

**THREE-YEAR-TERM REVISIT  
VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT**

**WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

**FOR**

**HALF MOON BAY HIGH SCHOOL**

**Lewis Foster Drive  
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019**

**Cabrillo Unified School District**

**March 7, 8, & 9, 2010**

**Visiting Committee Members**

Michael Payne-Alex, Chair  
English Dept. Chair, Santa Teresa High School

Mr. Michael Arredondo, Member  
Principal, San Lorenzo Valley High School

Mrs. Gail S. Hetler, Member  
Teacher, Berkeley, CA

**I. Introduction** (1/2–1 page)

**Include the following:**

- **General comments about the school and its setting and the school’s analysis of student achievement data.**

Continuing population growth has had significant impact on the small, isolated, rural, Half Moon Bay community. Originally an agricultural community, the school population has changed dramatically as more people who work in the Silicon Valley and San Francisco have chosen to establish the Coastsides as their home and commute to work. The traditionally agricultural community has also seen the influx of large agri-business that employs increasing numbers of migrant workers who also make their homes in the Half Moon Bay High School (HMBHS) attendance area.

As per the most recent CBEDS -2008-2009, the school has 1,141 students enrolled in grades 9-12 with a student ethnic distribution as follows: African-American/Not Hispanic = (.48%), American Indian or Alaska Native = (.19%), Asian = (2.1%), Caucasian = (52.07%), Filipino = (1.83%), Hispanic = (39%), No Response = (3.75%). The enrollment during the last nine years has remained relatively constant. Current API is 741, which represents a 16-point drop since the last visit but a 54-point increase since 2002.

The staff at HMBHS continues to analyze major data pieces such as CST and CAHSEE scores, graduation rates, and pass rates. In addition, the Special Ed department members have significant facility with the CAPA test data, which they continue to use to accurately place and instruct their students. The biggest change since the last visit is a notable increase in examination of CELDT scores, which has resulted in better placement of English learners.

Half Moon Bay High has also begun using common assessments and benchmark tests for all subject areas. They do not yet have a reliable software program with which to record and analyze the results of those assessments. However, district leadership reports that they have secured a grant and have set a deadline to purchase a reliable data software system by June 2010. Acquisition of such a system will undoubtedly further the work of the staff at HMBHS, which has demonstrated good faith and honest effort in working toward their goals of an increased level of data analysis.

- **Significant changes or developments that have affected the school since the last visit.**

Site and district staff report that following the 2007 visit the staff was motivated to move forward with the spirit and message of the Visiting Committee report. During the 2007-2008 school year, however, a conflict that had been simmering between the staff and the principal became more and more heated, until the principal finally resigned. This period of turmoil ended with the hiring of the current principal, who is in her second year in that position.

In the 2007 self-study, the staff noted that the percent of Hispanic or Latino students had increased by 6% between 2001 and 2006; that number has increased by another 6% in the three ensuing years. This might be seen as a portentous development, considering the fact that HMBHS has had a goal over at least the last nine years of increasing the success of its ELL and Hispanic students. However, it must be noted that a sense of shared mission, which both Hispanic and White parents actually referred to as a sense of “family”, has replaced the hint of fatalism and negativity that seemed to be associated with this demographic shift during the visit three years ago.

## II. Follow-up Process (1/2–1 page)

- **Briefly comment upon the school’s process for follow-up, including the capacity of the school to monitor implementation and accomplishment of the areas for improvement as recommended by the previous visiting committee.**

In 2007 Half Moon Bay High School was given a three-year accreditation, and the visiting committee identified five School-wide Critical Areas for Follow-up. During the first year following the visit the school was able to implement a bell schedule that included time for weekly collaboration to take place. There was also time set aside for school wide professional development. In the last two years the new administration has provided the leadership to address all five Critical Areas and provide ongoing leadership. Since then, Half Moon Bay High School has implemented the following:

