

WASC Midterm Report 2003

School Profile and Assessment

Founded in 1856, Lowell is a four-year public college-preparatory school located on a 26-acre campus in the southwestern sector of San Francisco. It is the oldest public high school west of the Mississippi River, and is one of 11 high schools that make up the San Francisco Unified School District. The 2,576 students who currently attend Lowell constitute a socially, ethnically and culturally diverse population that reside in neighborhoods all across San Francisco. Twenty-two percent of our student body comes from socioeconomically disadvantaged homes and are eligible for either free or reduced lunch benefits. Since 1999-2000, the percentage of students on free lunch has remained stable at 11% while the number of students on reduced lunch has increased from 6% to 10% of the student body. Approximately 40% of Lowell's students live in homes where English is not the primary spoken language and 51 of our students receive services through the Special Education Department where 24 are Severely Learning Disabled (SLD) and 27 are in the Resource Specialist Program (RSP). Chinese students make up the single largest ethnic group (55%), followed by Other Whites (17.4%), and Other NonWhites (11.9%). There are a myriad of other racial/ethnic groups that make up the student population, but none of these other groups constitute more than 5% of the total student body (see Appendix P. 8). Admission is selective and competitive, based on Stanford Achievement Test scores, grades achieved in academic subjects in middle school, and many other factors, including extracurricular/leadership activities, community service, athletics, socioeconomic status, and extenuating circumstances. Lowell is deeply committed to the principle of diversity within our school population, but recent federal court decisions prohibit the use of race or ethnicity as an admissions factor. This has temporarily created a decrease in our underrepresented student population. In response, our administrative staff has been aggressively recruiting qualified underrepresented students and encouraging them to accept the increased number of admission invitations we were able to offer this year. The staff will continue to explore ways to improve the current ethnic/racial balance in the school.

The mission of Lowell is to ensure that each student lives up to his/her potential and in doing so, makes a positive contribution to our society and the world community. Lowell's tradition of academic excellence has produced a host of distinguished alumni over the years and has made Lowell the recipient of many awards and recognitions including permanent membership on the College Board & College Scholarship Service Assembly, U.S. Department of Education's "Blue Ribbon School Award" (1982-1983, 1994-1996, 2001-2002), and "California Distinguished School Award" (1986, 1990, 1992, 1994, 2001).

Community recognition and awards are one measure of a school's success, but Lowell employs a variety of methodologies to evaluate student achievement. Established assessment tools such as the SAT 9, SAT 1 and AP exams serve as the primary academic yardsticks for student achievement. The California Standards Test (CST) was introduced in 2002 and the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) results will be reported in 2004 for the first time. All testing data indicates that over the past three years Lowell students have maintained high levels of achievement well above both District and State norms (see Appendix P. 1). The CST and the SAT 9 indicate that our students are achieving at their highest levels in Mathematics and English

Language Arts and at their lowest levels in Science. Since the only statistics available for the CST are for the year 2002, there is no way to assess relative growth, but the data may indicate which department curriculums are most closely aligned to the State Content and Performance Standards. Socioeconomically disadvantaged students did less well than students who are not classified as socioeconomically disadvantaged in all subject areas with the exception of CST 10th grade Mathematics (see Appendix P. 2). We have very little standardized test data on African American students because test results are not reported if the number of students in any grade level is less than ten. The scores reported for African American students in the 11th grade indicate that only 50% of the African American students tested are achieving acceptable levels of proficiency. A score of 50% is 35 percentage points below the second lowest performing subgroup in English Language Arts (see Appendix P. 2), and is 29 percentage points below the second lowest performing subgroup in Social Science (see Appendix P. 3). Eleventh grade Filipino American students are earning significantly lower scores in Mathematics than either 9th or 10th grade Filipino American students which may indicate that students in this subgroup are electing not to enroll in advanced level math classes (see Appendix P. 2). The test scores for Special Education students are included with the scores reported for the student body. The district does not supply us with disaggregated data for this subgroup.

In 2002, Lowell was ranked sixth nationally in the number of Advanced Placement (AP) examinations administered among 13,680 high schools with AP programs. (For the four previous years, Lowell was ranked fifth, sixth, or seventh nationally.) A record 954 students took, 2,021 AP exams, and achieved a 92% passing rate with a score of 3 or higher (on a 1-5 scale). Over the past three years, the number of students taking AP exams has increased by 222, the number of exams taken has increased by 400, while the pass rate has improved by 2% percent (see Appendix PP. 9 -10). Our 2000 WASC Self Study revealed that underrepresented students are not proportionately enrolling in AP classes. Since 2000, the AP/Curriculum has been tracking minority enrollment in AP, and in conjunction with the counseling staff, she has been trying to increase the numbers of underrepresented students in Advanced Placement classes.

One hundred percent of the 2002 graduating class took the SAT I and achieved a 1,227 combined mean score. Also, in the Class of 2002, 103 out of 582 graduates received recognition in the National Merit Program. Upon graduation, 96.2% of the seniors in the Class of 2002 immediately entered college. Lowell remains the largest feeder school to the University of California (UC) with approximately 46% of its 2002 graduates attending a UC campus (see Appendix P. 13). In 2000 and 2001, Lowell was ranked second among all public high schools in California's Academic Performance Index (API) and is the highest ranking large high school in the state (see Appendix PP. 4 - 5). And as a result of their superior performance on the 2002 Stanford Achievement Test (9th Edition), a record 719 Lowell students each received a \$1,000 Governor's Scholarship that can be applied towards their college education.

Students not only excel in academics, but they have a rich and varied life at Lowell. With our "modular" and "self-scheduling" system, they exercise individual choice in the selection of their classes and schedules, in allocating study time, and in participating in a broad range of activities, clubs, and sports. Over the years, students have won many team championships in athletics, top honors in forensics/band/orchestra/choir/architectural design competitions, superior rankings in science/math contests, and first place in the all-city Academic Decathlon. The Lowell student

newspaper has been honored several times with the Columbia Scholastic Press Association's Gold Crown Award in journalism and the prestigious Pacemaker Award as one of the ten best newspapers in the United States from the National Scholastic Press Association, one of two major rating services for high school newspapers. These achievements validate our belief that Lowell students learn to accept the responsibility and enjoy the success that accompanies choice.

This operating principle of choice and responsibility manifests itself through a diverse choice of course offerings taught by a dedicated and talented faculty. The faculty constantly monitors, reviews, revises and updates the curriculum to make it more challenging, relevant, and responsive to the needs of the students.

Parents and alumni are active participants in the Lowell community. In 2001-2002, the PTSA demonstrated support for the school by raising over \$150,000 for scholarships, curriculum materials, and equipment. They organize, supply materials for, and work on, many school beautification projects, such as renovation of the arts wing and faculty lounge. We are especially grateful to the late alumnus William Hewlett who donated over a ten year period approximately \$480,000 worth of computers and software to help upgrade Lowell's educational technology program. This program is now augmented by a state Digital High School Technology Grant that has vastly improved computer resources for students and staff. This semester the PTSA and Alumni Association are jointly engaged in an unprecedented fundraising campaign to save school programs and staffing positions which are threatened by the current state budget crisis. The Volunteers in College and Career Information (VICCI) Center as well as the Book-to-Book Center are staffed entirely by parent volunteers for the benefit of Lowell students.

The Lowell administration encourages all members of the Lowell community, either as individuals or as organized groups, to become involved in discussions and activities that affect the operation of the school. Groups such as the PTSA, Lowell Staff Council, School Site Council (SSC), Administrative Council, Student Body Council, WASC Leadership Committee, Union Building Committee (UBC), and Technology Committee are all part of the mix that go into the decision-making process within the school. There are many elements that are significant in making any school successful. The total commitment to a tradition of academic excellence, the cooperation of individuals in developing a shared vision, and the acceptance of the responsibility to realize that vision are the ingredients that make Lowell unique and exemplary.

