.

E3. School Culture and Student Support Criterion

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

Means of student support at Liberty Ranch High School are varied and individualized and meet the needs of students on campus. When students struggle academically, they are referred to SSTs which meet to assess a student's strengths and weaknesses and come up with a strategy to address those weaknesses. 504s and IEPs also address the needs of individual students who are not being successful in high school for one reason or another.

The guidance department at Liberty Ranch begins meeting with LRHS students during their 8th grade year. These incoming freshmen are also welcomed by Link Crew which is a small group orientation that allows older students to act as mentors to the freshmen. Freshmen who are considered at-risk in English and Math receive additional support from the PASSAGE Program which provides these students with an additional support period to help them succeed in their freshmen classes. Link Crew leaders also connect with freshmen through the PASSAGE support period and lead lessons about responsibility and character.

Liberty Ranch HS also promotes parent involvement as an essential support to high school students. The staff continuously strives throughout the year to encourage parents

to be a part of their student's education and to supplement support services provided by counselors, health workers, teachers and the school psychologist. A counselor from the community program, Strategies for Change is also available to students one day a week for drug and alcohol counseling.

Each student at Liberty Ranch meets one-on-one at least annually with their counselor to review their academic record and to choose classes for the upcoming school year. During these meetings counselors can help students enroll in AP/Honors classes, in particular programs that interest them and in recovery programs if a student is deficient in credits. *Advanced Academics* is an online credit recovery program available to LRHS students. To make up credits, students can also enroll in Adult School or Summer School. Counselors also advise students on career pathways based on the *Naviance* personality and career interest survey that 9th graders take. These career components to LRHS classes help students to make relevant and meaningful connections between the curriculum in their classes and their future interests and career goals.

Whether students are best served through AVID, AP classes, the Ag Department, performing arts classes, Special Education, Migrant Education, EL classes, Summer School, or one of many other programs on campus, the master schedule is designed to "offer the most selection to the most students".

The Special Education teachers began team-teaching in regular education classrooms to support Special Education students in mainstream classes. The Migrant Education program also offers strong support to its students, with an on site advisor one day per week and also access to adult tutoring and computers. The ELAC parent group is a means of support for EL students that is supported by the LRHS administrative team who acknowledges that involvement of EL parents leads to increased success of EL students. A study skills class is also available to EL students to help build and support organizational skills and effective study habits.

Liberty Ranch also offers an after school tutoring program in Math and English, but that is an opportunity for all students to receive tutoring or have a quiet place to make up a test or complete homework in any subject. The AVID program is another option for students who need additional support during high school to achieve their goal of attending a four year university. The AVID program offers lunchtime tutoring to students on campus. The library and computer lab on campus are open during scheduled times for student use throughout the year. Textbooks are checked out to all students to take home or available online.

The center of student support at LRHS is a strong guidance department that works with students to meet their individual needs whether they are academic, social/personal or post-high school oriented. Students can request to meet with their counselor throughout the year regarding any concern. Each of the 2 counselors on staff service one half of the student population determined alphabetically. Due to the large student caseload for each counselor, they have had to cut back on some services offered to be sure to provide what

the administration considers essential. The counselors strive to make individualized learning plans for every LRHS student to help them be successful in high school and beyond.

E4. School Culture and Student Support Criterion

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

Liberty Ranch has a College and Career Center that offers information and opportunities to students researching post-high school opportunities. The College and Career Center has a part time technician who hosts guest speakers and presenters from various colleges and representing various careers. The College and Career Center also offers field trips, college and career fairs, one-on-one counseling, test preparation, scholarship information and both online and printed information to students.

Student clubs, sports and performing arts serve as extra-curricular outlets for students and teacher advisors to participate at LRHS while exploring talents and interests. Clubs have a variety of focuses, but keep students informed about meetings and club leadership or community service opportunities using the daily bulletin or a club Facebook page.

The school has another wonderful tool for communication with all students called the Senate. The Senate is made up of members from each club, program and 4th period class on campus and meets to ensure regular and consistent communication on campus. Student feedback from Senate meetings has been positive about Liberty Ranch High School and the opportunities and support provided to students on campus.