- Created a Leadership Team of seven teachers who are elected at-large through a union facilitated election. This body is another dimension of shared leadership, in addition to the Academic Council, which is comprised of Department Chairs.
- Created School Improvement Teams which were transitioned into collaboration Pods, which include Classified staff, this school year
- Centered the 2009-2010 Site Staff Development Plan on the principles of the Professional Learning Community model, which had been adopted by the Cabrillo Unified District
- Created two Strategic Academic Support Classes (SAS) to support “cusp” students who need support in Math and/or English
- Implemented a Credit Recovery Program to support students at risk of not graduating
- Created a School Wide Student Recognition Program (Renaissance)
- Expanded their College Prep A-G course offerings
- Implemented pacing guides and a School Wide Data Analysis day to review common assessment Results
- Created a Bilingual Resource Team and established English Learner Pathways to address English learner needs
- Reinvigorated the English Learner Advisory Council (ELAC)
- Entered into a Professional Learning Community with other high schools in the county and the local community college called Cal-PASS

The new site administration has created a powerful collaborative structure for change and school wide improvement. The school staff and community have embraced the improvement process and are dedicated to changing the culture of the school to meet the needs of all its

students. Half Moon Bay High School has made a strong commitment to continuous improvement and ongoing monitoring of student achievement.

**III. School's Progress on Critical Areas for Follow-up (2-4 pages, but more may be needed)**

**A. Comment on the accomplishment of each schoolwide action plan section, noting which critical areas for follow-up have been addressed through each section. In this succinct summary of the school's progress since the full visit, comment on any observable impact on student learning.**

**Note:** There was a change in the administration of HMBHS at the beginning of the 2008 – 2009 school year. At this point, the district School Board identified four target goals for the school's action plan. The present plan, a Single Plan for Student Achievement, is based on the School Site Council and ELAC committee's effort to align the district goals and WASC recommendations and was written in Spring 2009. Of this plan's four goals, #1 addressed Critical Area #5 and #2 addressed several of the Key Issues. The remaining two goals do not overtly address any the critical areas of follow-up, but the steps in the plan do. The fact that these goals look more like progress measures seems attributable to the fact that the board instructed the school to develop SMART goals that are specific and measurable. The school board additionally has identified that these goals are part of a five-year plan and that the percentage or point increase in student proficiency and the action steps may be revised but the overall goals may not be. This Visiting Committee, in meeting with district staff and the school leadership team, got clear understanding and agreement from both groups that the Critical Areas for Follow-Up need to be included in the site/action plan.

**SCHOOL GOAL I #1:** HMBHS will increase annually by 10% the number of HMBHS graduates who are college (UC/CSU ready (meet the minimum eligibility requirements set by UC/CSU)

The critical areas for follow-up that have been addressed are Critical Area 5 (“Expect all students can achieve in rigorous academic courses and remove the barriers to access college preparatory classes”), Key Issue B2 (Ensure all students (i.e., EL, Hispanic, special education) are expected and challenged to enroll in college prep classes and supported to be successful.) C1 (“Ensure all students [i.e., EL, Hispanic, Special Education] are expected and challenged to enroll in college prep classes and supported to be successful”) and E2 (Staff culture that includes the expectation of taking on extra responsibilities to help students.) During the 2007-2008 school year HMBHS made efforts to support ELs and Hispanic students' success by hiring some bilingual teachers and implementing a bell schedule that allowed for weekly collaboration time. 2009 – 2010: HMBHS is in the process of having every possible class approved on the UC A-G list including SDAIE and ELD 3 classes. The Freshman Orientation was initiated. Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) have been implemented at all grade levels. The counselors provide specific outreach to Spanish speaking families. The counselors meet with each student receiving two D or F grades at progress period and follow-up with families. Two Strategic Academic Support (SAS) classes have been created. The Portable Assisted Study Sequence (PASS) Program is used to support the Migrant population. (pages 32 -33). English Learner Pathways were adopted. The data results provided indicate that there has not been the desired impact (a drop of 4% (page 38).

