Western Association of Schools & Colleges

JUNIPERO SERRA HIGH SCHOOL

Focus on Learning

Self Study Report
2009 - 2010

CONQUISTADORS
JUNIPERO SERRA HIGH SCHOOL

FOCUS ON LEARNING

WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES
AND
THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ACCREDITATION SELF-STUDY

MICHAEL JIMENEZ
PRINCIPAL

JEFFREY THOMAS
SELF-STUDY COORDINATOR

SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

FEBRUARY 2010
Visiting Committee

Mr. Dennis Collier, Chair
Assistant Principal
Temecula, California

Mrs. Marguerite J. Anatol
Director, Assessment
Costa Mesa, California

Mr. Greg Gilliland
Teacher
Simi Valley, California

Dr. Tammy Guzzetta, Ed.D.
Principal
Moreno Valley, California

Mrs. Jamie Hunington
Teacher
Lakewood, California

Mr. Vincent Lopez
Teacher
San Gabriel, California

Mrs. Susan Thompson
Teacher
Camarillo, California
SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION

Richard Barrera  President
John Lee Evans    Vice President
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DISTRICT SENIOR MANAGEMENT

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Darryl LaGace Chief Information and Technology Officer
James Masias Chief Financial Officer
Mark Bresee General Counsel
Tony Burks Executive Director, Atypical/Charter Schools
Dianna Carberry High School Improvement Officer
Jeff Olivero High School Improvement Officer
Robert Grano Middle School Improvement Officer
Shirley Wilson Middle School Improvement Officer
Rupi Boyd Elementary School Improvement Officer
Karla Loria Elementary School Improvement Officer
Jean Madden-Cazares Elementary School Improvement Officer
Mitzi Merino Elementary School Improvement Officer
Jennifer White Elementary School Improvement Officer
Junipero Serra High School
5156 Santo Rd.
San Diego, CA 92124
http://serra.sandi.net

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Michael Jimenez
Principal
Lauren Basteyns
Vice Principal
Eric Burston
Vice Principal
Kathy Lorden
Vice Principal
Jeffrey Thomas
Site Operations Specialist

DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

Business Education
Christine Timmins
English
Tami Thoro
Mathematics
Tonia Brooks
Naval Science (NJROTC)
Mike Brown
Physical Education
Jonn Pisapia
Science
Bruce Scott
Social Science
Charlie Burkart
Special Education
Caroline Jackson
Visual and Performing Arts
Maria Bachofner
World Languages
Cecile Nedellec

COUNSELING STAFF

Susan Skinner, Head Counselor
Jan Allen
Claire Bobis
Megan Corazza
Leslie Hudak
Elva Mora

SUPPORT STAFF

Bridgette Brunetto, Supervising Administrative Assistant
Carlos Gaines, Plant Operations Supervisor
Tom Gray, School Police Officer
Lanelle Probe, School Nurse
Joe Schmidt, ASB Advisor
Greg Wall, Special Ed Cluster Support Teacher
ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION – 2009-10

Principal
Michael Jimenez

Admin Council
Athletics
Budget
Campus Supervision
Counseling
Credit Recovery
Instructional Leadership Team
Life Skills Counselor
Lunch Intramurals
Master Schedule
New Teachers
NIROTC
Parent/Community Groups
Physical Education
Social Science
School Police
School Site Council
World Language
Williams Act

Site Operations Specialist
Jeffrey Thomas

Attendance
CAHSEE Testing
Campus Supervision
Classified Evaluations
Connect Ed
Commencement
Community/Media Relations
Community Service
Data Director
Facility Issues
Federal Survey Cards
HAZMAT/CHO
LOP List
Media Center
New Student Orientation/S2S
Open House - Fall
Parent/Student Connect
Senior Exhibitions
STAR Testing
Summer Mailing
Technology
Transportation
WASC

Vice Principal
Lauren Basteyns

Assessments
Assets
Behavior Plans
Discipline-Suspendable Offenses (A-G)
ELST/ELAC
Health Services
IEPs
Manifestation (Zero Tolerance)
Math
Open House - Fall
Opportunities
Project American Dream (12)
Psychological/Academic Testing, Evaluation & Summary
Saturday School
Special Education
Special Ed Paraprofessionals
Teacher Evaluations
Testing Accommodations/Modifications
Yearbook

Vice Principal
Eric Burtson

CAHSEE Intervention
Business Education/ROP
Discipline-Suspendable Offenses (H-P)
Electrical Training Center
IEP Meetings
Open House - Spring
Practice CAHSEE
Project Recovery
PSAT
Real Connection
SAT Prep
School Safety Plan
Science
Sophomore School of Humanities
Supervision Staff
Teacher Evaluations

Vice Principal
Kathy Lorden

AP/GATE
AP Incentive Grant
AP Testing
ASB
AVID
Cheer
Discipline-Suspendable Offenses (Q-Z)
Drill Team
English
FOCUS
Gear Up
IEP Meetings
Library
Master Schedule
Open House - Spring
Serrandipity
Teacher Evaluations
VAPA
# Program and Organization Coordinators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Placement Coordinator</td>
<td>Steve Baker</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASSETS</td>
<td>Adrian Vazquez</td>
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<tr>
<td>Athletic Director</td>
<td>Jonn Pisapia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)</td>
<td>Kiana Moyers</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASB Student Activities</td>
<td>Joe Schmidt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Credit Recovery</td>
<td>Lisa Ellis</td>
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<tr>
<td>English Learner Support</td>
<td>Martha Vidana-Cross</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gifted and Talented Education (GATE)</td>
<td>Cecile Nedellec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTO President</td>
<td>Donna Guevara</td>
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<tr>
<td>Real Connections</td>
<td>Krissie McClain</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Newspaper (Serrandipity)</td>
<td>Linda Nelson</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Site Council</td>
<td>Suzie Fore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serra Foundation President</td>
<td>Norm Ryan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASC Self Study Coordinator</td>
<td>Jeffrey Thomas</td>
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<td>Yearbook</td>
<td>Michael Pedersen</td>
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# Support Personnel

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<tr>
<th>Role</th>
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<tr>
<td>Deaf and Hard of Hearing</td>
<td>Cory Hoffman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employer Outreach Specialist</td>
<td>Stacy Brennan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychologist</td>
<td>Scott Reiche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Pathologist</td>
<td>Angela Martin</td>
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</table>
Staff By Department

Bold indicates Department Chair
* indicates new to Serra since last WASC visit

**Business Department**
Jim Blankinship
Robert Edwards
Mike Fuller*
Michael Pedersen
Joe Schmidt

Christine Timmins

**English**
Mike Cawley*
Tifanie Clark*
Tommy Cotner*
Hiedi Hall*
Lynda Lavine*
Marisa Lutz*
Kiana Moyers*
Linda Nelson*
Paul Runge*
Alison Schliem*
Lisa Smith*
Tami Thoro*

Elizabeth Ward
Cindy Zoltan*

**Mathematics**
Aaron Basch*
Erin Berry*

**Tonia Brooks**
Peter Burrell*
Tomas Cometto*
Beau Elfman*

Suzie Fore
Thomas Henry
Marian Marshall*
Jarod Martin
Matthew Medina*
Michael Morales*
Brett Patrick*
Kim Thomas
Franz Wrasidlo*

**NJROTC**
Harold Bronson

**Mike Brown***
John Prior*

**Physical Education**
Brian Basteys
Lorene Dabney
Taylor Edwards*
Scott Hopgood*

Jonn Pisapia

**Science**
Erin Barron*

**Robert Dyson**

**Diane Gerry**

**Chris Herrin**

**Denise Litt**

**Sarah Schindler**

**Bruce Scott**
Ericka Senegar-Mitchell*

Carlie Spears
Steve Stone
Kent Tartt*

Ralf Uebel*

Ariel Valentino*

**Social Science**
Harlan Bleecker

**Charlie Burkart***
Glenn Nankil

**Barney Norman**

**Jim Richards**

**Peggy Spates**

**John Turner***

**Lindsey Welch**

**Special Education**
Darla Chamberlain*

**Mary Cratsa-Wilhelm**

**Kris Erickson**

**Julie Gushlaw**

**Brenda Iodice**

**Caroline Jackson**

**Ronald Kasper**

**Emily Longerbone**

**Keri Pisapia**

**Gary Richeal**

**Kimberli Santa Maria**

**Phyllis Swanson**

**Visual and Performing Arts**
Maria Bachofner

**Robert Boughner**

**Ruth Howell**

**Carol Klett**

**Steven Rea**

**Marc Thomas**

**World Language**
Simone Brooks*

**Ken Colbert**

**Stephen Jackson**

**Dovie Kilmer**

**Juan Mora**

**Cecile Nedellec**

Serra High School: Focus On Learning 2010
**Classified Staff**

**Custodial**
Carlos Gaines  
Todd Maloney  
Kathy Topete  

**Employment Outreach**
Stacy Brennan  

**Special Education Assistants**
Brenda Bailey-Burks  
Lauren Beck  
David Bueno  
Julie Castro  
Julian Cobian  
Jacob Deshazer  
Richard Finnegan  
Wendy Fransk  
Aaron French  
Alicia Gibson  
Tami Irvine  
Kathleen Lowrey  
Brenda Lucas  
Cynthia Morales  
Katrina Murillo  
Tresa Parkman  
Roy Reed  
Joan Seiley  
Patrick Yeakey  

**Office**
Beatriz Beraud  
Bridgette Brunetto  
Marie Byrd  
Cruzanne Conrique  
Guille Olivares  
Georgina Palacio  
Lissi Peretta  
Chi Seo  
DeAnn Valdos  
Lyn Weddel  

**Supervision**
Erick Gonzalez  
Malik Matthews  
Richard Tato  
Adrian Vazquez  
Demetria Wilson  

**Library/Media Center**
Hemalatha Challa  
John Moreno
WASC INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM
2009-2010

Maria Bachofner  Visual and Performing Arts
Lauren Basteyns  Vice Principal
Tonia Brooks  Mathematics
Mike Brown  NJROTC
Charlie Burkart  Social Science
Eric Burtson  Vice Principal
Caroline Jackson  Special Education
Michael Jimenez  Principal
Kathy Lorden  Vice Principal
Cecile Nedellec  World Languages
Georgina Palacio  Classified Representative
Jonn Pisapia  Physical Education
Joe Schmidt  ASB Advisor
Bruce Scott  Science
Susan Skinner  Head Counselor
Jeffrey Thomas  School Site Operations Specialist
Tami Thoro  English
Christine Timmins  Business Education
Group A: Organization: Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership and Staff, and Resources.

Erin Barron  Science
Mike Brown  NJROTC
Bridgette Brunetto  Support
Tifanie Clark  English
Tomas Cometto  Mathematics
Lorene Dabney  Physical Education
Lisa Ellis  Counseling
Kris Erickson  Special Education
Carlos Gaines  Support
Leslie Hudak  Counseling
Brenda Iodice  Special Education
Caroline Jackson  Special Education
Stephen Jackson  World Language
Dovie Kilmer  World Language
Carol Klett  Visual and Performing Arts
Lynda Lavine  English
Emily Longerbone  Special Education
Jarod Martin  Mathematics
Jim Richards  Social Science
Ericka Senegar-Mitchell  Science
Carlie Spears  Science
Christine Timmins  Business
Ariel Valentino  Science
Lyn Weddel  Support
## Group B: Standards-based Student Learning: Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Subject</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maria Bachofner</td>
<td>Visual and Performing Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harlan Bleecker</td>
<td>Social Science</td>
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<td>Robert Boughner</td>
<td>Visual and Performing Arts</td>
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<td>Harold Bronson</td>
<td>NJROTC</td>
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<td>Simone Brooks</td>
<td>World Languages</td>
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<td>Tonia Brooks</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
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<td>Peter Burrell</td>
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<td>Mike Cawley</td>
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<td>Darla Chamberlalin</td>
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<td>Tommy Cotner</td>
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<td>Robert Dyson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mike Fuller</td>
<td>Business</td>
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<td>Julie Gushlaw</td>
<td>Special Education</td>
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<td>Chris Herrin</td>
<td>Science</td>
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<td>Denise Litt</td>
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<td>Matthew Medina</td>
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<td>Barney Norman</td>
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<td>Lissi Perretta</td>
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<td>Keri Pisapia</td>
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<td>Steve Rea</td>
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<td>Paul Runge</td>
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<td>Susan Skinner</td>
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<td>Franz Wrasidlo</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
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</tbody>
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Group C: Standards-based Student Learning: Instruction

Brian Basteyns          Physical Education
Beatriz Beraud         Support
Megan Corazza           Counseling
Beau Elfman             Mathematics
Suzie Fore              Mathematics
Elizabeth Griego        Social Science
Heidi Hall              English
Cory Hoffman            Special Education
Ruth Howell             Visual and Performing Arts
Angela Martin           Special Education
Cynthia Morales         Special Education
Michael Morales         Mathematics
Cecile Nedellec         World Languages
Brett Patrick           Mathematics
Michael Pedersen        Business
Bruce Scott             Science
Lisa Smith               English
Steve Stone             Science
Kent Tatt               Science
Tami Thoro             English
John Turner             Social Science
Adrian Vazquez          Support
Joshua Weeden           Special Education
Lindsey Welch           Social Science
Group D: Standards-based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability

Erin Berry  Mathematics
Charlie Burkart  Social Science
Hemalatha Challa  Support
Ken Colbert  World Language
Cruzzanne Conrique  Support
Mary Cratsa-Wilhelm  Special Education
Robert Edwards  Business
Chuck Giles  Mathematics
Kiana Moyers  English
Linda Nelson  English
Jonn Pisapia  Physical Education
Scott Reiche  Special Education
Chi Seo  Support
Phyllis Swanson  Special Education
Kim Thomas  Mathematics
Marc Thomas  Visual and Performing Arts
Ralf Uebel  Science
DeAnn Valdos  Support
Elizabeth Ward  English
Group E: School Culture and Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jann Allen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jim Blankinship</td>
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<td>Stacy Brennan</td>
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<td>Gulle Olivares</td>
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<td><strong>Georgina Palacio</strong></td>
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<td>Lanelle Probe</td>
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<td>Gary Richeal</td>
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<td>Sarah Schindler</td>
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<td><strong>Joe Schmidt</strong></td>
<td><strong>Business</strong></td>
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<td>Peggy Spates</td>
<td>Social Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cindy Zoltan</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Site Council (SSC)
2009-2010

Staff
Michael Jimenez Principal
Jann Allen Counselor

Teachers
Suzie Fore Mathematics/Chair
Matt Medina Mathematics
Michael Morales Mathematics
Keri Pisapia Special Education

Parent Representatives
Susan Castaneda
Ed Harris
Martha Moreno

Student Representatives
Nina Reyes
Alexandra Ryan
Rachel Wiegman

English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC)
2009-2010

Staff
Martha Vidana-Cross EL Support Teacher

Parents
Araceli Valles Chair/DLAC/SSC Representative
Adela Rangel Vice Chair
Yolanda Matias Secretary
Flor Abril
Veronica Cruz
Gloria Gomez
Rosario Gonzalez
Aurora Potter
Jose Angel Tello
Pascual Vargas
PARENT/TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO) BOARD
2009-2010

Donna Guevara  President
Sara Rodriguez  Executive Vice President
Theresa Gorton  Treasurer
Nancy Herbst  Secretary
Monica Weishan  Membership Co-VP
Melissa Rij  Membership Co-VP
Mary Ann Michlanski  Ways & Means VP
Cathie Mehnert  Parliamentarian
Cindy Jack  Auditor
Dionne Lozano  Historian
Tina LaRocco  Hospitality
Tracy Morter  Co-Hospitality
Luisa Gendron  Serra Spirit Coordinator
Cindy Jack  Serra Spirit Co-Coordinator
Janet Green  Tierra Times Coordinator
Judy McIlroy  Webmaster
Dana Brown  Character Education
Serra Foundation Board of Directors
2009-2010

Norm Ryan President
Rob Wright Vice President/Past President
Campus Improvement Committee Chair
Julie Matthews Treasurer
Dionne Lozano Assistant Treasurer
Janet Green Secretary
Cinda Dahl Assistant Secretary
Cara Furio Membership Co-Chair
Allison Kahn Membership Co-Chair
Paul Gotfredson Grant Committee Chair
Darla Lopez Auction Committee & Acquisitions Chair
Bo Lee Acquisitions Co-Chair
Jen Joyce Snack Bar
Barbara Lefkarites Web Master
Don Nacrelli Legacy Wall Project
Rom Sarno Corporate Fundraising

Committee Members
Liz Adamski Carol Mundell
Kristin Akenewich Gail Myers
Pat Brennan Tina LaRocco
Tracy Edinger Don Nacrelli
Kim Gotfredson Diane Miller
Cindy Jack Enrique Munoz
Allison Kahn Beckie Ryan
Greg LaBuda Michelle Silverthorn
April Lovecchio Sharon Stanley
Gabriela McParlane Corinne Young
SERRA ASSOCIATED STUDENT BODY OFFICERS
2009-2010

Eden Aklile Commissioner of Clubs
Alexus Bell Commissioner of Activities
Evelynn Brule Junior Class President
Desiree Casillas Junior Class Vice President
Merrick Chalk Sophomore Class President
Elizabeth Cho Commissioner of Marketing and Publicity
Manuel Contreras Sophomore Class President
Donna Du ASB President
Yoshimi Hasegawa Senior Class Representative
Kelsea Jordan Freshman Class Representative
Pedro Martinez Commissioner of Technology and Logistics
Andrew McDonald ASB Treasurer
Joeleen McGinnis Senior Class President
Lauren Milnes Freshman Class Representative
Kenny Nguyen Commissioner of Academics
Veronica Nigoche Commissioner of Campus Relations
Jessica Olafsen Commissioner of Spirit
Nina Reyes Senior Class Vice President
Alexandra Ryan ASB Vice President
Margaret Ryan Freshman Class President
Jennifer Steele Commissioner of Elections
Eric Stinson Commissioner of Athletics
Ellysha Sunga Commissioner of Campus Relations
MacKenzie Teutsch Commissioner of Marketing and Publicity
Ai My Tran Senior Class Representative
Rebecca Wade Freshman Class Vice President
Rachel Wiegman ASB Secretary
CHAPTER I:

STUDENT/COMMUNITY PROFILE AND SUPPORTING DATA AND FINDINGS
CHAPTER 1: STUDENT AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

The District

Junipero Serra High School is a school of change nestled in a district of change. For the district, this change is evident in the number charter schools (35), the number of atypical schools (15), and even in the large number of high schools (29) it has acquired through reconfiguration of earlier schools. For example, fourteen schools recently came into existence from the district’s reconfiguration of three of its large urban comprehensive high schools. The district also oversees 24 middle schools and 118 elementary schools. In all it serves 132,000 students and employs nearly 16,000 San Diegans. Sixty languages and dialects are spoken in the district’s students’ homes. As is to be expected in a large urban district, many of its students are socioeconomically disadvantaged. Furthermore, these socioeconomic conditions are not spread equally among students across all schools. Some populations are almost nearly one extreme or the other, though most schools have some intermediate combination.

The district’s structural and academic changes began in earnest in 1998 when Superintendent Alan Bersin established the Institute for Learning with the mission “to improve student achievement by supporting teaching and learning in the classroom.” The institute recognized the need to begin with a focus on improving reading and writing in the San Diego Unified School District.

The institute trained teachers in literacy strategies and set up mini-libraries at the classroom level. Soon thereafter, the district hired literacy administrators. These positions were bold experiments, joining content expertise with evaluative authority in one person. The expectation was that these two qualities would work together to leverage teacher learning far beyond what traditional training or evaluative oversight could do separately. Furthermore, stationing literacy administrators at particular sites like Serra was thought to have the potential to boost teacher effectiveness even more by uniting entire departments under common goals and common methods.

The literacy reforms did bear fruit at the elementary level, though scores remained largely unchanged at the high school level. Subsequently, the district hired John DeVore as Administrator for High School Reform. He challenged high schools to set high expectations and focus on student results.

Meanwhile, the district broadened its approach, creating more site administrator positions. After literacy came math, then finally, the district added science and special education administrators. At one point (fall, 2004), Serra had a site operations specialist and four site administrators in addition to its normal contingent of Vice Principals and the Principal.

During the same period the district also embraced the small schools movement, dividing up three long-standing comprehensive high schools into multiple small schools, re-opened for business in 2004. These three, San Diego High, Crawford, and Kearny High
School, established their own themes, foci, and structures, infusing them with rigor, relevance and relationships.

While the district continued its development of the Institute for Learning and the small schools, it found itself dealing with an acceleration of grass-roots interest in the formation of various charter schools. Some within the district understood that the Institute for Learning and the small schools needed to show results, not just because they were created for that purpose, but also so they could compete with the charters. However, the increase in the number of charter schools siphoned off students in the middle of the reform process, impacting statistical analyses and making it unclear exactly how effective the district’s strategies were.

The district continued to press for effectual change at the remaining comprehensive high schools. John DeVore oversaw the implementation of small learning communities, having some of the elements of the rigor, relevance, and relationships of the small schools, but holding on to some of the advantages that come with size. Serra High proactively adopted these efforts, dividing the entire freshman class into four interdisciplinary teams within its program Freshmen Oriented to Create Ultimate Success (FOCUS). FOCUS itself was a success; effecting an API increase from 667 to 709, a decile rank boost from 5 to 6, and a similar schools ranking increase from 4 to 7 (API base years 2004 and 2005). If a 42-point increase weren’t enough, deeper analysis shows that the gain was due almost exclusively to increased CST scores in the freshman class—again showing the effectiveness of FOCUS.

However, by the end of that year, some within the district’s community of parents and teachers had grown impatient with Superintendent Bersin’s reforms. Changes within the district’s science program had drawn particular complaints, both for the inversion of the traditional science sequence and for the adoption of an inquiry-based curriculum. By July of 2005 Superintendent Bersin’s contract had been cancelled. Some of his assistant superintendents were also released, as were all site content administrators.

The district hired retired Superintendent Carl Cohn to replace Alan Bersin. Superintendent Cohn had a reputation for bringing about change in the Long Beach district, but he also had a reputation for building community support. He did not impose major changes in San Diego Unified. Nor did he demand that curricular changes be held in place. As a result, some of the hard feelings that came from earlier mandates began to lessen. Sites became more autonomous. For example some re-invented the science sequence, adapting despite the previous textbook adoptions. Some stayed with the plan, though no schools had the departmental unifying factor provided by the site administrators.

Two years later, Superintendent Cohn announced his return to retirement, precipitating a search for a new superintendent. A few months later, the San Diego School Board found Terry Grier, hiring him in March of 2008. Superintendent Grier came with a reputation for raising low scores in urban districts. His visionary approach to tackling San Diego’s problems started him off well. His emphases included teacher quality, data, technology,
rigor, and closing the achievement gap (specifically, turning around underperforming schools). In the fall of 2009, the district lost Dr. Grier to an out of state competitor. Since then the school board has decided to make a careful search, installing long-standing Deputy Superintendent Bill Kowba as acting Superintendent for an indefinite period of time, until they are confident the process has led them to a strong replacement.

The School

Serra High School opened in 1976. It is situated in Tierrasanta, an ethnically and socially diverse neighborhood several miles northeast of downtown. Roughly one-third of the students come from Tierrasanta. Another third come from the Murphy Canyon Naval Housing District, and a final third come from all over San Diego—either through the school choice program or the Voluntary Ethnic Enrollment Program (VEEP). Serra’s enrollment has hovered around 2100 for most of the years since the last WASC report.