Areas of Strength for School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth:

- Liberty Ranch High School has a variety of meaningful support options to ensure students are both supported and can be successful throughout high school.
- Liberty Ranch has strong curricular and co-curricular programs on campus to appeal to students of all abilities and with various interests.
- The outreach to parents is strong and meaningful beginning with parents of 8th graders and promoting parent involvement in variety of opportunities throughout their student's high school career.
- Liberty Ranch has a clean and well maintained campus thanks to a strong and dedicated custodial staff and a clear expectation that treatment of campus and facilities are included the atmosphere of respect on campus.
- LRHS teachers are professionals who are committed to their students and the school and are proud to show their school spirit on dress up days or by participating in school activities.
- The support staff at LRHS is an integral part of the school community and represents the school with pride while treating all students, community members and visitors with respect and professionalism.

- Students for their great pride in the school and for their strong, enthusiastic support of teachers.
- Liberty Ranch security officers and administration ensure a safe campus that is acknowledged by all stakeholders who were surveyed; students and teachers appreciate and respect the school security officers.

Key Areas for Growth:

- Self-assessed need for more parent involvement and increased parent communication
- The school's website is not currently providing the communication or information desired.
- Provide more college visits through AVID or College & Career Center to encourage students to achieve at their highest potential.

Chapter IV - part B.

Liberty Ranch's 1200 students are being offered a wide and increasingly varied array of programs and offerings. Many are effective and valuable; some are new and untested. However, what stands out to the Visiting Committee is the notable desire on the part of the staff to provide outstanding opportunities and choices for their students. The Visiting Committee wants to encourage the staff to keep, maintain and augment the good and effective things; and to select and refine the areas for improvement, remembering the adage, always, *less is (often) more*. You can't "do it all" so focus on the best and drop the marginal or less successful.

As a (relatively) new school the staff is "anxious to get up to speed" – they want to do it all and with a quality and depth typical of an older experienced school. The Visiting Committee encourages the school – its staff, students and community to focus on "the big stuff" and not worry over all the "little things." The "little things" is relative, but this staff is fully capable of deciding what is really important.

Areas of Strengths

There are many fine and good things about Liberty Ranch High School. The Visiting Committee wishes to note and celebrate a number of these areas. We believe – strongly, we should add – that the school is fully aware of their *key areas for growth*. They know where they are and where they need to go. We want to help them get there. The "starting point" must clearly be a recognition, appreciation and continual awareness of the "best practices and programs" of the school, its students and staff.

1. The students, individually and collectively, are truly a great strength of Liberty Ranch High School. Their openness, honesty and good will are infectious and pervasive. Their support of the teachers is overwhelming.
2. The great diversity and inclusiveness of the entire school community is what "America is all about!" – the truest manifestation of that age-old adage. Liberty Ranch High School makes the American ideal of positive, productive diversity an everyday fact of life.
3. The teachers at Liberty Ranch High School are, without a doubt, deserving of every accolade we can bestow upon them. From our meetings with Focus Group Leaders (2 teachers co-chair each group) to meetings with full Focus Groups (all teachers are included) and parents and students, the recognition of the dedicated and effective work of teachers is outstanding.
4. The administration and Leadership Team are clearly focused on the tasks – both the reality and the difficulty – that must be accomplished in order to make the kind and degree of improvements needed in the years ahead.
5. The Principal for his vision. He is in his first principalship, and is the only principal Liberty Ranch has had, he is undaunted in drive, vision and focus in making Liberty Ranch High School a great, recognized and outstanding school. The two Assistant Principals are also recognized for their dedication to and work for the school.
6. The entire support staff – from the office, library, career center, cafeteria staffs to the instructional aides, campus security, grounds and maintenance people – is "one" in their desire to make Liberty Ranch High School the best possible place for students to learn and grow.

7. The parents the VC talked to are supportive of Liberty Ranch High School to a high degree.
8. There are many fine and special programs at Liberty Ranch High School – its academies, leadership programs, its ag program and its efforts to assist students in many special ways, e.g. credit recovery, homework assistance, building positive relationships between students and staff, booster and support clubs, organizations, and specialty classes.

