

LOWELL HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENT/COMMUNITY PROFILE

Founded in 1856, Lowell is the oldest public high school west of the Mississippi. Lowell is a four year college-preparatory school in San Francisco, a city of 724,000, that is the financial and cultural center of the Bay Area metropolitan region. The student body of 2,538 is socially, ethnically and culturally diverse and is drawn from the entire city. Since 1966, merit-based admission requirements set it apart from other public San Francisco high schools and qualify it to be called an alternative school. Admission is selective and competitive, based on CTBS scores and grades achieved in academic subjects in middle school. (The CTBS was replaced by the new SAT-9 state-mandated test for the students entering Lowell in fall 2000.) The former superintendent and school board changed the Lowell admissions policy for students admitted in the 1996 fall semester. The new admissions policy prescribed that 70% - 80% of the freshmen were to be admitted under one cut-off score computed strictly according to their composite CTBS scores and GPA's. The remaining 20% - 30% of the freshmen were selected from a pool of value-added applicants who were given extra admission points if they met additional criteria, e.g., took honors courses in middle school, lived in public housing, were eligible for the federal lunch program, participated in extra-curricular activities, had parents who did not graduate from high school, came from a single-parent home, etc. Special consideration was also given to Native American, Latino and African American applicants, recognizing the historic racial discrimination against their communities. Students admitted on a value-added diversity basis typically score 55 or higher using the test/GPA scoring standard (1-69 composite points), but no student is admitted with a score less than 50. All value-added students are required to attend a special summer school session to prepare them for the rigors of Lowell. In February 1999, as a result of a Federal Court settlement of a lawsuit against the Consent Decree, race and ethnicity could not be used in considering the candidates for the incoming Class of 2003. The number of Latino and African American admittees dropped dramatically compared to the previous year's entering class. Their underrepresentation in the student body is a major concern and has to be addressed through a vigorous outreach and recruitment effort that the Lowell community is committed to implementing. Balancing the school's need for racial and ethnic diversity with the need to uphold the rights of all who can meet the entrance requirements remains one of our school's greatest challenges.

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 many distinguished alumni, such as Edmund G. Brown, Albert Michelson, Joseph Erlinger, Dian Fossey, William R. Hewlett, Alexander Calder, Richard Levin, Pierre Salinger, Rube Goldberg, Donald Fisher, Naomi Wolf and Stephen G. Breyer. Over the years, Lowell has been 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 Award" (1994-1996), "California Distinguished School Award" (1986, 1990, 1992, 1994), and the U.S. Department of Education's "Excellence in Education Award" (1983). During the 1997-98 and 1998-99 school years, 90% of the students who took Advanced Placement (AP) examinations passed with a score of 3 or higher (on a 1-5 scale). In 1999, Lowell was ranked fifth nationally in the number of AP exams administered. For the three previous consecutive years, Lowell was ranked sixth nationally. In 1999, 732 students took 1,621 AP exams. Ninety-eight percent of the 1999 graduating class took the SAT I and achieved a 1,216 combined mean score. Also, in the Class of 1999, 103 out of 643 graduates received recognition in the National Merit Program. Upon graduation, 96.5% of the 1999 seniors immediately entered college. Lowell is the largest feeder school to the University of California with approximately 39.3% of its seniors attending a U.C. campus.

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 in free mods (periods), 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 with the Columbia Scholastic 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. They demonstrate support for the school by raising money for scholarships, curriculum materials, equipment, and the theater technician. They organize, supply materials for, and work on, school beautification projects such as the newly remodeled faculty lounge. We are especially grateful to alumnus William Hewlett who has donated in the past ten years over \$480,000 worth of computers and software to help upgrade Lowell’s educational technology program. 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. In 1992, the San Francisco School Volunteers organization named Lowell to its “Honor Roll of Schools” for having an outstanding school volunteers program that supports the school’s academic mission.

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, Staff Council, Site Advisory Council (SAC), Administrative Council, Student Body Council, 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.

STUDENT INDICATORS

Enrollment Data

Over 1,850 eighth grade students compete for the 600 freshman seats at Lowell each year. The physical plant was originally built to accommodate about 1,800 students, but at times over the past six years, our enrollment has swelled to over 2,700 students. Consequently the school community has been pressuring the District to lower our enrollment number to 2,400.

September 1999 data shows that student enrollment is 2,538. Our student population consists of 55.8% females and 44.2% males with Chinese students comprising the single largest ethnic group at 47.1%. Other Whites comprise the second largest ethnic group at 17.8% followed by Other Non Whites at 12.9%, Latinos at 9.2%, Filipinos at 4.6%, African Americans at 4.0%, Koreans at 2.4%, Japanese at 1.5%, and American Indians at .7%.

For the 1997-98 school year, our special needs population consisted of 1.1% LEP/NEP students, 2.2% EDY students, 2.0% Special Education students and 55.4% GATE students. As of September 1999, we have 90 identified bilingual students who are waiting to be redesignated, and our percentage of GATE students has dropped to 45.3%

Student Enrollment Fall 1999

<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	L	OW	AA	C	J	K	AI	F	ONW
1121	1417	233	453	102	1196	39	62	9	117	327
44.2%	55.8%	9.2%	17.8%	4.0%	47.1%	1.5%	2.4%	.4%	4.6%	12.9%

(See Appendix p.1 for breakdown by grade level)

Enrollment Numbers Over Six Years

<u>1994-95</u>	<u>1995-96</u>	<u>1996-97</u>	<u>1997-98</u>	<u>1998-99</u>	<u>1999-00</u>
2,720	2,635	2,716	2,571	2,534	2,538

Enrollment numbers have decreased by approximately 6.7% since our last WASC, however, we have not reached our enrollment goal of 2,400. Since the main physical plant was designed to accommodate a student body of about 1,800, portable bungalows were installed to provide additional classroom space. There are now 23 bungalows located on campus. Many of the old and dilapidated bungalows will be demolished and be replaced with a new academic/science wing scheduled for completion by spring 2002. However, unless additional new structures are added or unless the enrollment is reduced, the campus will remain overcrowded.

Language Proficiency

English is not the primary language spoken at home for approximately 40% of our students. However, students who are admitted to Lowell have demonstrated academic excellence in middle school and are normally redesignated out of the ESL or bilingual classes prior to their freshman year. Each year a small number of freshmen enter Lowell with a LEP classification, however, these students are no longer in need of bilingual classes and are usually awaiting completion of the administrative process of redesignation. Consequently, Lowell does not offer ESL or bilingual classes. During the 1998-99 school year, 100% of LEP or bilingual students were redesignated from bilingual to regular status.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

As of August 1999, Lowell has a Special Education Department Chair who oversees the recently enlarged *Special Education Program*. The Special Education Department provides services for 23 Resource Specialist Program (RSP) students and 17 at-risk students who are currently being tested for learning disabilities. A second group of 15 Severely Impaired (SI) students over the age of 18 are housed on our campus, but spend most of their day at job sites. These students are not mainstreamed into any of our classes and operate as a separate transitional program on our site. In the fall of 1999, a third group of 18 mildly to moderately Learning Disabled (LD) students were added to the campus and have been mainstreamed into Visual and Performing Arts and P.E. classes.

In fall 1996, *Strategies for Success* classes were created to provide extra academic support for value-added students in the entering ninth grade. However, in August 1999, Consent Decree funding for this program was cut due to a federal court settlement that reduced the percentage of

African American and Latino students in the freshman class. The District then eliminated the extra staffing allocation for the Strategies classes because Lowell did not have a sufficient number of African American and Latino students in them.

The *Peer Resource Program* provides a variety of services to students such as peer counseling, peer education, and peer mentoring. The Peer Resource counselor and trained peer tutors run a drop-in center for tutoring and counseling.

The *California Scholarship Federation (CSF)* students provide individual and group peer tutoring when students request academic support. During the fall 1999 semester, 300 CSF students were tutoring approximately 1,000 students.

The *Cooperative Vocational Education (CVE) Program* is a career exploration program whose classes are designed to teach students business and computer skills. In addition, the CVE counselor facilitates the career choices of students by helping students seek part-time employment and intern opportunities in the business and academic communities during the school year and over the summer.

Three *Resource Centers* provide places for students to study, use computers, and access reference materials in the four academic subject areas. Paraprofessionals staff the resource centers to provide students with academic support when needed.

The *Junior ROTC Program Of Instruction (POI)* motivates students to be good citizens by developing leadership potential, logical reasoning, effective communication, good health, physical fitness, teamwork and an appreciation of the military's place in history.

The *Volunteers In College and Career Information (VICCI)* Center works closely with the Counseling Department and is operated by parent volunteers who are trained to provide financial aid/scholarship information, schedule visits by college representatives, and duplicate transcripts for students. The VICCI Center also maintains Internet links with public and private colleges and universities across the country. As a part of this program, parents operate the *Book-to-Book Center* which allows students to purchase needed school supplies on campus.

The District's *Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) Program* provides additional funding for students who are academically gifted. Lowell uses the funds to support honors classes, Advanced Placement classes, Advanced Visual and Performing Arts classes and the Academic Decathlon Team. Because of budget cuts this year, the District no longer funds a .2 FTE position for a GATE coordinator.

The Lowell and *The Lowell Web Site* are funded through grants and funds raised from newspaper advertisements. This school newspaper and Web site provide updated information on school issues, special events and matters of interest to the Lowell community. *The Lowell* has won the Pacemaker Award and the Columbia Scholastic Press Association's Gold Crown in 1999, 1996, and 1995, and *The Lowell Web Site* is currently a national finalist in the National Student Press Association's competition for the best school Internet site in the country.

Lowell was invited to apply to the *Digital High School Program* as a second round school in 1998. In spring 1999, the Lowell community decided to delay its application for Digital High School funds until spring 2000. Projected timelines for construction of a new academic/science wing, substantial renovations, and a long-awaited schoolwide networking and electrical upgrade threatened Lowell's qualification for technical support and training grants. To advance the technological skills of the faculty during the postponement, the PTSA funded the Digital High School Bridge Plan. The plan features "Tech Tuesdays", weekly workshops throughout the school year conducted by teacher-trainers to assist faculty with Level I Competencies.

Development of personal and professional proficiencies in preparation for the Digital High School Program will allow for the concentration of more sustained effort on curriculum integration following the installation grant.

While Lowell is grateful for the commitment of the PTSA and distinguished alumni like William Hewlett who have made generous donations, Lowell looks to Digital High School to advance schoolwide technology access, resources, and proficiencies. Lowell is committed to the introduction of appropriate technologies in all departments and disciplines. Improvement of the infrastructure and network technology will enable all students, faculty, and instructional support staff to develop information technology literacy as the Lowell community enters the twenty-first century.