Significant Developments

Introduction

In the three years since the 2000 WASC Committee visit, many significant events have occurred and a fair amount of work has been done at Lowell to implement the WASC Action Plan. On behalf of the entire Lowell community, I want to express our gratitude and appreciation for the time and energy that the Visiting Committee had devoted to assessing Lowell and its future direction, and to helping us to achieve some of the results that we are now able to share in this third-year WASC Progress Report.

Paul Cheng - Principal

Significant Developments, 2000-2003

The 2000-2001 school year began with the arrival of a new superintendent, Dr. Arlene Ackerman, who generated much excitement with her commitment to restore fiscal integrity to a financially troubled school district. She also proposed new ideas, such as the “Weighted Student Formula” (WSF) to help promote school reform and accountability. The WSF concept and methodology had already been implemented in the Seattle and Washington D.C. districts, where Superintendent Ackerman had previously worked. The purpose of the WSF was to give school sites flexibility in providing resources to match individual student needs and increase equity in per-student funding among schools. The success of the WSF was predicated upon the close collaboration of the site administration and the School Site Council (SSC)/Site Advisory Council (SAC) in designing and implementing an academic achievement plan and a corresponding budget crafted to address the needs of the school’s student population and unique site priorities. In March 2001, Superintendent Ackerman announced that full implementation of the WSF for the schools would not take place in the upcoming 2001-2002 academic year. Instead, schools were invited to apply for participation in a pilot initiative that trains school personnel in the “Site-Based Budgeting” process. The selected schools would be given an Unrestricted General Fund budget denominated in dollars in lieu of F.T.E. (Full-time Equivalent) staff positions and would determine what staff and non-staff items to buy with those dollars. A schedule of districtwide average salaries for the certificated and classified staff would be utilized in the budgeting process. As an incentive for schools to apply to be in the pilot, an additional \$100 per student would be granted to the 20-25 chosen schools. In early April 2001, the Lowell administration and the Site Advisory Council voted overwhelmingly to respond in the affirmative to the Superintendent’s invitation. In mid April Lowell was notified of its selection as one of the 22 pilot schools and received approximately \$250,000 over and above the site allocation for the 2001-2002 school year.

Changes in the decision-making and budgeting processes have been accompanied by some significant changes in personnel as well as changes in the appearance of the school site plant. The AP for Administration has changed three times and the position of AP in charge of Curriculum has changed once. The counseling department was able to add 1.4 counselors and 1.4 security aids with the help AB 1113 funds and one more secretary was hired to support the main office. In addition, the Lowell campus has been under renovation and construction for the past three years. Electrical wiring and high speed internet access cables were installed to accommodate DHS, bathrooms throughout the physical plant were repaired and made more attractive, construction was started on our new academic/science wing in 2002, a new campus access road was paved, the roof was repaired, the current science wing was prepared for remodeling, new fencing and lighting were installed, the student courtyard received new lighting, benches and a partial roof cover and several of our old bungalows were removed. Some of our classrooms have also undergone change. Room 110 has become the “Steve Silver Theater”, room 212 became a student based computer center and every Lowell classroom now possesses its own computer and printer.

Spring 2001 was an unforgettable semester for Lowell’s Symphonic Band because it was invited to play at Carnegie Hall. The 71 band members gave an electrifying performance and received a standing ovation from a mostly New York audience and guests from Colorado and California.

Over 100 proud Lowell parents and friends flew in for the concert and joined in the celebration that followed the Band's performance. This historic trip could not have been possible without the personal backing of the parents and fundraising efforts that brought in \$145,000 to defray costs.

Upon its return from Carnegie Hall, the Band and the rest of the school learned that Lowell had been selected as a 2001 California Distinguished School for the fifth time since 1986. In addition, the Lowell Visual and Performing Arts Department was also singled out for a 2001 "Excellence in Arts Education" Award from the California State Department of Education.

The 2001 fall semester will long be remembered for the tragic and horrific events that took place in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania on the morning of September 11th. Like the rest of the nation and most of the world, the Lowell community was shocked and repulsed by the unspeakable atrocities inflicted on thousands of innocent lives. The school quickly recognized that there may have been families in our large school community who lost members on one of the flights or who may have had family or friends who perished in the World Trade Center catastrophe. The Lowell PTSA and administration jointly sent "A Message to Lowell Families" conveying this sentiment and outlined how the school was dealing with this terrible tragedy.

The school immediately responded to the crisis by providing onsite support to students who needed to speak to counselors or the Wellness Center/Peer Resource staff to share feelings, to be with others, to talk in a group, or to talk privately. An information sheet offering advice on how to respond to students and specifying the staff names, phone extensions, and locations of their offices was reviewed and distributed to teachers and staff members at the September 12th faculty meeting. Teachers were told they could release students to those locations. Choir director Othello Jefferson and his students sang patriotic songs and moments of silence were observed by the administration on Radio Lowell and at Back-to-School Night. At the all-school Spirit Rally on the football field, the entire student body paid homage and also sang patriotic songs in memory of those who died and in honor of our country. In that momentous first week, some teachers took time to watch the catastrophe and its aftermath unfolding live on television and/or discuss the events of September 11th with their classes during the school day. Some students held a peace rally on the center courtyard catwalk and a teacher set up a memorial (with student expressions of sorrow and hope) in the Main Office hallway. Another teacher helped students to express their emotions and thoughts on the tragic events through dance and invited the school community to view the students' work in the Dance Studio. Some teachers had students write about their feelings and perceptions concerning the tragedy; a few of those essays were published in the San Francisco Chronicle's "Friday" section (September 21, 2001). By the end of the second week, much of the initial horror, grief, and disbelief started to give way to a feeling of unity that was reflected in Spirit Week student artwork on hallway walls and windowpanes. They provided concrete evidence and meaning to our national motto: "E Pluribus Unum" ("Out of many, one").

In the following month, a schoolwide teach-in was organized by social studies teacher Barbara Blinick and supported by many other faculty members. The school learned from the experience of September 11th that it had to be vigilant and ready to help students cope with crises and tragedies as they may arise in the future.

Beyond September 11th, Lowell saw some positive advances in a number of areas. The new Lowell admissions policy with the three “bands” kicked into place and brought about a small but noticeable change in the number of acceptance offers extended to African American and Latino students. Although the actual number of underrepresented minority students has dropped slightly over the past three years, it is anticipated that by 2003-2004, once the policy is better understood and more effectively implemented by the school district and middle schools, Lowell will be able to enjoy the benefits of a more diverse student body. The entire school community recognizes that Lowell is a public school and has a responsibility to ensure that the multiplicity of view points and racial/cultural backgrounds are represented as it strives to promote cooperation and collaboration among all groups reflecting the rich diversity of San Francisco.

In spring 2002, the School Site Council (SSC) met and deliberated over many meetings on the Site Plan and how to allocate \$8.9 million for the 2002-2003 faculty/staff and programs using the school district’s Weighted Student Formula (WSF). The WSF gives school sites more flexibility in determining its spending priorities that are tied to an academic achievement plan. For example, WSF funds enabled Lowell to implement the Lowell Electronic Arena (LEA) program which allowed students to electronically select courses and classes for the first time. The value and utility of the WSF will be fully assessed after it has been implemented.

During 2001-2002, many individual students, teachers, and groups garnered numerous well-deserved honors, awards, and recognition that reflect the excellence of Lowell. Among the accolades was one award that represented and symbolized the efforts and successes of the entire school community, and that was the Blue Ribbon School Nominee Award given by the State Department of Education. Lowell representatives attended the May 24, 2002 ceremony in Anaheim honoring all 39 Blue Ribbon Nominees from California. On a follow-up visit to Lowell in March to validate our application, Blue Ribbon reviewer Robert Jaklich of Texas dropped into many classrooms and was extremely impressed with what the faculty and students were doing. He also had the opportunity to see a variety of extracurricular activities and interview many site and district people. In May 2002, Lowell became one of 172 middle and high schools from across the country selected to receive the prestigious Blue Ribbon Award. All the schools were honored at a national ceremony in Washington, D.C. in October 2002.