Key areas for Growth

1. The growing Latino population and their special needs and issues need to be addressed in a thoughtful and systematic way. Their inclusion is not an issue; their success is. Attention to a number of specific, related issues for ELLs is essential to successfully working with these students. Developing a stable, consistent, broadly-based program is essential. In addition, the involvement of Latino parents is a major concern. Because of the importance of family in the Latino community, this is an area of encompassing concern.
2. Socio-economically disadvantaged (SED) students have a number of unique and special needs. While there is some “overlap” with Latino issues, there are also a number of key needs that are unique to SED students. There will often be a significant group of non-Latino students who are classified SED, e.g. the “homeless” and students living on their own or with family support; their special needs and issues must always be of special concern and addressed.
3. Attention to and support for instructional improvement/development needs to be systematically addressed. While many – most, in fact – teachers are doing a commendable job, the changes currently seen and those in the offing impact instruction in large ways.
 - a) Technological advances need to be better utilized: inclusion (development and utilization) of every possible tool should be utilized; more equipment, better training, taking advantage of all tools and opportunities must be a priority;
 - b) New core curriculum, standards, federal benchmarks, common assessments, etc. all have major impacts on instruction and must be addressed in the immediate future.
 - c) Staff development and in-servicing needs are a continuing and permanent need. While the school has done a good job of meeting individual needs, a comprehensive, *school-wide* 5-year plan for staff development in all areas, and across all areas needs to be developed and put in-place.

Chapter V – The Action Plan

Liberty Ranch High School has had an effective action plan; however, several segments of the school community have been “left on the fringe.” The new action plan – it follows this page – is based on the “Key areas for Growth” of the (this) April 2013 Visiting Committee. These 3 key areas provide a real *Vade Mecum* or guide for a new action plan. The VC has gone over the new action plan with the school’s leadership team; we heartily endorse it and believe that it provides an excellent framework for significant, genuine and lasting progress

Goal #1: Increase student success of each of our identified subgroups: Hispanic/Latino, EL, and SED to raise their academic achievement levels by measuring the number of students on pace to graduate and those successfully completing University of California A-G requirements. ESLR #2—Academic Achievers

ACTION PLAN	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	RESOURCES	ASSESSMENT	TIMELINE	REPORTING
1. Incoming freshmen will be given an ELA and Math placement test in May and placed in appropriate classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Counseling *English/Math Dept. Chairs *Administrator in charge of counseling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Selection/Creation of tests *Funds to pay for test proctors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Scoring tests and setting up rubric for class placement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Tests given by May 30 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Test Scores and master Schedule
2. EL students who have not been re-designated will be assigned an EL support class where ELD strategies and study skills are emphasized.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Counseling *Administrator in charge of master schedule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Identification of ELLs *Master Schedule *ELLs past Assessment scores 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Grade Checks * Assessment scores *Teacher feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *March-September 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Progress reports *Quarter and semester grades * Assessment scores
3. Organize a task force to address issues of parent involvement for all subgroups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Administration * Leadership from booster and parent groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Time *School site budget *Parent group rosters *Power school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Task force action plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Task force formed by June 1 * Action developed by August 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Action plan *Meeting minutes
4. Use data to identify student needs to guide instruction and teaching practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Professional Development committee * Administration *Dept. Chairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Outside consultant * Professional development *Data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Student performance grades *Benchmarks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Progress reports *Benchmark data *Assessment

		*Time			scores * IEP meetings
6. Further address the PASSAGE PLC for at-risk 9 th grade students in English and/or math for targeted instruction and support and explore options for continued support in their 10-12 th grade years.	*Counseling *Admin. in charge of counseling *PASSAGE coordinator	*Past Assessment scores *Teacher recommendation *Past grades	*Master schedule *Assessment scores	*Ongoing *May 30 th for the following year	*Master schedule *Assessment scores
8. Explore options to provide a remediation program for students to be “retaught and reassessed.”	*Department Chairs *Principal	*Creating curriculum *Teacher training	*Grade reporting *Teacher observation	*May 30 for the following year	*Assessment scores *Teacher observation
9. Continue to provide tutoring in ELA and math.	* Principal *Dept. Members	*Funding for after-school tutoring	*Grade reporting	*Ongoing	*Grade reports *Tutoring roster *Assessment scores
10. Explore opportunities to provide more technology access to students.	*Administration *Department chairs *Director of Technology *CBO *Superintendent	*Budget and staffing *Equipment	*Grant applications *Budget Allocations *Increased Lab hours	*Ongoing	*Minutes of staff meetings *Minutes of Tech committee