Serra is spacious, spread over 110 acres. It has benefited from proposition MM, enjoying facilities enhancements administered from 2002 through 2004. These include a four-classroom laboratory science building and a campus-wide technology infrastructure upgrade. In the mid-2000’s, many classrooms received ceiling mounted projectors and document viewers, allowing instructors to maximize the benefit of the earlier upgrades. This combination of technology facilitates synthesizing instruction via multiple sources: information from the Internet, electronic presentations, media, and best examples of student work.

Despite problems with the state economy, Serra is currently experiencing a third wave of technological enhancement, thanks to the Proposition S Bond Program. Prop S is funding the Interactive Classroom (i21) initiative. The five year plan will include the installation of state of the art interactive technology in every classroom in the district. Our entire math department was the first to benefit having received training in the use of Promethean Boards, installed in time for the start of the 2009-10 school year. Next year English will receive these boards. The following years 20% of the classroom will receive the upgrades and training. The year began with all teachers receiving extensive training in Data Director, a computer program that will make it very easy to generate shared assessments based on specific curricular standards. Data Director also has the capacity to manipulate educational data in many forms.

Structural, Instructional, And Leadership Changes

Each of the superintendents mentioned above has made a lasting imprint on Serra’s quest for academic excellence. In fact, Serra is compounding the various reforms to enhance the effects of each. We are using technology to incorporate standards in teaching and assessment. We are analyzing assessments to correlate grades with CST scores. Rigor, relevance, and relationships undergird instruction, collaboration, and culminating demonstrations of student learning. We are adapting instructional sequences to optimize performance. And the charts below show that Serra is closing the achievement gap.
The following grid summarizes some of the ongoing and novel structures and strategies utilized at Serra High School.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal, 2 Vice Principals, Operations Specialist, 3 Content Admin 1 Special Ed Admin</td>
<td>Principal, 2 Vice Principals, Operations Specialist, 1 Special Ed Admin</td>
<td>Principal, 2 Vice Principals, Operations Specialist, 1 Special Ed Admin</td>
<td>Principal, 2 Vice Principals, Operations Specialist, 1 Special Ed Admin</td>
<td>Principal, 3 Vice Principals, Operations Specialist</td>
<td>Principal, 3 Vice Principals, Operations Specialist</td>
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| Educational Structures and Programs --year of introduction | FOCUS (9) Freshmen Exhibition | Sophomore School of Humanities (10) Sophomore Exhibition | Junior Exhibition | (Revised) Sr. Exhibitions ASAP tutoring AVID (increased for under-represented students) ELAC | Ten-to-Succeed |


| | Mapping, Common Assessments, Rigor/Relevance/Relationships, Questioning/Higher Level Questioning, Student to student dialogue | Mapping, Common Assessments, Rigor/Relevance/Relationships, Questioning/Higher Level Questioning, Student to student dialogue | Mapping, Common Assessments, Rigor/Relevance/Relationships, Questioning/Higher Level Questioning, Student to student dialogue | Mapping, Common Assessments, Rigor/Relevance/Relationships, Questioning/Higher Level Questioning, Student to student dialogue | Mapping, Common Assessments, Rigor/Relevance/Relationships, Questioning/Higher Level Questioning, Student to student dialogue |

| | Mapping, Common Assessments, Rigor/Relevance/Relationships, Questioning/Higher Level Questioning, Student to student dialogue | Mapping, Common Assessments, Rigor/Relevance/Relationships, Questioning/Higher Level Questioning, Student to student dialogue | Mapping, Common Assessments, Rigor/Relevance/Relationships, Questioning/Higher Level Questioning, Student to student dialogue | Mapping, Common Assessments, Rigor/Relevance/Relationships, Questioning/Higher Level Questioning, Student to student dialogue | Mapping, Common Assessments, Rigor/Relevance/Relationships, Questioning/Higher Level Questioning, Student to student dialogue |
Note that leadership has changed, peaking in number with 8 full time administrators in the 2004-05 school year then falling off to the current set of 5. Michael Jimenez took over after Principal Donna Somerville left before the 2006-07 school year, and he has overseen Serra ever since. Jeffrey Thomas has served as School Site Operations Specialist for the past seven years. After the content administrators left in ’05-'06, there has been much turnover in the Vice Principal positions. Kathy Lorden has been here for two years, as has Lauren Basteyns, though Mrs. Basteyns had been our Site Special Ed Administrator in previous years. Eric Burtson is the newest Vice Principal, arriving this year, though he was the Science Administrator in ‘04-'05 and teacher/resource teacher the year following.

In addition to its clubs, athletics and associated student body, Serra has a diverse set of programs to motivate students in a variety of ways. Our GATE and Seminar programs provide stimulating environments for our gifted population. We have had a strong ROP contingent of courses and instructors, emphasizing business skills, accounting, web and graphic design. Our NJROTC program is exemplary, designated distinction for fourteen straight years and winning the district’s Stillwell Award 8 years running.

Our various grade level exhibitions have been phased in over time, emphasizing our work on rigor, relevance, and relationships begun with FOCUS. The Senior Exhibition existed first. Then we added the Freshman Exhibition in ’04-'05. The Sophomore and Junior Exhibitions followed in subsequent years.

Real Connections has been at Serra since before the last WASC cycle. It is funded by California under the Healthy Start program. It has been an invaluable aid for students at critical junctures, helping them recover from bad personal choices and helping them acquire life skills to promote good choices.

Recent additions to school structures aim to help our socioeconomically disadvantaged population overcome the achievement gap. Last year we increased our AVID course offerings from three sections to five. The new capacity was intended to increase our underrepresented students in AVID. One new condition was that AVID participants schedule at least one advanced course.

Ten to Succeed is new this year. Its mission is to keep students from dropping out through positive group interaction and thoughtful mentorship (relationships). Ten of the most at risk boys and ten such girls are selected at the intersection of four criteria: 1) falling grades, 2) shrinking attendance, 3) appearance of behavioral issues, and 4) recognized ability to interact productively with peers and adults.

The changes grid also punctuates critical points in the evolution of our plan to boost academic performance school-wide. See the curricular and instructional strategies row of the grid. Though the elements of FOCUS were assembled the year prior, Serra christened the effort in ’04-'05. The entire freshman class was broken into four houses, each with its own set of math, science, and English teachers. The theme of the year was “Think Like a Genius,” celebrating the centennial of Einstein’s miraculously productive
year (1905) in which he explained theories on Brownian Motion, Relativity, and the Photoelectric Effect. FOCUS ran struggling student meetings, featuring a few students at a time. Related to the rigor of FOCUS, Questioning and Higher Level Questioning became school-wide emphases to promote understanding, deeper learning, and improved academic performance. Serra’s teachers and administrators initiated these innovations, but they also proactively adopted district efforts—specifically, mapping core curricula to state standards and making and sharing assessments among all teachers of specific academic courses.

As mentioned, the impact of these changes was an immediate 42-point increase in API. Appropriately, and perhaps predictably, most or all of this gain was due to CST performances of that freshman class.

The following year, Serra expanded its targeted application of rigor, relevance and relationships up to the 10th grade via the inception of the “Sophomore School of the Humanities”.

In subsequent years, the school sought to increase understanding through the promotion of student-to-student (academic) dialogue. Most recently, we are attempting to become very conscious about teaching the standards, making assessments be the linchpin between instruction and the standards. Mapping connects standards to the curriculum; Data-Director connects standards to the assessments. Data Director also informs the teacher how well skills with specific standards manifest on the tests. This facilitates targeted re-teaching.

This new emphasis on assessments will allow us to go one step further: correlate course grades with CST performance. This year we are training one science and one math teacher to be the first to find and report on the degree of correlation between these two sets of assessment, internal and external. We believe time, reflection, and iteration will allow us to bring these two systems into harmony, giving our teachers the ability to predict and plan for high performance on CSTs.

**Community**

As mentioned above, Serra is demographically representative of the district itself. It is comprised of three sub-communities drawing from the neighborhood, military housing, and all of San Diego.

Serra is fortunate to have two community groups supporting its efforts: a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and a Foundation. The Serra Foundation is a nonprofit organization with a primary emphasis on raising money for academic, athletic, and general campus improvements. The foundation has been faithful to this cause, even increasing its contributions in the midst of the recession.
Serra established an English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC). ELAC has been a resource, helping Serra address the needs of its English Learners.

Serra has several business and community partners including California Coast Credit Union, Miramar College, MCAS Miramar, and Lockheed-Martin. These partners help with exhibitions, field trips, job shadows, mentoring, and other requests.

Prior WASC
In 2003-2004, Serra High School was awarded a six-year accreditation term with a three year visit by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

Mission
The mission of Serra High School is to provide rigorous, relevant, standards-based curriculum that will prepare our students to be responsible citizens and productive members of the 21st century workforce.

Schoolwide Learning Goals

Schoolwide Learning Goals “The Q 5”
Revised: 2008-09 and 2009-10
Serra High School Graduates will be…

Responsible Citizens who:
• Show respect for individual and cultural diversity
• Know the history and values of our democratic nation
• Take part in school and community life
• Develop political, economic, and environmental awareness globally

Effective Communicators who:
• Develop effective communication skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening)
• Utilize technology to interact and share ideas

Achievers who:
• Demonstrate academic, creative, and practical skills
• Produce quality work in all academic areas
• Demonstrate exceptional achievement in areas of personal strength and passion

Effective Problem Solvers who:
• Work well independently or cooperatively to solve problems
• Envision moral and ethical solutions to local, national, and world problems
• Know how to access information, integrate knowledge, and adapt to change

**Lifelong Learners** who:
• Take responsibility for decisions and actions
• Balance mental, physical, and emotional health
• Utilize strengths and interests to develop evolving career plans

**School Status**

This section reports on Serra’s status relative to Federal accountability measures found in the Academic Yearly Progress (AYP) reports. We feature state accountability, including API and CST results, in the Student Performance Data section later in this chapter. Serra missed making the AYP targets two years in a row, putting us in the first year of program improvement.

**AYP Criteria and Results**

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*Source: Serra High School: Focus On Learning 2010*
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### White

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<td>ELA Participation Rate</td>
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### Socioeconomically Disadvantaged

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### English Learner

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<td>Math Proficiency</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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We include African American student results in this table because these students may soon constitute an official subgroup, as they did several years ago. The charts below show which groups are in danger of hitting missing AYP next year, in addition to those that just missed last year.

Two subgroups missed proficiency in the English CAHSEE: Hispanic and English Learner. All subgroups except white may miss this year, unless our efforts to raise scores beat the projection towards the increased target. The story is similar with the mathematics CAHSEE, though only the English Learner group missed that this year.
Enrollment, Attendance and Facilities

Over the past five years, Serra High School has maintained a steady population of about 2100 students. An exception was last year’s peak at 2200. As the chart below shows, the 2008-09 peak corresponds to a peak in the freshman and senior populations.

The peak in senior populations was the continuation of a trend up from about 370 to 470 over four years. This is an encouraging indication of a possible increase in persistence toward graduation. Oddly, freshman population had been steadily decreasing until the jump last year. Perhaps this jump was a positive community reaction to Serra’s pronounced jump in API score the year prior. In fact, the chart below shows that this trend continued over several years (revealing that a correlated response in grade 9 enrollment lags a year behind API Growth reporting).

Enrollment by Grade Level

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>2093</td>
<td>2074</td>
<td>2190</td>
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<td>584</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 11</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>524</td>
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<td>Grade 12</td>
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<td>404</td>
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<td>473</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1023</td>
<td>1001</td>
<td>941</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1039</td>
<td>1092</td>
<td>1132</td>
<td>1159</td>
<td>1052</td>
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![Enrollment by Grade](image1.png)

![Enrollment by Gender](image2.png)
Enrollment by Ethnicity

The following table and charts document the recent history of Serra’s enrollment by ethnicity. The two pie graphs accentuate the changes between the present and four years ago.

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<td>White</td>
<td>653</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>722</td>
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<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>16</td>
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Most populations have remained mostly unchanged, though African American populations have fallen off by 20% and the Hispanic group has increased by about the same percentage.

Enrollment by Title I

Over the last five years, Serra’s Title I enrollment has increased from 42% to 51% of the population. Half our population is low income.
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<td>43.0%</td>
<td>47.0%</td>
<td>46.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Title I, %</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
<td>57.0%</td>
<td>53.0%</td>
<td>54.0%</td>
<td>49.0%</td>
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**Enrollment by English Proficiency**

Serra’s English Learner population has been steady at about 170, or 8% of the student population. However, Serra is increasingly less primarily English speaking. In the 2005-06 school year, 1285 (62%) were Fluent English Proficient (FEP), while in 2009-10, 1162 (57%) were FEP, a drop of 5%.

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Enrollment by Primary Language

The following table and charts document the recent history of Serra’s enrollment by primary language. The two pie graphs accentuate the changes between the present and four years ago.

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The proportion of first-language Spanish speakers has increased considerably, from 25% to 32% of total enrollment over the recent five-year span. Consequently, the proportion of first-language English speakers has dropped from 62% to 57% of enrollment.

Enrollment by Special Program
There have been some changes among Serra’s special populations. Serra’s students with disabilities have increased from 10.1% to 10.6% of school enrollment over five years’ time. Rising at a faster rate is Serra’s Gifted and Talented (GATE) population, going from 22.0% up to 27.6% of enrollment.

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<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>w/Disability</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GATE</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>559</td>
<td>561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w/Disability</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GATE</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attendance, Mobility Rate**

Serra’s mobility rate has remained near the 96% level for several years, after jumping by 10% in 2006-07.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mobility</th>
<th>2005-06</th>
<th>2006-07</th>
<th>2007-08</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>87.4%</td>
<td>97.0%</td>
<td>96.0%</td>
<td>96.0%</td>
<td>95.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attendance Rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Sept</th>
<th>Oct</th>
<th>Nov</th>
<th>Dec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>96.4%</td>
<td>95.6%</td>
<td>95.5%</td>
<td>94.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>97.1%</td>
<td>96.0%</td>
<td>95.5%</td>
<td>94.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>96.8%</td>
<td>94.5%</td>
<td>94.2%</td>
<td>94.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Behavior

The chart below shows the recent behavior history of Serra’s major and/or problematic subpopulations. The record is for all incidents in which a student is referred as the perpetrator, up to and including those incidents that resulted in suspension.

Note that this year’s numbers are a projection based on the number of days remaining in the 2009-10 school year by the time the report was run. Note also that numbers have fallen greatly for all subgroups reported.

Behavior Incidents as % of Subpopulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007-08</th>
<th></th>
<th>2008-09</th>
<th></th>
<th>2009-10*</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#</td>
<td>% of subpop</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>% of subpop</td>
<td>#</td>
<td>% of subpop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afr-American</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>616</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Projected
**Student Performance Data**

Serra High had a great 2007-08 school year, resulting in a 66-point gain in API. We held on to most of those gains, retreating only by 3 points. However, according to state accountability, we needed to make at least a 5-point gain to make our target for 2008-09, so we missed that. Subgroup results were interesting. English Language Learners were the (official) subgroup with the biggest gain (61), followed by the biggest miss (-9) the next year. Conversely, the Asian subgroup experienced our smallest gain (35) followed by our biggest gain (5). Either way, combining our two recent year shows the trend is strongly up.
## API Growth, Targets, and Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>School</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>705</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>-14</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make?</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>African American</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>602</td>
<td>688</td>
<td>688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-12</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make?</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asian</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>782</td>
<td>777</td>
<td>773</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>35</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English Learners (EL)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>631</td>
<td>622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>-27</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispanic</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>641</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>684</td>
<td>680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>-14</td>
<td>-7</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Socio-economically Disadvantaged</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>676</td>
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<td>696</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>-35</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>-1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>No</td>
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<td><strong>Special Ed (students with disabilities)</strong></td>
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</tr>
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<td>481</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>501</td>
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<td>Target</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>-9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>-53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make?</td>
<td>No Data</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>White</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>781</td>
<td>777</td>
<td>741</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>-18</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Make?</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>State</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>689</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>713</td>
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<td>Target</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>(est'd 8)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>State Socio-economically Disadvantaged</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>616</td>
<td>634</td>
<td>648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>(est'd 11)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make?</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following charts show that Serra, like the state, has made good progress on API. Serra’s particular feature is that we are extreme in our up and down movements, though the overall trend is clearly up.

![Serra API History, 2003-2009](image)

![API Growth Scores, 2005-09](image)
API AND THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

How well is Serra doing in the challenge to close the achievement gap? By one measure, Serra is struggling--two of its subpopulations missed the AYP targets for proficiency this year. However, by a more traditional measure, Serra is doing well, with a gap nearly half that of the state’s. Serra’s comparison to the state was made possible by the fact that both entities have the same proportion of economically disadvantaged to all students. In 2008-09 Serra was at 51% compared to the state’s 52% (not exactly identical, but close enough to allow a valid comparison to the all population). Serra’s economically disadvantaged API growth score was 7% lower than its all group. This is a small gap in comparison to the state’s 13% score difference. See the chart, below left.

A deeper analysis shows that Serra has outpaced the state in the race to close the achievement gap. See the chart, below right. (However this time-analysis is loose: Serra’s economically disadvantaged population has been steadily increasing, so when compared to the all group, the early year gaps should be adjusted down slightly from where they are reported in the chart. Still the shape would be similar, and quite accurate for the recent years.)

API DECILES

The graphic below clarifies the school-wide trend shown in raw API score above. While there has been a retreat in recent years, the latest API Base report shows a strong return to Serra’s 2005 decile 7 rank. The similar schools decile ranks are more volatile, ranging from 1 to 8. Oddly, those two extremes occurred in subsequent years. The school demographics have not changed radically between the two years, so the change could not be due to some sort of staff to student compatibility. Our best explanation for the rise is Serra’s commitment to continuous improvement. The only difference between Serra’s best two years (API Base years 2005 and 2008) is that the most recent year had a higher similar schools rank.
California Standards Test (CST)

It is helpful to know that Serra has returned to an API decile rank of 6. In our effort to understand which CSTs are pulling the school’s API up and which CSTs are pulling it down, we employed a characterization process. A characterization compares a school’s scores on particular CS-Tests relative to how well a typical school performs on these tests at each API decile. Such an analysis is possible, though difficult. This analysis makes sense however, considering that the bulk of an API score is comprised of CST results. We have more, but here is a snapshot of our characterization, below.

CHARACTERIZATIONS, CST/API
The characterization process is helpful in confirming what we’ve known for a while: Serra’s students are more accomplished in The Humanities (English and social sciences) than the Sciences (math and science). The argument cannot be made that CST scores are naturally higher in the humanities than the sciences, because the characterization process provides absolute standings through API comparability. The data above show that for Serra, English/Language Arts students’ CST results match those for an API 8 school, despite the fact that Serra is an API 6 school. Conversely, Serra’s Geometry CST performance matches that of an API 6 school. (We chose to represent math with Geometry, because districts throughout the state give algebra at different grade levels, some starting in grade 8, others 9.)
In the past two years, CST scores have leapt forward. The gains have been greatest in science, though English, Math, and Social Sciences are not far behind. The following charts show the changes within all five bands from far below basic up to advanced. All school charts for English/Language Arts, Math, Social Science and NCLB Science are listed first, followed by grade level results in English and Science.
Science’s big improvement coincides with the changes made in scheduling course sequence. Physics had been moved to grade 9 in the early 2000’s. Two years ago Earth Science was added to grade 9. Physics was left as an option for students who took geometry their freshman year. The result was earth science scores that were higher than physics had been. Another result, predictably, was that physics scores went up. Not so predictable was the interesting finding that students co-enrolled in physics and geometry did better with this change than they did before the change. Moving chemistry to grade 11 and biology down to grade 10 helped scores for both years.

Math remains the discipline with the lowest scores, and the least improved, though there was improvement. More on this is found in the next section.

CST STRATEGIC AND INTENSIVE GROUPS

Strategic students are defined as those scoring at the basic level. Intensive are those in below basic or far below basic. These are visible as the lowest three bands in the graphs above bands above. It is obvious that math is the discipline with the most strategic and intensive students. Unfortunately, it is one of the more important disciplines to school success. The other is English/Language Arts. Charts for English and Math strategic and intensive students by percent of testing population are given below. Comments follow.
The trends are promising. English’s intensive population is shrinking, even as the school population is becoming gradually more economically disadvantaged. This improvement appears at each ELA grade, falling off to nearly half the level it had at its peak—overall and at each grade. Overall, the peak was 30% of the testing population; the low is presently 17% of the population. That’s a drop from 500 intensive students in English, to about 280. The strategic populations are flat, except in ELA 11, where they have risen 7%. This effect is somewhat balanced by the fact that ELA 11 also had the biggest drop in intensive students, a full 15% of the population.

Math dropped too, from 69% of the population to 54%. However, this is still a very large proportion of students in the intensive category, and a serious cause for concern.

CST SUBGROUPS

Data for subgroups is given below in bar graph format by percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced. The analysis spans all three years of ELA, and a representative sample of all other disciplines across all three grades. Physics representing grade 9; geometry, grade 10 (and 9); and US History, grade 11.
Across all grade levels of English, the African American and Asian groups have experienced the best and most steady gains. The economically disadvantaged group enjoyed a step up in the last two years. Grade 11 had been lagging in white subgroup performance, but has made dramatic moves to catch up to grades 9 and 10. The EL group has been doing best in grade 9 (compared to how it has done in grades 10 and 11). However, it has moved downward in grade 11, to have virtually no representation in...
proficient or advanced performance levels last year. Oddly students with disabilities of done increasingly better in grade 11 ELA, and best in grade 9.

The most compelling change has been for the Asian subgroup in science and math. Changes are stunning, demanding thought. The Serra Asian subgroup in the mid-2000’s held steady at 22% of freshmen scoring proficient or advanced. By the most recent year (2009), it had risen to 59%--nearly tripling the number of students! Geometry tells almost the same story for this subgroup.

With the exception of the Asian Subgroup, Geometry has not yielded many other successes over time. US History has been shown increases for all subgroups except the EL and the disabled.

**California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)**

The exit exams play several roles in high school. 1) They test for minimal math and English competency, withholding diplomas from students not scoring at least 350 on each exam. 2) Along with the CSTs, they contribute to a school’s API score, and 3) they provide targets for federal compliance with Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as an AMO, granting proficiency for each score at or above 380. This third effect is logged in the AYP section above. It is the substance of the graphs found there. In this section we show how many of the school’s 10th graders are passing the exams. Since all 550+ students test in grade 10, we show only percentages.

Serra, like the state, has seen increases in CAHSEE pass rates at grade 10. In both subjects pass rates outpace the state, 85% to 80%.
CAHSEE SUBGROUPS

Pass rates have mostly held steady for the English test, though they have been rising for math (to catch up to English levels). The major subgroups have closer levels of performance than for the CSTs. However, pass rates for the English test have been falling for EL and Students with Disabilities. These two subgroups also remain the lowest of the set, passing at a rate of about 40% compared to from 70 to 90% in the other subgroups.
California English Language Development Test (CELDT)

In Serra’s most recent tested year, there were 175 students spread across all levels of English Language Development. (See below.) Serra has had about 175 students each of the past 4 years, up from 138 students in 2004-05. The charts below the table show Serra’s progress moving these students into the higher levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
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<td>6.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early Adv</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>29.0%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>47.0%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intermed</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>57.0%</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>55.0%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>41.0%</td>
<td>91</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early Interm</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
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<td>10.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Beginning</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
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<td>0.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
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<td>TOTALS</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>175</td>
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</tr>
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</table>
The set of charts show some definite changes in Serra’s success moving students to the upper performance levels in CELDT. From an absolute perspective, 2005 and 2006 seem like good years, but the students did well from the start of their high school experience, testing high in grade 9. This implies either that the population of skilled English Learners has changed or that grade 9 at Serra used to be quite productive. In all likelihood, students arrived more skilled in 2005 and 2006.