Night School operates on our campus from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. four days a week. This program utilizes our school site, but functions as a separate program.

ATTENDANCE PATTERNS

Attendance Rates

The grades 9-12 Average Daily Attendance (ADA) for 1997-98 was 99.7% and the dropout rate was 0%. Attendance figures for each of the four years prior to 1997-98 has been over 99% with each of the last two years increasing to 99.7%. On an average school day, approximately 50 students are absent on a full-day basis. The rate of excused absences for the 1997-98 school year was 2.1% while the rate of unexcused absences was .3%. Attendance is generally not perceived a problem, however, two years ago the administration and staff reformed attendance procedures in order to help the few students who needed to improve their attendance.

	Attendance Statistics				
	<u>1994-95</u>	<u>1995-96</u>	<u>1996-97</u>	<u>1997-98</u>	<u>1998-99</u>
ADA	99.3%	99.3%	99.7%	99.7%	99.7%
Excused Absences	.8%	.8%	1.6%	2.1%	1.9%
Unexcused Absences	.7%	.7%	.3%	.3%	.3%

The increased excused absence rate and decreased unexcused absence rate is most likely due to these improved attendance procedures. When an absence occurs, parents are phoned and students are required to bring a note from home in order to obtain a Re-admit Form to class. Teachers have the prerogative of not permitting a student to return to class unless a Re-admit slip is submitted. Students who have more than 3 cuts in a class during a given marking period are prohibited from participating in specific extra-curricular school activities.

Excessive absenteeism is mitigated through counseling, parental conferences, daily progress reports and District interventions. An important District objective is to further reduce dropout rates. Dropouts are defined as students who are absent without reason for 45 days or more, and whose whereabouts are unknown. For students who are having difficulty, Lowell has a policy on academic probation and a support system through the resource centers. Lowell's dropout rate has been 0% for each of the three years prior to 1997-98. The following is a snapshot of school attendance taken on October 7, 1999 which shows 132 students absent from 1 or more classes (partial-day absences). Of the 132 students, 24 were unexcused absences: One student missed 1 class, fourteen students missed 2 classes, five students missed 3 classes, four students missed 4 classes, and no students missed 5 or more classes. It is not possible to draw conclusions from this one set of numbers, but it does warrant further research and could point to a possible flaw in attendance procedures or a cutting problem. Furthermore, there is a problem in attendance taking when students are marked absent, and arrive late to class. When the student is tardy, the attendance strip may have already been collected by the Attendance Office. To eliminate this problem, there has to be better communication between the teachers and the Attendance Office. The teachers should give an updated list to the Attendance Office reflecting the changes.

Suspensions/Expulsions/Referrals/S.A.R.B.

The student suspension rate has been declining over the past four years. The highest number of suspensions was 26 during the 1994-95 school year. That number dropped to 13 students in 1997-98. One student was expelled in 1998-1999 and thus far, one student was expelled in the fall of 1999. Nineteen students were sent to the Student Attendance Review Board (S.A.R.B) during the 1998-99 school year due to attendance problems.

(See General School Data in Appendix p. 2)

Socio-economic Status

Since Lowell draws its student population from public and private institutions as well as from all areas of the city, its students represent a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. Additionally, socio-economic status was a factor in the admissions policy during the 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99 school years thereby increasing the socio-economic diversity of the student body. During the past four years, the number of students entitled to the Free Lunch Program has fluctuated between 15.5% (1994-95) and 11.7% (1997-98). This number has been on a steady decline. During the same time period, the number of students on the Reduced Lunch program has been as follows: 6.8% (1994-95), 6.5% (1995-96), 4% (1996-97), and 6.1% (1997-98). During 1999-2000, 6.3% of our students were receiving AFDC. Approximately 25% of our AP students receive an AP exam fee subsidy.
(See General School Data in Appendix p.2)

STAFF

Composition/Ethnicity/Mobility

1998-99	Number		Number
Principals	1	Permanent Certificated Staff	114 (88.3%)
Assistant Principals	3	Long Term Substitutes	9 (6.9%)
Counselors	7	Average Year of Service	17.9
Classroom Teachers	103	Average Age of Staff	49.2
Resource Teachers	1	Average Salary of Staff	\$50,490
Librarians	2	Staff recorded with :	
Other Certificated	2	Advanced Degrees	38.6%
		Additional Credentials	56.1%

No teacher is teaching out of his/her credentialed subject area.
1999-2000 staffing allocation see Appendix p. 34.

Comparison Of Staff Composition Over Time

	<u>L</u>	<u>OW</u>	<u>AA</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>J</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>AI</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>ONW</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> <u>NUMBER</u>
<u>1996-1997</u>	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Students	10.7	17.5	4.2	42.2	1.6	3.6	.4	6.2	13.7	2571
Certificated	11	66.9	3.6	10.2	2.2	0.7	1.4	2.2	1.4	136
Classified	14.2	28.5	14.2	38	0	0	0	4.7	0	21
Paraprof.	6.6	40	26.6	20	0	0	0	6.6	0	15

1996 - 1997 Male/Female

Students	43.6/56.4
Certificated	43.3/56.6
Classified	28.5/71.4
Paraprof.	66.6/33.3

	<u>L</u>	<u>OW</u>	<u>AA</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>J</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>AI</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>ONW</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> <u>NUMBER</u>
<u>1998-1999</u>	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Students	10.9	17.4	4.2	43.3	1.6	3.0	.4	5.7	13.5	2534
Certificated	8.5	61.2	4.7	14	1.6	.8	0	3.9	4.7	129
Classified	14.3	33.3	14.3	33.3	0	0	0	4.8	0	21
Paraprof.	11.1	38.9	22.2	16.7	0	0	0	11.1	0	18

<u>1998 - 1999</u>	<u>Male/Female</u>
Students	44.2/55.8
Certificated	48.8/51.1
Classified	23.8/76.1
Paraprof.	61.1/38.8

Certification for Assignment: As of fall 1999, all certificated staff are still teaching in their credentialed subject areas.

At the end of the 1997-98 school year, the District offered certificated employees an early retirement incentive package which resulted in the retirement of approximately 25% of our most experienced staff. Since then, the administration has made every attempt to ethnically diversify the staff while searching for the best qualified candidates to fill open positions.

According to District statistics for the 1996-97 school year, the Lowell staff consisted of 136 permanent certificated employees and 3 (2.2%) long term substitutes. The average years of service was 22 years and the average age of the staff was 52.1 years. The average staff salary was \$48,580. Advanced degrees were held by 42.4% of the staff and 50.8% held multiple credentials.

OUTCOME DATA

Achievement Data

GPA (Grade Point Average)

The average GPAs for all departments during the fall 1998 and the spring 1999 semesters are posted below. The GPA analysis by departments reveals departments do not differ from one another more than .95. Grading standards are consistent across departments from semester to semester.

GPA Analysis by Departments

	<u>Fall 1998</u>	<u>Spring 1999</u>
Total Average GPA	3.14	3.11
Highest Average GPA	3.78	3.75
Lowest Average GPA	2.83	2.79

(See Appendix p. 6 for GPA breakdown for all departments/special classes)

GPA's by Student Ethnicity and Grade Level 1998-99

(See Appendix pp. 4-7)

GPA's without P.E. for "Value-Added" Students with Admission Composite Scores Between 51 and 59 (Class of 2002)

The value-added students' admission composite scores range from 50 to 64. All non-value-added students were admitted under one cut-off score of 65 out of 69. (69 was the maximum composite score in the past two years.) The WASC Leadership Committee chose to review only the GPA's of the students with 51-59 composite entry scores to assess the relative academic success of this group of students.

G.P.A's Fall `98	L	AA	ONW	AI	Total	
0 - .99	2	2	0	0	4	
1.0 - 1.99	5	1	0	0	6	
2.0 - 2.99	18	4	3	1	26	
3.0 - 3.99	7	1	2	0	10	
4.0 +	0	0	0	0	0	
<u>Total</u>		32	8	5	1	46

G.P.A's Spring `99	L	AA	ONW	AI	Total
0 - .99	5	1	0	0	6
1.0 - 1.00	8	2	0	0	10
2.0 - 2.99	13	5	4	1	23
3.0 - 3.99	5	0	2	0	7
4.0 +	0	0	0	0	0
<u>Total</u>	31	8	6	1	46

NOTE: Two ONW students are designated Special Ed. Their GPA's were 2.83 & 2.50 (Fall Semester), and 2.63 & 2.50 (Spring Semester) respectively. Of the 50 original students in this 51-59 group, four transferred out: two remained in the District, and two left the District.

The data shows that an average of 71.7% of the students who had admission composite scores of 51-59 maintained good standing during their freshman year (2.00 GPA or higher):

- Fall 1998: 78% of the value-added students who entered with composite scores between 51 and 59 were in good academic standing.
- Spring 1999: 65.3% of the value-added students who entered with composite scores between 51 and 59 were in good academic standing.

Advanced Placement (AP) Examinations (Disaggregated by Course, Appendix p. 8)

Year	1996	1997	1998	1999
Number of Exams Taken	1,339	1,497	1,569	1,621
Number of Students	626	673	717	732
Passing Percent	88%	89%	90%	90%

There has been a steady increase in the number of AP exams administered and the number of students taking AP exams over the past four years. In 1998 and the three successive years prior to 1998, Lowell ranked sixth nationally in the number of AP exams taken. In 1999, 27 AP examinations were administered in 25 subject areas. The number of students scoring 5 on AP

exams is increasing faster than the national rate. In 1999, Lowell's AP national ranking moved from sixth to fifth in the nation for number of AP exams taken. (Enrollment in AP and Honors Classes by Ethnicity, Appendix p. 20)

Stanford Achievement Test 9th Edition (STAR) Result
National Percentile Ranking, 0-99

(Disaggregated Results in Appendix pp. 10-19)

Grade Level	Math		Language		Reading		Social Studies		Science	
	1998	1999	1998	1999	1998	1999	1998	1999	1998	1999
9	93	94	89	90	82	82	88	86	86	80
10	88	90	84	87	79	79	80	81	80	84
11	93	92	88	89	83	80	89	88	84	85

(Score of 50 Represents the National Average)

This is a relatively new test which is not yet aligned with the current state framework. Additionally, the content of the test was changed the second time it was administered. Therefore, any generalizations we might draw from class averages or comparative annual averages are questionable. The percentiles received on the STAR exam range between 79% and 94%. If generalizations are to be made, it appears that over the past two years, 10th graders were more able to improve their scores than 9th or 11th graders, and that Reading is the area that needs the most improvement. In 1999, Lowell ranked second in the state on the Academic Performance Index. (See Appendix pp. 24-28 for the state's new **Academic Performance Index** for Lowell)

Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT I) Average Scores 1996-1999

	VERBAL 1996	VERBAL 1997	VERBAL 1998	VERBAL 1999
NATIONAL	505	505	505	505
CALIFORNIA	495	496	497	497
SFUSD	455	456	456	463
LOWELL	577	573	576	589

(Please note that approximately 40% of our students state that English is not the primary language spoken in their home. Overall, our trend has been for math scores to be higher than verbal scores.)