With the prospect of war against Iraq on the horizon and widespread fear of terrorism, the new Homeland Security Agency marked the start of 2003 by placing the nation on “orange” alert status (the 2nd highest level). In California, Governor Gray Davis announced a shocking projected state budget deficit of \$35 billion with \$2.7 billion to be cut specifically from educational programs. The San Francisco Unified School District calculated that approximately \$21-\$23 million had to be chopped from its budget over an 18-month period. At Lowell, the devastating consequences of a possible loss of 15-19 teaching positions was discussed at several Administrative Council and School Site Council meetings. In response to the crisis, the PTSA, in conjunction with the site administration, decided to go to the parents to solicit donations to establish an “emergency budget crisis fund.” Everyone agreed that the money raised would be used to sustain teaching positions and programs that uphold and maintain the excellence of Lowell in the coming school years.

Conclusion

Many events have transpired in the past three years that represent significant changes in the evolution of Lowell High School. From admissions to personnel to communications to facilities, the ramifications of these changes will be felt for decades to come. As a public institution, Lowell has to be constantly ready to adapt to, as well as to initiate, modifications that enhance its ability to provide quality programs for its students. Despite formidable limitations and challenges, Lowell must be willing and able to link a tradition of excellence to present and future innovations in order to maintain its high standing in the education community.

As with all change processes, it is our belief that the WASC self-study process is an important integral aspect of that transformation journey involving all members of the Lowell community who are preparing our young people for the new century.

Monitoring Process

Lowell has a multifaceted procedure for implementing its Action Plan. The principal is the primary person responsible for ensuring that the process for implementation of the Action Plan is carried out. The WASC Coordinator serves as an informal advisor to the decision-making bodies and key individuals within the school who are charged with the responsibility for carrying out the various steps within the Action Plan. The WASC Coordinator consults with the WASC Leadership Committee that consists of the coordinator, three administrators, three teachers, one department chair and one paraprofessional, on an "as needed" basis. Initially, the implementation of the WSF led to some confusion between the SSC and WASC Leadership Committee regarding the responsibility for oversight of the Action Plan. There was some discussion that the Leadership Committee should be replaced by the SSC. Over time it became clear that while the Lowell Academic Plan and the WASC Action Plan share many of the same objectives, the Action Plan incorporates the broader concerns of the site community. At the present time, the SSC is charged with carrying out the WASC Action Steps which coincide with the superintendent's goals, and the WASC Leadership Committee is responsible for oversight of all other steps in the WASC Action Plan. In March 2003, the SSC adopted the Eleven Areas For Critical Follow-up from the WASC Visiting Committee Report as areas for targeted improvement for the next school year. The new role of the SSC, lack of common planning time, and the sabbatical of the WASC Coordinator, are factors that have negatively impacted the progress of our WASC process. Next year the .2 F.T.E. normally allocated for a WASC coordinator will be eliminated due to budget cutbacks, therefore, all school leaders will need to put forth an extra effort to accelerate the WASC process beyond its present stage. We will continue to collaborate with all segments of the Lowell community to ensure that the WASC process is faithfully implemented in the coming years.

At present, the "Responsible Parties" in the Action Plan are charged with annually reporting their progress to the "Reports on Progress" individual/committee who in turn informs the Leadership Committee as to the progress achieved for each Action Plan Step. The first year after our self study "Responsible Parties" submitted a written report to the WASC Coordinator. No progress reports were submitted during the second year while the WASC Coordinator was on sabbatical leave. All "Reporters on Progress" submitted this year's written reports. The WASC

Coordinator formatted and collated these reports creating the WASC Midterm Report, which was then submitted to the WASC Leadership Committee for their review and comment. The final Midterm Report will be posted on the Lowell website and an oral summary of the progress will be delivered to the staff prior to the end of the school year.

Procedures

GOAL: To ensure that all students meet the ESLRs, all constituents of the Lowell community will work together to improve current procedures and devise new ones.

Procedures A 1

Develop a strategic plan for the school which incorporates the School Philosophy, Site Plan, ESLRs, and the WASC Report

(Addresses critical area of follow-up: 2 and all ESLRs)

The School Site Council (SSC), particularly under Weighted Student Formula, makes a significant contribution to the direction of the school. The District has revised the former Site Plan (now called the Academic Plan) so it can better reflect goals and objectives of the school and how these goals and objectives can be met. The Academic Plan is developed only after public comment and must be revised annually. According to the District, the Academic Plan meets all State and Federal requirements.

Rather than developing a separate plan, the SSC voted on January 6, 2003 to use the Academic Plan as our sole planning document. This was after some discussion during the meetings of November 12, 2002 and December 9, 2002. While the Academic Plan does not discuss overall enrollment or major facilities issues, areas where the District rather than the school controls the policy, it does allow for us to establish goals and objectives that may take several years to achieve. The most recent Academic Plan was approved by the SSC on April 21, 2003, with a revision being due later this year (2003). The District has placed greater emphasis on using the Academic Plan as a planning document and provided further guidance (and budget information) at a training session on January 25, 2003. A similar session was held in late March 2002 to help us develop our last plan.

In order to support the District's emphasis of the Academic Plan, to better coordinate planning and budgeting, and in order to provide a planning document that has the broadest base of input, the SSC voted to use the Academic Plan as our sole strategic planning document. The first 2002 WSF Academic Plan can be found in the appendix.

Note: In the fall of 2000, the WASC Leadership Committee and representatives from the SSC met to discuss the feasibility of writing a long range strategic plan for Lowell High School. After some research and considerable discussion, the group concluded that a shorter term modified rather than a traditional version of a Strategic Plan might be possible. The Academic Plan as mandated by the district, is a short term, annual plan in which each school site is granted the decision-making power over how to best meet the site's immediate goals and objects as well as the educational goals established by the district. For the Academic Plan to become the Lowell Strategic Plan, it would need to transform into a longer range document and broaden its focus to

include the WASC Action Plans. The Academic Plan is solely under the jurisdiction of the SSC which precludes any official WASC participation in writing, implementing or overseeing the Academic Plan, although at the present time, some WASC Leadership Committee members concurrently serve on the SSC. There are many unanswered questions that remain as we consider merging these two important documents under the framework of a larger strategic plan, and there is little planning time in which to find the answers. What is clear, is that the Academic Plan in its current form is not a strategic plan; it does not incorporate all WASC goals and objectives, and therefore, it cannot be the “sole” planning document for the school.

Procedures A 2

Develop strategies to integrate SSC students into the Lowell community.

(Addresses critical area of follow-up: 3 and all ESLRs)

In the fall of 1999, SFUSD began a placement of Special Day Classes (SDC) at Lowell High School. The programs began with two SDC classes composed of two co-teachers, two paraprofessionals and twenty-four 9th grade students. Initially, these two classes were housed in room 122 awaiting the installation of two portable classroom units in the T -section of the school. Installation was completed in the spring of 2000 allowing each class to be housed in a separate classroom. This was the first successful step in integrating the SDC students into the community. These students finally had a base for their remedial course work as well as a launch pad to access the Lowell community. In the fall of 2000, five freshmen were added to the two SDC programs. The total number of day class students was 26. These students, both freshmen and sophomores, were scheduled into the Lowell community according to each student's IEP (Individualized Educational Plan). In most cases, the general education placement for these students was one class of P .E. and one class of visual and performing arts. The visual and performing arts class was scheduled only after an inventory of interests and abilities of each student was taken. After the placements were made, special education staff contacted the general education staff members who were to work with SDC students and arranged meetings to discuss implementation of each student's IEP. After discussions between the visual and performing art department head, the physical education department head, the assistant principal of curriculum, the SDC teachers and the department head of special education, it was determined that successful integration of special education students would be better achieved by the SPED staff sharing information of the SDC students' IEPs and abilities with the general education staff. These placements continued in the spring of 2001. In the fall of 2001, the SFUSD held an in-service at Lowell High School to discuss the school district's policy for grading SDC students in general education placements, graduation requirements for SDC students, modification of curriculum for SDC students and implementation requirements of the IEP with regard to general education. The inservice was attended by the special education staff, the physical education staff, the visual and performing arts staff and several administrators. Other issues discussed at this meeting included concerns about whether SDC students would receive a Lowell diploma or a SFUSD diploma the SPED Program Specialist for SFUSD indicated that the district does not offer diplomas independent of school sites, therefore it was the district's position that SDC students who have met graduation requirements will receive a Lowell diploma. Since the introduction of the SDC program at Lowell High School, SDC students have been successfully integrated in many academic and extracurricular ways. This integration has been the result of communication between staff as well as the persistence and interest of SDC students in accessing the broader