**SCHOOL GOAL #2: HMBHS will show an increase of 12.4% in student proficiency for the Socio-Economically Disadvantaged subgroup on the California High School Exit Exam in English Language Arts.**

The Key Issues addressed are C2 (“Inconsistent use of instructional strategies in classrooms that would support all students (i.e. EL, SED, Hispanic and Special Ed).” and D1 (“Site should consider analysis of assessment data correlated to standards to determine key standards to emphasize in curriculum and instruction to maximize student performance.”) Professional development was provided in the areas of differentiated instruction and teaching academic literacy for success in the content areas. In 2009 – 2010, the areas of focus for staff development include closing the achievement for Hispanic, EL, and SED populations, Professional Learning Communities, and instructional strategies to actively engage all students and address all learning styles. Departments are engaged in preparing curriculum maps and pacing guides to align instruction. Departments are using a cycle of inquiry with quarterly common assessments. The statistical impact on student achievement was an increase from 25.6% in 2008 to 50.5% in 2009 of SED subgroup who scored proficient or advanced in the area of English Language Arts

**SCHOOL GOAL # 3: HMBHS will show an increase of 11.6% in student proficiency for the Socio-Economically Disadvantaged subgroup on the California High School Exit Exam in Math.**

Although the HMBHS 3-Year Term report does not specifically address any critical areas for follow-up or key issues in relation to this goal, other than the Visiting Committee’s general admonition to support the learning of *all* students, the action steps that are being taken to reach this goal do reflect the Critical Areas of follow-Up. For example, the staff has created interventions for struggling learners, including SED students, by identifying “cusp” students and placing them in Strategic Academic Support classes in the Fall ’09 semester and in the AVENTA program in Spring 2010. The Visiting Committee also notes that many of the measures for Evidence of Progress relate to tracking what the staff will do. The committee therefore recommends, as a next step, developing some measures of the impact of these interventions on student achievement.

**SCHOOL GOAL # 4: HMBHS will show a 12 point increase on the Annual Performance Index (API - from 570-582) in the English Learner subgroup.**

Although the HMBHS 3-Year Term report does not specifically address any critical areas for follow-up or key issues in relation to this goal, other than the Visiting Committee’s general admonition to support the learning of *all* students, the action steps that are being taken to reach this goal do reflect the Critical Areas of follow-Up. For example, the staff has created significant interventions for English learners, especially the implementation of the English Learner Pathways, reinvigoration of the ELAC committee, and hiring eight bilingual staff members. The Visiting Committee notes that this is the area where HMBHS has made the most significant progress and encourages the staff to continue to develop additional ways to measure and analyze student achievement in this area.

### **CRITICAL AREAS for FOLLOW-UP**

Because the goals in the Single Plan for Student Achievement did not overtly incorporate the 2007 WASC Visiting Committee recommendations into that plan, this Visiting Committee feels that it is appropriate to explicitly list how the school *has* addressed those Critical Areas. Much was accomplished by the five School Improvement Teams during 2008 – 2009 in relation to the remaining critical areas of follow-up, however, due to the recent implementation of new programs, there is no data analysis on the effect of these programs on student achievement.

#### **1. “Develop and implement a comprehensive staff and professional development plan that is tied to student learning needs and the school-wide action plan.”**

The first phase of change was implemented the year immediately following the WASC cycle of 2007. The bell schedule was altered to include weekly collaboration time embedded in the staff day. The professional development plan included a 3-year phase-in of collaboration, vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment, benchmark development and data analysis. The Leadership Team decided to focus in-house toward sharing and collaborating with each other. These minimum day workshops became known as “peer expert workshops.” Completion of both the pacing guides, in which essential key standards are designated and assessed in common formative assessments, and the corresponding benchmark exams in targeted core areas were made top priority.

Departments used CST subject area data to identify essential skills to be taught and assessed each quarter. The site staff development plan for 2009-2010 is fully aligned with the 2009-2010 Single Plan for Student Achievement and with the district board adopted goals for 2009-2010.