	MATH 1996	MATH 1997	MATH 1998	MATH 1999
NATIONAL	508	511	512	511
CALIFORNIA	511	514	516	514
SFUSD	510	517	512	517
LOWELL	616	619	620	627

In 1998, Lowell had the 11th highest SAT I scores of any public high school in the state of California. Rankings for 1999 are not yet available.

Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) Scores
 (Disaggregated Results in Appendix pp. 21-22)

Comparison of Norm Curve Equivalent (NCE) Mean Scores

Grade Levels	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
<u>9th Grade</u>			
Reading Comprehension	76.1	75.4	The scores for this year are posted differently from those of previous years.
Math Concepts & Application	82.7	80.8	
<u>10th Grade</u>			
Reading Comprehension	77.3	79.7	They have been reconfigured as a matched comparison with the STAR test, therefore, a matched comparison with _____ previous CTBS scores is not possible here. Test results for 1997-98 are in the Appendix.
Math Concepts & Application	82.7	83.4	
<u>11th Grade</u>			
Reading Comprehension	78.7	72.7	
Math Concepts & Application	83.1	78.3	

National Merit Recognition

	1998	1999
Merit Scholars	10	7
Merit Finalists	6	16
Merit Semifinalists	3	16
Merit Commended	36	61
National Achievement Commended	0	3

Golden State Exam Results

(See Appendix p. 23)

Completion Rates

Post Graduation Plans

Senior Survey Results

	1998	1999
Graduating class	646	642
Number of survey responses	637	629
<u>Students will:</u>		
		<u>By %</u>
attend college	612	96%
directly attend a 4 year college	405	66.2%
attend the University of California	214	33.6%
attend a California State University	78	12.3%
attend private 4 year college	51	8%
attend two year college with transfer program	183	28.8%
postpone college for a minimum of 1 semester	25	4.1%
		<u>By %</u>
	607	96.5%
	439	72.4%
	239	39.3%
	132	21.8%
	68	11.3%
	147	24%
	21	3.5%

Percentages are based on the number of survey responses received.

Currently surveys are based on the student's declaration of post graduation plans. We need to do more to obtain more substantive statistics for 100% of the student body.

Extra-curricular Activities

Extra-curricular activities are one of the richest aspects of the Lowell culture. According to our 1998-99 Student Survey, 82% of students participated in a wide range of extra-curricular school activities. There are 51 clubs that meet afterschool hours in which students are encouraged to pursue hobbies and special interests. Community service is an important aspect of club membership in that 25 hours of community service are required each year in order to maintain official club status. A list of campus clubs are included in the Appendix. Lowell supports 24

afterschool sports programs including Varsity Cheer and Song Girls. Our teams successfully compete with other schools in and out of the District. For example, Lowell athletes won 15 Varsity City/Section Championships and 3 Frosh-Soph City titles in 1998-99. Our Academic Decathlon team has won the city championship for each of the past 13 years, and took second place in the Spring 1999 Division competitions at the state level. The Forensics team has won numerous city championships and annually sends students to compete at the state and national levels. Some of the highlights of any school year are the orchestral, choral and band recitals as well as the fall play and the spring musical production.

PROCESS DATA

Student Survey

Students on the WASC Student Committee wrote the questions for the Student Questionnaire based on the WASC criteria and their own assessment of issues deemed important to their fellow students. In fall 1998 the entire student body was asked to complete the Student Survey during their registry period. The survey was given in two parts over a two day period and collected at the end of each registry session. Results were tabulated over Christmas vacation by the WASC Student Committee with assistance of the Shield and Scroll, and distributed to all WASC Student Committee members, student government officers and registry representatives, and at the Lowell Community Retreat.

Results

Overall students are pleased with the education they receive at Lowell. They cite the strong emphasis on academics, class choice, open campus and the modular schedule as their favorite aspects of the school environment. They view the school as a safe and friendly place that is doing a good job of preparing them to go to college. While students praise their college preparation, they express displeasure with the stress and pressure that result from stiff academic competition. Several students commented that there was too much emphasis on grades and not enough emphasis on learning. Based on department ratings, in general students are pleased with their classes, but wanted some improvement in all criteria areas. Students seem to be having a mix of experiences with their teachers and staff, finding some extremely helpful while others are less nurturing and supportive. The dilapidated physical condition of the building in conjunction with the lack of cleanliness and unacceptable levels of sanitation constitute the greatest single source of student dissatisfaction with the school.

(See Appendix p. 37 for full results)

Parent/Community Survey

Questions for the Parent/Community Survey were written by the WASC Parent Committee which began meeting in August 1998. Survey questions were based on both WASC criteria and parents' assessment of issues that were deemed important to the school. The survey was enclosed in a copy of the PTSA *LowellLight* and mailed to the parents' homes. The introduction to the survey was written in English, Chinese, Russian and Spanish explaining to parents that they could request a copy of the survey in any one of these languages. Results were tabulated in December 1998 with the assistance of the Student WASC Committee and the Shield and Scroll. Results were distributed at the Lowell Community Retreat in March of 1999. (See Appendix p. 38 for full results)

Results

Parents perceive Lowell as a positive environment for their children and are grateful that a public school such as Lowell exists. They view the strong emphasis on academics and the safe school environment as the most positive aspects of the school. Parents feel that most teachers are very supportive of students, but expressed some concern that not all are as nurturing and supportive as they need to be. Parents also expressed concern about the physical appearance of the building, general maintenance, and disrepair.

Staff Survey

While several members of the staff indicated that they would like to have a staff survey, we were unable to get a small team of staff members together in order to write a staff survey. Teachers indicated that they were too overworked to commit any time to this project.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT TRENDS

Much of the success of Lowell's students is a result Lowell's efforts to create links to the outside community. The foundation of many of these links remains the Lowell parents, alumni, and the wealth of educational institutions which reside in the Bay Area. The few programs which have been discontinued over the past six years such as MESA, have been discontinued because of budget cuts which were beyond the control of the Lowell community. In the past six years, there has been a growth in new programs which further connect Lowell to community organizations (e.g., Coleman Advocates for Children and the S. F. Medical Society/SFUSD's Condom Availability Program), the state (Digital High School), a university (UC-Berkeley's Interactive University Program), and a private enterprise (Steve Silver Foundation). Corporate Partnership is one area where the Lowell currently lacks any formal ties.

State/Federal Program Mandates

The *Free and Reduced Lunch Program* provides free and reduced lunches for students who meet the federal government's economic guidelines.

Community Foundation Programs

The *San Francisco Education Fund* provides grants to teachers for special projects which will enhance their curriculum such as the All-City Partners-In-Print program which supports journalism at Lowell and other high schools.

San Francisco School Volunteers recruits and screens individuals from the community who are willing to provide service to the public schools. SF School Volunteers can act as classroom aides or provide clerical support or assist with special projects.

Ocean, Mission, Ingleside Family Center (OMI) brings professional mental health interns onto the campus to work with students and/or parents who have need for mental health services.

Through the *Condom Availability Program*, students who are sexually active can receive free condoms to avoid sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancy. This program operates on campus in collaboration with the S. F. Medical Society and the School District.

PACT Educational Clearinghouse is a non-profit organization that assists low income students in applying for college admissions and financial aid. It also helps students develop career goals, make career choices and improve job skills.

Students who participate in the *Training in Educational Service (TIES Program)* have the opportunity to earn 5 credits for tutoring at the nearby Lakeshore Alternative Elementary School. Students signing up for this program report to Lakeshore School where a counselor assigns them to work with a classroom teacher.

The *Enterprise Program* helps to provide jobs for high school students who need supplemental financial support. This program creates a direct link between students and the business community.

The Math, Engineering and Science Achievement (MESA) Program concentrates on improving math and science skills of at-risk students so they can function competitively at the college level.

It also helps students with their transition from high school to college. This year the MESA program lost its funding from the University of California and is currently not operating a Lowell or any other District high school.

Gay, Lesbian and Straight Alliance connects the school, the District and the city Department of Public Health. Students gain tools for coping with gender identification issues and are taught self-respect and tolerance for others.

Students who participate in the *German Email Program* engage in a cultural exchange with German students through the internet. This is the first program of its kind in the U.S. and serves as the model for international exchanges between schools and classes.

Several Lowell teachers have been awarded fellowships in the *Fullbright Teacher Exchange Program*. Most recently two Social Science teachers spent a year each teaching in Northern Ireland and one of our World Language teachers was chosen to teach in the People's Republic of China during the summer.

San Francisco State University Volunteer Program. SFSU offers a class in which prospective teachers perform community service at a school site. Lowell offers school volunteers the opportunity to observe and assist in and out of the classroom, and work closely with a classroom teacher while exploring the field of education.

In the *Upward Bound Program*, a University of San Francisco counselor helps minority students transition from high school to college by tutoring and assisting students with college placement. *Upward Bound* monitors students once they have matriculated in college and continually provides a safety net for students throughout their years on the USF campus

The *Interactive University* is a joint venture between the SFUSD and the University of California at Berkeley. Two Lowell Social Studies teachers and one Lowell English teacher work cooperatively with the International Studies Department at Berkeley to write lesson plans which technologically link Lowell students with guest lecturers at the University. This program creates an opportunity for our students to directly interact with some of the nation's foremost authorities in their fields.

Lowell has been a part of the *All-City Partners-in-Print* coalition of public high school journalism teachers since the spring of 1991. Its purpose is to further the interests of high school journalism in San Francisco by organizing workshops for students, by taking students to regional and state conventions, by providing support to new journalism teachers in the District, and by writing grant proposals to fund related projects. It is funded by the San Francisco Education Fund.

Josephine Miles Scholarship allows teachers to take tuition free classes at the University of California.