Lowell community. SDC students have participated in the Black Student Union, Gay-Straight Alliance, gymnastics, track and field, football, wrestling, basketball, cheerleading, dramatic productions, school musicals, dance recitals, choir concerts, and orchestra performances. SDC students have taken inside work experience (IWE) in the library, with the assistant principal, in the copy center and have been TA's (teaching assistants) for the severely impaired special education classroom. In accordance with their IEP's, SDC students have taken a variety of classes in general education, including Women's Studies, U.S. History, Advanced Dance, Gymnastics, Spanish I, Career and Vocational Education, Health, Driver Education, and College and Career Prep.

Procedures A 3

Develop a plan for cleaning and maintaining the physical plant.

(Addresses critical area of follow-up: 11 and ESLRs 4 and 5)

The AP/Administration has attempted to improve campus cleanliness over the past three years by enacting the following measures:

Collaborated with SFUSD Facilities and Management Department to redefine work assignments for maintenance personnel.

- Developed a direct feedback loop with custodians.
- Developed a direct feedback loop between teachers and SFUSD Facilities and Management Department.

Curriculum

GOAL: To ensure that all students meet the ESLRs, we must continue to monitor the alignment of the curriculum to the ESLRs and to the District, State and National Standards.

Curriculum A 1

Identify assignments that allow students to attain the ESLRs.

((Addresses critical areas for follow-up: 2, 5, 6, 7 and all ESLRs)

All departments have made progress in aligning the curriculum to State Content Standards and the ESLRs and in identifying assignments that are representative of the ones that allow students to attain the ESLRs. All departments have used some of the professional development days and/or department meetings to go through the process as a department or in discipline or course-specific groups. In at least three departments, however, the department as a whole examined the curriculum against the standards and ESLRs, but left it to individual teachers to select assignments that best represented the coursework. Several departments, such as social science, science and English, are still completing the alignment process for a new course or for additional grade levels. No department appears to be reviewing assignments and student work and making adjustments to the curriculum on a routine basis, although some teachers do this informally. Competing demands for department meeting time and the shortage of common planning time (due to the modular schedule) continue to be barriers for the curriculum alignment process.

Each department has an Evidence Binder with assignments and samples of student work for each course and a status report on the department's curriculum planning.

To ensure that all students meet the ESLRs, we must continue to monitor the alignment of the curriculum to the ESLRs and to the district and state standards

Curriculum A 2

Complete the development of department-wide rubrics and school-wide standards.

(Addresses critical areas for follow-up: 5, 6, 7 and all ESLRs)

All departments have developed rubrics and/or aligned the final exam to the standards and ESLRs. The rubrics are course specific in mathematics, physical science, and visual and performing arts, while English, science, social science and world languages have developed performance-based rubrics. Given the large number of course offerings at Lowell, many departments are developing the rubrics incrementally. In two departments the rubrics were prepared by individual teachers for the courses they taught.

Department Rubrics Developed to Date

Department	Rubrics Developed to Date
English	Essay rubric; writing benchmarks for grades 9-10
Mathematics	Standards-based final exam for all three 9th grade math courses. Developed more challenging curriculum for underperforming students to increase AP enrollment.
Physical Education	Rubrics for all courses.
Science	Rubrics for lab reports, group projects, homework assignments, and exams (Multiple Choice & Completion Questions), essays, and problem solving. Lab matrices for each course.
Social Science	Rubrics for group presentation, oral presentation, visual presentation, group presentation, free response and document-based essays.
Visual and Performing Arts	Rubrics for all courses.
World Languages	Rubrics for “active skills,” oral presentations/oral proficiency, speaking and writing performances.

The department heads and the Administrative Council have not yet defined a process to develop school-wide standards or consistent rubrics.

Each department has a description of their rubrics in the Evidence Binders.

Curriculum A 3

Coordinate curricula for sequenced courses.

(Addresses critical areas for follow-up: 2, 5, 6, 7 and all ESLRs)

Limited department-wide work has gone into the coordination of curricula for sequenced courses. Most departments have identified start and end dates for themes, topics or chapters in the text, while science has prepared a lab matrix for each science course and world language uses

the course syllabi to identify what material is to be covered in each course. There is informal coordination among teachers teaching sequenced courses.

Department Status of Sequenced Courses

Department	Status of Sequenced Courses
English	Writing benchmarks for 9th and 10th grade writing to identify what is to be covered each semester.
Mathematics	Two-page course coverage document distributed in August, “ <i>Where Are You Forms</i> ” distributed one-two times a semester.
Physical Education	A common 9th and 10th grade physical fitness curriculum developed. Other courses are not sequenced nor have prerequisites.
Science	Laboratory matrix for each course to demonstrate what labs should be conducted for each chapter.
Social Science	Yearlong courses-starting and ending dates identified for each topic. Semester-length courses-themes and topics to be covered identified. Course syllabi developed.
Visual and Performing Arts	N.A. Single teacher usually teaches a sequence of courses, informal coordination among teachers sharing courses. Common list of projects and assignments prepared.
World Languages	course syllabi for each language level for all courses, syllabi for first year language revised for Chinese, French, Japanese and Spanish.

A description of the coordination for sequenced courses for each department is located in the Evidence Binder.

Curriculum A 4

Upgrade the library facility and resources to better reflect the academic needs of students and to increase student use of the facility.

(Addresses critical area for follow-up: 8 and all ESLRs)

A. The library continues to upgrade the facility and resources in order to meet the needs of the student and staff population.

In fall 2002, the library received a \$20,000 grant from the PTSA to purchase new carpeting and new furniture. The librarians, are in the process of identifying vendors at this time. They have also applied to the Alumni Association for an additional \$20,000 for new furniture. The librarians are hopeful that by the opening of school, in August 2003, the library will be a much more cheerful and inviting place for students and staff to work and study. To make the present facility more attractive, each month the librarians display new and topical books, free bookmarks and posters. An annual book fair in the month of December helps to draw in students and staff.

1. The library is now fully automated, with 8 new catalog computers that students and staff can use to access the library’s collection. Twelve new I-MAC computers and 26 new PC computers for the library’s drop-in computer lab were added in the spring and fall of 2001. Two video-viewers were purchased to enable staff to preview videos and to allow students to watch videos

required for class. The library purchased an LCD projector so that the librarians can give computer-related lessons to students and staff. A digital video camera was purchased to loan-out to staff.

2. With state funds of \$20.00 per student over the last three years, the librarians were able to update many areas of the book, online and video collections. Much of the funds were used to update the reference section. The librarians purchased new general encyclopedia sets, and specialty encyclopedia sets such as science, health, art, geography, and music. New online sources include Newsbank, SIRS, and ABC-CLIO's World History, American History, Geography, and American Government databases. Current book titles were purchased for all the nonfiction and fiction sections of the library. New periodicals requested by students and staff were added to the periodical collection.

B. An intensive effort needs to be made to involve the students and staff in utilizing the library as an effective research and media center.

1. All the ninth grade students come to the library at the beginning of their fall semester with their English teacher for a library orientation lesson. The librarians devised a treasure-hunt type of lesson plan in which students actively perform research tasks. This lesson has been very successful at introducing students to the types of material available in the library for research purposes.

2. The librarians actively seek to collaborate with teachers from all disciplines in planning research projects for their students. Some examples of research topics include epic and myth, drama from around the world, great speeches in history, the Middle East, Greek history, African culture and geography, careers, and many current and controversial debate issues. In the spring of 2002, the librarians collaborated with a math teacher and had a model roller-coaster contest in the library.