Another pattern is the success of grade 11 in most of the past 5 years. Last year was successful relative to the state. From grade 9 to 11, there was a 24% movement into the higher levels, compared to 10% at the state level. However, the patterns have not held steady over the years, and, with these small populations, it is hard to attribute the success to the program. It would be more valid to look at cohorts, e.g., grade 9 in 2005, then grade 10 in 2006, etc.; but this analysis is not conclusive. The best that can be said is that Serra’s CELDT performance is comparable to the state’s.
Serra High School has sought to increase the number of students taking AP courses and exams. We plan on adding AP Physics to our offerings for 2010-2011. The numbers and charts below will show how Serra has done in numbers of students taking AP courses, sitting for exams, and passing those exams. The data also compare Serra’s percentages to those of the San Diego Unified School District.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AP Participation</th>
<th>2006-07</th>
<th>2007-08</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment, Gr 10-12</td>
<td>1396</td>
<td>1361</td>
<td>1328</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in a Course</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>409</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Took an Exam</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>403</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passed an Exam</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>190</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHS % of Population in AP</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHS % of Population Taking an exam</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHS % of Population Passing an exam</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment, Gr 10-12</td>
<td>22513</td>
<td>22492</td>
<td>22654</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in a Course</td>
<td>5928</td>
<td>5751</td>
<td>6061</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Took an Exam</td>
<td>5269</td>
<td>5234</td>
<td>5896</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passed an Exam</td>
<td>2752</td>
<td>2707</td>
<td>2949</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDUSD % of Population in AP</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDUSD % of Population Taking an exam</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDUSD % of Population Passing an exam</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though Serra has experienced a decrease in the number of students enrolled and sitting for an exam, it has enjoyed a slight increase in the percentage of students who pass an AP exam (from 13 up to 14%). Serra’s percentage of students enrolled in an AP
course (31%) has fallen near to that of the district’s (27%). Despite these differences, Serra has 1% more students passing an AP exam than the district.

Serra’s higher percentage of students taking an AP course implies that the school is effective at recruiting broadly among its various subpopulations. Now the challenge is to increase passing rates.
Chapter II:

Student/Community Profile – Overall Summary from Analysis of Profile Data
CHAPTER 2: STUDENT AND COMMUNITY PROFILE: OVERALL SUMMARY FROM ANALYSIS OF PROFILE DATA

What are the implications of the data with respect to student performance?

Serra High School’s achievement gap is narrowing. The economically disadvantaged population API lags the school-wide API by 7%. For comparison, the state’s difference is 13%. Furthermore, the gap is getting narrower with each passing year. While this is also true for the state, Serra’s movement is faster.

This phenomenon demands reflection. What is the source of the success: tutoring and remedial programs, commitment to standards, small communities, collaboration, and/or teacher professional development?

Despite the relative success towards closing the achievement gap, challenges remain. Serra is in the first year of program improvement, because the EL subgroup failed to meet math AMOs the last two years. Also, the EL and the Hispanic subgroup missed ELA AMO proficiency in our most recent year. Projections show that both groups and the socioeconomically disadvantaged will miss the rising targets for 2010 in both ELA and math. CAHSEE support classes may help, but other interventions will be needed, at least to meet Safe Harbor. Furthermore, CAHSEE support classes may need to increase enrollment for grade 10 students (those whose practice CAHSEE or CST scores predict trouble with the grade 10 test).

A focus on the Hispanic subgroup will meet the needs of a major portion of the economically disadvantaged group. Of course, the EL subgroup requires its own strategies.

Serra has made strong gains in API. Also, Serra’s similar schools decile ranking of 8 shows that the school has a high capacity for serving its students. However, Serra’s gains have been volatile. For example, Serra’s API is 63 points higher than it was two years ago. This gain came in the first of those two years. From one perspective, this year’s retreat by 3 points is essentially a successful maintenance and capture of the previous year’s gain. Serra missed the five-point target regardless, losing three points in 2009. Therefore, some way must be found to identify and nail-in-place those mechanisms that are responsible for the gains. Once accomplished, gains could be smoothed out to yield a regular increase. Reflection is needed.

Serra has traditionally done better in English and Social Science than Math and Science. Recently, however, science CST scores have risen dramatically. Of course, all four disciplines need to continue to make gains, but the current condition of the four core disciplines shows that math needs the most attention right now. Science’s gains directly followed a reconfiguration of course offerings and a time of tight collaboration among its teachers. Perhaps a similar focus on math will jump start big gains in that discipline.
Math’s predicament is easily seen by looking at the strategic and intensive CST charts on page 25. English’s intensive group (below and far below basic) has fallen almost to 15% of the tested population. Math, on the other hand is still above 50% intensive. Intensive students cry out for extra instruction. Yet the intensive group is so large that providing double-math periods for each person in that group would overwhelm the master-schedule. This implies that some other form of radical intervention is needed.

The good news is that addressing this problem would have other beneficial effects on the health of the school. Oddly, the EL group is doing better in English CAHSEE than in math CAHSEE (having missed ELA only one of the two previous years, while missing math twice). The fact that the EL group is doing better in English implies that the EL group can make significant gains in math, with the right strategies in place. Therefore, a strong support for math in general (and specifically in grades 9 and 10) could possibly get us and keep us out of program improvement.

More good news about math is that its intensive group has been falling. Both the math and English charts (p. 25) show a sharp turning point down in this population starting in 2007. Ensuring that this trend continues will help both CST and CAHSEE results (API and AYP).

The persistent lagging success among EL students is a concern. Serra’s recent construction of an English Language Acquisition Committee is a definite boon to the campus. It’s size and involvement must grow.

Finally, as always, freshman attendance needs to be supported to ensure timely graduation.

Critical Academic Needs Identified

1. Focus on reducing the size of the school-wide intensive population in CST mathematics.

2. Address the particular needs of the EL population, which has not participated in Serra’s success in closing the economically disadvantaged subgroup’s achievement gap. Attention needs to be paid to ELs’ performance on English and Mathematics CAHSEE as well as the CSTs of each core discipline. Developing ELAC should be one venue. Instructional strategies, extracurricular interventions, and scheduling supports are other possible approaches.

3. Continue to address attendance issues. Students must become and remain engaged in school. Ten to succeed, small communities, career pathways, and possible radical restructuring of the school day may each contribute to a higher graduation rate and improved academic success.
4. Identify the next steps in professional development and school restructuring. Maintain and improve that which has worked; scrap that which has not; lay down logical next steps; and consider deep restructuring.

Important Questions raised by the analysis of student performance, demographic, and perception data.

1. How do we identify and build on those supports that have yielded drops in CST English and Math intensive groups?

2. To address the intense need for improvements in math scores, do we need to focus on tutoring, instruction, schedule changes, or some combination? How sweeping do these changes need to be? (See question 3.)

3. Can we build on past successes, or is massive restructuring the best way to ensure future gains in API, AYP, and graduation rate?

4. How will Serra High address subpopulations (especially EL) to bring the school out of Program Improvement?
Chapter III:

Progress Report
CHAPTER 3: PROGRESS REPORT

Schoolwide goals at Serra are monitored yearly through the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA) process. The SPSA is reviewed and revised yearly to help all students achieve at a high level. SMART goals have been adopted by the district as the structure for reviewing student achievement and for planning and meeting the needs for student growth. The school site council, made up of stakeholders including teachers, staff, administration, parents, and students, has the responsibility to approve the SPSA. The plan is submitted to the district program accountability office and is in turn submitted to the school board for approval.

**Goal 1: Increase rigor by aligning core courses to content area standards with common units of instruction, curricular maps, and assessments.**

*Continue implementation of Fundamental Teaching Practices*

Formerly, Serra was using the “Fundamental Teaching Elements and Expectations for All Classrooms.” Although the Fundamental Elements still appear on the Serra website, our school’s focus has been to ensure that all students have access to a rigorous standards-based curriculum. The majority of this work has occurred in Professional Learning Communities, or PLCs. Although we do not refer to the Fundamental Teaching Elements specifically, agendas are expected to be posted with objectives and clear expectations for each lesson. There has also been professional development focused on raising the level of questioning using both Bloom’s taxonomy and Costas’ level of questioning.

*Increase professional development opportunities to develop teaching strategies for greater student success.*

There is time during the workday available for meetings on modified Wednesdays each week. PLCs generally meet once a month. PLCs at Serra are course-alike groups who and review student data, share instructional strategies and develop common assessments. There are currently curricular maps in place for the core content areas, although they are not universally followed. Continued discussion and refinement of the curricular maps is ongoing during department and PLC meetings. Work on curricular maps for electives continues. During the 2007-08 school year, one of the foci of the PLCs was improving standardized test scores and sharing test-taking strategies with students. Serra’s API score rose from 671 in the 2007-08 school year to 737 during 2008-09. During 2008-09, the administration chose writing as the priority at Serra. Raising test scores and access to a rigorous curriculum help students produce quality work in all areas and become academic achievers.
Ensure that students are appropriately placed in core curricular classes.

Students choose courses with guidance from counselors and teachers. Student placement in courses is determined by completion of prerequisite courses, student interest, students’ grades, performance on assessments including CAHSEE, CELDT, CST and course placement exams, as well as teacher recommendations. Electives and course information is available in the course catalog on the Serra website, through counselor presentations to students, and through grade level parent matriculation nights presented in February and March. Counselors present course options to incoming eighth graders at the middle schools. Every winter the incoming 9th graders from the two neighborhood middle schools visit Serra. During their visit the students tour the campus and attend assemblies where they are exposed to courses and extra-curricular programs offered at Serra. Counselors meet individually with each student to discuss the student’s schedule.

Interpret student performance data to shape instruction.

At the beginning of each school year, the administration shares with the staff CST results as they relate to academic grades and classroom performance. In creating and revising SMART goals for the SPSA, disaggregated data is analyzed to target meeting the needs of all students in order to close the achievement gap. Data on performance of subpopulations was reviewed to help the school meet the needs of all our student populations and to help raise the achievement of all students. Teachers have access to Data Director to review results of CST and other assessments, including district benchmarks in mathematics and reading diagnostic scores, for their students. Teachers can create their own reports to analyze data. Common formative assessments and writing prompts are developed within many course-alike groups, our PLCs. District benchmarks (in Geometry, Algebra Explorations, and Advanced Geometry) and end-of-course exams are used in some classrooms. AP Exam student responses are being ordered for this year’s administration to review student performance and inform instruction in those classes. Benchmarks are used regularly, but not daily, in many classrooms. The PSAT is offered to all 9th, 10th, and 11th graders, and the results are shared during a tutorial period. The tutorial lesson about PSAT focused on helping students recognize their strengths and weaknesses on the PSAT, setting goals to improve performance on similar tests, and planning and looking ahead to their prospects for college.

Increase interdepartmental collaboration.

The majority of interdepartmental collaboration has occurred through the Small Learning Communities, or SLCs. Intradepartmental teacher collaboration is encouraged through PLCs. The English department has had pullout days for collaboration. Teachers in the mathematics and English departments have participated in district course-alike professional development and share out information in department meetings.
Better utilize existing site-based technologies.

Technology classes are offered periodically during prep periods on what we call Web Wednesdays. The classes are open to any teacher with an interest in using technology to improve student achievement. The content of the classes is selected by teacher interest and the needs called out in the annual California Technology Assistance Project (CTAP) staff survey. Web Wednesdays have included classes on databases, WebQuests, Graphic Organizers, creating teacher websites with GoogleSites, GoogleDocs, GoogleEarth and Gradebook, the district’s web-based grading program. The school sent teachers and administrators to both the Computer Using Educators (CUE) Conference in Palm Springs and the local San Diego CUE conference. The staff members who attended the conferences shared the latest Web 2.0 tools with the entire staff at Serra CUEniversity held on one of our early leave Wednesdays. Emphasis was place on using on-line collaboration tools as a way to promote student engagement and reach a deeper level of understanding.

In 2008 on-site after school trainings were held on Data Director and ConnectEdTeacher, two new web-based programs adopted by the district. Interested teachers were taught how use Data Director to access student achievement data. In the ConnectEdTeacher workshop teachers learned how to send home automated messages regarding student performance and behaviors to parents in the home language.

In the Fall of 2009, all members of the four core departments received more intensive professional development in the use of Data Director during our early leave Wednesdays. The teachers were taught not only how to use the program to review student data but to also use Data Director to create their own assessments. The workshops covered how to link teacher created assessments to standards and then how to use to the Data Director report tools to see how well they were meeting those standards. Also beginning in the Fall of 2009, all of our Math teachers attended district training as part of the i21 Interactive Classroom program. They learned how to use the newly installed interactive whiteboards and the student netbooks.

Our ability to use technology helps us work more efficiently, communicate with parents and students, and enhance the instructional program. Students’ abilities to use technology will allow them to become better communicators through discovery and creating effective presentations and documents.

Goal 2: Increase schoolwide expectations to ensure that all students, including all subpopulations, will be prepared to enter and complete a four-year college or university after graduation.

Create a college going culture.
At Serra, approximately 40% of graduates are meeting a-g requirements for UC/CSU schools. Most class offerings at Serra meet UC/CSU a-g requirements. All students are encouraged to take mathematics all four years, and to take three years of foreign language. The counselors present a-g requirements to students at every grade level during matriculation and to parents at parent nights held to share information about course offerings, graduation requirements and a-g requirements for UC and CSU schools. Each year, students review their progress towards meeting graduation and college entrance requirements with their counselor and sign a form indicating what they need to do meet those goals. For students not on track, a copy of the form is sent home to parents and conferences can be held, as needed.

In 2005 the district used Carnegie and Gates funds to pay for all 10th graders to take the PSAT during school hours. In 2006, Serra supplemented this by using site funds to pay for all 11th graders to take the PSAT as well. In 2007, there was no funding to pay for large groups of students to take the PSAT so the test was given on a Saturday to only those students who paid for the exam. Since 2008, all 9th, 10th, and 11th grade students have taken the PSAT during school hours and the district has picked up the cost of the exam. Grade level tutorials are held in January to review PSAT results, discuss the purpose of the PSAT, and help students recognize their strengths in writing and mathematics.

**Increase the number of students taking advanced and Advanced Placement (AP) classes.**

Serra had attempted to increase access to AP courses by allowing any student to select an AP course without restrictions. This was an attempt to reduce barriers to enrollment in AP courses. The result has made it difficult to meet the needs of students in AP classes, as described by teachers and demonstrated by AP scores. The current philosophy is to ramp up students’ readiness to increase enrollment in AP courses by increasing the number of students who are prepared for rigorous workload of AP courses. Many teachers discuss course selection with students and encourage students to choose advanced level courses in the lower grades according to student readiness and willingness to engage in a more challenging curriculum. The school also sent home a letter encouraging students to consider taking AP and advanced courses. The letters were sent to homes of students who showed promise according to the College Board’s AP potential program. Since the last WASC visit, Serra has added a French language AP course. In 2008-09, Serra has begun participation in an AP grant focused on building the AP program. Part of the grant is intended to increase access for all subpopulations to the AP curriculum, prepare students to enter the AP program through vertical teaming, and improving AP test scores for all students. The AP department has offered spring parent nights to make parents and students familiar with the offerings and requirements of the AP program. Also, in the 2008-09 school year, any student enrolled in an AP course had the opportunity to take the corresponding exam at no cost.

**Strengthen and expand AVID program to promote student success in rigorous courses.**
Students enrolled in AVID are expected to be enrolled in at least one advanced or AP course, and the AVID administrator works with the counseling department to help students choose appropriate classes and review student schedules. The administration is currently making efforts to offer a period 7 AVID course to allow continued access to the AVID program to students during their sophomore year. The AVID coordinator visits feeder schools and makes presentations to promote the AVID program.

Advanced and AP classes are offered at Serra. The program has flexibility. Students are not placed into rigid tracks. Students may qualify for advanced courses based on their grades, teacher recommendations and student scores on standardized tests.

**Goal 3: Design and implement strategies to increase opportunities for all students to connect to Serra High School in personal ways in order to ensure academic success.**

*Analyze and investigate incoming 9th graders’ academic data and identify strategies that will assist their specific target needs.*

In addition to the implementation of FOCUS (see “explore/develop smaller learning communities”), Serra has developed support classes to encourage success of incoming 9th graders. At Serra, there exists a math support course for 9th graders enrolled in Algebra Explorations. There are also English support classes for incoming ninth grade English learners. Middle School academic performance and standardized test scores are the indicators used for selection of students for these courses. Students may also self-select one of these courses if they so choose.

*Create supports and strategies that will continue to reduce the achievement gap.*

Serra High School has many opportunities for students to receive academic assistance and participate in activities that help them feel a connection to the school. With use of grant money and Title I funds, the Academic Support Assistance Program (ASAP), a before and after school tutoring program, was started in late Fall 2008. The Media Center is open, computers are available for student use, and teachers supervise and offer students assistance completing school projects and homework. The program is also offered one night each week. Before and after school and at lunch and peer tutoring is also offered through Serra Real Connections as well as individual teachers.

Students who do not pass the CAHSEE exam are enrolled in CAHSEE preparation classes during the regular school day. Separate math CAHSEE and English CAHSEE classes are available. In 2008-09 a credit recovery program was added to the regular school day. Students can make up credits through online Apex courses under the guidance of the graduation coach. Students can also enroll in success school, our extended day program, or summer school to make up credits for graduation and to meet the UC/CSU a-g requirements.
In addition to clubs, sports, and ASB-sponsored activities, Serra has made efforts to help students feel connected to the school. A special after school program, called Opportunities, funded by the ASSETS grant was established during the 2008-09 school year. The program enables the school to offer activities such as ceramics, weight training, scrapbooking and driver’s education, to our students. An Opportunities recreation room featuring foos ball, air hockey and the Wii was opened in the Fall of 2009.

Explore/develop smaller learning communities.

Serra pursued a grant to develop small learning communities to help students feel more connected to the school and develop a sense of a community of learners among our students and staff. Prior to the 2004-05 school year, freshman teachers developed a program for the 9th grade teams. The program was called Freshmen Organized to Create Ultimate Success (FOCUS). An effort was made to put all the 9th grade classrooms in the 200 building. New technology was purchase for all 9th grade classrooms. Four 9th grade teams were formed; students in each team shared a math teacher, English teacher and science teacher. Teachers shared a common prep to discuss curriculum and students. Special assemblies and team-building activities were scheduled, including a 9th grade dinner and special speaker. Conferences were planned and held for struggling students with all the core teachers present. The corresponding increase in test scores in the year that FOCUS was introduced was a major indicator that the program was a success.

Each subsequent year, a new grade level added an SLC. In 2005-06, the Sophomore School of Humanities was introduced. Humanities teachers carefully planned their instruction and integrate the curriculum into a humanities block. Teachers work closely together not only in preparing the curriculum, but also in discussing students’ needs. In 2006-07, the Project American Dream, grade 11 (PAD 11) was introduced and in 2007-08, Project American Dream, grade 12 was introduced. In PAD 11, English and history teachers were paired and students shared two teachers. The theme for the junior year of PAD 11 was Charting the Course. The emphasis of the eleventh grade year was exploration. The intent was for students to explore various academic paths, possible future careers, and ultimately, what it means to them to fulfill their American Dream. PAD 12, although called a small learning community was truly a series of supports to assist seniors in completing their senior exhibition and graduation requirements. Students were set up with mentors from the staff and were to meet and discuss their exhibition plans.

Despite our best efforts, the SLCs that followed FOCUS were never as successful as the 9th grade SLC. The challenges of scheduling multiple small schools while still maintaining the benefits of a truly comprehensive high school could never be overcome. Ultimately the end of the grant funding, multiple changes of district focus, the master schedule problems and the loss of some of the architects of the SLCs, has caused many elements of the original SLCs to fade away. Currently FOCUS and SSH still exist at Serra but they are still hanging on thanks to key teachers who believe in the benefits that
SLCs have to offer. They are loosely structured and have been transformed into grade-level teams. In 9th grade, the focus is on character development and study skills for all students and rewarding achievement through the FOCUS awards. In the Sophomore School of Humanities, students complete a joint research paper in English and social studies classes. SSH also recognizes student achievement with award certificates every six weeks. The seniors still receive support in completing their senior exhibition and community service hours but not as part of the 12th grade SLC. Students at all grade levels are expected to complete an exhibition and portfolio. This looser structure has led to the belief by some staff members that SLCs do not currently exist at Serra.

During the 2008-09 year, the administration facilitated discussions of the key elements of SLCs and how to bring back parts of the our former SLC structure that they thought were important in helping students connect to the Serra community and making the high school experience positive.

**Goal 4: Staff needs to be appropriately fair, firm, and consistent in the application of disciplinary practices in order to meet the needs of students.**

Members of the staff reviewed the school discipline policy to make sure expectations were reasonable and clearly stated. The ESLR’s (now The Q 5) and school policies are posted in every classroom. School discipline policies are published in the summer mailing (in English and Spanish), the Serra student planner and on the web site. The discipline policies are also communicated to students and staff through the use of a school-wide video presentation, grade-level assemblies and classroom visitations by the administration. Students and parents sign a discipline contract at the beginning of the school year, indicating they have read and understand the school’s discipline policies.

The LOP, or Loss of Privileges List has been developed as a way to encourage students to be on time to class and to reduce the number of tardies. Supervision staff, counselors and administrators write down names of tardy students fairly and consistently to ensure students are held accountable for being on time. Teachers are instructed and encouraged to stand at their doors to greet students and to consistently mark students tardy. Students with excessive tardies lose privileges such as participating in athletics or attending dances. At this time, there is not a similar strategy to encourage students to be in class and to hold students accountable for unexcused absences.

Although some teachers have participated in professional development for behavior management and to increase student engagement, there has not been systemic focus on this issue or specific supports in place for teachers with particular needs in this area. Teachers can seek assistance with behavioral issues from the counseling department or their department chairperson. The vice principals intervene for serious issues. Since the last WASC visit the vice principals routinely calibrate to ensure consistency and that all students receive similar consequences for similar infractions.
Goal 5: A broader range of parents, including those from outside the Tierrasanta community, need to receive communication in their primary language using multiple means in order to ensure more involvement in the school to support the success of their students.

The PTO newsletter, the *Serra Spirit*, is published every six weeks in both English and in Spanish. Communication with Serra parents is facilitated through the use of ConnectEd. The administration records customized messages in English and Spanish. ConnectEd allows the school to send these messages to all or selected staff and parents. This system is also integrated with the attendance system to call homes when a student has been marked absent during the day. ConnectEdTeacher allows teachers to choose from a set of pre-recorded messages and send them to all or selected parents in the home language. ParentConnect is available to parents in order to view student attendance information. Parents can also view student progress for classes if their teachers use GradeBook. Every two weeks is Pink Progress Report Day. Students can have all the teachers sign off on their grades and take the pink progress reports to their parents. Dates for the Pink Progress Report Days are sent home in the summer mailing and published in the *Serra Spirit*.

The Serra website is available in multiple languages with information for staff, students, parents, and the community. All but two of our clerical staff speaks more than one language and communicate with parents in their primary language whenever possible. Serra has also increased the number of clerical staff who are paid the bilingual differential to translate for parent/teacher conferences, SSC meetings, and other school meetings. If the office staff is not available district translators are bought in. SSC agendas and minutes are available on the Serra website in Spanish and English. The entire summer mailing, which contains registration materials, contact information, school rules, student contracts, important dates, information about our various parent organizations and volunteer opportunities is now printed in English on one side and Spanish on the other. Every home receives all the materials in both languages. We also have copies of the district produced *Facts For Parents* in the most common of our home languages available on request.