The *San Francisco State University Student Teaching Program* and *Dominican College Student Teaching Program* link Lowell with students from each of these universities. Our teachers mentor graduate students as they teach their first class in preparation for entering the teaching profession.

Coleman Advocates for Children conducts a mock election for social studies classes which helps prepare students for their civic responsibilities. Students receive election materials, discuss issues, use voting machines and receive election returns.

The *Excel Program (XL)* allows Lowell students to concurrently take classes at San Francisco City College during the school year.

The *Academic Talent Development Program (ATDP)* permits Lowell students to enroll at UC Berkeley during the summer session.

School/Business Relationships

William Hewlett has given Lowell \$480,000 over the past ten years. The money has been used to maintain and update technology in the school.

The Steve Silver Foundation has donated funds to convert an existing classroom into a little theater.

Parent/Community Organizations

The *Lowell Alumni Association* actively raises money to provide Lowell with approximately \$50,000 per year in grants to be used by the staff for the benefit of the student body. Funds from the Alumni Association have been used to purchase computers for the library, support *The Lowell* newspaper, subsidize the AP and Forensics Programs, purchase pianos for the VPA Department and uniforms for the football team. This year an Alumni Association grant brought the California Poets in the Schools Program into our English classes. In addition, the Alumni Association publish a newsletter which keeps Lowell's 25,000 alumni members connected with each other and the current issues on our campus.

Lowell is very fortunate to have an active *PTSA* membership of 1,200 plus parents. Many directly participate on school committees. Parents oversee the VICCI Center, the Book-to-Book Center, publish the *LowellLight* newsletter, sponsor school clean-up days and provide the staff with grants for projects, equipment or materials.

PTSA members actively share in our decision-making process through their participation on their Academic Affairs Committee, the Site Advisory Council, and Digital High School /Technology Committee. Two years ago, the PTSA donated their time and labor to provide the staff with a beautifully-remodeled faculty lounge, and twice a year treats the staff to dinner prior to Open House.

Lowell students are not eligible for many of the federal entitlement programs which exist at other schools. Consequently, we rely on the extra financial support we receive from parent/community/business organizations. For example, the PTSA has purchased VCR's for every classroom as well as computer hardware, software, CD players and most recently donated funds for the purchase of a schoolwide voice-mail communications system. The PTSA is currently supporting the *DHS Bridge Program* which enables teachers to improve their computer skills in preparation for the transition to Digital High School. During the 1998-99 school year, the PTSA donated \$90,894 to our school. It is fair to say that we could not sustain the quality of our program without the continued financial and personal support of the members of the PTSA.

At one time, the PTSA created a *Wellness Committee* whose task was to bring professional mental health care workers onto the campus where they would present workshops for parents and/or students. Health care professionals also provided one-on-one counseling sessions as needed. Unfortunately, the Wellness Committee is not operating on campus this year.

School /District Growth Needs

District Policies/School Financial Support

Sources of 1998-1999 school funding.

General Fund Site Budget Allocation

1998-99 Site Block Grant..... \$75,592

		CBEDS Allotment based on	
enrollment.....	80%	\$72,161	
	20%	\$18,049	
GATE Funds.....		\$16,916	
SB 1882 - Net funding after deducting benefits and District overhead....		\$12,700	
EIA/LEP- Net funding after deducting benefits and District overhead...		\$ 7,665	
Alumni Association.....		\$66,928	
PTSA.....		<u>\$90,894</u>	
	Total		<u>\$360,905</u>

District dollar expenditure per pupil: \$35.60

EXPECTED SCHOOLWIDE LEARNING RESULTS/SELF-STUDY PROCESS

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ESLRs

On October 20, 1998, the Lowell community wrote their ESLRs. They were written in a collaborative effort and based on current research in the education field. The first step was for individual departments to discuss and write their expectations for students. Each department then brought their expectations to a schoolwide meeting in which the staff, a few parents, and students reviewed concepts in *Second to None: The Report of the California High School Task Force* and two recent articles written on education in the 21st century. We then wrote schoolwide ESLRs based on the expectations presented by each department and current research. Once five ESLRs were written, the group broke into five committees, each of which wrote descriptors for one of the ESLRs. The language of the ESLRs and descriptors was refined by the Leadership Committee, then voted upon by the entire staff. The ESLRs were completed in December, 1998. Our ESLR poster was designed during the spring of 1999, and posted in every classroom the first week of the fall 1999 semester.

Philosophy and Vision Statement

Lowell has had a philosophy and vision statement for many years. The vision statement and excerpts of the school philosophy are printed in the *Lowell Student Handbook* which is distributed to each freshman. Due to early retirements in the spring of 1998, approximately twenty five percent of our staff was new in the fall of 1998. Many staff members, although familiar with the Lowell's college preparatory objectives, were not familiar with the existence or content of the vision statement and philosophy, therefore, copies of these two statements were given to each staff member. The staff was asked to check the existing philosophy and vision statement for inconsistencies with our newly-adopted ESLRs, and asked to recommend needed modifications. A few minor modifications were made, and the two statements were voted upon and accepted by the entire staff.

Structure and Composition of Focus Committees

The large size of the Lowell community represented a challenge to the formation of the focus committees. It was decided that five large committees would be formed, but that each committee would break into two to three subgroups. Periodically the entire committee would regroup as needed, especially to obtain consensus on the final focus report. Each subgroup had its own Leadership Committee facilitator who was responsible for maintaining home group representation within their subcommittee. Each subcommittee responded to one or two of the criteria for their specific focus committee.

To insure community-wide representation on each focus committee, an apportioned number of seats were reserved for each home group. Stakeholders were allowed to sign up for the focus committee of their choice provided the individual met the criteria for an open seat on that committee. Some exceptions were made when an individual was adamant about being on a particular committee. Attendance records were kept for each focus committee meeting.

Student/Community Profile

This document remained a work in progress throughout the two year self-study period. The self-study coordinator was responsible for the compilation of data and the Leadership Committee for data analysis. As the document evolved, updated editions were distributed to committee facilitators who shared the information with committee members.

SELF-STUDY PROCESS TIMELINE

Early Preparations

Spring 1998

The self-study coordinator was appointed and met with the principal to create a WASC timeline.

July 1998

The self-study coordinator met with the PTSA Executive Board to orient them to the WASC process and to encourage their participation on the Parent/Community Committee.

August 1998

The self-study coordinator met with a small number of student body officers and registry representatives for a WASC orientation and to plan the formation of a Student Committee

September 1998

Professional Development Day 8:00 A. M. - 9: 25 A. M.

The self-study coordinator oriented the staff to the Focus on Learning process. Then department chairs facilitated the writing of 5-6 department-wide student learning outcomes. The self-study coordinator and the principal chose the WASC Leadership Committee. Student and Parent Committees were formed, and work began on the Student Survey and continued on the Parent/Community Survey. The self-study coordinator met with the PTSA to encourage participation on the Parent/Community Committee.

October 1998

Professional Development Day 10/20/98 1:00 P. M. - 3:00 P. M.

During a two-hour time block, department chairs presented each department's expected learning results to the entire Lowell community, we reviewed current theories on education, and wrote our ESLRs and descriptors as described above. Copies of our vision statement and philosophy were distributed to the staff for their review.

Seven members of the Leadership Committee attended a Focus on Learning training workshop. The Leadership Committee worked on responses to the Resource and Process Committee recommendations, and researched responses to the Schoolwide Recommendations. Student and Parent/Community Committees continued to work on their respective surveys.

November 1998

After consultation with the PTSA Executive Board, completed Parent/Community Surveys were enclosed in the PTSA monthly newsletter, and mailed to the home of each Lowell student. Similarly, the Student Committee met weekly to complete the Student Survey and prepare it for distribution to the student body. The Leadership Committee met biweekly and continued drafting its responses to previous WASC recommendations. The wording of the ESLRs, the vision statement, and the philosophy was finalized. The Leadership Committee reviewed the data that had been gathered to date for the Student/Community Profile. Some preliminary generalizations were drawn, but there was much more work to be done on the profile. Leadership Committee members selected the focus committee they were most interested in facilitating.

December 1998

Professional Development Day 12/1/98 12:45 P. M. - 3:00 P. M.

At a community-wide meeting, the revised vision statement and philosophy were presented to the staff for final comment and vote. Stakeholders reported to their home groups to write their department's responses to the previous WASC recommendations. In addition, drafts of the Student/Community Profile were distributed to department chairs for review by department members. Student Surveys were administered. The WASC Student Committee and Shield and Scroll students gave up four days of their winter break to assist the self-study coordinator in tallying Parent/Community and Student Survey results. The Leadership Committee continued to work on Resource, Process and Schoolwide reports and planned WASC activities for January.

January 1999

Professional Development Day 1/4/99 11 A.M. - 3 P.M.

Support staff reviewed the ESLRs and identified the ways in which they support the ESLRs within the context of their jobs. Simultaneously, the teaching staff examined their courses' alignment with state/District content and performance standards. The results of this examination were documented by each department.

Professional Development Day 1/19/99 11 A.M. - 3 P.M.

Each department evaluated their relative degree of success in teaching the ESLRs. Individual departments discussed then charted the ways in which the ESLRs are incorporated into department course curriculum and teaching methodologies. The next step was for departments members to check their course alignment with state/District content and performance standards. Department members cross referenced student assignments and their corresponding assessments with State/District content and performance standards as well as the ESLRs. Members of the staff stated that this exercise was important, and that it needed part of a continuing strand of professional development.

The Leadership Committee worked on building consensus on responses to the Resource Committee, Progress Committee and Major Recommendations. The Resource responses were completed, but the other two committee responses were tabled. It also reviewed the Parent/Community and Student Survey results and planned the upcoming community-wide retreat. The self-study coordinator met with the PTSA to select a focus meeting schedule that would maximize parent involvement.

February 1999

The Leadership Committee adopted guidelines for classroom observations. While the Leadership Committee continued discussions on the Student/Community Profile, department chairs assisted with signing-up staff members for focus committees. Student sign-ups were advertised in the Student Bulletin and administered by the Student Committee. Facilitators for each focus committee were selected. The self-study coordinator met with the Academic Affairs Committee to orient them to the Focus on Learning process and to encourage their participation on focus committees.

Guidelines for the collection of written and visual evidence were distributed to the staff. The staff began classroom observations and departments set up Evidence Binders.

March 1999

Professional Development Day 3/4/99 11:30 A.M. - 6:30 P.M.