#### **2. “Ensure all students are enrolled in rigorous academic courses.”**

Half Moon Bay High School has made a concerted effort to bring all courses to the highest academic standards, and to make certain that all the students have access to those courses. This year a new course, Spanish for Spanish Speakers (S4SS), has been implemented to increase the challenge for native Spanish speakers and increase their literacy in their primary language. The number of Social Science AP courses has increased making more places available to students seeking AP classes and allowed teachers and counselors to encourage students to take the more rigorous courses. All students with learning disabilities in the Resource Program are mainstreamed in all classes, with the exception of where the IEP Team determines the severity of the disability requires a small, specialized setting. The counseling department has developed the Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) for all grades, most recently with the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, which involves individual meetings with all freshmen and their families. Counselors, through the PLP program, provide guidance in the area of rigorous course selection. Bilingual counselors meet with Spanish-speaking parents and college-related information such as FASA are presented both in English and Spanish. In addition, all AP classes have been made more accessible to all students, and enrollment has increased.

**3. “Ensure all teachers are implementing differentiated instructional strategies to allow all students success in a rigorous standards-based curriculum.”**

In the last 3 years, the teaching staff at HMBHS has increasingly implemented a number of innovative techniques that engage students in classroom activities, support varied learning styles and differentiated abilities and consistently check for understanding. They have also worked to provide opportunities for extra-curricular enrichment by also enlisting community support. In addition, they have done some peer-to-peer sharing of best practices in the area of differentiation. It is clear, however, that there is a desire and some need to continue work on implementing differentiation strategies in all classes.

**4. “Provide collaboration time for all teachers to analyze data through School Loop, Cruncher and other data-related tools.”**

Weekly collaboration has been built into the HMBHS bell schedule every Tuesday from 7:45-8:45 am with a focus set to a schedule determined by Leadership with whole staff input. In addition, they hold seven “Super Tuesdays” throughout the year, which combine an early release with the late start. These are the days when longer presentations have taken place. Having implemented a collaboration schedule, the Leadership Team, in agreement with administration and the faculty, set aside department subject area collaboration time in order to plan common and benchmark assessments. Teachers, along with counselors, use Cruncher data to adjust student placement and plan differentiated instruction based on EL status and other student needs. Teachers communicate among themselves, staff, students and parents about grades and assignments in School Loop using School Loop’s portal and email functions. In addition, all departments have been analyzing data from benchmark tests that they have developed collaboratively and/or created with the Intel Assess program. However, the only tool available has been the Item Analysis function for Scantron machines. The staff’s effort in this regard is commendable, but this Visiting Committee was very relieved to hear from the district leadership has secured grant funding for a data analysis program (like Data Director) and is in the process of vetting them, so that one will be in place by June 2010.

**5. “Expect all students can achieve in rigorous academic courses and remove the barriers to access college preparatory classes.” This section also addresses Key Issue C1: “Ensure all students (i.e., EL, Hispanic, Special Education) are expected and challenged to enroll in college prep classes and supported to be successful.”**

This Critical Area for Follow-Up is addressed in Goal #1 of the Single Plan for Student Achievement, but there are a few more items that the Visiting Committee also feels that the school has done to address this concern. HMBHS is engaged in a process of having every possible class approved on the UC A-G list, in order to increase the number of graduates who are UC/CSU eligible. Three out of the four years of Social

Studies courses are A-G approved, and the Freshman Studies class is slated to be A-G approved as a World Studies class in the 2010-2011 school year. The Science and Agriculture departments have received A-G approval for all courses except Intro to Agriculture Science, which is slated to be submitted to UC in the 2010-2011 school year. The new Earth Science class provides a scaffold to ensure the development of skills needed for success in higher-level science courses.