The administration has held several parent meetings, including the English Learners Advisory Committee (ELAC) at schools in our feeder patterns outside the Tierrasanta community. ELAC agendas and minutes are also posted on the Serra website in English and Spanish. Williams Act posters are posted in every room in six different languages.
CHAPTER IV:

SELF-STUDY FINDINGS
CHAPTER IV: SELF-STUDY FINDINGS

WASC Focus Group A: Organization:
Vision and Purpose, Governance, Leadership and Staff, and Resources

Criterion A-1 - The school has a clearly stated vision or purpose based on its student needs, current educational research, and the belief that all students achieve at high levels. Supported by the governing board (San Diego City Schools Board of Education) and the central administration (San Diego Unified School District), the school's purpose is defined further by expected school-wide learning results and the academic standards. The expected school-wide learning results stress attainment of the academic standards.

What Currently Exists:

In the course of the Focus on Learning process it was discovered that Serra did not have a mission statement. Students, staff, administrators and parents were asked to submit mission statements. Six variations were submitted and placed on the school’s web site. All stakeholders were asked to complete an on line survey to select the best mission statement. 13% of the survey respondents were students. 61% were staff, 18% parents, 4% community and 3% defined themselves as “other”. After three months, the survey was closed in January 2010 and the following became the Serra High School Mission Statement:

The mission of Serra High School is to provide rigorous, relevant, standards-based curriculum that will prepare our students to be responsible citizens and productive members of the 21st century workforce.

The School ESLRs have been revised and updated to include student awareness of global issues. At the district’s request, the “Results” in ESLRs was changed to “Goals” in the Fall of 2009. The “Expected” no longer worked when Results was changed to Goals so it was determined that we needed a new name for our Schoolwide Learning Goals. They are now called the Q5 and outline expectations for all Serra students upon graduation. The Q5 were drafted and with input from all instructional leadership team members and were approved for publication.

Student Study Team (SST) — An SST is assembled for any student whose academic performance or change in behavior is leading to failing grades. An SST is initiated by the counselor after consistent problems are reported by teachers or parents and consists of parents, counselors, teachers and other school staff to review the student’s performance and determine interventions needed for student improvement. Teachers, parents, and counselors monitor these interventions over a period of time. If the interventions have not helped then further meetings are held to discuss alternatives.
Site Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA)—The site plan is based upon a thorough analysis of student academic performance. The actions proposed in the SPSA form a sound, comprehensive, and coordinated plan to reach stated school goals to improve student academic performance:

**GOAL #1 for Improving Student Achievement**: -- All students must be provided the opportunity to meet state content standards at grade level. Our goal, as required by new Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs), is that 44.5% of students schoolwide, including all significant subgroups, will score proficient or above on the ELA portion of the CAHSEE (with a score of 380 or above) on the tenth grade CAHSEE in the spring of 2010.

**GOAL #2 for Improving Student Achievement**: -- All students must be provided the opportunity to meet state content standards at grade level. Our goal, as required by new Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs), is that 43.5% of students schoolwide, including all significant subgroups, will score proficient or above on the Math portion of the CAHSEE (with a score of 380 or above) on the tenth grade CAHSEE in the spring of 2010.

**Areas of Need**:
- Q-5s need to be introduced soon to enable students time to meet expectation of achievement for senior exhibitions and for general knowledge. School staff needs time to assimilate Q-5 and disseminate and promote information to students.
- Introduce Q5 to students in the freshman year and incorporate them into all exhibitions—freshman, sophomore, junior and senior.

**Criterion A-2** - *The governing board (a) had policies and bylaws that are aligned with the school’s purpose and support the achievement of the ESLRs and academic standards based on data driven instructional decisions for the school; (b) delegates implementation of these policies to the professional staff; and (c) monitors results regularly and approves the single school-wide action plans and its relationship to the Local Education Agency plan.*

**What Currently Exists:**

Governance at Serra High School is comprised of three different groups: the School Site Council (SSC), the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), and the Administrative Council.

Serra’s School Site Council is a state-mandated governing body whose members include the principal, four teachers, three parents, and three students. The California Department of Education requires an SSC in all schools that receive Title 1 or categorical funding. Each year the SSC reviews, updates and approves the school’s SPSA based on Serra’s California Standards Test (CST) data, California English Language Development Test (CELDT) scores, and SMART Goals. The district-assigned and department-designed SMART Goals are also incorporated into the SPSA. SMART Goals are achievable.
objectives created by each department that identify the level of improvement that students will achieve in that area. Each goal has a time frame that extends over one year. The SSC evaluation and monitoring procedures also include the study of the overall school operations including budgets and facilities.

Members of the SSC are elected by their respective stakeholder groups. In the summer, all parents are sent a ballot in their student’s registration packet. Mini-biographies of the candidates are posted on the school’s website and the election is held at the Fall Open House in September. Teachers and staff are elected by their peers through a secret ballot. Students are chosen through a lunchtime election coordinated by the Associated Student Body. Students are made aware of the election through the school bulletin.

The relationship between the SSC and the parents is established through the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) newsletter (the Serra Spirit) and the community newspaper (the Tierra Times). All meeting times, agendas and minutes are posted on the school website. Serra’s teachers are aware of the SSC and its role in maintaining the SPSA through faculty meetings, email and notices in mailboxes. Clear lines of authority and responsibilities are stated in the bylaws of the SSC. All meetings are open to the public.

The Instructional Leadership Team includes the site administrators, department chairpersons, the athletic director, the ASB advisor, and the head counselor. This group meets at least once a month to disseminate information, evaluate test scores, discuss school needs for improvement, progress on school goals, plan for professional development, make policy decisions and recommendations to SSC.

The ILT uses the district SMART goals to help determine Serra’s SMART goals which are included in the SPSA. Each department, based on student achievement on CST data, reviews student performance on daily curriculum and grade-level common assessments, writes achievable, measurable and observable goals. These SMART goals address ways in which departments can assist their students in improving scores on standardized tests in their respective areas. Teachers, as well as members of the SSC, are learning how to implement the district’s new SMART goals. This is a new concept mandated from the superintendent last year.

The Administrative Council is comprised of the principal, three vice principals, the school site operations specialist, the head counselor, the supervising administrative assistant, the plant operations specialist, the nurse, the athletic director and the ASB advisor. This group meets at least once a week to discuss student achievement and test scores, plan professional development activities, approve student and faculty requests, update the school calendar and discuss implementation of upcoming activities that impact the school as a whole and discuss any other pertinent issues.

Serra's principal is the central figure acting as a liaison between all three governing boards and the district. He meets weekly with all governing bodies and the High School Improvement Officer, the Local Educational Agency representative (LEA) to discuss district mandates.
Areas of Need:

- The SSC delegates the implementation of their findings as written in SPSA to the professional staff through the ILT. The governing boards of Serra High School function both independently and in conjunction with each other. Much of the work of the SSC is reported out to the ILT. The ILT brings the information back to their departments. Disseminating information electronically can get the information to members who did not attend the ILT meetings.

- It is recommended that the SPSA be brought to the attention of the faculty during a meeting early in the school year where it can be discussed. Each faculty member can then better understand the entire plan and how it affects their teaching strategies.

Criterion A-3 - Based on student achievement data, the school leadership makes decisions and initiates activities that focus on all students achieving the ESLRs and the academic standards. 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.

What Currently Exists:

Broad-based and Collaborative — The school’s planning process is broad-based, collaborative and has the commitment and input from all stakeholders, including the staff, students, and parents.

The school’s leadership team works closely with key members of various shareholder groups including the SSC and English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC). Ideas, innovations, and input from the school community are valued and solicited by encouraging participation during Open House and Spring Showcase. Ideas from the school community are regularly expressed through special interest groups such as the Serra High School Foundation and the PTO. The leadership team communicates regularly with members of the school community through the ILT and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).

School Plan Correlated to Student Learning — Serra’s SPSA and analysis of student achievement, Q5, and the California academic standards are used by the faculty to improve teaching instructional methods.

The school's vision is shared with the community and everyone in the school community is encouraged to help students achieve this vision. Some of these community groups include club and sports booster programs, the Serra High School Foundation, the PTO, and the Associated Student Body.

As part of Serra High School's plan to improve test scores and develop overall improvement within departments, administrators have asked for SMART Goals to be developed. These goals are department based and were created to show improvements on student achievement as well as teacher practices. The administration has given department chairs directives to construct growth targets. Teachers within each
department use common assessments throughout the year to evaluate the progress of the determined SMART Goals. On professional development days or in FOCUS group meetings teachers review these common assessment results. Departments have determined a percent for improvement on specific areas of need. The SMART Goals and results will be reviewed the following fall.

**Areas of Need:**

- Data and teacher recommendations should be used consistently for placement and articulation in next year’s scheduling of all students.

**Criterion A-4 - A qualified staff facilitates achievement of the academic standards and the ESLRs through a system of preparation, induction, and ongoing professional development.**

**What Currently Exists:**

Teachers have expertise in their subject area(s) as determined by their California State Teaching Credential(s). There is also continuous professional development offered over the summer and during the school year. These programs include AP & Gate teachers.

All teachers and paraprofessionals participate in professional development throughout the year including summer. Teachers meet regularly in the following: home groups (departments), focus groups (WASC), Professional Learning Communities (course-a-likes), and whole staff trainings. These meetings facilitate collaboration among staff for course-alike teachers, grade-level coordination, and WASC preparation. Selected staff members are trained through the district or attend conferences, then disseminate the information to the rest of the staff with suggestions on how to apply the techniques/information in individual classrooms in order to improve student engagement and achievement.

Teachers and paraprofessional are teaching in their credentialed areas thereby complying with state and federal No Child Left Behind requirements. In addition to the appropriate credential, teachers are given the option to request a particular assignment based on additional certifications and personal strengths/interests. For example, English classes for students reading significantly below grade level are taught by teachers trained in strategies for supporting struggling readers and writers.

To aid teachers new to the profession, the state provides resources in the form of the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program. New teachers at Serra go through the state-mandated BTSA program in which they receive a specially trained mentor to support them with classroom management techniques and alternative teaching methods that are research based.

Cluster Support Teachers (CST) support administration, teachers, para-educators, and parents in all area concerning increasing the academic achievement level of students that have an IEP. They assist with coordination of services, classroom management/positive
behavioral supports, scheduling, and compliance with district, state, and federal regulations.

Each core department has academic standards that are assessed through standardized testing. Most teachers have access to their subject matter standards via the California state standards website. The adoption of new textbooks helps teachers improve delivery of standards-based material. These textbooks are on an adoption cycle and are based on state standards.

All core subject teachers have been trained on the new Data Director program. This program allows teachers to more accurately identify student needs through access to test data of all students from past school years. This data is then used to modify and reflect on instructional practices. Another component of the program allows for common assessments to be created within course-alike classes and the results to be disaggregated. Each home group is beginning to utilize the data collected from common assessments to measure student achievement and re-develop curriculum based on the results.

Promethean Boards were provided to math teachers this year by the district in order to diversify delivery of mathematical concepts. The boards also included a delivery of companion projector and individual laptops for students. There have been several staff developments for math teachers to become proficient at using this new technology.

Students will use the Q5 to complete their senior exhibitions this year. Students are required to explain how they have achieved mastery of the Q5 during completion of their senior exhibitions.

Areas of Need:

• The school needs to provide sufficient time and resources for the successful implementation of the Q5.
• Each grade level needs to incorporate the Q5 into their end of year exhibitions.
• More teachers need training in the delivery of instruction using current technology in the classroom.
• The school needs to provide funds for all subject area teachers to attend professional development, not only the core subject area teachers, in order to keep up with changes in curriculum and technology.

Criterion A-5 - Leadership and staff are involved in ongoing professional development that focuses on identified student learning needs.

What Currently Exists:

Each year Serra administration and staff develop a comprehensive professional development plan based on student achievement data and teachers' knowledge and skill levels.
Professional Development—Serra High School supports professional development through expenditures of time, personnel, material, and money. This facilitates student achievement of California's academic standards and its expected positive learning results. Serra consistently devotes half of the school day each Wednesday for general staff meetings or the more focused PLCs which are organized by department. The PLCs in core content areas work together on pacing or developing common tests and assessments. Certificated staff members are sometimes sent for training that is shared with colleagues. Both unrestricted and categorical funds have been allocated to allow teachers to attend various professional development activities providing they fall under the SMART goals of that department.

Teachers are encouraged to communicate expectations to students through posting of standards, objectives, schedules and assignments in their classrooms. At the start of each school year students are given planners to keep track of class assignments. A growing number of teachers post assignments and grades on the Internet using Gradebook or other online grading program, have personal websites, and offer tutoring during lunch and after school.

The school district offers opportunities for professional development for newly adopted texts and for development of specific curricula. In response to the diversity in California's public schools, the district offers the Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) to better enable teachers to instruct students with multicultural backgrounds. Most of Serra's teachers have SDAIE or Crosscultural, Language, and Academic Development (CLAD) certification.

Supervision and Evaluation—Serra implements effective supervision and evaluation procedures to promote professional staff growth. Stull evaluations help teachers and administration to set mutually acceptable goals for student achievement. All teachers are required to be evaluated every two years. These evaluations also provide support for teachers who wish to improve some specific area(s) of their practice.

BTSA is a rigorous program dedicated to new teachers who are paired with more seasoned professionals who advise and assist them in the various aspects of pedagogy.

Teachers are encouraged to take the National Board Certification program in order to become nationally certified.

There are many indicators of student performance and teacher certification which, when considered, tend to positively affect current and future student performance. These include:

AYP and API scores
Graduation rates, CAHSEE scores, CST scores
Number of teachers with graduate degrees
Number of fully credentialed teachers
Number of teachers teaching outside of credential areas
Areas of Need:

• Teachers need to be made more aware of funding opportunities for professional development. More information on Professional Development opportunities needs to be made available to all staff members. Budget constraints have limited access to professional development opportunities.

Criterion 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 programs to support students in accomplishing in accordance with the legal intents of the program(s)

What Currently Exists:

The human, material, physical, and financial resources are sufficient for Serra to accomplish significant work in raising student achievement. Serra High School uses a variety of programs, both state/district mandated and staff initiated, to support the academic growth of its students. State guidelines coupled with the Q5 and SPSA guide some of the curriculum content and the instructional process.

The various committees on campus work to identify appropriate budgetary expenditures that support the school’s vision. Part of the budget planning process involves the ILT examining assessment data, including information from CSTs, CELDT scores, CAHSEE results, and other data information to determine schoolwide needs. This information is then shared with all stakeholders.

All of our resources are directed at critical needs and are used in accordance with the legal requirements of the funding programs. Some of the major resources available to support student achievement include:

• Title One, Economic Impact Aid and School Based Coordinated Program funds are used to provide supplemental programs and resources for areas of targeted need. These funds provide:
  • CAHSEE support teachers in both Math and English Language Arts
  • Literacy Advancement Academy teachers
  • Algebra Explorations Advancement Academy teachers
  • English language support teacher
  • English language development support
  • Parent Academic Liaison
  • Professional learning opportunities for teachers
Support for parent involvement, including newsletters to serve as a communication tool and support for meetings.

Serra received funds from Economic Impact Aid/Limited English Proficiency (Total Budget $42,417) and primarily uses these funds to support English learners through the use of our English learner support teacher and supplemental resources to make core contents accessible to English learners. Funds support the administration costs of CELDT.

Additional full time employees in counseling have been allocated to Serra High School through AB1802 funding.

The district allocates support for CAHSEE to the site in the form of additional staffing FTEs.

Accelerated Student Achievement and Performance (ASAP) is an after school tutoring program that is funded by a grant. This program is part of a larger web of student support services dedicated to tutoring struggling students or students who wish to improve or maintain their academic standing.

In terms of physical resources, Serra’s campus is clean and well maintained and is considered by staff, students and community to be a safe and orderly environment as documented by stakeholder surveys. The Serra Foundation contributes significant funding to improve campus beautification and safety. They have provided lights throughout campus and in the stadium, covered eating and social areas, and most recently, building signage. They have also provided funding and blueprints for the landscaping and signage project with the school name integrated in the design on the corner of the school that serves as a major entrance to the Tierrasanta community. In spite of cutbacks within the custodial and landscaping ranks, Serra’s campus continues to be clean, attractive, and safe for all stakeholders. Parts of the campus are open on the weekends for community and sporting events.

Areas of Need:

- Budget constraints are limiting improvements in all areas of campus life: human, physical, material, and financial.
WASC Focus Group B: Standards-based Student Learning: Curriculum

Criterion B1 - All students participate in a rigorous, relevant, and coherent standards-based curriculum that supports the achievement of the academic standards and the expected school-wide learning results. Through standards-based learning (what is taught and how it is taught), these are accomplished.

Current Educational Research and Thinking

All students in a diploma-bound program are enrolled in a rigorous academic program leading to graduation. Required classes include: four years of English, three years of social sciences, three years of mathematics to include geometry and first year algebra, three years of sciences and two years of physical education. Students are also required to take electives that meet fine art and practical arts requirements including foreign languages and other fine/practical art electives totaling two semesters when a language is taken, or three semesters if only fine/practical arts are taken. Non-diploma bound students follow a program based on the California Alternate Performance Assessment Blueprints (CAPA Blueprints) and their Individualized Education Plans.

Academic Standards

Curricula in all core academic areas, foreign language, and arts, fine and practical, are aligned with the California State Content Standards. Non-diploma bound students’ programs follow the CAPA Blueprints. San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) has developed scope and sequence documents in all core academic areas. With the exception of support classes, classes in the English, social studies, and science departments meet the California public university a-g requirements. AP Psychology meets a-g requirements as an elective. Earth science is counted as an a-g elective while all other science classes meet the a-g science requirements. With the exception of support classes, the mathematics department offers one class that does not meet the a-g requirements, Unifying Algebra and Geometry. Unifying Algebra and Geometry is intended as a bridge to higher-level mathematics courses for students who are not yet prepared to move on to Intermediate Algebra. All students have access to all electives offered. Core curriculum classes are also offered with L (language learners) and G (students with special needs) rosters with additional classroom support.

Serra’s schoolwide learning goals, the Q5, are integrated into instruction to help students meet the goal to graduate as educated, aware, responsible, and active global citizens. Effective communication is integral to all classes and is demonstrated by student completion of research reports, oral presentations, various writing assignments, and discussions during collaborative work. Problem solving can be exhibited through homework problems, lab activities, group projects, and other hands-on activities. Students are encouraged to be academic achievers and time managers in the classroom as well as achievers in a wide variety of extra curricular activities, including band, orchestra,
theater, athletics, ASB, and the after school Opportunities program. The staff at Serra encourages students to be responsible citizens by communicating expectations for student behaviors through school planners, grade-level assemblies, and a summer newsletter before the year even begins. Students are aware of their responsibility to make good decisions and are encouraged to do so in a variety of ways. There are many clubs at Serra that give students the opportunity to be responsible citizens. Two notable clubs are Key Club, a service organization, and Club Green, where students learn about stewardship of the planet and support recycling efforts at Serra. Serra encourages students to be lifelong learners by preparing them for active and successful futures. Students are provided with many supports to meet UC/CSU a-g requirements. Students are also offered many opportunities to find a lifelong avocation through a diverse array of courses, clubs, teams, and organizations. These include theater tech classes, web design classes, and publications. Physical education provides lifelong importance for a fit body. At Serra, students have many opportunities to find something they love.

Accessibility to Curriculum

Serra has recently become the recipient of an Advanced Placement (AP) grant to increase enrollment in AP classes and improve the quality of the AP program. The 2008-2009 school year PSAT results were analyzed to find students with potential for taking Advanced and AP classes. Letters were sent home to parents of students who scored well on the PSAT, according to the guideline of the AP Potential program. This encourages student enrollment in Advanced and AP courses. During the summer of 2009 Serra offered its first AP Summer Camp program to these students. The PSAT was offered to all students in grades 9-11 for the 2009-2010 school year. Before and after school tutoring with certificated teachers is available to all students through the ASAP program.

Integration Among Disciplines

Teachers are expected to post daily objectives and student outcomes in the classroom to guide students through the daily lessons. The Q5 are posted in most classrooms. The daily objectives and outcomes must be linked to the subject area standards. Teachers in some curricular areas, such as math and science, have met in district-organized course-alikes to develop common scope and sequence, assessments, and to devise strategies to increase the number of students achieving standards. Departments and grade level teams collaborate to help students create exhibition projects at each grade level culminating in a senior exhibition. Informal collaboration also occurs between teachers and departments. For example, teachers discuss shared students and strategies for increasing engagement. Teachers also share standards-based projects with each other. The focus for GATE teachers this year is to use a common GATE strategy. The strategy this year is the use of Project Based Learning (PBL) to increase rigor in the GATE classroom.

What Currently Exists

Students are involved in challenging learning experiences in classes. Students have access to computer technology in classrooms and the Media Center. Students are
expected to be computer literate and capable of utilizing computer skills in every subject area. Support is provided to help students meet these expectations, sometimes through direct instruction in the computer lab, sometimes informally. Through state and federal funding the district has begun to make technology available in every classroom. This year, Promethean boards have been installed in most mathematics classrooms. A teacher computer and a class set of student netbook computers will be made available for those classrooms. Over a five-year period the district intends to establish this technology in all classrooms. Training in how to use these resources to improve student engagement and achievement of standards has been promised and is in motion. Seniors are expected to use technology in the presentation of their senior exhibitions.

Professional development is being provided to help teachers use student performance data to inform instruction. Data Director training includes locating data, creating testing instruments and creating reports to examine student performance trends. All GATE and AP teachers are required to attend professional development specifically geared to meeting the needs of those students. Teachers in world languages are involved in training to improve student performance through the use of smart classroom technology as it becomes available.

Many students in our non-diploma program further their learning with real life experiences in the community. This community based instruction provides these students with a way to generalize what they have learned in the classroom setting.

**Criterion B-2 - All students have equal access to the school’s entire program and assistance with a personal learning plan to prepare them for the pursuit of their academic, personal, and school-to-career goals.**

**Variety of Programs-Full Range of Choices**

Students at Serra are encouraged to take the highest level course for which they are prepared as determined by testing, former grades and teacher recommendation. This is encouraged through individual conferences with students during articulation. Information is also shared with parents at grade-level articulation nights. Available program choices are reviewed with students in their English classes before articulation begins. This information is also shared with parents at the grade-level articulation nights.

**Student-Parent-Staff Collaboration**

Students, with parent and counselor input, complete a four-year plan in the eighth grade. Student learning plans are maintained in the counseling office. Students may review and revise these plans with assistance from their counselors. Parents are encouraged to review course choices with their students and are required to sign a course choice card each year. In support of their academic, personal and school-to-career goals, students and their families can participate in Freshman Forum, 10th Grade Review Night, 11th Grade College Night, and College Financial Aid Night. Students who receive special education services review their Individual Education Plan (IEP) each year with their case manager,
teachers and parents to ensure that the student is receiving the proper services to reach his/her individual goals.

**Monitoring/Changing Student Plans**

During articulation, test scores, grades, student interests and goals are reviewed to help students select classes. Counselors discuss options with students. Teachers also help students select the next course in their subject area. Counselors develop a graduation plan for every student in March each year. Students enrolled in the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program develop personal learning plans which are discussed and reviewed annually to encourage a full college-preparatory course load. IEPs for special education students are developed with close collaboration between parents, teachers and other educational specialists as appropriate. Students are involved in this process and parents are invited to attend.