This day was a community-wide retreat designed to draw the larger community into the WASC process. The day began with a luncheon for staff, parents and students and culminated with a dinner and open house (6:30 P. M. -8:30 P. M.). Meals were generously provided by the PTSA. As parents entered the building, they were given descriptions of each focus committee and encouraged to sign up for the committee of their choice. The day's activities included an overview of the WASC process, and the first meeting of the focus committees. Facilitators reviewed the ESLRS, focus committee criterion, rubrics, outlined a course of action, and began to examine evidence.

Professional Development Day 3/5/99 1:00 P.M. - 3:00 P.M.

Departments met to continue collecting, evaluating and organizing student work. Department chairs and Leadership Committee members jointly instructed staff on conducting a department snapshot to document the frequency with which various teaching methodologies were being used in a given week. Additionally, departments worked on department-wide rubrics, benchmarks and standards.

Professional Development Day 3/26/99

This day was a continuation of the March 4th community retreat. Focus committees continued their gathering and examination of evidence. At the end of the day, they summarized the year's accomplishments and the generalizations drawn to date. This was the culminating community activity for the school year.

The staff unsuccessfully attempted to write a staff survey. The Leadership team planned its WASC activities for the rest of the school year. We continued our analysis of the Student/Community Profile. Seven members of the Leadership Committee attended the second WASC training workshop.

April and May 1999

The Leadership Committee made decisions on the archiving and storage of evidence over the summer months. The committee resumed editing responses to Schoolwide recommendations and Process Committee recommendations.

September 1999

Professional Development Day 9/17/99 8:00 A. M. - 9:50 A. M.

Departments used this time to assess their Evidence Binders. The support staff met with two Leadership team members to discuss the types of evidence non-certificated staff could use to illustrate their support of the ESLRs.

Leadership Committee members attended WASC training workshop and discussed progress of focus committees.

October 1999

Professional Development Day 10/1/99 8:00 A. M. - 9:50 A. M.

Focus committees spent their time examining evidence and forming generalizations.

Professional Development Day 10/22/99 8:30 A. M. - 9:50 A. M.

Focus committees used this time to continue examining evidence and writing generalizations.

Professional Development Activity 10/29/99 8:00 A. M. - 8:50 A. M.

While departments held their monthly department meetings, support staff met to discuss their evidence gathering progress and to exchange ideas.

The Leadership Committee completed and approved the Schoolwide and Process Committee responses. We worked on the Program Committee responses. Members of the Parent/Community Committee and Student Committees drafted responses to their Committee's respective recommendations. More editing was done on the Student/Community Profile. The most recent edition of the Profile was distributed to facilitators.

November 1999

Professional Development Day 11/19/99 8:30 A. M. - 9: 50 A. M.

Focus committees made final generalizations and began drafting the focus reports.

The Leadership Committee amended its meeting schedule to meet once a week through February 2000. The Committee continued its analysis of the Student/Community Profile. The self-study coordinator gave directions on how to pull focus reports together. The principal and self-study coordinator met with District officials about the WASC process.

The Student Committee completed its responses to its previous recommendations.

December 1999

Professional Development Day 12/1/99 8:00 A. M. - 9:50 A. M.

Committee facilitators presented drafts of the committee report to the committee for their review and approval. Areas for needed growth were identified.

Jim Stack from the District's Assessment, Evaluation and Research Department met with the Leadership Committee to assist with our attempt to draw generalizations from testing data in the Student/Community Profile. Corrections were made to the Program Report responses. Drafts of all focus committee reports were critiqued by the Leadership Committee. The Parent Committee presented their Parent Committee responses to the Academic Affairs Committee and PTSA Executive Board. Based on focus committee report drafts, members of the PTSA Executive Board prioritized the draft's recommendations for growth.

Professional Development Day 1/28/00 8:30 A. M.- 9: 15 A. M.

All focus committees met to approve all report revisions and to prioritize recommendations for growth.

The self-study coordinator critiqued each focus committee draft. Focus committee facilitators worked on completing their committee's report. The remaining parts of the Parent Committee's responses to previous recommendations were completed and approved by the Academic Affairs Committee which also submitted its priorities for areas of recommended growth to the self- study coordinator.

February 2000

All reports were edited, and prepared for print. The Leadership Committee identified growth to be addressed in the Action Plan. The Action Plan was written by the Leadership Committee.

Professional Development Day 3/10/00 8:30 A.M. - 9:15 A.M.

The Action Plan will be presented to the staff for comments and suggestions. The Leadership Committee will revise the Action Plan to reflect the will of the community.

One of the most interesting suggestions to emanate from Focus On Learning is one which calls for the creation of a site-based strategic plan for the school. Six years ago, in an effort to incorporate shared decision-making into the school's governance, the self-study led to the creation of a new governing body called the Site Advisory Council. This year's Action Plan calls for major reforms that would strengthen the SAC allowing it to author the new strategic site-based school plan. The Focus on Learning Accreditation Report would become a primary resource on which a new school plan would be based. Once the SAC reforms are instituted, the SAC would become the guardian of the ESLRs insuring that school goals and operations are aligned, and that ESLRs are periodically revised to reflect the changing needs of the school population.

MAJOR SCHOOLWIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The school administration and faculty develop and implement an articulated staff development program that supports the achievement of the school's goals and objectives. The plan will provide staff with opportunities for professional growth in order that they keep current with curricular trends and ideas and will ensure a focus on continuous improvement of the instructional program.

(School Report; pp. C-1, 4, D-7 ,9, 11, 12, 13, 15; conferences with Process Committee, administration, and staff; WASC Criteria: 146,150; Improvement Process)

Response:

Since the WASC committee's visit, an SB 1882 Professional Development Grant was given to Lowell to promote staff development opportunities in educational technology, alternative assessment, and multicultural education. As a result of support from the SB 1882 teacher-directed committee, Lowell has been able to improve teacher access to individual and whole class instruction utilizing educational technology. Part of the grant was used to organize a computer lab of 35 Macintosh LC 575s, a server, two printers, a scanner, and hubs which have been connected to the SFUSD Internet provider.

Additionally, through 1882 funding, new computers have been allocated to Language Arts, Social Science, Mathematics, Visual and Performing Arts, Physical Education and Science offices with Internet access to give teachers access to educational technology.

On staff development days, the faculty has worked to design professional development activities that are useful to teachers, counselors and students alike. These activities are aligned with District and state goals. New courses in math, science and world languages reflect a cooperation between the site and other agencies committed to designing a curriculum that utilizes different instructional strategies and integrates courses with the real world. Some of the workshops given include the following: word processing, world language instruction, computer-assisted design, physics and biological simulations and how-to sessions for using the internet and e-mail. Counselors have attended workshops on student enrollment and financial aid at the University of California, visited a variety of college campuses and attended a Steve Covey conference. In the spring of 1999, SB1882 funds were used to provide substitute coverage that enabled teachers to write a grant proposal for Digital High School. We intend to have articulated staff development around Digital High School.

In addition, the site has used its professional development time to edit and print supplementary readers to be used in classes. The staff continues to work with professional organizations in subject matter fields (Advanced Placement, Golden State Exams), and with the wider community including WASC visiting committees and boards. To involve the larger academic community, speakers from U.C. Berkeley were invited throughout 1996 and 1997 to address the faculty on library resources, and new developments in Native American and African American studies and literature. Some examples of the use of professional development funding have been teacher workshops at the Exploratorium for math teachers, the San Francisco Performing Arts Library for language arts teachers, and the Palace of the Legion of Honor for visual and performing arts teachers. Additionally, funds have allowed staff members to attend the State Journalism Conference, California Library Association Conference, Asilomar Math Conference, the MacWorld Conference and AP workshops in all disciplines.

The District Curriculum Improvement and Professional Development Center (CIPD) has scheduled staff development days for developing subject matter standards consistent with SFUSD as a Challenge District in mathematics, language arts, and science. The curriculum improvement process has been accomplished with varying levels of staff participation. The Counseling Department has used its staff development time to write guidelines that have been developed in conjunction with central office staff. Professional development concerning health, safety, earthquakes and asbestos issues has likewise been implemented for security aides, custodial and clerical staff.

Until 1999-2000, Lowell staff development had been driven by District-mandated programs, curriculum needs, individual department issues and the desires of individual staff members. Prior to Focus on Learning, there had not been a schoolwide assessment of staff development needs, and therefore, no articulated program for staff development. Clearly, a plan for such a program is needed. As we work our way through the WASC process and the Digital High School grant process, ideas for a coherent schoolwide plan are slowly emerging. The Digital High School grant mandates a professional development strand in the effective use of appropriate educational technology across the curriculum. The Lowell PTSA has committed \$30,000 for staff technological training to prepare the staff for the technological components of the Digital High School. Currently the administration, in cooperation with the UBC and SAC, is exploring ways to build site professional development into the school schedule. The creation of a common planning period will go a long way in helping us to develop and implement a coherent, articulated, ongoing plan of professional development.

New state legislation which forces professional development days beyond the instructional calendar will be a challenge for site- and District-based professional development. Since the state has reduced funding for staff development, there is a concern that site-determined staff development may become secondary to District-mandated activities. While District designated staff development activities may satisfy identified District needs, many times it does not reflect the priorities of the individual school site. Throughout the three-year SB1882 grant cycle, Lowell's funding for staff development has progressively decreased, due to an increase in the number of schools sharing the existing funds and, this year, due to decreased state funding. The 1999-2000 school year will be the last year of the three-year grant used to support site staff development. While Lowell plans to apply for another three-year grant in 2000, we have no assurance as to the existence of new funding or what the level of new funding might be.

2. All departments establish a structured meeting time of at least an hour's duration within the monthly modular schedule to enable curriculum revision, sharing of resources, collaborative problem solving and other matters of departmental concern.

(School Report; pp. K- 3,8,1,19, D-7,8,15; CDE Criteria 146, 150, conferences with departments)

Response:

From September 1994 until June 1999, Lowell used a modified instructional schedule created by the Faculty Council (now Staff Council) for staff meetings. The modified schedule carved 90 minutes out of instructional time for faculty and departments to meet on a monthly basis, with occasional exceptions due to winter holidays or special circumstances. Schoolwide faculty meetings occur first on the agenda, and the time remaining is set aside for department concerns. Traditionally, faculty meeting agendas set by the administration have taken precedence over department issues and sometimes define department agendas, leaving insufficient time for department issues or curriculum development. The administration and faculty feel that a new school schedule, which incorporates a common planning time for all staff, would be an important step in providing the necessary time to work on a wider array of school issues, WASC and departmental concerns. In fall 1999, there were eight staff development days that set aside one hour and 50 minutes each for department meetings, faculty meetings, and WASC activities. In spring 2000, those meetings were reduced to 45 minute sessions twice a month.