3. In the spring of 2003, the librarians received an \$8,000 Title V grant. Their project entails giving a series of technology workshops to the teachers and paying them extended hours so the staff can learn to use the research and literacy databases to which the library subscribes. (This also addresses WASC critical-areas-of-need 6 and 10.)

4. In order to make the library more user-friendly, the librarians have instituted a number of policy and procedural changes. A separate library card is no longer required; students now use their regular student ID card. If the students do not have their ID cards, the library staff accepts other forms of identification. The whole check-out procedure has been greatly simplified. There is no limit on the number of items students can check out and they are allowed to check out many types of materials that they were not allowed to in the past. Students are no longer asked to leave the library for whispering or working quietly with schoolmates. Boxes of art supplies are available for student use. To help patrons locate information, new bright-yellow laminated placards direct students and staff to various sections of the library media center.

5. In the fall of 2002, a Literacy Program was created with a librarian as the coordinator to support students who are reading below grade level. A group of forty students worked

independently on computers in the library to develop reading skills and strategies, using the Newsbank database. In the spring of 2003, Plato reading software will be purchased for the Literacy Program with funds from Digital High School, the District G.A.T.E. office, and the library's Title V grant. Librarians will provide professional development for teachers on reading strategies across the curriculum and use of the Plato software and pay them extended hours through the Title V grant.

Professional Development

GOAL: To ensure that students meet the ESLRs, the staff requires additional support and training.

Professional Development A 1

Create an annual ESLR-based professional development plan with a thematic focus.

(Addresses critical areas for follow-up: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and all ESLRs)

Once a month, forty-five minutes of professional development time is allotted for department meetings. Typically every other department meeting is devoted to the completion of the curricular steps in the Action Plan. The selected activities for these professional development blocs are directed by the AP for Curriculum and the department chairs. They are guided by the need to align course curricula to State Standards and the ESLRs. Each curricular department is in a different stage of completing this alignment, therefore, each department's activities are guided by specific department needs. The Professional Development Committee still needs to create a professional development plan to take academic curricula beyond the requirements of alignment. The attainment of all ESLRs is impacted by the need for a focused, thematic professional development plan.

In addition, the district sets aside three professional development days during which time the Lowell faculty has participated in curriculum workshops and has listened to guest speakers who addressed curriculum related issues. Departments have also used these days to continue the curriculum alignment process and to develop course rubrics. All staff members; teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, and counselors participate in professional development activities.

In the spring of 2000, the Digital High School (DHS) application was completed and the specific needs, goals and benchmarks to support the ESLRs were identified. DHS goals stressed the development of the staff's individual technology proficiency needs and the integration of technology across the curriculum to improve student achievement. The DHS plan was revised and our needs reassessed in spring 2002 after delays in the installation of the electrical and networking systems prevented the processing of Lowell's DHS application for one year. Since the implementation of DHS, much of Lowell's professional development time has been devoted to attaining the goals and objectives set forth in Lowell's DHS Plan.

After the 1997 WASC Committee visit, Lowell received an SB 1882 professional development grant to promote staff development opportunities in educational technology, alternative assessment and multicultural education. In 2000-2001, SB 1882 expanded the Tech Tuesday

program initiated in 1999-2000 through PTSA funding. A weekly calendar of professional development courses which focused on technology skills proficiencies was developed based on a survey of faculty needs. Again, paraprofessionals, counselors, administrators and Wellness Center staff were invited to participate. A little over one-third of the faculty participated in these workshops. The school SB 1882 Committee also awarded mini-grants to 38 faculty members to attend a total of 38 days of conferences and institutes related to their subject areas. In 2001-2002, SB 1882 funded 15 faculty mini-grants to teachers who collectively participated in 168 hours of institutes and conferences over a two year period. Faculty members from two departments used funds for curriculum alignment activities. The funding for the program ended in 2002, but carry-over funds in 2002-2003 will be used for mini-grants this spring.

The after school technology workshops in 2000-2001 were poorly attended primarily because they solely focused on technology proficiency skills. The annual technology survey revealed that the area of greatest need was in technology integration across the curriculum as opposed to strictly focusing on individual technology skills. As a result, in spring 2002 the professional development agenda was revised by the Technology Integration Specialist to include after school and/or Saturday workshops which enhanced the staff's ability to embed technology lessons across the curriculum. The tech specialist also coached both individual and small group technology lessons. All training activities were tailored to individual teacher needs and focused on the utilization of newly acquired instructional resources. Over one-third of the teachers participated in these activities between February and May 2002. Professional development evaluations were very positive, and the program is continuing through 2002-2003.

Developing and implementing an annual professional development plan that has technology integration across the curriculum as its theme has been impacted by the following factors:

- Delays in the deployment of instructional technologies and in the installation of the network.
- Delays in receiving the SB 1882 funding until midyear.
- Lack of common time for teachers to plan and collaborate around curriculum.

Professional Development A 2

Utilize embedded common time for planning and professional development

(Addresses critical areas for follow-up: 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and all ESLRs)

The state funds three days during the school year for embedded professional development time. Since the state provides funding for these days directly to the district, there are times when the district establishes the agenda for these days and other times when the site Professional Development Committee established the agenda. Due to the current state budget crisis, it is not possible to predict if the state will continue to fund these professional development days in 2003-2004.

The Professional Development Committee does not yet have a written overarching plan for school-wide professional development except in the areas mandated by Digital High School. Once a month there is a forty-five minute block of time for departments to meet. Department meeting time is used to disseminate information to each department, discuss department concerns and/or work on curricular matters. There remains no other embedded common planning

time that is specifically devoted to professional development. Common planning time is in direct conflict with the school's modular schedule which generates a minimal number of the banked ADA minutes required for embedded collaborative time. To compensate for the lack of sufficient common planning time, SB 1882 funds some departments to set aside time outside the school day for professional development.

The Lowell staff understands the need for professional development time, but has expressed the opinion that the benefits of the modular schedule outweigh the need for the embedded professional development time. However, the administration and staff continue to search for ways to alter the school schedule all permit the modular schedule and embedded professional development time to coexist.

All ESLRs are impacted by the absence of a written professional development plan and the lack of embedded common planning time for professional development.

Professional Development A 3

Develop an orientation and support system for new faculty and staff members.

(Addresses critical area for follow-up: 1 all ESLRs)

New faculty orientation has changed in several ways over the past three years.

The District: In the Fall of 2000, the district began to provide orientation for new teachers. The following year, the district added the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program which provides support to newly credentialed teachers by pairing each new teacher with a mentor. Based on the needs of the new teacher, the mentor and the new teacher design a professional development program to insure the success of the new teacher in the classroom.

Administration: New faculty members receive the *Faculty Handbook* and an orientation to registry procedures. Although the handbook and orientation are not new, the content of the orientation has been improved with the inclusion of a New Teacher Packet containing information about course offerings, the School Profile, and the *Students' Rights and Responsibility Handbook*. New teachers also receive a package of school supplies to help them start the school year.

Department chairs: In addition to providing orientation to department procedures and expectations, new teachers are assigned a "buddy" in the department, who can provide additional support for new department members.

Staff Council: The Staff Council has increased the number of site social activities to include a lunch for beginning teachers and faculty potluck luncheons throughout the year. Both of these activities help new staff members make social connections at the school.

Professional Development A 4

Write a professional development program to implement the WASC Action Plans.

(Addresses critical areas for follow-up: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and all ESLRs)

Other than the professional development program described in Professional Development A 1, the WASC Leadership Committee and the Professional Development Committee have not yet prepared a professional development program to implement the WASC Action Plan. The slow pace of implementation in some areas indicate a critical need to develop a program that would address the problems of limited time for professional development and support collegial work around curriculum and assessment.