Since Personal Learning Plans (PLPs) have been implemented at all grade levels, there is now a framework for making sure that all students do have access to and can complete all the requirements for college prep. The HMBHS counselors also provide specific outreach to Spanish-speaking families (two of four counselors are bilingual in Spanish) in collaboration with the English Learner Advisory Council (ELAC) parent group in the areas of promoting academic success, applying to college, and financial aid resources. Counselors meet with each student receiving two D or F grades at the progress period and follow up that meeting with communication to families regarding their progress, resources available to them, and advising to parents and students on ways to promote their success.

During the 2009-10 school year, HMBHS created two Strategic Academic Support(SAS) classes. These courses will combine credit recovery using Aventa, organizational skills, and support for core classes. HMBHS also uses the Portable Assisted Study Sequence (PASS) Program to support our Migrant population with a UC- approved high school program that provides curriculum aligned with the California Content Standards via portable units of study that allow migrant high school students throughout California to receive credits toward graduation.

**Recommendations: Priority and/or Additional Areas for Improvement: Identify and note any areas that need to be given priority for the school's ongoing improvement. (This may also include critical areas for follow-up.) Identify new areas of concerns, if applicable.**

Areas of Improvement:

- Create a long-range, multi-year, Schoolwide Action Plan that specifically addresses the WASC Critical Areas of improvement including growth targets for improved student achievement for all significant sub-groups and a comprehensive professional development plan that is tied to student learning needs. The goals of the Single Plan for Student Achievement should be combined with the long-range Schoolwide Action Plan. Parents, students, and all staff should participate in the creation of this plan. (Site Council, ELAC, PAC, pods, etc) as they did with the current Single Plan for Student Achievement. There should not be a special plan for the WASC process.
- Create a formal process for disaggregated data collection and analysis at the course alike and department level to monitor student achievement in the academic standards and the ESLRs.
- Create a formal process to assess the effectiveness of professional development in adjusting teacher practice and in increased student achievement and/or engagement in learning.
- Collect data on the effectiveness of intervention programs and targeted counseling on the improvement of student achievement of the academic standards and the ESLRs. This data could come from surveys, measures of academic performance, suspension data, etc.
- Implement the improvements recommended by the ESLR Focus Group (page 34) in accomplishing Key Issue A4: "Develop benchmarks and rubrics to assess Expected Schoolwide Learning Results"
- Collect and analyze longitudinal data that is disaggregated for CSTs, CAHSEE, CELDT, benchmark exams, and other relevant data that measure student achievement in the standards and the ESLRs. The committee notes that the benchmark process is still in its infancy, that the school does not yet have a modern data recording and analysis program in place and that the district goal for obtaining such a system is June 2010. Therefore, it is understood that the longitudinal data on benchmark tests and cannot really get going until the 2010-2011 school year. At the same time, the committee encourages HMBHS to continue the benchmark and common assessments it has begun, with the hope that the current data can be entered into the new system if at all possible.
- Make every effort to build on the success and scope of the student activities program, which has been improving school culture and climate. Ideally, this might be by incorporating an additional release/prep period for an Activities Director.

**B. Commendations Related to Progress: Note and report on significant progress the school has made in responding to the critical areas for follow-up and in carrying out the related action plan.**

- Adopted a bell schedule that included weekly collaboration
- Hired a new principal, during the 2008-2009 school year, whose collaborative leadership style (with the site and the district office) and energy has reenergized the campus and made it clear that HMBHS is moving forward
- Created focus on curriculum and instruction by hiring a new bilingual assistant principal and naming her Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Instruction
- Hired a bilingual Guidance Counselor, School Liaison and five other bilingual staff since 2007
- “Reenergized” the English Learner Advisory Council, which has exponentially increased participation by Hispanic parents
- Developed and implemented an English Learner Pathway that guides proper placement of ELs to give them maximum opportunity to meet A-G requirements upon graduation
- Increased A-G offerings by getting a number of courses approved
- Expanded Personal Learning Plans with counselors’ exemplary implementation, which includes meetings with families to review the plans
- Developed common and benchmark assessments in most courses in each subject area
- Increased connection to school through increased activities involving staff and students
- Increased access to and enrollment in AP courses, and maintained good AP test results