The following are department responses to the recommendation presented in question 2.

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

The modular schedule must be reconfigured to allow for regular departmental meeting time. Then the departments must claim and use that time. In 1998-99, the limited use of portions of the eight scheduled staff development days for department business has provided marginal help. The faculty meetings, however, have invariably preceded the department meetings, and when the faculty meeting has run long, it is the business of the departments which is short-changed. Teachers become preoccupied with the school-wide matters or shift their attention to upcoming classes. Department meetings, with department-driven agendas, must be a regular, scheduled part of the life of the school if collaborative work is to be done.

WORLD LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

This would be feasible if the site administration scheduled a minimum day on a monthly basis when all the members of the department could meet collectively, allowing teachers the time to work together without interruption. This scheduled time should be used solely for matters of departmental concern and should not be encumbered by peripheral requests of the District and site administration.

SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

As requested by the WASC recommendation, the Science Department has always met when the principal has designated a time for departmental meetings. We are in complete compliance. Considering that we don't have a central department office, this meeting time is most crucial to the department members. It has been suggested to the department members that Friday could run on an "A" code provided that it is a normal week. This would create four 20 minutes blocks (mods 3, 8, 13, 18) for teachers to meet if they wanted to get together.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The Physical Education/JROTC/ Health Education Department meets following every school site faculty meeting that is scheduled by the administration to revise curriculum, share resources, problem-solve collaboratively and address department concerns.

MATH DEPARTMENT

The Math Department does not have a structured, monthly meeting to discuss curriculum, collaborate or deal with department concerns. Rather, teachers who share common free mods collaborate informally. This collaboration would be easier if those teachers who taught common courses were always free at the same time, but scheduling complexities make this impossible. Periodic department meetings are arranged according to site/district professional development days. These tend to focus on administrative concerns rather than curriculum matters because specific subjects are not easily discussed as an entire department.

COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

The Counseling Department meets every Tuesday at about 10:30 with an agenda that contains informational and discussion items. We keep minutes and agendas of all our meetings.

SOCIAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

The Social Science Department currently has limited flexibility on this issue. Most teachers of "A" code classes have mods 3 and 18 off. Each of these mods is 30 minutes long. However, teachers who have "B-C" code class schedules do not have these mods off. The department does utilize mods 3 and 18 for emergency meetings, but these mods do not permit adequate time for discussion or to address all the topics raised in the recommendation.

It is our feeling that this issue stems from the master schedule. In order to accommodate a monthly structured meeting time for all departments, it will be necessary to develop a modified instructional schedule. A modified schedule would need to allow at least one hour for departmental issues to be raised and discussed before or after students arrive on campus.

This raises the issue of instructional time. Many faculty members are distressed at what they feel to be the excessive staff development imposed on instruction this current semester (spring 1999). An essential component of developing modified or special schedules should involve input from the teaching staff rather than imposition by the SFUSD.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS DEPARTMENT

The Visual and Performing Arts Department meets whenever a department meeting is scheduled into the school day by the administration. During this time, and on their own time, department members have done the following:

- * Two visual art teachers collaborated on presenting a district-wide professional development workshop.
- * Department members have assisted each other in the use of computer hardware and software.
- * A music teacher consulted the visual arts teachers about art history slides to illustrate a piece of music being studied in band class.
- * Veteran art teachers collaborated on curriculum planning with a new faculty member.
- * The yearbook and newspaper continue to share resources and to collaborate on coverage of events schoolwide.

In August 1999, a new schedule was implemented which allows all departments to meet one hour and fifty minutes per month. The department has also used mod 12 for A code teachers to meet to discuss urgent issues, such as Special Education, allocation of funds for instructional supplies, and the management of the auditorium. As of spring 2000, a new schedule revision created two forty-five minute blocks of time each month for faculty meetings, department business and staff development.

3. The District administration implement a textbook adoption policy and purchasing procedure in order to provide adequate curriculum resources appropriate to the unique student population served by Lowell High School. (PVC Report; School Report, pp. B-3, M-2, 4, 7, 16; conference with administration and staff; WASC Criteria: Curricular Program, Instructional Practices, Integrated Skills)

Response:

It is the opinion of the Lowell High School parents and staff that the current textbook selection process is deeply flawed and does not account for the varying needs of different school populations. Currently books are adopted with no consideration for honors or AP classes. Many U.S. History and math classes continue to use old instead of more recently adopted textbooks because they more accurately reflect the academic levels of the Lowell student population. The administration, department chairs, parents, and individual teachers have continually expressed their concerns about the adoption of textbooks that do not meet the individual needs of our students. The entire Lowell community needs to be proactive in urging CIPD and the members of the SF Board of Education to reform the current textbook adoption policy and allow our school site to select books which appropriately challenge the intellectual capacity of our students.

The following is the District guideline for the instructional materials adoption process as set forth in the SFUSD Instructional Materials Handbook for High Schools (Revised 1/96):

“The adoption of textbooks and instructional materials for use in the San Francisco Unified School District is required by state statute, is regulated by established District procedures, and is an important part of the District’s instructional improvement cycle which is aligned with the state curriculum framework development schedule.”

The CIPD staff is responsible for the administration of the District’s instructional materials adoption process. The work of reviewing instructional materials in a given core curriculum area is carried out by a committee established through an application process open to District teachers and administrators.

As part of the adoption process, the District’s core curriculum is reviewed and aligned with current research in curriculum and instruction.

“The District review committee develops criteria to use as an objective foundation for the evaluation of available textbooks and instructional materials. The development of the criteria includes an examination of District demographics and student assessment data. The criteria developed by the committee is then used in the selection of instructional materials that best support the District core curriculum program.”

In the recent adoptions for Spanish, Spanish honors, Chinese (Mandarin), and science, the District adopted basal texts with Lowell teachers on the textbook committees. Additionally, texts for AP Biology and AP Physics were adopted. To include AP texts in the adoption process is crucial because the State mandates that only those texts formally adopted by the SF Board of Education are eligible to be purchased with State textbook funds. As the price of textbooks, especially those used for AP, spirals upward, the school is hard pressed to purchase textbooks for those students who want to take AP courses. In the fall of 1999, we could not meet the student demand for AP classes due to the insufficient number of textbooks available.

Also in the SFUSD Instructional Materials Handbook for High Schools under “Need to Reexamine Currently Used Materials,” it states:

“If a group of teachers think that currently used materials need to be reviewed and possibly replaced, a letter should be sent to Maria Santos describing in detail the rationale for requesting new materials, citing exact examples and page numbers in

the currently used materials. Letters with substantiated reasons for requesting a new adoption will be referred to a committee of curriculum assistant principals and/or department chairpersons for consideration. Reasons for reexamining currently used material include the following (we have included only those areas that apply to Lowell): Quality and suitability of content and format of authorized materials/Suitability for students.”

There are several adopted textbooks that are below the ability of the students at this school, and therefore teachers continue to use older textbooks. The Handbook does allow flexibility on this issue:

“Titles that have been replaced, or which are no longer regarded as generally useful in present courses, are classified as discontinued. However, copies on hand in the schools need not be removed as long as they are in good condition and are still more appropriate for their student use than the current adoptions.”

As stated in the SFUSD guidelines, texts need not be replaced until they are no longer usable. The District is committed to a single core text for the entire District, but does have a more open process for the electives, and teachers at Lowell adopt books that are challenging and proper for our students.

Department chairs in English and Social Science have been urged to petition CIPD to form adoption committees for AP books in these disciplines in order to have these texts purchased with state funds.

It is noted in this guide that a tentative schedule for adoptions in core courses is as follows:

1996-97: Biology, Cantonese, Economics, Physics.
1997-98: ESL, Spanish
1998-99: French, Mathematics
1999-2000: Language Arts, Social Science

The selection procedure for electives has been fairly open as long as the course description and syllabus outline the type of course, and the goals and objectives are teacher-planned and driven rather than textbook driven.

4. The District office and Board of Education address the serious maintenance needs of the school plant including:

**leaking ceilings
poorly maintained lighting and heating systems
vandalism and graffiti
broken ceiling and floor tiles
roof leaks
and the poor general maintenance and appearance of buildings and grounds**

Many of the maintenance needs are in areas that directly affect student and staff health and safety needs. These include:

**unsafe storage of chemicals in science
inadequate ventilation in science labs
unsecured library book shelves
broken windows**

(School Report: F-8, 9; Q-1,13; conference with Science Department; observations of Science labs and overall school plant).

Response:

In the area of chemical and fire safety:

The site administration and staff, with the assistance of the district administration, have taken the following steps:

- * All chemicals throughout the school have been cataloged, separated by type of hazard, and properly labeled. MSDS binders have been placed in each of the areas where these chemicals are used. In addition, there is a master MSDS binder on file in the Main Office. Also, the District and site administration have removed chemicals no longer in use or outdated. Restraining shelving and lips have been placed around chemicals and apparatus to secure them in case of seismic disturbance.
- * The site administration and staff, with the assistance of the District administration, provided for the installation of showers, fire blankets, and adequate ventilation for laboratories through the expenditure of bond issue funds during the 1996-97 school year. This situation will be totally addressed by the renovation of science labs.
- * All library shelves have been seismically secured.
- * Broken glass around the campus has been and continues to be replaced as needed.
- * The District has identified and repaired/installed fire separation doors, door closures, fire extinguishers, fire glass, and occupancy rate signs. The site administration has made new fire/disaster evacuation route signs indicating primary and secondary routes to help the faculty/staff and students exit the building safely in case of a disaster.

In the areas of sanitation and electrical safety:

The site administration and custodial staff, with the assistance of the District administration, have taken the following steps:

- * The site administration and custodial staff, with the assistance of the District administration, have repaired or replaced all toilets, urinals and soap, hand towel and toilet paper dispensers.
- * Proper electrical conduits and receptacles have replaced extension cords in all computer labs throughout the school.
- * The District has implemented an on-line repair procedure for calling in repairs. This method has been extremely efficient in securing timely and complete repairs.

There are still deferred maintenance issues that need to be addressed in the school. While maintenance items which affect the health and safety of students and staff are given priority, the District needs to put more money into day-to-day maintenance practices. The policy of relying on bond issues to cover the cost of major school repairs is deeply flawed and results in maintenance remaining a critical issue for this school site.