(Addresses critical area of follow-up: 9 and all ESLRs)

The counselor's plan for revitalizing the mentoring program is the following:

In spring 2003, each counselor will identify two junior student mentors and will take them to the middle school orientations for programming incoming 9th graders. Thus each incoming middle school group will have met with at least two junior mentors. The goal is eventually to have one mentor for each five incoming freshmen. The hope is that this relationship will evolve through four years and will involve academic and social activities at least throughout the first year thus enhancing the incoming student experience at Lowell.

As a Lowell community, we have not gone to great lengths to improve our student mentoring program. However, there are a few notable changes which have redefined and expanded the meaning of "mentoring" in our school. Over the past two years, Peer Resource has become a primary location where students are able to receive emotional support. Peer Resource students have blossomed into a long-lasting community in T-14, as they welcome all students with open arms. The sentiment we get from several students is that it is a great place to relax and get advice from the peer resource teachers who are experts in certain subjects dealing with the students' health and well-being.

The Big Brothers and Sisters Organization, previously only known for touring eighth graders around campus, has also designed a mentoring and advising program in which juniors and seniors advise underclassmen on the entire college process and other matters related to their college admissions. We now have three resource centers in room 261, 215, and the Library which provide academic support. The Library is also a new home to mentoring, as the CSF sponsors reside in the library.

It should be noted that while the Peer Resource and the Big Brothers and Sisters programs are both effective and valuable, only a small percentage of the student body are active participants.

The last significant change in the past three years is the addition of the Wellness Center. Now with its own office, students can go there for both physically and emotional help. The Wellness Center has the ability to bring specialists into the school. For example, if a student is suicidal, the Wellness Center will bring in a professional specifically competent in suicide prevention to talk with the student. If there are minor injuries, our staff nurse has all the equipment needed to treat the problem.

Student Support

GOAL: To ensure that all students meet the ESLRs, the Lowell community will develop strategies to support students not achieving their potential.

Student Support

Student Support A 1

Evaluate current systems for identifying and supporting students not achieving their potential.

(Addresses critical area for follow-up: 9 and all ESLRs)

In 2001-02 all 9th graders were required to take "Resource" 40 minutes each day for the first six weeks. "Resource" could include time in the three general resource centers and special labs (science, world language, English/social studies) plus non-class work with teachers. After the first six week, only students who received a C- or lower in an academic class were required to continue with "Resource." These procedures were assessed in the spring of 2001 and again in spring 2002, and several changes were put in place:

- To overcome the crowding that resulted in the first six weeks, the Resource schedule for 9th graders was spread over 12 weeks in the fall with students attending on a Monday/Wednesday or a Tuesday/Thursday schedule.
- Ninth grade students continued the 12 weeks of Resource in the spring.
- Students who received a C-or lower in a core subject in any grading period continued with Resource for 40 minutes a day, 5 days a week.
- Certificated staff, supported by paraprofessionals in some instances, supervised the students' use of their resource time.
- Targeted software was installed in the Library and Resource Center computers (see below).
- A Resource Center Coordinator was appointed to coordinate the 3 general Resource Centers, monitor student utilization and progress, and develop the referral system.

Forty percent of Lowell's students come from homes where English is a second language. Based on relatively low SAT 9 reading scores, a literacy program was created in the fall of 2002 to support students who are reading below grade level. A group of 40 to 50 students were asked to work independently on computers in the library to develop their reading skills and strategies, using the Newsbank database, which provides unit quizzes to monitor student progress. As a result of a Title V grant for the literacy program in December 2002, librarians will provide professional development for teachers on reading strategies across the curriculum and the use of the PLATO reading software that was purchased using Title V, GATE and DHS funds this spring.

In the fall 2002, procedures were developed for teachers to refer students to the Resource Centers and to track their progress. To assess whether student needs were met by Resource Centers' services, the Resource Center Coordinator is surveying students and requesting feedback from teachers.

Two courses were initiated for students not meeting their potential. The first, entitled "Problem Solving," was implemented in the last two spring semesters for students who experienced academic difficulties the previous semester. Two new 10th grade courses, "San Francisco Perspectives" and "Western Civilization," were initiated to address the needs of GATE students who are underperforming and for students who are underrepresented in AP courses. The objective of each course is to prepare these targeted students for AP courses in 11th grade.

There are still some issues that must be addressed to improve support for students who are at risk of not achieving to their potential:

There is no formal process to monitor 10th - 12th grade student participation in "Resource." Although the referral process has been implemented, attendance by students is not mandatory nor is attendance factored into the student's grades. Since the Lowell student body is drawn from all over the city, transportation is problematic, making before and after school support programs less desirable. Students are highly motivated to take full academic loads, leaving little time during the school day for additional support activities or course work that is not part of the graduation and UC Berkeley a-g requirements.

Student Support A 2

Assess The Curricular Paths Of Selected Subgroups.

(Addresses critical areas of follow-up: 9 and all ESLRs)

The AP for Pupil Services, the counselors, and the Wellness Center staff are constantly assessing the curricular paths and the progress of the following groups:

- Underachieving GATE students with attention to underrepresented ethnic groups.
- Students on probation
- Students with attendance problems (cutters)
- Freshman with grades below a "C"
- Seniors at-risk for graduation
- Students on suspension list
- Students on truancy list
- Students not passing standardized test or other tests
- Students referred to the SAP/SST Committee
- Students with health issues
- Students classified ELL

Student Support A 3

Enhance Tutoring Services

(Addresses critical areas of follow-up: 9 and all ESLRs)

Approximately 200 students are in the California Scholarship Federation (CSF) and comprise the peer tutoring pool. Teachers and counselors refer students for tutoring, or students may request tutoring. Students are matched with CSF honor students using the computerized system recently developed by the CSF Office. The system generates individual letters to the students and their families identifying the students' tutoring needs and identifying the tutors. Should a student need

more attention than a CSF tutor can provide, there are certificated staff and paraprofessionals available at the resource centers. This spring the resource center coordinator is setting up a schedule for student teachers, who would like to spend their required "third hour" tutoring students. Students may also be directed to the Literacy Program for extra support. (see Student Support, A I.) Lowell also participated in the tutoring program using San Francisco State University students from 2000-2002, but SFSU ended the program in 2002.

There is a consensus that the quality of the CSF Peer Tutoring Program has declined over the past two years and that some changes need to be made to restore the effectiveness of this vitally important program.

Factors that may be negatively impacting the program are:

- Although a referral process has been implemented, student attendance is not mandatory nor is attendance factored into the students' grades.
- Paraprofessional have replaced certificated classroom teachers as CSF supervisors.
- Since the Lowell student body is drawn from all over the city, transportation is problematic, making before and after school support programs less desirable.
- Students are highly motivated to take full academic loads, leaving little time during the school day for additional support activities or course work that is not part of the graduation and UC Berkeley a-g requirements.
- Student time to either tutor or be tutored has grown more scarce due to the Increased number of credits required for graduation.

There is a shortage of available peer tutors.

Student Support A 4-submitted by AP/Curriculum

Revitalize the Student Mentoring Program

(Addresses critical area of follow-up: 9 and all ESLRs)

The counselor's plan for revitalizing the mentoring program is the following:

In spring 2003, each counselor will identify two junior student mentors and will take them to the middle school orientations for programming incoming 9th graders. Thus each incoming middle school group will have met with at least two junior mentors. The goal is eventually to have one mentor for each five incoming freshmen. The hope is that this relationship will evolve through four years and will involve academic and social activities at least throughout the first year thus enhancing the incoming student experience at Lowell.

As a Lowell community, we have not gone to great lengths to improve our student mentoring program. However, there are a few notable changes which have redefined and expanded the meaning of "mentoring" in our school. Over the past two years, Peer Resource has become a primary location where students are able to receive emotional support. Peer Resource students have blossomed into a long-lasting community in T-14, as they welcome all students with open arms. The sentiment we get from several students is that it is a great place to relax and get advice from the peer resource teachers who are experts in certain subjects dealing with the students' health and well-being.