**Post High School Transitions**

Serra provides a variety of transition options for students. These include AP courses that prepare students for college and ROP courses in business, multi-media, computer technology, web design and marketing. Dual enrollment with the San Diego Community College District is offered for Automotive Technology and Political Science. Serra’s vocational counselor works with students with disabilities who are interested in seeking employment. There are three programs for which these students are eligible: work incentive classes on campus, workability programs in the community, and the Student Apprenticeship Program (SAP) which is school and community based. Students are also required to prepare a senior exhibition and complete a portfolio to accompany the exhibition. Students are also required to provide evidence of application for FAFSA or a scholarship as part of the senior exhibition. VAPA classes study careers in the arts as part of the curriculum. Serra is offering a Biotechnology class for the second year that gives students real world work experience in biotech labs. Military recruiters come to campus and talk to students about careers in the military and opportunities for scholarships through ROTC programs.

Students in the non-diploma bound programs are often placed into the Trace program once they turn 18 in fulfillment of federal law which allows students with disabilities to receive support services until they are 22 years of age (if they have not earned a high school diploma). The SDUSD TRACE program is a support network to assist students transitioning from high school to adult life. Students are encouraged to be as independent as possible in the community through the development of their IEP and Transition Plan (TP). Support is determined to facilitate life goals. Person Centered Planning is used to assist the student in creating a vision for the future and to assist them in the planning process of IEP/TP. Through this process, the student is able to realize and make this reality. Supports are generally provided in the following areas:

- Job placement
- Recreation/Leisure activities
• Self-Advocacy
• Classes that are offered through community colleges, and training programs that encourage life-long learning
• Accessing the student’s local community (shopping, banking, etc.)
• Independent Living skills.
• Mobility training in order to access the various community opportunities
• Linkage with integrated community agencies.

Criterion B-3 - Upon completion of the high school program, students have met all the requirements of graduation.

Real World Applications-Curriculum

Upon completion of the high school program, most students at Serra meet the graduation requirements, including passing the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). Staff members monitor progress of students through the articulation process, formal 6-week progress notes and informal progress notes biweekly. Students have access to real world applications at Serra through educational field trips, AP courses, ROP courses, transition skills classes and senior exhibition requirements for graduation. The counseling department maintains regular contact with local community colleges and universities and offers college nights on campus for students to attend. Serra took students to the Hispanic College Fair and National College Fair. Students with disabilities are offered a field trip to the community college disabilities office for a presentation on services available to students with disabilities.

Meeting Graduation Requirements

Support is provided to students to ensure that students are meeting the graduation requirements. CAHSEE preparation classes are offered in both mathematics and English to sophomores, juniors, and seniors who have not yet passed the exit exam. Serra also offers support classes for math and English in ninth grade to students who are identified at risk. Before and after school tutoring with certificated teachers is available to all students through the ASAP program. Serra Real Connections offers after-school peer-tutoring to students. Individual teachers offer tutoring during lunch and after school on an as-needed basis. All students must complete required coursework, tests, and the senior exhibition in order to graduate from Serra High School. There are two levels of qualification for graduation:

Diploma – 44 credits, a 2.0 GPA or better, responsible citizenship, Senior Exhibition, and passing the CAHSEE. Special education students are not required to pass the CAHSEE to graduate for the class of 2010.
Letter of recognition – Special education students who do not meet the diploma or certificate requirements, but who do meet all goals of their IEP qualify for a letter of recognition.

Students are offered alternative ways to earn graduation credits through summer school, APEX online courses and local community college classes. Success school, an extended day opportunity for students to make up deficient credits, is available to students, as well.

Areas of Strength:

• Content standards are well-defined for all courses. Standards for support classes are designed to support success in core areas.

• There are opportunities for students to meet UC/CSU entrance requirements.

• Teachers work within departments to plan to raise student achievement.

• All students have plans to help them meet four year plans created with counselors and parents and these plans are reviewed regularly.

• Most students graduate and meet district requirements.

• Teachers collaborate on lesson plans.

Areas of Need:

• There is little or no follow-up communication with Serra graduates.

• More opportunities to explore career options and post high school options are needed for students not interested in college.

• There is not enough integration between disciplines.
WASC Focus Group C: Standards-based Student Learning: Instruction

Criterion C-1 - To achieve the academic standards and the Q5, all students are involved in challenging learning experiences.

Courses offered at Serra embed national, state, and/or district academic content standards, build in the schoolwide learning goals (Q5) and utilize state curriculum frameworks to determine curricular content and instructional strategies. For example, math and English support classes combine different state standards that support student preparation for testing and achievement in the regular classroom. The World Language department has new state standards that were adopted by the state of California in January 2009. Methods used to deliver the instructional program are consistent from year to year varying only when the curricular content is revised. All teachers are expected to post the daily objective and student outcomes on the board to guide the students through the lesson of the day. Daily objectives and outcomes must be linked to the standards. However, not all teachers post daily objectives or student outcomes. Some teachers use guiding questions to begin the lesson. Administrators make informal classroom observations, checking that the daily objectives and outcomes are posted. While Administration visits usually occur on a regular basis, due to unplanned issues that arise on campus, they may not be able to visit as many classes as they had planned. Administrators use an observation feedback form noting the rigor of topics, types of questioning teachers use, and whether or not teachers connect the lesson to a standard. Administrators give feedback on that sheet in order to help teachers continually improve their practice.

New textbook adoptions and the supplemental material promote challenging learning experiences for students. Most new textbooks adopted by the district have a standards map provided to the teachers. The district provided curriculum includes a pacing guide, benchmarks and a district wide common final exam for many classes. In many cases, when new adoptions are approved, the district provides professional development to help teachers implement the curriculum.

Beginning with the class of 2007, the science sequence for general education students is physics or earth science for ninth graders, biology for sophomores, and chemistry for juniors. For additional rigor within their course of study, students have the option to take additional science courses through the new Bio Tech course, Physiology, and AP Environmental Sciences. Moreover, students have access to advanced, honors, and AP levels of each science course throughout the sequence to offer more challenging learning experiences.

The science department is representative of the way most Serra departments strive to provide students with challenging, meaningful learning experiences. A variety of teaching strategies are used in science to actively engage students and emphasize higher order thinking skills. These include laboratory experiments, jigsaw activities, writing assignments, hands-on practical exams, and research assignments.
Laboratory activities are a key component of most science classes. Students work in groups to complete hands-on laboratory experiments or inquiry activities. Subsequent data analyses and reporting allows the students to use different analytical and writing skills and to relate their learning to the real world.

Jigsaw activities are a beneficial strategy in science classes because it empowers students. Sections of text are divided and groups of students are tasked with becoming experts on their section, groups of different experts then form to share and explain all of the parts of the assigned reading. Students learn how to get information from their textbook, how to discuss it with fellow experts and how to share/teach/explain it to their peers. This strategy is particularly useful for sciences such as biology that utilize comprehensive texts. Jigsaw activities promote careful reading, discussion and cooperative learning to empower students, allowing them to utilize their resources effectively.

In addition to the cooperative and collaborative learning that takes place during laboratory activities and jigsaw activities, science students at Serra are involved in a variety of special cooperative group learning activities. Students work to achieve a set goal through in-class group projects, simulations, station activities and through the use of strategies described by Kagan (2009) in which students may be arranged into different groupings such as numbered heads, mixed-ability groups, student-selected teams, randomly generated groups, partners, triads and small groups of four and five. Station activities involve students working on a given task to contribute to their group’s overall understanding of the taught concepts. Students work to move from table to table or station to station within the classroom to accomplish a given set of activities and to collect data on a graphic organizer. Such kinesthetic activities allow students to move around, physically work with concepts and discuss with peers their relevance, engage in peer discussions, and build upon mental schema. Students also may be involved in group warm-up activities, assessments, debates and scavenger hunts.

As a form of alternative assessment, much of student learning may be charted or presented visually in the form of posters. In addition to poster work being used as a formative project assessment, it may also be used as a form of informal assessment in which students may be asked to visually represent their current or prior knowledge on a given topic. Students may be asked to draw and then add to a poster to illustrate growth of knowledge on a subject. Posters may also be used in jigsaw/expert group presentations in order to facilitate student-centered learning and peer teaching. Posters are used not only as assessments, but also as teaching aids and do well to scaffold students in building a working understanding of abstract concepts. Many students are visual learners and this method helps those learn material through drawings, charts, and sketches.

In addition to traditional note-taking strategies (Cornell notes, copying notes from board, etc.), different types of graphic organizers may be used to facilitate students in learning novel concepts. Graphic Organizers (G.O.s) may be used during a traditional lecture in order to help students record main ideas; they may be used during station activities to collect important ideas from in-class activities; they are useful in building up students’ mental schema through a marriage between prior knowledge and new concepts. They are also useful strategies in digesting pieces of text, organizing information provided during
peer presentations and in collecting important ideas from videos and posters. G.O.s may be presented in science classes in the form of foldables (3-D graphic organizers), charts, flow diagrams, mind-maps, Venn diagrams, structured notes (fill-in-the-blank advanced organizers) and streamlined to aid students in organizing their thoughts in a way that is most helpful to their learning.

Modalities are commonly used as visual aids, particularly in physiology and earth science, to enhance student learning. A model skeleton, two sets of disarticulated skeletal bones and many x-rays of actual human bones in the body are available for students to study in physiology. Stethoscopes, blood pressure machines, and sphygmometers are also used in physiology to enhance student learning and understanding.

Jeopardy review games engage and involve students in their learning. Teacher made PowerPoints that follow the popular game show format while asking content related questions are a helpful tool for review before a test. By adding in technology, pop culture and competition, students are interested and engaged, effectively studying/reviewing content.

Student presentations are an effective way to engage students and to teach content more in depth. This strategy forces student presenters to figure out how to explain a topic to their peers who learn in multiple mediums. Research shows that teaching a topic helps a student to make that information part of their longer-term memory. Students do individual or group presentations on topics related the subject of study. Examples include presentations on a particular biome, endangered species, the universe, marine life, and systems of the human body. Oral presentations are used as a communication tool to describe information learned. These are also important to help students prepare for life situations after high school such as job interviews, college presentations or presentations dealing with a career.

Guest speakers are used to enhance content material and bring real-world experience into the classroom. This engages the students and allows them to connect the topics in class to current issues and activities happening in their community they live in. Examples of recent guest speakers that have visited science classrooms are a speaker from the organization I Love a Clean San Diego who talked about issues of protecting our watersheds and freshwater resources, and speaker from the the City of San Diego Hazardous Materials Division spoke about what human activities create hazardous materials and what we can do to prevent them from affecting our environment.

The Business Education department maintains rigor through their articulation agreements with the San Diego Community College District, assuring that students will be receiving adequate training to enter college and/or to work in the business community. Rigor is maintained in all business courses and students are required to make oral presentations graded by standards-based rubrics. Each Regional Occupation Program (ROP) course offered at Serra High School has an advisory board who are responsible for reviewing course outlines and course competencies. Tenets of the Q5 are modeled through advisory boards comprised of individuals who work in industry, interested parents from within the field, or former students who are familiar with the program. Once the board makes a recommendation for course content it is passed on to the San Diego County Board of
Education for approval. Serra has never had an advisory board recommendation changed by the County Board of Education.

Like Serra’s science and business courses, the Social Science department actively engages students in order to promote challenging learning experiences. Primary source documents are utilized to show opposing viewpoints in history, as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of various economic systems in economics and government courses. Historic debates are occasionally used throughout social science courses, wherein students use both primary sources and standards-based textbooks to defend their positions. Students form opinions and challenge those of their classmates through carefully structured Socratic seminars. Lastly, geography is taught through a hands-on approach in some courses. Using maps, students work in pairs to locate areas of the world and continue mastering the ability to follow directions, especially written instructions.

Classes in all areas of the visual and performing arts (VAPA) are provided at multiple levels, from beginning to Advanced Placement. Courses in music, theatre and visual arts cover every aspect of the arts. Art classes include ceramics, art and AP art, mixed media and design and printmaking. In music, band, choir, orchestra and music appreciation are all offered. A beginning survey course is offered in theatre, with advanced classes in performance and technical theatre. The primary goal of all VAPA teachers is to ensure that students meet either the proficient or advanced levels of California State Standards for visual and performing arts. The teaching philosophy of all VAPA teachers integrates the Q5 fully into the instructional program. The nature of the arts requires that students use all levels of thinking skills to problem-solve, be resourceful, interpret, effectively communicate in a variety of media, as well as collaborate on practical and artistic projects. The arts at Serra are taught in ways that encourage students to exercise thinking at all levels (Bloom and Costa). The faculty meets occasionally to discuss new and proven academic research and to determine what assignments will allow students to think at the higher levels of the taxonomies within all classes taught.

The English department also strives to keep students engaged and challenged by continuously reflecting on its best practices and editing the curriculum to incorporate them. Curriculum in English courses is tied to state standards and to Serra’s Q5. The English department is developing a four-year curriculum map for all Serra High School students. This curriculum is geared to ensure that students have the opportunity to achieve grade level proficiency in all of the state standards by the time of graduation. Curriculum Maps are still being developed in the English department, particularly in the 11th and 12th grade classes. Some English classes incorporate essays at regular intervals during the year that allow students to offer input as to the grade earned. The majority of teachers utilize modeling as a direct teaching strategy, combined with more student-centered activities such as writer’s workshops, student-generated projects and Socratic seminars.

All courses in the Math department follow state standards, which are embedded into daily lessons. Ninety-five percent of the math classrooms are equipped with Promethean Boards. Most of the mathematics courses offered at Serra are using district-adopted textbooks. New textbook adoptions have been made for geometry and algebra. In order to
ensure students are properly challenged, they are placed in mathematics classes based on test scores, teacher recommendations, and grades in previous mathematics courses. Those courses are: Algebra Exploration, Geometry, Advanced Geometry, Unified Algebra/Geometry, Intermediate Algebra, Advanced Intermediate Algebra, Precalculus, Honors Precalculus, Statistics and Data Analysis, and AP Statistics and AP Calculus. Additional support classes include algebra support for ELL and special education students, and CAHSEE (California High School Exit Exam) support classes. There are two AP mathematics courses offered at Serra; AP Calculus and AP Statistics. Common assessments are utilized where 80% of the material is shared. Some tests are created and/or scored using data; results are used to adjust instruction and support students in meeting of standards.

Physical education at Serra follows California state standards aligned with the Prudential Fitnessgram testing. These test results are given in March and the results from the state of California are received in the fall of the next school year. Activities and exams are given all year to prepare students for the Fitnessgram testing. Poor test results may require a student to take another year of high school physical education. The PE standards are used to help students become a lifelong learner and enhance individual health and strength.

Special education provides specialized academic support to students based on a continuum of support determined by each student’s need, as reflected through analysis of assessment and collaboration of each student’s IEP team. All students that are participating in a program to receive a diploma are enrolled in general education classes with standards-based curriculum. Supports for students with IEPs may include collaborative support within the context of the general education class, co-teaching methods in the general education classroom, and additional classes for support in math and/or reading. Each student in special education has a case manager who, with an IEP team, develops the student’s IEP and manages its distribution and application in cooperation with general education staff. Students who are in a program designed to receive a letter of recognition receive specialized academic support in a separate classroom with a Life Skills-based curriculum tailored to the individual level of need as stated in each student’s IEP. Students in applied classes are working toward mastery of IEP goals. Applied curriculum is available in English, math, history and science. Students may also participate in general education classes with a modified curriculum for an applied credit. Students who are identified as moderate to severe in their IEP continue to receive instruction in the six core areas of a functional curriculum: language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, health, and physical education. Each student receives an individualized, relevant and coherent curriculum aligned with state standards for students as outlined in the California Alternative Performance Assessment. Additional support currently available to all students on an IEP as determined by need and each student’s IEP team includes: Special Education Assistants, Special Education Technicians, Instructional Behavioral Technicians, School Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Speech/Language Therapist, Adaptive PE, Vocation/Transition support, Deaf and Hard of Hearing support, Visual services and Assistive technology.

In addition to the state standards, each course at Serra addresses the Q5. Many content standards fall into the categories of one or more of the Q5: Responsible Citizens,
Effective Communicators, Academic Achievers, Effective Problem Solvers, or Lifelong Learners. Academic departments have looked at the Q5 and identified activities, projects, and lessons that coincide with them. For example, problem solving is addressed in mathematics courses every day. For effective communication, students communicate through class work, essays and short answer questions. All grades have an end of the year exhibition in which the student must demonstrate engagement in the Q5.

Designing curriculum that is challenging, rigorous, and standards-based has been the subject of many site-based professional development sessions in the past and continues to be a focus of our efforts. In the more advanced classes, students experience approaches that involve inquiry, formulating and solving problems, teamwork, reflecting on and communicating about their work, and revising work in progress. When the Small Learning Community (SLC) grant was in place, funding was available for professional development to provide time for teachers to work together on curriculum design. Currently, designing curriculum is not done through professional development but by teachers meeting during their prep periods and after school. Professional Development gives ideas on new strategies and teachers are left to find the appropriate lessons to use the strategies. Even though the SLCs are gone, the English and history department still work together informally.

Areas of need:

- Some teachers use repetitive teaching strategies day after day, which does not engage all students.
- Need more time for professional development in order to create concrete lessons, to update curriculum maps and to develop common assessments including assessments using data director.
- Need current texts in all classes that appeal to student learning and adequately address standards.
- All teachers need to have all technology available, not just some teachers.

Criterion C-2: *All teachers utilize a variety of strategies and resources, including technology and experiences beyond the textbook and the classroom, that actively engage students, emphasize higher order thinking skills, and help them succeed at high levels.*

All students are exposed to challenging learning experiences throughout their high school years at Serra. Standards-based lesson plans are evaluated with department-wide common assessments. The use of Data Director in core classes has aided in this process. Objectives and outcomes in each class are requested to be posted on the board for all students and visitors to see. It is important that students are aware of these objectives and outcomes as they guide learning in the classroom. The posting of objectives and outcomes are looked for when administrators make classroom visits.
Teachers are encouraged to reach beyond the textbook when planning their courses. Real world applications help the students understand how their classroom learning is useful outside the school’s walls. Some students are able to experience field trips, job shadows, internships, simulations, guest speakers, research projects, and club-sponsored activities in some of their classes. In many courses such as biotech and physiology, students are doing activities that will help aid them in future careers.

The Science in the City outreach program at exposes students to various careers in the field of science. Serra High School, the Serra High School Foundation, Miramar College, AMGEN, and Biogen Idec are the program sponsors, and the Serra High School Biotech instructor is the Program Director. During 2008 and 2009, the program arranged school day, after-school and Saturday field trips to various labs or science-related facilities around San Diego. Some of the sites visited included Scripps Mercy Hospital (Pathology), Genentech, Forensic Science Center, Miramar College Biotechnology, UCSD BioBridge, AMGEN/Bruce Wallace, Amylin, Invitrogen, Biogen Idec, Vertex, Senomyx, and the 2009 BIO International Convention in Atlanta, Georgia.

Biotechnology is a relatively new course piloted at Serra High School in 2008-2009, and officially added to the curriculum in 2009-2010. It is a two-semester advanced laboratory science course designed for students who are interested in the fundamental principles of biotechnology, as well as possible employment in the biotechnology industry. Students in the course are introduced to current laboratory science research practices in the field of biotechnology, and explore the various uses and applications of biotechnology principles and processes in forensics, medicine, drug discovery, pharmacology, bioinformatics, genomics, agriculture, ecology, environmental science and biomedical ethics. Field trips to local biotechnology companies are key components of the course that complements and reinforces core areas of study.

Taking students out of the classroom and allowing them to experience the content discussed in class creates real-world connections to the material. Educational field trips are the best way to provide opportunities for student engagement and to foster higher order thinking skills. Some of the educational field trips AP Environmental Science students have taken are to the Miramar Landfill, the CRES Research Laboratories for Endangered Species at the San Diego Wild Animal Park, The Birch Aquarium, and the San Diego Water Reclamation Facility to take part in their Climate Change program.

Relevant and real-world applications are embedded in all of the business department classes. The current variety of classes offered in the business department include: Accounting, Business Management, Computer Applications, Computerized Graphic Design, Marketing, Video Production, Tools for the Digital Age, and Web Design. The practical aspects of these classes combined with their tangible connections to real-world applications provide the students with numerous opportunities to develop and apply technical and problem solving skills.

In addition to the practical application of technology in a multitude of project-based assignments, the students gain hands-on experience working in the student store. Students in business classes are also exposed to numerous learning opportunities that extend beyond the classroom. Job shadows, company tours, and guest speakers are frequently
used to connect the outside world with the classroom and ensure the timeliness of the curriculum. Companies including NBC, Sony Online Entertainment, Jack in the Box Creative Center, and Wildstorm Productions have all partnered with our business classes to provide these opportunities.

Each ROP (Regional Occupation Program) business class conducts an annual advisory board meeting comprised of industry members to review the relevant course outlines, competencies, and projects. These board members help develop projects, provide labor market information, and help ensure that the material and experiences provided in these classes are both rigorous and relevant.

All business classes have access to industry standard software such as Microsoft Office and the complete Adobe Master Suite software package. These software applications, coupled with the practical experience of the business teachers, allow students to easily understand the relevance of the material taught in the classes and benefit from the opportunities offered to them outside of the class.

Serra NJROTC utilizes the Classroom Performance System (CPS), which is directly integrated with Naval Science Curriculum materials to form a fully automated, interactive classroom. Every student is assigned a remote that is able to track and record participation and performance in class. Feedback is instantaneous with respect to each instructional objective, and the teacher can give immediate, timely corrections as necessary. CPS includes a wireless chalkboard that is used to demonstrate practical skills, such as maritime and land navigation techniques. CPS questions can be directly tied to California Content Standards, and assessment of a student’s or class’s ability to meet the standard can be determined.

Students have access to technology as a tool for learning in most classes. Students are asked to do research, to complete projects, to access teachers’ web sites, to give power point presentations, to produce podcasts, and to collaborate using Google Docs. A good example of a technology driven student product was when U.S. History students used Garage Band to create a radio broadcast in which students profiled social, political, and economic issues of specific moments in American history. Students are use computers to produce the student newspaper and yearbook publications. At least one computer is available in all classrooms. A computer lab is available for teachers to reserve. A limited number of mobile computer laptop carts are also available for certain departments. Some server issues remain, and logging on an entire class can take a long time, causing some reluctance among teachers who might otherwise make use of the lab or laptop carts. There are also a few computers in the media center that students can access before school, after school and during lunch. Due to staffing reductions, the media center is only open after school every other week for student computer use.

Technology is part of the everyday lives of our current generation of students. Utilizing it in our classroom is necessary to grasp our students’ attention and keep them focused on the content. In some science classes Google Docs are used to write group and individual lab reports. This program allows students to collaborate on a document while working individually at home. The lab reports are on the Internet so they can be opened from any computer. The program also allows students to be creative with their lab reports. They
can insert clip art or line graphs and tables made on Excel to the document. Teachers can also track individual student participation through Google Docs.

Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices are used by students who have language disabilities. These devices include computers used for communication and word processing. They range from low-tech devices that can be programmed to speak words/phrases to high-tech devices that are multi-level computers based mode for communicating.

The use of technology resources to support student post-secondary education exploration, career education and high school course of study by the counseling department is also evident through its implementation of the Naviance program. Naviance is a web-based planning and advising system that has a three-service workspace for student and counselor use. The counselors’ office service tracks grades and records, manages the post-secondary counseling process of college applications, and uses mid-year reports to track scholarship applications for both the student and counselor. The second service, Course Manager, supports appropriate scheduling and course planning through analyzing student test data and previous course of study. The third service, District Connection, allows students to aggregate their personal and school data to compare with other high schools in the district. District Connection is an important service as students investigate admissions statistics for post secondary education as well as serves the teachers of Serra as a check to student comprehension of course standards. The Naviance program is also available to families for home use for course planning, post secondary admissions and associated document creation and tracking of student academic success.