5. The District administration and site administration, in cooperation with the faculty, develop and implement a plan for the ongoing maintenance and future renovation of Lowell High School in order to sustain a constructive teaching/learning environment. (School Report: F-2, 5-11; conference with staff, students, parents; observations of school plant; WASC Criteria: Plant, Finance).

Response:

The District has taken the initiative in refining its response structure to maintenance problems at Lowell and indeed throughout the whole district. The response time to immediate and long-term problems has been drastically reduced. In addition, the Lowell PTSA has taken a proactive stance to assist in maintenance by sponsoring two clean-up days a year. The PTSA also meets regularly with the site administration and the district administration on future maintenance and building plans for Lowell. The District set aside some \$553,000 for renovation at Lowell in the spring of 1997. In addition, a \$140 million bond issue was passed in June of 1997 that will result in new construction for both the San Francisco Community College District and the SFUSD. Included in the SFUSD's proposal is a new \$7 million academic/science wing for Lowell. The

new wing will consist of state-of-the-art classrooms and other facilities that will replace many of the dilapidated “temporary” bungalows. Ground breaking for the new wing will occur in the summer of 2000.

6. The school administration, faculty, students and parents expedite the formation of a “school site council” as recommended by the previous WASC visiting committee for the purpose of facilitating communication between various school community groups, and to provide a forum for shared decision making.

(School Report: pp. B-1, C-5, D-1, 5, 7, 13, 14; conference with Process Committee, administration, staff, parents and students; WASC Criteria; Philosophy, Goals and Objectives; Organization; School Culture).

Response:

Using the principal’s March 1992 concept paper on the formation of a Site Advisory Council (SAC) and ideas generated from the faculty, parents, and students during the WASC self-study process of 1993-94, Lowell was able to create a functioning SAC in the fall of 1994. The SAC is composed of 26 voting members representing all the constituent groups in the Lowell community--faculty, administration, students, parents, classified staff, alumni, and the residential/business community. In its initial developmental phase, the SAC met weekly to discuss its purpose and define its role and responsibilities. A constitution and by-laws of the Lowell Site Advisory Council were drawn up and adopted in March 1995. Since that time, the SAC has been meeting twice a month during the school year to carry out its functions as specified below:

- * To assist in the follow-up of the WASC Self-Study Report
- * To facilitate full communication and discussion among the constituent members of the Lowell community listed above.
- * To strive for perpetuation of the Lowell tradition of academic excellence.
- * To serve as a forum for mutual concerns of the Lowell community.
- * To inform the Lowell community of matters under discussion; arrive at decisions in a timely manner.
- * To assist with oversight of the Digital High School Grant (once it is received).
- * To consult on school problems that:
 - a. are not the exclusive purview of the UBC, the Staff Council, the Parent Teacher Students Association, Lowell Students Association and the Lowell Alumni Association.
 - b. are not prohibited by contract law.
- * To address any problem voluntarily submitted by a constituent body when that body has been unable to resolve an issue.
- * To consult, upon request, on expenditures from federal/state agencies and other corporate or private gifts that are not the exclusive purview of the PTSA, Alumni Association, Staff Council, or the Lowell Student Association.

In Spring 1997, membership of the SAC was modified to 50% staff and 50% parents/students/community representatives. This brought the SAC in line with district guidelines empowering the SACs to determine the expenditure of federal/state funds.

PROCESS COMMITTEE RESPONSES

1. The school administration, faculty, students and parents expedite the formation of a “school site council” as recommended by the previous WASC visiting committee for the purpose of facilitating communication between various school community groups, and to provide a forum for shared decision making.

(School Report: pp, B-1, C-5, D-1, 5, 7, 13, 14; conferences with Process Committee, administration, staff, parents and students; WASC Criteria: Philosophy, Goals and Objectives; Organization; School Culture)

Response:

See response #6 under Major Schoolwide Recommendations.

2. The school administration, faculty and parents develop and implement a process to align the school’s goals and objectives with the school philosophy, to regularly review and communicate those goals and objectives to the school community and to continually evaluate progress towards these goals and objectives.

(School Report: pp, D-1,2, 3, 5, 15; conferences with Process Committee, administration, staff, parents; WASC Criteria: Philosophy, Goals and Objectives; and Improvement Process)

Response:

The Lowell Plan provides the structure for the school day, augmented by the recently developed expected schoolwide learning results (ESLRs). The plan permeates the interactions among all community constituencies. The school’s philosophy, policies, and procedures are provided to all students in the Lowell Student Handbook. This Handbook, published with the support of the PTSA, was developed after a two-day retreat in September 1993 and a follow-up retreat in February 1997 to discuss current issues and their impact on the goals, objectives, and processes at Lowell High School. A subsequent on-site retreat took place in March 1999 in conjunction with WASC activities.

Other forums work toward uniting our philosophy, goals and procedures in light of a changing environment. These include the Site Advisory Council (SAC), discussed elsewhere in this report; the United Educators’ Union Building Committee (UBC) and the Staff Council, the elected representatives of the faculty; the Administrative Council, consisting of the administration and department heads; the PTSA and its subcommittees; and an active student government with support from the administration and faculty sponsors. Proposals are formulated and considered. When perceived as beneficial, changes are implemented. One such change was a reorganization of the student government in 1998 to better coordinate the myriad activities in which our students participate.

3. The District administration implement a textbook adoption policy and purchasing procedure in order to provide adequate curriculum resources appropriate to the unique student population served by Lowell High School.

(PVC Report; School Report, pp. B-3, M-2, 4, 7, 16; conference with administration and staff; WASC Criteria: Curricular Program, Instructional Practices, Integrated Skills)

Response:

See response #1 under Major Schoolwide Recommendations.

4. The District administration consider restoration of the third assistant principal at Lowell High School in order to enhance the support services commensurate with the student population served. (School Report; pp, D-7, 15, conference with staff; WASC Criteria: Organization)

Response:

Following the 1994 recommendations of the Process Committee, the District restored to Lowell the third assistant principal's position in the fall of 1995. As the committee pointed out, the tasks associated with building and grounds could more effectively be carried out separate from responsibilities associated with curriculum and instruction.

Lowell now has an Assistant Principal for Curriculum, an Assistant Principal for Pupil Services, and an Assistant Principal for Administration. The division of responsibility has become indispensable to the school's ability to support its students, particularly because administrative responsibilities have multiplied in recent years. These administrative burdens include an increased number of student teachers, a growing corps of community volunteers and contacts, new building construction and renovation, and increased state-mandated testing.

5. The District administration, school administration, faculty and Lowell community work to increase the participation of underrepresented students in the academic and leadership opportunities now available at Lowell. (School Report; pp, D-5,8,9,15; conference with staff; observation; WASC Criteria: Improvement Process & Culture of the School)

Response:

Lowell High School provides a wide variety of academic and extracurricular leadership opportunities. These venues include, but are not limited to, student government, sports-related activities, ROTC activities, journalism, forensics, music, drama and dance, and the Shield and Scroll Honor Society. Unfortunately, participation in certain of these activities has been limited. Of the 78 leadership positions in student government and clubs, 74% are held by girls and 24% are held by boys. This disparity is significant even though more girls, 55.8%, attend Lowell than boys, 44.2%. In terms of minority representation in these leadership positions, there seems no gross disparity between the proportion of student leaders and the general school population. Still, some gaps exist: Filipinos comprise 4.6% of the general population but hold only 3% of leadership positions, Latino students comprise 9.2% of the population but hold only 6% of the leadership positions.

Lowell is proud that every ethnic group participates actively in co-curricular activities. According to the 1999 WASC Student Questionnaire, at least 59% of the students from each ethnic group reported participating at least once per week in these activities. The highest level of participation was reported by Asian students (68.5%), followed by White students (62.4%), then Other Non-White students (61.5%), then African Americans (60.2%), and finally Latinos (59.3%).

Lowell has responded to the academic challenges specific to the underrepresented groups with several programs: Summer Bridging, Strategies for Success, required ninth-grade participation in resource centers, and Peer Resource support groups. There is an apparent need to strongly

encourage students from underrepresented groups to participate in the academically oriented co-curricular activities.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE RESPONSES

1. The site administration and faculty develop ongoing support services for the students enrolled through the Lowell Academy Program, thereby enabling these students to experience greater success in the core curriculum, access to advanced level classes, attainment of high school goals and post-secondary opportunities. (School Report: E-27; 28; WASC Criteria: Student Support Services; CDE Criteria: Special Needs, paragraph 1, Student Paths, para 1; Interviews: Program Committee)

Response:

Prior to 1996, the Lowell Academy Program was funded by the District's Integration Department for the purpose of supporting underrepresented minorities (Latinos, African Americans, Native

Americans) to enable them to be successful at Lowell. It provided supplemental tutorial services to help strengthen the students' language and math skills so they could perform better in the core classes. In 1996, with the adoption of a new Lowell admissions policy by the Board of Education, a new program called "Strategies for Success" was created that had the same purposes as the Lowell Academy. The new value-added admissions policy gave special consideration to Native American, Latino and African-American applicants, recognizing the historic racial discrimination against these communities. Students admitted on a value-added diversity basis typically score 55 or greater using the CTBS/GPA scoring standard, but in no event was a student admitted with a score less than 50. To ensure student success, all value-added students were required to attend a special summer school session to prepare them for the rigors of Lowell and to take a "Strategies for Success" class during their freshman year. The "Strategies" classes were staffed by two full-time teachers who were funded by the Integration Department from 1996 to 1998. In 1998-99, due to a District fiscal crisis, the Strategies allocation was not made, but the school felt it was still important enough to be retained with two teacher positions out of its general staffing allocation. Appeals were made to District officials for restoration of the positions, but the positions did not materialize.

In spring 1999, a federal court judge ruled that race/ethnicity could not be used as the primary or predominant factor in assigning students to schools. The Lowell Admissions Committee that met to review the value-added applicants could not consider race/ethnicity in its deliberations. As a result, the number of Latino and African American admittees dropped dramatically compared to the previous year's entering class. Because of this drop, the Integration Department could not use Consent Decree funds to support the Strategies program with two additional teachers. Therefore, the Strategies for Success classes were not offered to any of the incoming value-added students in the fall of 1999. However, value-added students continue to receive academic support in a number of other ways:

The *Summer Bridging Program* consists of summer school classes which help to prepare ninth grade students for the academic demands of Lowell High School.

Student Resource Centers are special areas where students receive help with school work, access to computers and reference materials.

The *California Scholarship Federation (CSF)* provides peer tutoring to students in all academic subject areas from 7:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. each school day.