The Big Brothers and Sisters Organization, previously only known for touring eighth graders around campus, has also designed a mentoring and advising program in which juniors and seniors advise underclassmen on the entire college process and other matters related to their college admissions. We now have three resource centers in room 261, 215, and the Library which provide academic support. The Library is also a new home to mentoring, as the CSF sponsors reside in the library.

It should be noted that while the Peer Resource and the Big Brothers and Sisters programs are both effective and valuable, only a small percentage of the student body are active participants.

The last significant change in the past three years is the addition of the Wellness Center. Now with its own office, students can go there for both physically and emotional help. The Wellness Center has the ability to bring specialists into the school. For example, if a student is suicidal, the Wellness Center will bring in a professional specifically competent in suicide prevention to talk with the student. If there are minor injuries, our staff nurse has all the equipment needed to treat the problem.

Assessment

Goal: To ensure that all students meet the ESLRs, we will develop and refine tools to measure student attainment of all ESLRs within departments and across the curriculum

Assessment A 1

Evaluate the current status of development of ESLR assessment.

(Addresses critical areas for follow-up: 2, 5, 6, 9 and all ESLRs)

Departments and individual teachers use a variety of assessments to monitor student achievement, including course grades and standardized tests such as the SAT 9, the Golden State Exams, the AP exams. Relatively low achievement scores in literacy, for example, led to the reading comprehension and literacy program and the acquisition of the *PLATO* literacy software. The *PLATO* software will provide pre and post assessment of progress in reading.

The district provides each school with an annual "School Site Data Binder," which is discussed with department chairs, who then share this information with their department members. The district also provides a data disk that allows the school to manipulate and easily analyze the school's disaggregated student data, but few faculty members are able to use the database program that is required to read the data disk. Training in database is planned as part of the DHS professional development.

Each department has made progress toward the development of rubrics, benchmarks and/or benchmark exams to guide the grading and assessment of student achievement and to provide feedback to students. In several departments, however, rubrics have been developed by individual teachers, but are not used department-wide, and rubrics are not developed for all courses.

Although the use of technology is largely the initiative of individual teachers at this point in time, a cadre of teachers in each department are using a variety of technology tools to document student performance, to monitor progress and to provide feedback to students. . The number of teachers using technology for assessment purposes is expected to increase dramatically once the network installation is complete in April and the professional development continues to engage more teachers.

Most monitoring and assessment at Lowell focuses on student achievement of content standards. While each department has aligned the curriculum with the standards and the ESLRs, neither the departments nor the school as a whole has developed specific tools for ESLR assessments.

Assessment A 2

Synthesize and align ESLR assessment across departments.

(Addresses critical areas for follow-up: 2, 5, 6, 9 and all ESLRs)

While there has been some informal collaboration between departments around curriculum and specific assignments and there has been cross-departmental training in the *PLATO* literacy software, there has been no plan developed to align ESLR assessment across departments. At their May 2003 meeting, however, the department chairs will initiate a process to examine the literacy and critical thinking ESLRs across all departments.

Assessment A 3

Devise and refine assessment tools to measure student achievement of each ESLR in all departments.

(Addresses critical areas for follow-up: 2, 5, 6, 9 and all ESLRs)

While the curriculum and assignments have been aligned with the ESLRs and the State Standards, the departments have not begun to develop assessment tools to measure the student achievement of each ESLR. A process to accomplish this action step will be devised for 2003-2004.

Assessment A 4

Align standards across departments as applicable.

(Addresses critical areas for follow-up: 2, 5, 6, 9 and all ESLRs)

There has been no discussion to date on the alignment of standards across departments. A process to address this action step will grow out of step 2 and 3.

Communications

GOAL: To ensure that students meet the ESLRs, all constituents of the Lowell community will work together to improve communications.

Communication A1

Clarify the decision-making process throughout the school.

(Addresses critical areas of follow-up: 1 and 2 and all ESLRs)

Lowell High School's decision-making process and its unique characteristics were described in the 2000 WASC Accreditation Report (page 76):

Lowell High School has a formalized governance and organizational structure that recognizes and reflects the diversity of key decision-making bodies in the school community. In fact, one of the most striking features of Lowell's culture is that the school's leadership is not the sole province of the principal, but consists of all the administrators, faculty/staff and students, and the community members, including the very active and supportive PTSA and Alumni Association. Focus group members have observed that under this system, the principal serves as the manager of a decentralized system in which personal and group initiative is allowed to flourish, and ideas "bubble up" from below, sometimes independent of any formal process.

This process requires continuous interaction and a commitment to shared decision-making among several interest-based organizations that represent the primary constituent groups at Lowell—students, parents, teachers, classified staff, administrators, and alumni. The membership and decision-making processes of these key stakeholding organizations are detailed in a chart (see Appendix P. 11) that was developed and shared with the entire Lowell community.

One of the most important developments in decision-making since the completion of the 2000 WASC Accreditation Report has been the implementation of the Weighted Student Formula (WSF) policy that uses a new approach and procedures for the allocation of resources and budgets to school sites. In addition to every school getting a base allocation, an important feature of the WSF is that certain student characteristics, such as being a special education or limited English-speaking student, carry extra weight and generates extra dollars that a school could use to educate those students. Another WSF key element is that school site councils are allowed more flexibility in setting budget priorities and crafting instructional programs that serve the particular needs of their school communities. This is accomplished through budget allocation expressed in dollar amounts rather than the traditional F.T.E.s (Full Time Equivalents), thus giving more budgeting options for things other than personnel. At the outset of her tenure in August 2000, the new superintendent, Dr. Arlene Ackerman, decided to apply her successful WSF experiences in Seattle and Washington to San Francisco. A districtwide WSF committee was formed to study the idea and make specific recommendations to her and the Board of Education for implementation. In 2001-2002, Lowell was one of 25 school that participated in the district pilot WSF program and received an extra \$250,000 in its budget. The WSF was fully implemented for all schools during the 2002-2003 school year. Under the WSF, the Lowell School Site Council (SSC) has been given great power and responsibility in the decision-making process. It exercises complete control over the development of the "Academic Plan" and the allocation of WSF funds for all personnel and non-personnel items such as salaries, supplies, materials, equipment, field trips, substitutes, reproduction, mailing, etc. In 2002-2003, Lowell's WSF budget was \$8.9 million. Communication to the entire Lowell community about SSC business and the WSF has been very

strong and consistent. Lowell's SSC is composed of 28 members, all of whom are elected, except for the principal, by their respective groups, and decisions are made in accordance with majority vote protocol. Notices of SSC meetings are posted as well as also published in the weekly bulletins. The SSC chairman makes regular reports as needed to teachers at faculty meetings.

Communication A 2

Develop and implement a plan to improve student awareness of academic opportunities and recognition of student achievements.

(Addresses critical areas of follow-up: 9 and all ESLRs)

The school currently informs students of academic opportunities and recognizes student achievements in the following ways: weekly student bulletins, weekly senior bulletins, posted honor rolls, Governor's Scholars Award posting, awards/recognition in "The Lowell" newspaper during the spring semester. In spring 2003, a school wide recognition/certificate will be presented to select students based on GPAs and other criteria. The census of registry teachers regarding improvement of student recognition is that there has not been a vast change in student recognition procedures or in improving student awareness of academic opportunities. Information does get to the students using the current system that we have in place.

Communication A 3

Develop and implement a plan to improve student awareness of extracurricular opportunities, recognition of nonacademic student achievements and contributions to the community.

(Addresses critical areas of follow-up: 9 and all ESLRs)

In terms of developing and implementing a plan to improve student awareness of extracurricular opportunities, we as the Student Body Council 2002-2003) have looked to the registry teachers for progress. The Student Body Council (SBC) surveyed twenty-two registry teachers and found that although teachers have improved awareness by reading the weekly and senior bulletins to their registries, there is no formal procedure to increase awareness of programs and activities. Among the teachers polled, two teachers have improved their systems of extracurricular awareness by providing information about community programs to the VICCI Center. The AP/Pupil Services notifies the VICCI office about the array of community programs and opportunities that exist for teenagers. The VICCI, a college and career center on campus, then takes the outside opportunities (such as summer programs, science internships, arts festivals/contests) given to them and places them in their bulletin. Students, after reading the announcements in the bulletin, then go to the VICCI for more information or for applications. Over the past three years, students have noticed a definite increase in the number of students recognized in the weekly bulletin for their awards and achievements. However, nothing has been done by the AP/Pupil Services to improve the current system of recognizing students for their achievements or to improve student awareness of extracurricular activities.