Goal #2: Provide an effective transition program for incoming freshmen to reduce teacher referrals for defiance and disruption, decrease the number of classes failed, and increase performance scores in freshmen core classes. ELSR #1 Healthy Individual (positive relationships); ESLR #2 Academic Achiever and ESLR #3 Well-rounded citizens (respect diverse cultures and contribute to society)

ACTION PLAN	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	RESOURCES	ASSESSMENT	TIMELINE	REPORTING
1. Fully implement Link Crew program including orientation and a Link Crew class.	*Link Crew Coordinator *Counseling *Principal *Administrator in charge of counseling	* Master schedule *Student interviews and selection *Teacher recommendation	*Link Crew/freshmen contacts *Teacher observation *Decrease in referrals *Grade Reports *Assessment results	*Ongoing *May 30	*Assessment scores *Data analysis of referrals and F numbers
2. Continue to provide “Making High School Count” presentations at all feeder schools and “Building Bridges” presentations to all parents of incoming 9 th graders.	*Counseling *Administrator in charge of counseling	*Power Point *Time at feeder schools *Administrator support at feeder schools	*Teacher feedback *Student responses	*January	*Decrease in referrals *Assessment scores *Data analysis of referrals and F numbers
3. Provide freshmen with a “Reality Check” presentation	*Counseling *Administrator in charge of counseling	*Power Point *Time schedules during English classes	*Teacher feedback *Student responses	*May 30	* Decrease in referrals *Assessment scores *Data analysis of referrals and F numbers

4. Provide freshmen assembly	*Link Crew Coordinator * Principal	*Time scheduled from 6 th period	*Teacher feedback *Student responses	*May 30	* Decrease in referrals *Assessment scores *Data analysis of referrals and F numbers
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Goal #3: Transition and fully implement the California Common Core Standards and Next Generation Science Standards in all English, math, and science classes with a special emphasis on literacy. ESLR#2 Academic Achiever and ESLR #4 Knowledgeable Individual (21st century skills).

ACTION PLAN	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	RESOURCES	ASSESSMENT	TIMELINE	REPORTING
1. Provide training for all staff on new standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Principal * Staff development committee *ELA and math staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Collaboration Time *SCOE Training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Classroom Lesson plans *Teacher observations * Staff Development Agendas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *August *Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Staff Check-in *Admin. Walk-throughs.
2. Implement new benchmark exams and practice material incorporating literacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Principal *Department Chairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *SchoolNet Training *AVID weekly *CCSS and New Generation Science Standards practice material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Revised Benchmarks *Lesson plans *Teacher observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Quarter and semester benchmarks * Data Analysis from SchoolNet
3. Update the curriculum and textbooks to align for all English, math, and science classes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Principal *Department Chairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Summer Project Funding/Time *New Curriculum Template 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Revised Curriculum *Purchase of new material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Revised curriculum

Goal #4: To create a school-wide 5-year plan for staff development in the areas of technology, new standards (CCSS, NGSS), common assessments, and effective instructional strategies. ESLR# 2 Academic Achievers, ESLR #4 Knowledgeable Individuals, ESLR #5, Self-motivated

ACTION PLAN	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	RESOURCES	ASSESSMENT	TIMELINE	REPORTING
1. Re-establish the professional development committee.	*Administration *Department Chairs	*Time	*Professional Development 5 year plans	*May 20	*Minutes of meeting *Plan
2. Survey the staff on staff development needs.	*Administration *Department Chairs	*Survey *Time	*Staff Feedback	*June 1	*Survey results
3. Create a staff development calendar for the 2013/14 school year and beyond.	*Professional Development Plan	*Survey *Outside Consultant	*Finished calendar *Staff Feedback *Evidence of plan implementation	*June 1	*Staff sign-in sheets *Staff Feedback
4. Conduct an annual review of the professional development plan and calendar.	*Professional Development committee	*Plan *Staff Feedback	*Plan revisions	*May 1 Yearly	*Revised professional development plan