The mathematics department received new technology this year in most of the math classrooms. Promethean boards have been installed and student notebook computers and document cameras should arrive throughout the school year. The Promethean boards are being used in a variety of ways. In geometry, students are using virtual protractors and compasses to solve problems and complete constructions. In algebra, students are engaged and involved in creating algebra mats and equation mats used to aid in the process of solving equations. Many teachers use the board for notes, warm-ups, and examples with their students. The students are very interested in the new technology and enjoy working with the Promethean board. All math teachers are required to attend a series of professional development meetings to learn how to effectively use the Promethean Boards in their classes.

Graphing calculators are used in many math classes. The AP Statistics and AP Calculus classes use the calculators on a daily basis. Students are encouraged to purchase their own calculators, but Serra has a large supply available in the media center for students to check out for use throughout the year. Geometer’s Sketchpad is being used in some classrooms, and the statistics teacher wants to incorporate Fathom software into her classes this year.

Physics students utilize probeware such as motion detectors, force sensors, sensors for voltage, current, pressure, and temperature to collect laboratory data. The data can be displayed numerically and/or graphically and is easily analyzed to establish the relationships between experimental variables. Utilization of this technology is a real
world application of science and also allows students to collect more accurate data. For example, the use of force sensors enables students to verify Newton’s Third Law of Motion in situations such as collisions, which would be very difficult to quantify any other way.

Computer simulations are used to enable students to observe the relationship between variables by changing the independent variable and quickly assessing its impact on the remaining variables. For example, a roller coaster simulation allows students to vary the starting height or the mass of the coaster car and then observe the change in the velocity of the coaster car at the bottom of the run. A simulation of a closed container filled with a gas lets students change the volume and temperature of the gas and then observe the changes to its pressure as part of an experiment with the gas laws.

In addition to traditional activities in the classroom, Serra’s computer lab is effective in facilitating student learning through interactive involvement. Interactive activities such as WebQuests, meld technology with student knowledge and allow them to develop a deeper sense of understanding of the material. Using the computer lab also allows students to work independently on their activities at their own pace.

Early release Wednesdays allow for weekly meetings. At this time, most of our Wednesdays are focused on WASC and Data Director training. This year, some course-alikes are using common assessments through Data Director so that results can be more efficiently analyzed. Common assessments promote rigorous standard-based learning. Core teachers have been trained in the use of Data Director; this has allowed common assessments to be generated, and the analysis of test results has served as a valuable tool for planning instruction that promotes greater student learning. Common assessments results also help teachers identify any areas that might need re-teaching.

Each department at Serra holds monthly department meetings. Currently those department meetings are in the form of Home group meetings for WASC and PLCs to support collaboration among teachers. Collaboration is most common within departments where vertical and horizontal planning has occurred. Cross-discipline collaboration occurs in the small learning communities such as Focus and SSH. However, due to lack of funds, those small learning communities are not as strong as they used to be.

Some teachers use cooperative learning groups in their math classes. Students are encouraged to work with their peers and learn how to ask questions when help is needed. Collaboration within department is improving since with the introduction of PLCs. Developing common units of study and assessments is still a goal of the math department.

Teachers use a variety of strategies in the classroom. To achieve this, weekly meetings of the 9th grade literacy teachers to plan and share ideas and strategies are held. Some English teachers are involved in mapping out the units of study for various grade levels. Currently, English teachers use PLC time to work in grade-level groups forming common assessments. Most teachers in the English department have websites linked to the Serra website where homework assignments and other classroom information are available for students and parents. Some teachers are having students use Google Docs as part of in
class and homework assignments. Teachers are encouraged to use the computer lab for lessons relating to technology as opposed to simply word processing assigned papers. At the 11th and 12th grade level, guest speakers are often invited to English classrooms to discuss post high school career plans with students. English class instruction is differentiated and scaffolded according to the various entry points of the students. Some teachers use Socratic seminars as a way for students to explore issues and create meaning independent of the teacher.

In the science department, chemistry and physics teachers hold monthly on-site professional development. Monthly science department meetings also provide a forum for discussion of new curriculum and suggestions for improvement. In physiology, students use computers and outside texts to enrich their understanding of the subject. Students must turn in a bimonthly current event related to human health issues. In chemistry, students use supplementary materials to improve and enhance their understanding of the subject.

Rigor is promoted in the social sciences through real world learning experiences and the use of technology. Real world learning happens through exploration of the democratic process. In Government classes, students work as poll workers on Election Day. In U.S. History classes, students learn about the democratic process of presidential elections through lessons on political parties, and continue to see the implications of a new president through ongoing research and presentations that emphasize connections to the U.S. History curriculum. District-sponsored economic financial literacy materials (part of senior economics) are built around managing personal finances. Many guest speakers are utilized to help bridge standards-based instruction with the real world. For example, U.S. Attorney's have been used to help students understand a citizen’s role in American society.

All teachers in the visual and performing arts (music, art and theater) utilize strategies which address all learners- kinesthetic, visual and auditory. By its very nature of creating, learning in the arts takes students beyond textbooks and classrooms and allows them to explore and understand aspects of the world around them. In theater, students read texts in order to understand how to stage, direct or act in a play. This process automatically requires students to analyze and visualize the text at an interpretive level. In music, students aesthetically analyze a composition through listening and appreciating the piece. In art classes, students must interpret the world around them through the tools provided in the art classes, including computers, cameras and more traditional supplies such as paper, pens and pencils and materials like clay (ceramics).

Students in the ILS program at Serra participate in weekly community-based instructional experiences to learn vocational skills, mobility training, and independent living skills. Instruction takes place in the natural environment where skill acquisition leads to generalization of the desired behavior(s).

Areas of strength:

- Some teachers function as coaches and facilitators of learning as well as content area experts by being on district curriculum committees.
• Developing a collaborative culture among teachers through peer-driven professional development, which strengthens standards based lesson plans and promotes rigorous student learning.

• All core content teachers are officially certified in Data Director training.

Areas of need:

• Instructional strategies are characterized primarily by whole class instruction, teacher-directed instruction, and lectures.

• Technology is still used primarily as a tool to assist teachers in the management of the instructional program.

• The role of technology instruction and increasing student engagement needs to expand.

• More technology needs to be available to teachers.
WASC Focus Group D: Standards-based Student Learning: Assessment and Accountability

Rather than viewing assessments as the process by which teachers determine students’ grades, both teachers and administrators at Serra High School consider assessments as the method whereby standards are achieved and effectiveness of instruction is measured. Teachers identify critical skills to be assessed and incorporate components of these skills into daily instruction. They spot problems and offer specific analysis or praise to enhance the learning process. Finally, teachers at Serra use formative and summative assessments to reshape their instructional planning to meet students’ needs.

The Assessment and Accountability Focus Group was organized to evaluate Serra High School’s assessment practices and reporting methods for student performance. Based on the provided WASC rubric, the focus group identified specific evaluation processes utilized in various departments, acknowledged tools useful for disaggregation of test results, recognized methods of dissemination of student performance information, and determined where Serra operates relative to the rubric. Utilizing this data, the group determined specific assessment strengths of the school community and necessary fields of growth for utilizing and distributing information regarding student performances.

The focus group (approximately 20 members) was comprised of certificated and classified personnel, including administrative staff. The group began its evaluation during the Spring semester of the 2008-2009 school year, meeting on a regular basis through the Fall semester of the 2009-2010 school year. Individual group members were assigned to analyze their own departmental assessment strategies and determine how such procedures enhanced the educational progress of each student.

Criterion D1: Serra High School uses professional assessment processes to collect, disaggregate, and report student performance data to parents and other stakeholders of the school community.

Serra High School uses a variety of assessment results to monitor and improve programs and instruction. Professionally acceptable assessments include results from CST, CAHSEE, PSAT and AP exams. Information from Data Director provides a wealth of information regarding student performance data in achievement of academic standards, as well as scores from the previously mentioned professional assessments.

Data Director allows individual teachers and administrators to access and disaggregate information from a variety of perspectives involving CST and CAHSEE scores. CST results can be analyzed based on scaled scores (a color-coded graph report of CST scaled scores, including performance level cut points and average scaled scores), as well as proficiency levels (number and percentage of students proficient versus non-proficient on a CST).
In addition to CST data, Data Director also provides CAHSEE results for administrators and teachers. The CAHSEE summary report has the ability to display results by grade, program, gender, ethnicity, or language fluency. Data Director will also tabulate the number of English Learner (EL) and Fluent-English Proficient (FEP) students by primary language and provide in-depth, academic and demographic profiles of individual students.

Scores from the CST, CAHSEE and AP exams are shared among teachers during department, staff and collaborative meetings. Information from these professional assessments is disaggregated by subgroups to assist departments in determining SMART goals, following common curriculum, driving lesson planning, and developing common assessments for each unit. Data from these exams is closely analyzed to ascertain best practices used to teach and re-teach concepts that stimulate thinking and learning.

The administration at Serra High School regularly utilizes assessment of student performances relative to academic and behavioral standards. Since 2007, teachers have used tutorial days to review CST results with every student. During this tutorial period students are encouraged to consider their assessment results in relation to their personal learning goals, and set new objectives to move students into higher performance levels. Furthermore, documented improvement in student attendance and behavior are also routinely analyzed by the administration to determine the student population’s movement toward achieving the Q5 -- schoolwide Learning Goals, formerly referred to as ESLRs.

The Serra administration provides timely and appropriate reports of its assessments to all stakeholders. Parents are mailed score reports for the CST and CAHSEE for their individual students. STAR data is shared with parents in detail on the Serra website. Standardized testing results are regularly discussed with parents at PTO, SSC and Foundation meetings. CST and CAHSEE data, as well as results from classroom assessments are available to parents on line through Parent Connect. The School Accountability Report Card (SARC) is available to all stakeholders in two forms. The short version provides a general overview of standardized test data. The long version provides assessment results in greater detail after disaggregating information by subgroups. After analyzing the information, and meeting with parents, the administration uses the data to drive changes in curriculum and course offerings to better serve the learning needs and grade level performances of all students.

**Criterion D2:** Teachers employ a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate student learning. Students and teachers use findings from these strategies to modify the teaching and learning process for the enhancement of the educational progress of every student.

Serra High School teachers employ a variety of assessment strategies that target subject standards and demonstrate accomplishment of the Q5. Different assessment forms of standards are utilized, but the majority of teachers (more than 75 percent) focus on teacher-generated short answer tests and quizzes, teacher-generated multiple-choice tests and quizzes, individual projects and group projects. Other forms of assessment include
district end-of-course exams, publisher generated tests and quizzes, essay responses, oral presentations, performances and lab results, reports, and problem solving. These forms of assessments are incorporated into daily learning instruction in order to stimulate critical thinking.

The English department utilizes a variety of assessments – essay writing, research papers, journals, tests and quizzes, group and individual projects as well as oral presentations and portfolios – to evaluate student learning. While English teachers use a variety of student assessments, each grade level developed common forms of assessment for different units of study. This horizontal alignment is designed to ensure common, standards-based instruction and assessment in all sections of same-grade English courses. These common assessments promote vertical alignment in English courses and guarantee that students are exposed to and meet expectations and standards across grade levels.

Within the English department, each PLC established SMART goals to drive curriculum and improve students CST scores. Review of these goals at regular meetings, as well as determining appropriate lesson plans and common assessments, enable teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of learning activities. Teachers adjust their lesson plans and assessment procedures to accommodate students with IEPs and 504 plans, focusing specifically on moving a student with these learning modifications up into a higher-level performance band on the CST performance scale.

Ninth grade English classes utilize common student assessments in the functional documents, expository texts and persuasive texts units taught in English. These units fulfill benchmarks in attaining key standards. All three units are the focus of the first semester as they are a critical component of the CST. There is also a focus on freshman exhibitions featuring written reflections on work samples from other courses as well as freshmen exhibition oral presentations at the end of the school year.

The tenth grade English curriculum requires students to read world literature in conjunction with their chronological world history course. English teachers have partnered with World History teachers to support students across the curriculum to understand research techniques, writing styles, and APA writing format that will later be used in post-high school disciplines.

Eleventh grade English courses are split between three different curricula: American Literature, Honors American Literature, and Advanced Placement Language and Composition. While American Literature and Honors American Literature teachers follow similar pacing guides, both content and rigor are significantly different from the AP Language and Composition course. American Literature and Honors American Literature classes focus on chronological American texts, emphasizing analysis and literary criticism. These teachers utilize text-based assessments for weekly homework activities, in-class assignments, and end-of-unit tests. American literature courses require students to write specific essays, at least one per grading period, focusing on literary analysis, persuasion, biographical and expository compositions. Recently the district agreed upon an end-of-course writing exam for Honors American Literature, which will be adopted at the end of this school year.
Because of its complexity and time-involvement, project-based learning is used only occasionally (less than 25% of all assessments) in the English department. However, it is this type of student evaluation that is part of the core curriculum in the journalism classes. For instance, students are required to analyze current events on and off campus, determine appropriate articles for our student population, then research and write the articles following strict deadlines in order to produce high-quality publications. Writing, revising, designing page layouts and copy-editing are major assessments in the journalism curriculum.

Teachers are able to access students CST scores using Data Director and develop lesson plans that appropriately address language arts standards where student performance is weakest. Using the information acquired through Data Director, teachers can pinpoint which standards students are struggling with and develop lesson plans that teach and re-teach those principles. Data Director offers teachers a unique opportunity for developing standards-based assessments, administering such exams, and evaluating the progress of each student and class. Information collected from these teacher-generated multiple-choice tests identify the standard(s) being evaluated and immediately determine whether students achieve proficiency levels in that standard.

Assessment of student progress, and performance on state mandated tests, has become a focal point in the social studies department. As a result, teachers have developed a variety of assessment strategies to monitor student progress. Meeting in PLCs, teachers with common subjects integrate standards-based testing material provided by textbook publishers, testing material available through Data Director, and teacher generated assessments to address the needs of students as they prepare for both CSTs in social studies and district-provided end-of-course exams. To facilitate delivery of instruction and timely evaluation of progress, teachers in core social studies courses adhere to district course pacing guides and administer common assessments at agreed upon intervals. Data from these assessments is used by teachers to re-teach/reinforce important concepts that align with California State Social Studies Standards.

The math department uses a variety of assessments to evaluate student achievement and enhance each student’s educational progress. The district end-of-course exams are given in Algebra Exploration, Geometry, Advanced Geometry, Intermediate Algebra, Advanced Intermediate Algebra, Precalculus, Honors Precalculus, Statistics and Data Analysis. Most teachers use these tests as their final exams. Teachers use publisher tests and teacher-developed exams that are standards-based. Many course-alike teachers use common assessments, which can be used to get data on areas of student needs. In PLCs, in an effort to improve CST results, teachers develop the pacing of the courses after reviewing the district recommended pacing guides. Paging and switching of outlined chapters allows teachers to cover materials needed for these exams primarily before the tests are given. Other course content is still covered; however, introduction to this course content material takes place after the state testing window. District benchmark assessments are given in Algebra Explorations, Geometry and Advanced Geometry and are used to assess student knowledge of standards. The results help teachers evaluate and revise delivery models, and help in making decisions about which standards need to
be taught again. Teachers assign students test corrections and retake tests in order to help review missed standards that they may still need to learn.

The science department has adopted SMART goals related to students’ performances on the CST tests. In order to monitor progress towards these goals and to make instructional decisions, the department has engaged in a series of activities that are intended to support teachers as they assess student work. One approach is the alignment of the curriculum of each subject and the development of pacing guides. This allows teachers to write common assessments that are standards-based and to compare outcomes. This collaborative work occurs in PLCs. As teachers create lessons and labs, they can build on all teachers’ experiences and look at strategies to help students who are struggling to meet standards. The common assessments are modeled after released CST questions and are standards-based. They consist of benchmark assessments as well as unit exams, semester exams, and end-of-course assessments provided by the district. Besides these common assessments, teachers use a variety of formative tools that include daily and weekly homework assignments, topical quizzes, daily exit slips, and monitoring students during daily classroom activities. Teachers also participate in on-site professional development activities to share teaching and assessment strategies with colleagues from other district sites.

Students are also given the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of the subject content and meeting standards through projects, labs and presentations. Assessment tools are considered particularly important in identifying the needs of struggling students. This process is supported through the use of Data Director, which helps analyze students’ performances, provides background information, and includes a question bank of standards-related items.

In the world language department there are a variety of project-based assessments, standards-based quizzes and tests, oral presentations, participation and homework that make up assessments of student learning. Placement exams are administered to students interested in AP courses and Spanish for Native Speakers courses. District-wide benchmarks and final exams for first year Spanish and French classes have begun for the 2009/10 school year.

Examples of project-based learning and assessments include: researching a country, creating a passport with information about student and country, developing PowerPoint projects, creating a skit and performing it in front of the class about travel and the airport, creating a French village with stores and items in stores, writing and performing a commercial with an advertisement for a product in French, creating an “ofrenda” (offering) and presentation for the Mexican Day of the Dead (Dia de los Muertos).

Performance-based assessment includes daily participation of speaking activities from the district approved text or teacher generated activity, presentations of district mandated benchmarks for first year Spanish and French classes, presentations, cultural projects, skits of common real life situations and similar activities. Presentations occur in groups or pairs in front of the class with the script learned from memory. Textbook activities are often in pairs with a written script students may use in order to practice current vocabulary or grammatical structure. Teacher observation of daily participation provides
assessment of student understanding; rubrics are often used to grade the more formal presentations and skits are performed from memory.

Students with a 504 plan or an IEP may receive extra time to complete assignments or assessments. Alternative assessments may include giving some answers orally instead of written. Some teachers are using a computer remote answering system for multiple choice tests.

Some of the strategies that are used after test results are given include review of test answers, correction of answers, retaking of tests, using flashcards to learn from test results, and reviewing/amplifying notes for future tests. During collaboration, teachers review results of common assessments in order to determine students' needs and review strategies to teach and re-teach sections of curriculum. Placement tests are used in order to advise parents of correct placement of students in upper level classes.

The business department uses a variety of testing protocol including tests, quizzes and essays to evaluate student learning. These assessments may include one or more of the following: multiple choice and true/false tests, oral presentations, essays, group projects and peer assessments.

Many teachers in the business department use project-based learning assessments. Learning activities such as spreadsheet analysis of bus arrival data, multimedia productions (news, commercials, documentaries, music projects) produced at professional production standards, marketing and event planning (a banquet at the Polinsky Center) and the development and management of data for the small student-run business are all examples of high quality and project-based learning activities that have immediate relevance.

In addition to the project-based assessments, teachers in the business department use performance based assessments to evaluate student learning, such as the professional level of work performed by students in the Serra High School Student Store, as well as the quality of work completed on all computer-based projects.

When appropriate, teachers in this department use alternative assessments for students with IEPs and 504 plans to evaluate student learning. Many of these alternative measures include monitoring student participation and behavior in class, as well as verbal and written responses to content level standards.

Student feedback is an important part of monitoring student progress in the business department. Test results in this department often lead to test reviews, peer tutoring and individual tutoring. All of these processes lead to review of material and collection of data to make decisions in instructional approaches and changes in lesson delivery.

The Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) department utilizes a variety of assessment methods because of the range of courses offered. End of unit tests are given to assess student learning of textbook and/or lecture material. Creative productivity is emphasized in many classes through independent projects as well as group projects and assignments.
The State Model Curriculum Standards are used for the academic content standards that the department follows. Music and drama utilize performances to measure student competences. These performances may be solos or group presentations. VAPA is supportive of students with 504s and IEPs. Teachers work with students’ case managers to fulfill best and proper evaluation methods for the students. Serra High School’s Q5 are addressed in VAPA classes through projects and reviewed in department meetings.

The Special Education department utilizes project-based learning to varying degrees depending on the nature of the class and learning needs of the students. Special education students enrolled in general education classes receive the same amount of exposure to project-based learning as their general education peers with an added level of support when appropriate.

Serra strives to serve all of its students with disabilities within general education to the highest possible extent, but also provides smaller special education classes for varying levels of support. Students with higher levels of need, or more significant disabilities often have more exposure to project-based learning within their special education classrooms. The applied special-education classes often utilize hands-on projects to teach the application of learned academic skills to real world tasks. Common examples include using checking accounts to reinforce functional math skills in relation to budgeting, addition, and subtraction. Cooking lessons are similarly used to reinforce skills in relation to fractions, multiplication, and division.

Serra’s students with more significant disabilities often take part in Community Based Instruction (CBI) as a form of project-based learning. Students with severe disabilities often have a difficult time generalizing what they learn at school to real world applications within the community. CBI gives students the opportunity to visit local stores and businesses to apply academic skills that they have learned in class. It also gives students an opportunity to gain supported exposure to other real world skills related to safety, transportation, and interacting with unfamiliar adults that are essential to their success as adults.

Performance-based assessments within special education classes are continuous, but differ in nature depending on the type of class. For example, an Algebra support class is designed to support special education students simultaneously enrolled in the general education Algebra class. The teacher of the support class can assess the students’ progress on a closer level. They then have the ability to go back and re-teach concepts that are difficult for the supported students to understand when instructed at the typical pace of the general education math class.

For reading development, the special education department offers a class utilizing the Read 180 Program. Assessments available within that class are specific to the program (Read 180 articles, etc.) that assess progress and the teacher assesses for growth in fluency and comprehension.

Special education students enrolled within general education classes receive the same homework assignments as their peers. Occasionally, reasonable modifications and accommodations are made to assignments. All students enrolled within general education
classes are expected to meet the standards taught and assessed through class homework. Additional homework is rarely assigned through special education support classes; however, students are often given the opportunity to work on related assignments and receive support.

The special education department uses data and assessments to generate many decisions made with regard to supporting students. Every student with an IEP is individually assessed every year in relation to their areas of academic difficulty. These assessments help to monitor progress, establish goals for the upcoming year, and inform decisions relating to appropriate class placement and supports. Specific assessments given on this yearly basis include the Analytical Reading Inventory, CORE Phonics Assessment, and the Brigance Math Assessment. These scores are taken into consideration in addition to the standardized assessments that they take along with general education peers such as the CST and CAHSEE when developing IEPs.

In addition to academic assessments, special education students are also evaluated by the school psychologist in relation to learning styles, processing strengths/weaknesses, as well as social/emotional factors that might impact their academic progress. As opposed to a traditional IQ-dependant model of assessment, the psychologist focuses on more specific areas of processing abilities (detailed auditory processing, visual processing, problem solving, processing speed, visual-motor integration, etc.) that can relate to specific strategies. These findings in relation to learning styles are reflected in recommendations made to the IEP team in terms of specific teaching strategies, study skill recommendations, and supports that would benefit the individual student.

Students who have more significant difficulties within a specific area can also be assessed and supported by the school’s speech-language therapist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, and deaf/hard of hearing teacher. In addition to a full time school psychologist, Serra also has a part time bilingual psychologist that can assist in assessments of Spanish speaking students to determine the level of impact that their language acquisition has in relation to any learning disability.

Additional formal assessments for special education students are also available in relation to career interests and research. The special education department has utilized the Career Cruising assessment to help students identify and research potential careers. The school has a career and transition specialist through the special education department who works with our students in terms of supported job placements as well as their transition from high school to the working world. Formal and informal assessments of students’ strengths and difficulties (academic, cognitive, interpersonal relations, etc.) are used in conjunction with their interests to determine appropriate vocational experiences.