Communication A 4

Develop a strategy for improving schoolwide communication.

(Addresses critical areas of follow-up: 1-11 and all ESLRs)

The WASC Leadership committee, whose membership includes all administrators, met in 2001 to discuss ways of improving communication throughout the school. The committee's suggestions have led to the following changes:

- Decision making bodies within the school publish and distribute their minutes to staff members.
- Weekly school bulletins, course offerings and course prerequisites are published on the Lowell website making them more accessible to the community.
- The Staff Council has increased the frequency of social activities, i.e. potlucks luncheons, in order to bring the staff closer together.

Additional communication issues require staff time for intradepartmental collaboration. That has not been possible due to the constraints of the current modular schedule.

Technology

GOAL: To ensure that all students meet the ESLRs, all constituents of the Lowell community will work together to improve personal and professional technology competencies for students and faculty.

Technology A 1

Develop Digital High School (DHS) application utilizing community resources.

(Addresses critical areas of follow-up: 6 and ESLR 3)

Background: While Lowell High School was designated as a DHS school in 1999, the school community decided to postpone the application process due to delays in the district's timeline for the construction of the new science wing, extensive renovations and the school-wide networking and electrical upgrades. During the 1999-2000 school year, the Lowell community prepared the DHS plan and application which was completed in January 2000 and approved by the California Department of Education in May 2000.

Revision of the DHS Application: The delays in the district's construction and networking plans continued through the 2001-2002 school year, and as a result Lowell requested an extension of the DHS Installation Grant. As part of the request for extension, the school updated the 2000 DHS Plan and application to reflect current resources, staff and student technology proficiencies, and the curricular goals of the departments. A consultant with extensive technology planning background was brought in to coordinate the planning process and to provide expertise. Staff was surveyed to identify technology proficiencies and technology use. Meetings were convened with each department to review and revise as necessary their DHS objectives, benchmarks and timelines as well as the evaluation component. The Technology Teachers Cadre was reconvened to provide expertise and to monitor equipment acquisition. An instructional technologist with both professional development and technology integration expertise for grades K-12 was also retained from January through June 2002 to redesign and implement a professional development and support program for teachers. In April 2002, Lowell hired a computer/network technician to

accelerate the network and equipment installation (see Technology A 3). The revised plan was submitted in May 2002 and approved in early summer.

Technology A 2

Identify DHS Coordinator who is responsible for implementation of the plan.

(Addresses critical areas of follow-up: 6 and ESLR 3)

The AP/ Administration serves as the DHS Coordinator. Due to retirements and transfers, the position has not been consistently held by the same individual, however, Lowell has had a DHS Coordinator for each of the past three years.

Technology A 3

Implement DHS Goals, Objectives, Benchmarks and Evaluation to develop information literacy and curriculum integration.

(Addresses critical areas of follow-up: 6 and all ESLRs)

Professional Development

2000-2001: Construction delays continued into the 2000-01 school year, and as a result equipment installation slowed down and Internet access was limited to the library and a few labs. However, following a survey of teachers, the DHS Coordinator expanded "Tech Tuesdays" begun in 1999-2000 to 38 Tuesdays and Thursday workshops. The training focused on technology proficiency skills needed to implement the departments' DHS goals: word processing, spreadsheets, Power Point, digitizing, E-mail and Internet. Thirty teachers participated in the workshops.

2001-2002: Given the low levels of participation in professional development in 2000-2001, Lowell retained an instructional technologist with an extensive background in professional development and technology integration in K-12 to redesign professional development for DHS. Teachers were given the option of one-on-one onsite coaching, after school workshops or more extensive Saturday workshops. Each training session was tailored to the teacher's and/or department's specific technology needs and his or her DHS benchmark proficiency requirements. The focus was on teachers learning the technology by creating work products that they would use with their students. The instructional technologists also co-taught classes of students in the computer lab to demonstrate how to teach in a lab setting and to problem-solve when the need arose. Forty-nine teachers participated from February 15 through May 31, 2002 for a total of 110 training contact hours. Eighty-one of the 110 contact hours were one-on-one coaching.

2002-2003: The professional development program from 2001-2002 is continuing, with the instructional technologist placing more emphasis one-on-one-coaching around the benchmarks. She is recruiting teachers and departments who need help achieving their benchmarks, and aligning the professional development with the rollout of the equipment. 45 teachers have been supported for a total of 130 contact hours. Since the network and equipment installation was just completed in mid-February, the pace of professional development will increase through the end of May.

Equipment Installation

Equipment and Network Installation: Through the state's AB 2882 funded program Lowell acquired additional technology during 2001, including 106 PCs, 110 I-MACS and I-Books, 94 printers, 15 computer presentation units, 6 video cameras and supporting software. AB 2882 fulfills part of the required match for the DHS grant. The school-wide network was completed mid-February 2003, which was a critical component of the DHS Plan. All equipment acquired through AB 2882 and the DHS Installation Grant has been installed. All computers have Internet access. The student to computer ratio is now 5.2 to 1.

Curriculum

The following departments have made strides in implementing their DHS goals, objectives and benchmarks since the spring 2002: Social Studies, Science, World Languages, Visual and Performing Arts, Physical Education, English, and Mathematics.

Staff Proficiencies

Approximately 75% of the staff used word processing and e-mail, and half used spreadsheets and grading software, according to a survey and interviews conducted during 2002. A small percentage reported using technology in the classroom. The school is conducting a survey in February and March to gauge the impact of the professional development on staff proficiencies and use of technology for classroom instruction.

Technology A 4

Implement evaluation defined in the DHS Plan.

(Addresses critical areas of follow-up: 6 and ESLR 3)

The school has undertaken the following evaluation as defined in the DHS Plan:

Classroom Instruction: Samples of assignments, class lists and student work as well as Student Fitness Plans were collected in the spring of 2002 and again in February 2003. Additional samples will be collected in May. These samples are organized in binders for each department by the goals, objectives and benchmarks.

Professional Development: The following data are gathered on DHS professional development on an ongoing basis: training schedules, agendas, sign-in sheets, training handouts and materials (including on-line resources) and products created by participating teachers. The latter have included Power Point presentations for classroom instruction, on-line interactive heart monitoring charts and health plans for students, web pages with instructional resources, and video documentation project for science labs.

Staff Proficiency: In addition to the samples of assignments and teacher created work, the school conducts a survey of all staff in February and March. The results are analyzed and are used to guide professional development.

Student Access to Technology: The school is maintaining an inventory database of all technology that includes type of technology, location, serial numbers, and district inventory numbers. As stated in the DHS application, students now have access to computers and software

in all instructional rooms, the language and science labs, the Library/Media center, the 2 remediating labs and the whole-class lab. The labs are required to maintain logs of student use.

Student Proficiency: In summer 2001 Lowell conducted the Summer Bridging Program for entering 9th grade students, during which they took a five week technology course. Pre- and posttests were administered to gauge technology proficiency. Construction preceded the Summer Bridging Program in 2002. A newly required course, College and Career Preparation, was implemented in 2002 and was to include technology proficiency assessments. However, that component has not yet been developed.

Student Achievement: The following student achievement data is collected routinely: course grades, the state's standardized SAT 9 test, and the Golden State Exam (GSE)

Written Composition. This data will be analyzed to monitor changes in student achievement over time as technology is integrated into the curriculum. Lowell recognizes, however, that it is difficult to correlate improvement with the integration of technology, especially for Lowell students who already score at the top in standardized tests. It will be important to monitor changes in the types of assignments and increases in the rigor of actual student work to gauge impact.