Students supported within special education classes are frequently given the opportunity to review their tests and have repeated exposure to difficult material. In addition to teaching the content, special education teachers also focus on skills in addition to content knowledge that can impact test scores. For example, teachers review test-taking strategies that benefit students in all classes and review paragraph writing skills for essay responses. The teachers work to understand if the students’ difficulty is related to understanding the actual concept, or if the difficulty is more related to the structure of the assessment.
Depending on these findings teachers can assess in alternate methods or re-teach some of the key concepts.

Physical Education utilizes peer assessment and teacher evaluations to address mastery of motor skills. Formative and summative assessments are utilized by all teachers throughout the school year. This includes written (short answer and multiple choice), verbal assessments and physical demonstrations. For example, debriefing is an effective process in which activity stops and the teacher directs students to analyze what is happening; students reflect on their performances and teachers analyze these assessment results to determine the level of skill and where adjustments need to be made to their curriculum and instruction.

**Criterion D3:** *Serra High School, with the support of the district and community, has an assessment and monitoring system to determine student progress toward achievement of the academic standards and the expected school-wide learning results.*

Serra High School has established several protocols for monitoring student progress toward academic achievement. These procedures include district-established benchmarks, Data Director, online grading reports, regular progress reports, the SARC and standardized tests (CST and CAHSEE).

With the support of district leadership, Serra teachers have been involved in developing and administering district-established benchmarks for several core subjects. Ninth and tenth grade English courses, as well as American Literature classes developed end-of-course exams specific to the standards covered within those courses. Math classes, specifically algebra courses, have a district-created system to continually assess student knowledge, performance and depth of application. The world language department also utilizes district benchmarks for first year Spanish and French classes. All district benchmarks are linked to academic standards for the specific subjects. The science department utilizes district end-of-course exams for biology, chemistry and physics.

Serra High School is beginning to use Data Director, which provides administrators and teachers with vital information necessary to profile student achievement. Teachers of core subjects participated in a series of professional development workshops, learning and refining usage of this assessment tool. Many discovered that educators can access testing and demographic information for individual students, create and manage classroom assessments and compare the results of those assessments with high-stakes tests like the CSTs. Using Data Director empowers both teachers and administrators at Serra and offers the unique opportunity to determine which standards students seem to perform weakest and which standards students need to focus for review.

Serra High School provides online grade reports through Parent Connect. Student scores are available to parents and stakeholders by accessing this online service, allowing all parties to supervise individual student advancement.

The Serra administration provides timely and appropriate reports of its assessments and planning efforts to all its various shareholder groups and parents. Parents are mailed reports for CST and CAHSEE scores for their students. STAR data is shared with
parents in detail on the Serra Web Site. The School Accountability Report Card (SARC) is available to all stakeholders in two forms: the short form, which provides a general overview of standardized test data, and the long form, which provides assessment results in greater detail, particularly by specific subgroups. PSAT tests are also taken and scores are reported to students, parents and colleges/universities.

Other indicators of student achievement of academic standards are identified and regularly reviewed by administration. These include attendance, graduation rates and college entrance rates disaggregated by subgroups. Access to this information is made available to all stakeholders through the SARC posted on the district’s website.

**Criterion D4: The assessment of student achievement in relation to the academic standards and the expected school-wide learning results drives Serra High School’s program, its regular evaluation and improvement, and the allocation and usage of resources.**

Serra High School established SPSA goals in an effort to identify areas in which student performance is weakest, and provide support systems for improvement in those areas. Funding for support classes are approved by the SSC in an effort to aid student achievement and encourage movement toward successful graduation rates. Support classes include English and math academies (designed specifically for struggling students in ninth and tenth grades), CAHSEE support courses for students who did not pass either the math or the English portion of the exit exam, and EL support classes for students whose language classification places them in the English learner category.

The district supports APEX, a credit recovery program, for students who have received a D or F in a core academic subject. This program offers 24/7 online access to a student’s account, enables a student to work at an individual pace, recover graduation-required credits, and meet A-G requirements as established by the UC and CSU systems. Students at Serra who participated in the APEX program had a 99 percent pass rate as of June 2009. In addition, students who participated in success school increased their chances of graduation, decreasing student dropout rates.

**Strengths:**

- All subject areas are developing and implementing common assessments.

- Core subjects use Data Director to disaggregate and evaluate student scores and determine student needs.

- Opportunities are made available at staff meetings, department meetings and PLCs to review data and construct lesson plans addressing content standards.

- Money from SPSA is utilized to develop and conduct support classes such as literacy and math academies for ninth and tenth grades, CAHSEE support classes for students who have not yet passed the math and English portion of the exit
exam, and APEX credit recovery program for students who received a D or F in a core academic subject.

**Areas of need:**

- Professional development is needed in core subject areas to develop formative and summative assessments to determine student progress toward standards mastery.

- School and community stakeholders should participate in the development of course offerings available to students.

- Training should be provided for all teachers (especially non-core subject teachers) in Data Director usage.

- All teachers should receive training on Promethean Board techniques and accompanying software usage to develop strategies for assessments. This is an ongoing need based on the district’s mandated delivery of the technology.
WASC Focus Group E: School Culture and Support For Student Academic and Personal Growth:

The Structure and Purpose of the Focus Group:

Focus Group E was formed to analyze Serra High School’s guiding principles and climate based on the School Wide Learning Goals, known at Serra as the Q5. Certificated personnel from every department in the school, as well as classified personnel from widely differing departments, were randomly assigned to the group beginning in the early spring of 2009. This focus group met on Wednesdays, during teacher collaboration prep time (also known as student early leave days.)

The focus group identified concepts, reviewed data and evidence, and identified where Serra High School stands in the four stages of development on the rubric for each of our designated criterion.

Individual focus group members were assigned to collect evidence in a variety of classrooms and departments, as well as from the counseling office and the administration of the school. This evidence was compared with the “2007 Visiting Team’s Midterm Report.” Evidence was also correlated with the focus group’s essential concepts for each criterion.

Findings:

Criterion E-1: The school leadership employs a wide range of strategies to encourage parental and community involvement.

Serra has worked hard to develop a system of transparency and clear communication with families as well as the community. Our most comprehensive source of relaying information to parents and the public is our website http://serra.sandi.net. Information is added on a daily (if not hourly) basis so students, teachers, administration, parents and the public can access current and accurate information. It features up to date information such as policies, calendars, teacher contact information, state testing data results, athletic packets, dance agreements, meeting information and invitations to open house and other Serra events. The site also contains links that translate the contents into nine other languages.

One of our newest ways to provide communication with families is the Connect Ed mass communication system. It is used to make calls and emails regarding attendance, school announcements and emergencies. The system sends out automated attendance calls and emails twice a day at 9:30am and 5:30pm to inform parents if students have been absent from class. The administration is able to send out custom messages. The calls and emails can be sent to every family or to pre-selected individuals or groups at any time. For example, a call can be recorded in Spanish and sent only to families of 9th grade Spanish speakers. Another added benefit of the system is that in case of an emergency, our
administration can record a message and send it to all families immediately through voice, e-mail and text messaging.

The teacher component, Connect Ed Teacher allows teachers to communicate to parents in one of eight primary home languages. The teacher can select from over 130 prerecorded messages to send home. These messages can be sent to the entire class or the teacher can select individual students. The system uses the home language that is on file for the student. Messages from multiple teachers are combined so the parents only receive one phone call a night per child. Both Connect Ed systems have increased our ability to communicate with families immensely.

Another mode of communication with home is the Serra Spirit, our school newsletter that is published at the end of each 6-week grading period. The newsletter includes articles from all Serra stakeholders and features important information regarding what is happening on campus. It is a great way to inform parents about important events, dates, tests, policies, reminders, and includes a message from our principal allowing him to communicate directly with every family regularly throughout the year. It is published in English and in Spanish and is posted on our website.

A very important means of communicating directly with students are the bulletins announced at the beginning of fourth period by loudspeaker on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. We have recently added a weekly prerecorded television broadcast that features current events on our campus. Grade level assemblies and classroom presentations are held at the beginning of each school year to share student expectations and school rules.

The public is further notified of school news through the community newspaper, the Tierra Times. Important dates, interesting academic and athletic news, the honor roll, individuals selected for special honors, those who were awarded scholarships, and recognition of athletes and teams are submitted to the Tierra Times editors for publication. We use our marquee at the corner of Santo Rd. and Tierrasanta Blvd. to advertise important information because of the high visibility of that location.

Beginning in the spring of 2004 Zangle, the district student information system, was integrated at Serra. This system greatly improved the speed and accuracy with which student records are accessible by stakeholders. Access varies depending on staff positions. Teachers are given access only to the students on their current rosters. Counselors, special education case managers, and administrators have broad access over the whole school because they manage the entire school population.

Zangle is used by teachers to record and monitor attendance and grades and includes other important information regarding student records. Our staff uses this system to post attendance and view student contact information, schedules, behavior records, and designation of any special programs (GATE, seminar, EL, Special Ed, ILS, ED, etc.) This tool is one of our most useful ways of improving transparency and communication. Zangle has a feature called Gradebook, an online grading program to record and monitor
student progress. The information teachers post in Gradebook is accessible to parents on line through Parent Connect and to other staff members through Zangle Connect. A Parent Connect PIN and Password gives parents a single point of access to view information on any child they have enrolled in San Diego City Schools. Every year at Fall Open House and Spring Showcase, we have a campaign to register parents. Parents may also request activation of their account on line and then pick up their log in information when the present proper identification to the front office. Zangle make all of our jobs more efficient and effective, and provide transparency to students and parents. The challenge of this program is that the administration cannot force teachers to use Gradebook, and there are a few teachers who still don’t. When teachers do not use Gradebook, the information may not available electronically to parents, counselors, or administrators. We do not have 100% participation by parents and the tool is only effective when it is used. It should be noted that some teachers choose to use third party grading programs.

Our school year is broken into two 18-week semesters; fall and spring. Formal cumulative progress reports are sent home two times during a semester at six-week intervals. Students receive semester (or permanent) grades each semester, or two times per year. This is a way for students and parents to monitor academic progress. We have Pink Progress Report (PPR) days every other Monday, or three times per 6-week interval. A PPR is a snapshot of a student’s grades at a specific time. Administration and ILT feel that students need a means to monitor their progress and PPR is a terrific solution. Schedules of PPR days are given to students, parents, and staff. It is the student’s responsibility to find a counselor, administrator or teacher on PPR days and request a form. Teachers are strongly encouraged to fill these out. This serves several purposes. It gives students a chance to take responsibility for their education, gives students frequent feedback, and is efficient for teachers. Nearly all of our teachers participate, and many students take advantage of this option. The challenge of this system would be to get more students to take advantage of PPR days.

Other means of communicating with students, families and the public include Open House in the fall, and Spring Showcase in the spring. At fall Open House, all teachers are present in their classrooms for parents to visit and learn about the course. Spring Showcase is a time to showcase student work. At both events we have activities and food for sale to make the atmosphere relaxed, fun, and welcoming. Clubs, teams, and organizations set up booths to provide information about what they are and how to join. We also provide bus transportation for all students and their families as way increase participation from those families who do not live in the Tierrasanta community.

Our School Site Council (SSC) meets a minimum of six times during the year. It is comprised of our principal, teachers, staff, students, and parents. There are twelve members whose names are posted on the SSC link on our website (along with agendas, meeting minutes, by-laws, and our SPSA.) These meetings are open to the public and advertised on the website and auto-dialer message. Serra’s SSC involves representatives from all stakeholder groups. The members review data to help inform the development of the Single Plan for Student Achievement. This council also meets to discuss and
allocate the spending of Title 1 monies to increase student achievement (especially within our low socio-economic population.) SSC members are elected by their peer groups.

Our English Learner Advisory Committee or ELAC was formed nearly three years ago. This committee has been advised by a teacher, a Vice Principal, and now our English Learner Support Teacher or ELST. The committee is comprised of primarily parents who have EL students attending Serra High. The goal of this committee is to get EL parents informed about our school and how their children are serviced. Essentially ELAC members are advocates for EL students and give input to the SSC as to how Title 1 funds can be spent to increase student achievement.

Our newest addition to parent involvement was our recent First Parent Shadow Day. Parents were invited to come to school with their students and attend classes with them. The purpose of this event was to get parents on campus in a positive light so they can witness first hand the learning and achieving that goes on at Serra. Though widely publicized we did not have as many parents attend as we had hoped, a challenge we knew could occur. It is our hope that we will have better attendance at the next Parent Shadow Day.

As we have grown technologically, the result is better communication between teacher and students. Many teachers use websites to post classroom assignments, notes, study guides, and their syllabi. This is also a good way for parents to keep track of what is going on in the classroom and whether or not their child has homework. Some teachers are also using blogs to discuss questions pertaining to class material. Online discussions are preparation for how some classrooms work in college.

Our student population is 38% Hispanic and it benefits students and their families to have staff members at school who can help them access important information. In our front office we have five people who speak Spanish fluently. Other languages including French, Korean, and ASL are spoken by staff members.

To encourage parental involvement in college planning, the Counseling Office sponsors a Senior College Night in October and an Eleventh Grade College Night in the spring. Invitations are extended to parents in the Serra Spirit newsletter and on the Serra website. Counselors visit classrooms to encourage students to attend and bring their parents. College Night is announced in the student bulletin, notices are posted, and parent invitations are sent home through the mail. UC/CSU a-g requirements, testing, and finances are some of the topics covered. Last March, parents representing over 90 eleventh grade students attended. A senior college newsletter, Q-Tips is also printed and distributed to all senior students, helping inform them of application requirements and deadlines for many colleges. The Q-Tips are distributed in English classes once a month for the first six months of the school year.

For parents of 10th grade students, the Tenth Grade Review is held one night in the fall semester to make sure students are on track for meeting high school graduation requirements. Counselors share information on California’s public colleges and
universities, and inform parents about Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), as well as Advanced Placement (AP) exams and courses offered at Serra. UC/CSU a-g requirements are also discussed. The evening program is followed up in the spring when counselors visit tenth graders in their English classes to design their schedules for the last two years of high school.

Serra Real Connections helps many of our students from military families become aware of resources available to them. This includes Military Outreach, which helps mainly spouses of deployed servicemen and women with day-to-day problems, and access to Fleet and Family Support Center and medical resources such as Tricare.

Letters from the district superintendent and other communication from the district office are included in the Serra Spirit, sent home with students or mailed directly. District communication is automatically printed in both English and Spanish. The district also has a department to translate documents into other languages when necessary. Translators are provided, as needed, for IEP meetings. IEPs are also translated into home languages.

Parents participate in the Serra community in many ways. Parents are frequently seen at athletic events, supporting the athletes, selling booster club garb, or volunteering in the snack bar. Serra High School has an active PTO and Foundation along with booster clubs for Football, Seniors, Band, and Basketball. Parents also volunteer to serve on the SSC and ELAC committees. Parents help distribute textbooks, prepare the Serra Spirit for mailing, help proctor the census CAHSEE and help assemble the registration packets. Since 2008 the PTO has partnered with the administration to improve student performance on the CSTs. The PTO secures funding, orders and distributes over 14,000 snacks to students during STAR testing. Parent involvement improves Serra’s programs and opportunities significantly.

In conclusion, our group has determined through our collection of evidence that our school leadership, operations, staff and faculty have a very wide range of strategies to encourage parental and student involvement. Our main weakness would be the involvement of the community (or the several different communities) that make up our Serra culture. Approximately 1/3 of our students live in the Tierrasanta community, about 1/3 live in the Murphy Canyon Naval Housing community, and about 1/3 of students live in City Heights and its surrounding neighborhoods. Our Tierrasanta and Murphy Canyon communities are adjacent to the school and easier to involve because of close proximity. Our City Heights community is about 10 minutes away by car, and requires driving on the freeway to get there. Most of these students ride the bus via the Enrollment Options Program, Program Improvement School Choice or School Choice programs. Involving this community is more difficult because of the distance issue. Students sometimes have a hard time feeling like this is their school because they live outside the immediate neighborhood. We are continually trying ways and means to improve in this area. At this time it still remains an identified challenge that we are aware of and committed to working on. This is why we provide transportation to various school events like open house, football games, etc.
Criterion E-2: The school is a safe, clean, and orderly place that nurtures learning, and b. has a culture that is characterized by trust, professionalism, high expectations for all students, and a focus on continuous school improvement.

Surveys indicate that most students feel safe on the Serra campus. Students from San Diego City Schools regularly request assignment to Serra, partly because of the safety of the school. Since the last WASC evaluation, Serra has been regularly one of the top schools each year requested by the school Choice program offered by San Diego City Schools. Two late activity buses allow students to participate in athletics, clubs such as Opportunities, and tutoring programs such as ASAP after school, creating connections for our students who are not from our community. Surveys also reveal that most parents and students also feel that school rules are applied in a fair and consistent manner and that discipline is handled appropriately. This definitely sets the tone for a safe and orderly campus.

A school handbook is distributed to every student enrolled at Serra as a preface to the student’s planner/agenda. These serve the dual purpose of citing expectations and assisting students in good work habits while also fostering organizational skills. Orderliness is evidenced by the system of rules and regulations mentioned in the handbook. The handbooks are given on the first day of school. The first week of school there are grade level assemblies to go over rules and expectations. Following this, administrators and counselors visit all English classes to explain and answer questions about the rules and regulations. After all classes are visited, it is formally announced via loudspeaker, bulletin, website, school marquee, and auto-dialer (in the home language) the exact date and time that enforcement by all staff begins. Enforcement remains for the entire school year.

Although the school handbook indicates rules and policies, not all teachers and staff enforce them regularly. This challenge of inconsistency can lead to a disconnect with students and parents. Our administration staff remediate as necessary at faculty meetings, via staff-wide emails, and individual private meetings.

A system has been set up to deal with tardiness. Supervision assistants, counselors, and administrators have assigned posts around campus before school, lunch, after school and every passing period. Their purpose is to motivate students to get to class on time and to document, counsel, and discipline those who don’t. Late students who are stopped are documented by the attendance office excessive tardies will result in the addition of LOP “Loss of Privileges,” points.

The LOP list is explained in detail on the Serra High School website and in the student handbook. It is taught to students in the classroom visits referenced above during the Rules and Regulations presentations the first week of school. It was originated to teach our students that being present and on time is a basic individual responsibility. Being present, in mind as well as body, improves listening and memory skills. Presence helps to
develop persistence and ability to learn. Punctuality is of utmost importance and a basic skill required of anyone who wants to get even a low-skill job and become a responsible, productive adult. This life long habit is a highly important aspect of Serra culture and has been for several years.

Home contact by Serra Administration and Counseling is made to encourage students to come to school on time and regularly. During the first two weeks of school Serra Staff visit surrounding communities to find students who attended our school the year prior but haven’t shown up. Those students are encouraged to get to school. Measures are put into place to help each student and lower the dropout rate. Home visits have occurred for families without transportation or in cases where there was no working phone number. Many of our staff members go above and beyond to communicate with our student’s caregivers. Home visits are one more method of ensuring orderliness at SHS. This is also a way of letting our students and their families know we care, we expect and demand their best, and we do all that we cannot to allow them to fail. It is an effective way of improving our schools graduation rate.

Our school follows the zero tolerance policy set forth by our school district. Any student found with a weapon of any size, shape or form is recommended for expulsion. Often they are placed for a semester at an alternative school as a consequence.

**Many resources are utilized to enhance our environment & teach responsibility:**

For example, until his passing this past year, Judge William Mudd of the San Diego Criminal Court system would speak regularly to our seniors concerning the legal rights and responsibilities of adulthood which one assumes at the age of 18. Another example was a panel of rehabilitated felons who came to speak to success school students about the consequences of their choices, and how they turned their lives around. Administration was consulted, a SDPD/SWAT officer was present in the room giving a police perspective, and no visitors had crimes involving children. A third example would be visits to freshman classrooms by our life skills counselor from our district office, to speak to ninth graders about tobacco and sexual harassment. Lastly, several teachers lead clubs for students interested in certain subjects, hobbies, or issues. A terrific working example of this would be our Environmental Club, Club Green. The club meets at lunch and promotes and educates students about why taking care of our environment is important to our global future. Students get to express themselves and their opinions, and they learn how they can take responsibility for their environmental footprints and for change.

**The school environment of Serra is safe, secure, clean, and orderly:**

All staff members promote a caring and nurturing environment in order to encourage enhanced student learning based on high expectations. One example is the training that 12 SHS staff members attended for the program by The Flip Flippin Group called Capturing Kids Hearts. The philosophy of the program is highly related to the name of the training. Teachers are trained to create team environments, to teach social skills, to
promote group responsibility, and to foster student internal security. Teachers are taught how to bring students back in that have given up, stopped caring, and/or behave poorly.

Serra High School is a clean environment thanks to the efforts of our custodial crew. Our custodial and gardening staffs, despite recent cuts, do their best to maintain a clean and neat campus. A recent interview was conducted with Plant Operations Supervisor (POS). As an experienced custodial supervisor, his opinion is that he has enough manpower to keep Serra’s campus clean, orderly, and safe. The challenge for him is not having the proper equipment for tasks such as cleaning the gum off of the campus grounds, cleaning or replacing the ceiling tiles, fixing the sidewalks so they are safe, and painting walls that have been defaced. Besides the lack of equipment needed, he feels at the mercy of our district maintenance team. For example, our air conditioners did not work the first two weeks of school this year. It was the beginning of September and a serious heat wave. Teachers and students were uncomfortable in classrooms with no windows or exterior doors leading to irritability and exhaustion. Our POS feels his maintenance requests are not handled in a timely fashion and feels little control over the situation. Our POS feels our school does not have enough furniture, and the furniture we do have is falling apart. He feels our school has more individual desks and fewer tables, stressing the tables are sturdier and last much longer. All of these challenges are out of our site control. If we can overcome these challenges then our school would be much cleaner, much safer, and far more orderly. The POS also mentioned that he does thorough comprehensive evaluations bi-monthly to make sure everything is up to par. He shares these reports with his staff, and keeps them filed as evidence. He feels his team is doing a great job.

Strengths mentioned by the POS were the size of his custodial team, and the care students and staff take in respecting the school. He feels Serra staff and students have pride in our campus and keep it in better condition than other schools he has supervised.

Students have also become a part of keeping Serra clean by running the recycling program on campus. Five different clubs on campus have come together to share the responsibility so that the recycling program can run each day of the week. The custodial staff regularly clean classrooms, bathrooms, litter, debris, and remove graffiti from the walls. They also maintain the working order of our buildings, appliances, furniture, ceilings, and fixtures.

The culture of Serra High School is characterized by trust, professionalism, and high expectations for all students, and a focus on continuous school improvement:

The faculty and staff of Serra High School make a major attempt at developing trust with students. As early as our pre-service dates in August, our staff's discussions centered on what it means to be an educational professional. Instructors are encouraged to cultivate positive relationships with the students in their classrooms and to know them deeply as individual learners. We are a community of learners, and we have a shared vision that we must reflect on our teaching by opening our classrooms and making our practice public. For example, we now have scheduled Parent Shadow Days, where parents may attend class all day with their child and observe. Additionally, parents may observe anytime
they wish by appointment. Our teachers are all able to meet with parents by appointment, to discuss their child’s progress.

Classroom observations by administrators are a regular occurrence, and our site is a frequent host to visitors. Most staff and students are proud to show our professionalism, trust, and commitment to improvement. In addition to observing teaching and learning, they visit to connect with students as well. Recently our Principal visited a classroom as a guest speaker to speak to English Language Learners. He sat with them, talked with them in English and Spanish, introduced himself, and shared his experience, strength and hope about being bilingual. He spoke about how many doors opened for him because of his education in English, and how that education allowed him to go to college and become a principal. Another example would be our Vice Principals who have been visiting classes to give constructive advice and words of encouragement to teachers.

We have high expectations for our students, which are evident in district graduation requirements, standards-based instruction, and our focus on high school reform. Students are asked to take the most challenging curriculum possible, and we have worked tirelessly to support them in their pursuit of academic progress in a rigorous educational setting. Students meet regularly with their counselors to measure their progress towards graduation, to plan interventions if they are at risk and to set them up for entrance to a four-year university. Student Study Teams are also formed when any stakeholder feels something is amiss with a student. Whether it is unfounded giftedness, misplacement in a program, or something such as a disability that has gone unnoticed. Many times these teams can help students get on the right track to success. A challenge in this respect would be the amount of time counselors have for these important tasks. Due to the high number of students requiring supervision and discipline, our counseling staff frequently assists with supervision and discipline. Counselors receive behavior referrals and determine whether the offense is handled through the counseling office or is a suspendable offense which is then handed up to be dealt with by a Vice Principal. They are also part of our supervision staff before, during and after school.

As a staff, we have continued our work through shared learning and our commitment to continuous improvement. Teachers are required and encouraged to attend professional development training to continually improve their teaching practice and their relationships with students in the classroom. As a direct result their effectiveness has and continues to increase. Serra conducts monthly faculty meetings and regular staff development meetings where teachers meet in various small groups. These scheduled and mandatory groups give teachers a chance to collaborate on curriculum and classroom management. Examples of collaborative work include departments aligning their curriculum with the California State Standards, and creating common assessments. These meetings are led by highly skilled teachers and administrators in order to further promote quality standards and academic success.
Higher expectations require students to maintain certain grade point average minimums to participate in programs such as Associated Student Body (ASB), Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), athletics, and California Scholarship Federation (CSF). Advanced placement courses, GATE classes, and a Seminar program further enhance and encourage student excellence. Advanced Placement, and Seminar Instructors collaborate to align curriculum with current state standards, to prepare students to excel in state mandated testing situations and to do well in their future endeavors.

In the spring of 2006 the Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps placed 1st in the nation and the unarmed drill team placed first at the Navy Nationals Field Meet held in Florida.

The school sponsors academically-oriented special programs such as the 11th and 12th grade college nights where the counselors meet students and their parents to discuss financial aid and college entrance requirements. Every year in the spring, both a senior and undergraduate recognition programs are held where outstanding students are honored for their achievements. Every instructional department, grade level department, club and extracurricular activity has the opportunity to spotlight student excellence.

In conclusion, our group currently determines our school as a safe, clean, orderly place that nurtures learning and has a culture characterized by trust, professionalism, high expectations for all students, and a focus on continuous student improvement. Our group has highlighted many strengths and many challenges. Our plan is to continue to do the best we can with our budget, resources and abilities.

**Criterion E-3 and E-4:**

**Criterion E-3:** *All students receive appropriate support along with an individualized learning plan to help enhance academic success.*

**Criterion E-4:** *Students have access to a system of personal support services, activities, and opportunities at the school and within the community.*

**All students receive appropriate support along with an individualized learning plan to help enhance academic success:**

Serra has developed, and implemented a variety of academic programs in order to support and meet the educational needs of its diverse student population. As necessary these systems are revised and continually improved upon. All students have access to support designed to meet their individual goals and needs within individual classrooms and throughout the campus. These include district and state programs, as well as programs designed specifically for Serra students.
Our student articulation process allows the educational needs of each student to be addressed. An individual articulation plan is developed for each student by the counseling office. This process guides the students through placement and then monitors them throughout each year. This system ensures that students are challenged and achieve their full academic potential at Serra.

The articulation process begins each February with the counseling department hosting a breakfast for the staff of the two feeder middle schools to introduce new staff and program leaders speak about class offerings. We then begin grade level parent meetings to introduce the array of classes students can choose from, graduation requirements, discuss the rigor of advanced, honors and AP classes, and what we expect from all of our students. These meetings are held for each grade level in the evening. Teachers are invited to these meetings to introduce their programs and speak to the advantages of their courses. During the school day, the counselors visit each grade-level English class and pass out a class selection card and student transcript. These visits include traveling to the feeder middle schools to talk about Serra High School and what students can expect from their high school experience. We expect each student to take the card home for discussion with their parents and obtain their signature. Every student is then seen by the counselors and their class selections are chosen based on parent input, teacher input and progress being made in current classes. Each student receives a credit check sheet, which is signed by both the student and counselor. A copy is mailed home, one goes in the student cumulative file and one copy is filed in the counselor’s credit check book.

Special designations such as Seminar, GATE, IEP, ILS, LEP, etc. are also considered. Students are placed into programs according to their needs. Students have equal access to any level of classes. For example, for the past two years SDUSD wanted to encourage more students to challenge themselves and take AP classes. A new position, AP Incentive Coordinator, was added for this specific goal. The AP Coordinator is now in his second year here at Serra. His role is to conference with students individually; discuss the benefits of taking AP classes, offer support, and to motivate students to join the AP program. Once students join the program, the AP Coordinator, AP instructors, counselors and vice principals monitor their progress. This past summer Serra offered an AP Boot Camp. Students came voluntarily and learned strategies to prepare themselves for the rigor of AP classes. The goal for the group was to experience the fun of higher level learning, to learn how to be part of a successful team, and to embark on special learning excursions arranged especially for them.

At Serra, our students with learning or other health difficulties are placed in classes based on their individual needs as stated in their IEP or 504 plans. Students are placed in the least restrictive environment in which they can function successfully. The majority of special education students are in general education classes for a part/most of their day. They are supported through trained collaboration teachers with credentials in Special Education. If a student is identified for special education and shows the need for more individualized support, they receive specialized instruction for most of their day from highly trained special education teachers. All special education teachers manage a caseload of students. Their duties include conducting IEP meetings/reviews, acting as a
liaison between school, teacher, student, and family, and over-seeing student progress. A Vice Principal and our School Psychologist oversee all matters involving special education students.

Serra has a small number of English Language learners compared to other schools in the district. Therefore we do not have an English as a Second Language (ESL) course. This year we have added an English Learner Support Teacher (ELST) position as a resource teacher for our EL students. The ELST is in charge of CELDT testing, and new assessments that come about. The ELST is also teaming up with the Literacy Advancement Academy classes to team-teach specially designed ESL lessons.

Students who are designated as English Learners (EL) through administration of the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) are programmed into regular core classes taught by Cultural Language Acquisitions Development (CLAD) or Specially Designed Academic Instruction for English Learners (SDAIE) certified teachers. We also have support classes for both math and literacy that are instrumental in these student’s educations.

**INTERVENTIONS**

There are ninth grade math interventions at Serra designed to help struggling students who are performing below grade and who need a greater foundation in Algebra. Algebra Exploration Advancement Academy is a course that supports the 9th grade Math curriculum. This course provides an extra hour of targeted instruction to reinforce the basics, re-teach what was missed, support the regular curriculum, and provide extra time to students who need it. The classes are smaller and usually contain 20 students or less. This course levels the playing field for students with special needs, and students who are in our EL program (though it is available to all).

Literacy Advancement Academy classes are available to our English Learners to provide Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English, and to reinforce the 9th grade curriculum; English learners are one of our neediest populations, evidence being CST scores and grades. They are a group of children we as a school are very passionate about. Our goal is to bridge the language gap. This course provides students in our EL program ESL instruction, and an extra hour of support for the 9th grade English curriculum. We do not have an ESL program at Serra due to the number of EL students we have. Our EL student’s language acquisition levels range from Beginning English Students/New to US, through Advanced English Speakers soon to be reclassified. This extra hour of literacy allows time for students to work in small groups, with peer buddies, and to have extra access to the teacher for help and support.

Support classes in reading, writing and math are also given to struggling students in our special education department. These courses are taught by credentialed special education teachers and are in addition to general education core classes.
For 10\textsuperscript{th} through 12\textsuperscript{th} grades we offer support classes to students still struggling in Math and English. These courses are also designed to help students gain the skills necessary to pass the CAHSEE.

All support classes are designed to provide support, motivation, study skills and instruction to assist students who continue to struggle. Highly trained teachers who specialize in motivating hard to reach students teach these courses. We are continually exploring new ways to increase their achievement and bring these students (who are falling behind or straying to the side), back into the middle of the pack.

Classes are balanced early in October in order to ensure maximum exposure and opportunity for both teacher and student to build a relationship. Individualized needs are addressed for success if a student is struggling or needs to be placed in a more challenging advanced class. Teachers receive copies of accommodations and modifications for all students who have active Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and 504 Plans in order to further facilitate individual student learning. Teachers use Zangle to identify English Learners in order to use SDAIE strategies to help them access the curriculum.

Our faculty professional developments this year have been tied to utilizing technology to access and decipher student data, to find trends in learning, and to design our teaching towards areas of greatest needs with our students. We have been trained to use Data Director for this purpose. This tool should help teachers work smarter and more efficiently. We learned how to create assessments within the program so student scores can be monitored in data format. We have spent a good deal of time working with the program learning to view and analyze data in different ways, and identifying trends. The challenge of this new tool is the learning curve for teachers. Teachers in core areas have been trained and have experienced the program but many are not consistently using it yet.

Teachers have been working on creating common assessments in departments and grade level teams, as well as developing uniformity in our curriculums. The challenge would be that we do not have enough time to collaborate and plan together. Teachers provide access to a syllabus for each class, which outlines standards and gives an overview of requirements for the course. All students, whatever their abilities, are continually encouraged to meet the challenges of a standards-based curriculum in all areas. Serra teachers are encouraged to know their student’s learning needs by studying students comprehensively using tools like Data Director mentioned above. A major focus of recent staff developments is that teachers will design lesson plans based on student assessment data from Data Director. Teachers use various instructional strategies to tap into the different learning styles of all students, and monitor student progress frequently.

Serra Administration and staff believe that good communication between home and school provides strong support for students to increase academic success. Serra uses many forms of communication mentioned in detail in Criterion E1. Every staff member has voice mail and an email account. We make every attempt to keep family contact
information current so families get pertinent information in a consistent and timely manner. Teachers are encouraged to maintain communication with parents on a regular basis, especially when a student is at risk. We now have a system called ConnectEd Teacher that gives teachers the ability to call individual or large groups of students quickly in their home language. The system tracks the communication, which is tangible evidence. Some teachers have written phone logs also. Bi-weekly progress reports are described in detail in Criterion E1, and are also a way to communicate with many parents at once. They are a great tracking process for students and families monitoring progress.

Senior credit checks take place in October. All seniors meet with their counselor to discuss their final year of school and to make sure all graduation requirements will be met by June. Presentations are made to all senior classes regarding graduation requirements. There are two College Nights held at Serra High School to discuss college admissions procedures and financial aid. The Senior Class College Night is held in October, while the Junior Class College Night takes place in March. A financial aid meeting is held in December for 12th grade students and parents. Financial aid experts are the speakers and give important information and answer questions. All sophomore students and their families are invited to participate in a 10th Grade Review, which involves an evening program for parents in December and a presentation to students in February.

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program supports many of our students at Serra. AVID is a college preparatory program for students in the middle who are often economically disadvantaged and underachieving. It enables disadvantaged secondary students to succeed in rigorous classes, enter mainstream activities in school, and increase their opportunities to enroll in four-year colleges. AVID meets the needs of students at Serra by providing academic instruction and other support to students to prepare them for eligibility to four-year colleges and universities. They are also assigned a variety of writing projects to prepare for college essays. They are also given entry-level college skills, student coping skills, motivation to seek a college education, and career awareness. Beginning this year every AVID 9th or 10th grader is encouraged to take at least one honors class, while every AVID 11th or 12th grader is encouraged to take at least one AP class. The AVID class will provide these students the kind of support they will need in order to be successful in these more challenging courses.

Student planners are distributed to all students in September to facilitate organizational and time management skills. Teachers are encouraged to help students use their planners to write down all assignments and important information. This is an essential collegiate and career oriented skill.

The Academic Support and Assistance Program (ASAP) tutoring program is a new program held before school daily and after school on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. A late bus is provided for students who do not live in the Tierrasanta community so they have equal access to this academic support resource. This program provides students a place to work individually with teachers on their class work. Teachers from different subject areas are assigned to tutoring on different days so students can
attend the days when their teacher/subject is present. Teachers also conduct individual tutoring for their students on their own office hours schedule. A challenge with the ASAP program is motivating more students to attend and use it for working versus socializing.

Up until this year, students needing to make up credits toward graduation have had access to Success School which is a six-week after school class that meets Monday-Friday from 2:45-5:00. This year due to budget cuts this program has been suspended. This is definitely a challenge because it takes away a method for recapturing credits. Summer school has also always been available, but we are unsure about the future due to the budget. Success school and summer school lists are formed with students who have a D or F in core subjects. They are strongly urged to sign up and attend. If a student successfully completes a 6-week session of success school, or summer school the new grade will replace the D or F and provide the student credit for that course. The challenge is mainly funding, but also the small percentage that don’t take advantage of these programs. Another challenge due to the lack of funding is that these programs are only focused on remediation of grades and not for students who want to get ahead.

**Students have access to a system of personal support services, activities, and opportunities at the school and within the community.**

Serra High School has many opportunities in place to help support students in their social and emotional growth such as academic clubs, extracurricular activities, and support groups. All students have equal access to all services offered at Serra. A major goal at Serra is to make sure everyone feels accepted and welcomed as individuals.

The Serra High School NJROTC program takes full advantage of living near the largest Navy and Marine Corps bases on the West Coast. Serra NJROTC students participate in numerous activities at or with local military commands. These activities include orientation visits to Navy and Marine Corps installations as well as local military commands sending representatives to support Serra NJROTC activities. Serra NJROTC maintains a very positive, two-way relationship with all of the local military commands. This interaction and relationship helps to reinforce the classroom training with real world experiences and are an important part of the NJROTC program.

A personal support service at Serra is a program called Real Connections. It is a youth development program funded by SAY San Diego that runs support groups focusing on topics like: good-decision making, healthy relationships, teen pregnancy prevention, anger management/coping skills groups, and grief/loss.

Referral services through SAY San Diego (low-cost or free) are available to assist students and their families in locating medical, mental health, and social assistance so their basic needs are met. Emotional well-being is fostered through individual case management, conflict resolution, and support groups.
Serra counselors and/or the staff at Serra Real Connections at times refer families to agencies located outside of the immediate Serra community, closer to home for our students who must take the bus to Serra. Some of these referral agencies deal primarily with a particular ethnic or language sub-group of the population. It is important to keep location, access, cost, and language issues in mind when making referrals. Three programs that we give referrals to are Barrio Station located in Logan Heights, Jackie Robinson Family YMCA in Southeast San Diego, and Union of Pan Asian Communities (UPAC) located in Golden Hill. Barrio Station primarily serves Hispanic families with counseling, parenting classes, and youth programs. The services are free. The Jackie Robinson YMCA offers sports, after-school activities, counseling, tutoring, and other recreational and educational activities. The challenge is that we can lead students and families to these valuable assistance programs, but have little control over whether or not they are used.

Our employer outreach specialist (EOS) provides all students with the resources necessary to research and identify career opportunities. The EOS also provides students with possible volunteer, internship, and job shadow opportunities. All 9th grade students are given the Career Operational Preference System (COPS) test. This is an in-depth interest inventory designed to guide students to job clusters that match their interests. The EOS will also meet with students who request a meeting with her for one-on-one career counseling.

Students at Serra learn the importance of giving back to their community by way of doing community service. All students are encouraged to volunteer, especially through on-campus clubs and organizations. Students in grades 9 through 11 receive a certificate recognizing their service if they meet Serra's recommended number of community service hours. Seniors receive extra credit on their senior exhibitions if they complete the recommended number of community service hours. This is helpful not only for their college resumes and scholarship opportunities, but also because it is a positive experience for themselves and their community.

A full-time registered nurse directs the Serra High School Health Program. Our comprehensive program embraces three major areas: Health Services, Healthful and Safe School Environment, and Health Education. The primary purpose of the health program is to help students develop positive attitudes, make intelligent choices with their bodies, follow practices that will help them live healthfully and happily, and to assume responsibility for their own health. The health program, broadly interpreted, is the shared responsibility of the teacher, school nurse, and other authorized personnel in contact with students at school.

The nurse’s two main goals are to maximize students’ health and wellness so they can successfully participate in the district’s instructional program and to minimize the classroom instructional time missed due to health and wellness problems.

In pursuit of these goals, the nurse’s office provides intervention and treatment measures that involve evaluating, treating (where possible), and referring new and existing health issues.
and psychosocial problems as they occur. These measures may include but are not limited to the following:

- nursing referral follow-ups after failed health screenings
- evaluating, treating (when possible), and referring acute and episodic illnesses, conditions, and injuries as they occur (e.g., fevers, broken bones, severe headaches, symptoms of drug use, etc.)
- providing services to students with chronic and existing illnesses, disorders, diseases, and/or conditions (e.g., psycho-social and mental health problems, administering medications per physician’s orders, intervening with and educating students and their families regarding particular chronic-illness issues such as asthma, diabetes, etc.)
- educating and informing students as needed about important health issues such as communicable diseases, substance abuse, sex, HIV/AIDS, and tobacco
- assessing students who are under suspicion of being intoxicated
- working with 911 operators and paramedics to safely assist students in getting to the hospital quickly when needed.
- running to accident scenes to immediately provide first aid while awaiting paramedics.
- collaborating and providing training to site staff in case we become first responders.
- working with community agencies to plan and manage treatment of various programs (e.g., school blood drive, Healthy Start Community Collaborative, etc.).
- Also offered by the nurse are student screenings, staff surveillance of communicable diseases; immunization compliance review; and staff health prevention education.

Our nurse has a caseload of 2200 students, and is on her own this year to fulfill that duty as well as the tasks described above. Challenges include many first aid items are no longer allowed for administration (soap, water, and band aid only.) Another challenge for her this past year has been dealing with the H1N1 flu outbreak, pandemic. She gathers the information as it becomes available, provides barriers like hand sanitizer, and assesses those with flu symptoms. A third major challenge is that she needs more help. Due to budget cuts she no longer has a health office assistant spreading her abilities very thin.

Biology teachers in SDUSD are trained and given guided lessons to teach sex education to students. Our comprehensive sex education program embraces three major areas: Health Education and Services, Safe Sex, and Healthy Lifestyles and Relationships. The primary purpose of the health program is to help students develop good attitudes about health, make intelligent choices, follow practices that will help them live healthfully and happily, and to assume responsibility for their own health. Each year we have a handful of teenage girls who become pregnant. This presents a challenge to the education and future of both mother and child. This challenge needs to be better addressed, more interventions put into place, and a campaign that motherhood should occur after adulthood.
The School Psychologist at Serra works full time to assure that the psycho-educational needs of the students are met. He is available to work with any student who needs his services, which include but are not limited to the following:

- assessment of students with academic, emotional, and social needs
- conducting manifestation hearings to determinate zero tolerance status
- counseling services and crisis/emergency counseling on a short-term basis.
- consultation services to students, teachers and parents of students who attend Serra. In addition, he is called upon to assist those who may attend private, or nonpublic schools.

A major challenge is that we have one psychologist and our school counseling program consists of 4-5 guidance counselors. We don’t have enough trained staff to handle the social and emotional problems of today’s teenagers. We have students with drug, alcohol, smoking, depression, suicidal tendencies, and anxiety (and even cases of diagnosed psychosis.) We have students who are live in foster/group homes, and students quietly suffering abuse on an on-going basis and are too afraid to speak up. What is our evidence? Referrals, suspensions, IEPs, visits with school counselors, and parent/state disclosure. It is the opinion and hypothesis of this group that if students had quicker, easier, and more frequent opportunities to talk to someone about what is going on inside their hearts and minds, behavior, attendance, and academic performance would increase. Again it is an issue of funding and being spread too thin, and a lack of many families in addressing these problems privately and taking action through their health insurance or public assistance. This issue is critical and in great need of addressing.

ASB plans activities in an effort to maximize student participation from all populations on campus. Students have an opportunity to participate in a variety of lunchtime activities, spirit rallies, and dances, both formal and informal. ASB and various clubs sponsor activities, such as band performances. The district provides bus transportation to evening dances and sporting events for our students who ride the bus. ASB class members are elected or nominated to the team. Teachers are asked to seek out students who are leaders, but normally may not apply for ASB. Over the past couple years ASB has focused on diversifying its members in order to represent all population on campus with the goal of reaching out to all students at Serra. This is evident by our diverse ASB team, our own giant melting pot.

Elevated Student Relations Committee is a group that has been at Serra for four years and its goal is to support, educate, and celebrate the diversity of the student population at Serra. All students are welcome and have access to the lunchtime meetings once a week. This group has coordinated many events such as a performance for Hispanic Heritage month, and having the entire school write positive notes to our military, and attend Our Village.
The Business Management and Ownership classes, operate the Serra Student Store. The Student Store is open for business before school and during lunch. All students enrolled in this class have the opportunity to work in the student store, which teaches responsibility and for some students gives them their first job experience. In addition, the program recently added Caffeine Café, a coffee cart business operated by students. Students with disabilities team up with general education students to sell coffee, tea, and pastries to the office staff in the mornings during first period. This is a great way to teach job skills and responsibility.

After school students can participate in various school-sponsored activities. Some of these activities include athletics, cheer, band, and Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (NJROTC). Bus services are provided for all students who stay after school for any school-related activity, whether it is sports, tutoring, or Success School.

Serra’s student clubs provide opportunities for social activities, support for student growth, and service within the community. Our school has an abundance of clubs like the Boy’s Lacrosse Club or the Girl’s Volleyball Club. Other clubs support academics, such as the Academic League, the AP club, or the Theater Club. Still others offer mainly service opportunities. Service clubs such as the Key Club and Club Green, mobilize students to perform some kind of valuable service to their school or community. Each fall new clubs and old clubs promote their meeting times and encourage all students to join. All students have equal access to the clubs on campus.

As a group, we concur that student access to personal support services, activities, and opportunities at the school and within the community are good. But we also acknowledge that we still have a lot of room for improvement. We realize that we must continue to assess our current programs for supporting student needs and revising them as needed to continue and increase our success. In addition, we need to continue to communicate the availability of these supports and make their use part of the school culture.

Overall, our evidence proves we have improved in creating more realistic supports for our diverse student populations at Serra. It also proves that we have improved our methods of communication about these academic and social supports using the latest communication tools and technology. The biggest uncontrollable challenge is the budget/funding crisis that has trickled down to our district, campus, and programs. Another big challenge is the emotional well being of our students. The challenge we do have some control over is promoting and increasing usage of all tools and resources by our student body. Once we achieve that goal, we will have maximized potential for overall personal and academic student growth.

**Areas of need Criterion E1-4:**

- Not all teachers use Gradebook
• Not all parents are signed up for Parent Connect
• Get more students to take advantage of Pink Progress Reports
• Increase attendance at Shadow Your Student Day
• Helping non-community students and families build a connection with Serra High School. Both academically and in extracurricular activities.
• Not all teachers and staff enforce the rules and policies in a consistent manner
• We don’t have the correct equipment to keep our campus clean and safe.
• Don’t have enough furniture for classrooms that are in working order.
• Increasing the teachers’ comfort level with Data Director.
• Motivating more students to attend before and after school tutoring.
• Motivating more students to attend Success school and maintaining funding for this program.
• Encouraging students and families to take advantage of the valuable assistance programs that are offered at Serra and through Real Connections.
• More mental and emotional support services needed for students.
• Inadequate budget for all departments.