The *Math Peer Tutoring* program helps students in need of mathematics support.

A *Plan of Action for Challenging Times (PACT)* counselor visits Lowell three days a week in order to assist seniors and their families in matters concerning college financial aid, filling out forms or another areas in which prospective college students may require support. The services provided by the PACT counselor are targeted toward minority students whose families have previously not attended college. Of the 50 to 60 scholarships made available to seniors, at least 40% are exclusively for underrepresented minorities.

Teachers keep office hours during which any student may drop in for help.

The *Upward Bound Program* helps minority students transition from high school to college by providing tutoring and assistance with college placement. The program, run by the University of San Francisco, monitors students once they have matriculated to college and provides a safety net for students throughout their college years.

The *Math, Engineering and Science Achievement Program (MESA)* concentrates on improving math and science skills so at-risk students can function competitively at the college level. It also

helps students with the transition from high school to college. MESA has operated under the auspices of San Francisco State University and UC Berkeley in past years, but because of budget cutbacks, MESA has not been operational on the Lowell campus during the 1999-2000 school year.

The Cooperative Vocational Education Program (CVE) provides job support, teaches employment skills and supplies internship opportunities for students who seek career exploration or part-time employment.

2. The faculty and site administration establish a staff development committee to develop and implement an inservice program that meets the specific needs of department curricular and instructional issues. (School Report: E-43, 39; WASC Criteria: Curricular Program; CDE Criteria: Integrated Programs)

Response:

An SB 1882 Professional Development Committee was established in 1994-95 . The committee was composed of representatives from each department, and was funded by three-year block grants from the state, and administered by the District. It was the job of the SB 1882 Committee to determine professional development activities for the school on site-designated professional development days. For four years, it did an admirable job of bringing in renowned speakers from U.C. Berkeley, authors and experts, and in planning interdisciplinary activities. In addition, the SB 1882 Committee provided individual teachers with grants for conferences, workshops, classes, or special projects, which improved their ability to teach their course curriculum. The SB1882 Committee emphasized bringing in speakers to address multicultural issues that were of interest to the staff. It also provided time to facilitate interdisciplinary planning and increase teacher use of technology. Committee agendas were staff-driven, but too frequently the District intervened by substituting agendas of their own.

Since its inception, SB 1882 professional development activities have had three foci: technology, cross-curricular literacy, and multiculturalism. Much of the professional development for the past two years has focused on technology to prepare for becoming a Digital High School. A Faculty Technology Committee composed of representatives from each curricular department was formed to guide and help with the Digital High School preparations and ensure that all the curricular aspects are in place. Some members from this committee joined with parents, students, and administrators to serve on a Tech Advisory Board, which oversees Lowell's technology development plans. Under the guidance of the Faculty Technology Committee, each department was able to write its own curricular technology plan. Because our application and funding for Digital High School was delayed by one year, the PTSA provided grant money to transition teachers to Digital High School with weekly on-site training workshops (Tech Tuesdays). In addition, groups of teachers can request training for specific projects which incorporate technology into course curriculum. Thus, in the area of technology, there is a committee which has a well-developed plan of technology professional development, driven by Digital High School.

During the 1998-99 school year, the District provided schools with eight staff development days, five of which were site-based. This year, the District has provided three staff development days that will not be carved out of the instructional calendar. A newly configured "Professional Development Leadership Committee" composed of teachers, department chairs and the Assistant Principal for Curriculum will establish staff development agendas and replace the previous SB1882 Committee. The District plan is to financially compensate teachers for attending professional development workshops on their own time. The Lowell administration is supplementing District-allotted professional development time with banked instructional minutes each month. Thus far, utilization of this time has been shared by administration, department

chairs and WASC Focus Committees, with the administration apportioning the time allotted to each.

At present, there is no articulated in-service professional development program for cross-curricular literacy or multiculturalism that meets the specific needs of department curricular and instructional issues; however, it is hoped that the newly constructed staff development committee will be driven by department-related concerns and not District mandated agendas.

3. The District and site administration support additional counseling allocations to enable the counseling staff to provide increased individualized support services for the purpose of planning, programming and monitoring of student development and learning. (School Report: E10-12, 23, 24, 39; WASC Criteria: Student Support Services; CDE Criteria: Student Services, Guidance and Counseling, individualized Student Planning; Interviews: Program Committee, Parent Committee, Student Committee.)

Response:

Following the 1994 recommendation of the WASC Visiting Committee, the school administration requested the District to provide an increased counseling allocation. This was done in the form of a letter from the principal and the Site Advisory Council (SAC) to the superintendent during the 1994-1995 school year. Unfortunately, due to budget constraints, the district was unable to comply with the request.

Some additional counseling time was allocated in 1996-1997 only for the value-added program. This addition did not enable the regular counseling staff to provide increased individualized support services to the rest of the student body. For the 1996-97 school year, the official counseling allocation of 3.5 counselors, for a student body of 2,716 students, translated to a ratio of 776 students per counselor.

The counseling responsibilities for this value-added counselor were limited to the 180 value-added students who then had the services of two counselors: one regular counselor of record and the second value-added counselor, who could interact in more depth with the teachers of those students. While this was good for the value-added students, it did not free the regular counselor of any guidance/programming responsibilities, nor did it decrease the general counselor-to-student ratio. This arrangement lasted for two years, after which the value-added funding was withdrawn, and the counseling position disappeared by the beginning of 1998-1999.

At the same time, in 1997-1998 the Lowell administration, responding to the requests of counselors and the AP Testing Coordinator (a counselor himself), increased the counseling staffing by 1.0 F.T.E., finally decreasing the counselor/student ratio. This was done by utilizing additional .2 F.T.E. staffing allocations which were granted to Lowell for every 20 students who took an AP examination. In fact, because the coordination of AP examinations is done primarily by counselors, the administration at Lowell has, for many years, allotted additional staffing from the AP Program to the District counseling allocation.

The AP program allocation allows the Lowell administration to adjust and supplement additional counseling time. As the number of students taking AP testing increases, the counseling staff believes they need time to accommodate the 1,400 students taking tests in about 25 subject areas.

Thus for the years 1997-1998 and 1998-1999 the Lowell administration managed to slightly decrease the counselor-to-student ratio. This was not without internal strife. As a response to class size concerns, the Union Building Committee (UBC) requested the administration to take the time given to counselors and to use it to decrease class size in science and social studies. As

a result of those requests, the Lowell administration, beginning 1999-2000, reduced the counseling allotments that were being subsidized by the AP testing allocation. Consequently counseling was reduced by .4 F.T.E.

So at the beginning of this fall semester, the counseling staff began negotiations with the principal, ironically utilizing the assistance of the same UBC which had caused the loss of .4 F.T.E. in counseling.

As a result of the negotiations by counselors with the administration, counselors were able to recover .2 F.T.E., leaving the Counseling Department with a net gain of .2 F.T.E. To be fair to all parties involved, the problem stems from not having enough resources at the site to take care of all needs. It is very clear that you cannot take time from one department to fund the needs of another. The District needs to provide more counseling time. The necessity of having an increased counseling allocation appropriate to the number of students at our school, given directly by the District, cannot be overstated.

In summary, although we have a fraction of a counselor more in 1999 than we had in 1994, we are still far over the ratio recommended by the American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD), which is 250 to 1. With a student body of 2,520 divided by the district official allocation for counseling of 3.5, our counseling ratio is 720 to 1. What the school administration gives us internally from AP funding is temporary and can be eliminated, as we have experienced in the past.

RESOURCE COMMITTEE RESPONSES

1. The District administration and site administration work immediately to resolve the health and safety hazards currently evident at Lowell High School, which endanger the students and staff in their pursuit of the educational program.
(School Report: pp. F-2,9,10; conference with staff, students, parents; observation;
WASC Criteria: Plant)

Response:

In the area of chemical and fire safety:

1.) The site administration and staff, with the assistance of the District administration have taken the following steps.

- All chemicals throughout the school have been cataloged, separated by type of hazard, properly labeled, and have MSDS binders in each of the areas where these chemicals are used. In addition, there is a master MSDS binder on file in the main office. Also, the District and site administration have removed chemicals no longer in use or outdated. Restraining shelving and lips have been placed around chemicals and apparatus to secure them in case of seismic disturbance. As the site updates its inventory of chemicals, the SFUSD will dispose of obsolete chemicals in the proper fashion. The new academic/science wing will have a room designated for storage of chemicals.
- The site administration and staff, with the assistance of the District administration have provided for the installation of showers. There are still no fire blankets or adequate ventilation for laboratories. However, we expect to begin improvements in the summer of 2000, to be completed in 2001.
- The District has identified and repaired/installed fire separation doors, door closures, fire extinguishers, fire glass, and occupancy rate signs. The site administration has devised and made new fire/disaster evacuation route signs with primary and secondary routes for all spaces in which humans may be, to assist them in exiting the building safely in case of disaster.

In the area of sanitation and electrical safety:

2.) The site administration and staff, with the assistance of the District administration, have taken the following steps:

- The site administration and custodial staff, with the assistance of the District administration, have repaired or replaced to working order all toilets, urinals and soap, hand towel, and toilet paper dispensers in areas normally used for these purposes. Soap dispensers may or may not be on the walls, due to vandalism in girls' and boys' bathrooms which requires ongoing maintenance.

- Proper electrical conduits and receptacles have replaced extension cords in all computer labs throughout the school.

2. The District administration and the site administration, in cooperation with the faculty, develop and implement a plan for the ongoing maintenance and future renovation of Lowell High School in order to sustain a constructive teaching/learning environment.

(School Report: pp. F-9, 11; Conference with staff, students, parents; observation; WASC Criteria; Staff, Plant, Finance).

Response:

The District has taken the initiative in refining its response structure to maintenance problems at Lowell and indeed throughout the whole District. The response time to immediate and long-range problems has been drastically reduced. In addition, the Lowell PTSA has taken a proactive stance to assist in maintenance by sponsoring two clean-up days a year. The PTSA also meets regularly with site administration and the District administration on future maintenance and building plans for Lowell. As noted in Response #1 under Schoolwide Recommendations, the District appropriated \$550,000 for renovations at Lowell. These improvements included new shades on windows throughout the school; a new partially enclosed courtyard; four lavatories meeting ADA standards in the fine arts wing; new student lockers; new ladies' tampon dispensers; new hallway lighting; new display cases; a new mural; and additional security lighting, speed bumps, and fencing on the west side of the campus. A bond measure was passed in June 1997 that will result in new construction for Lowell High School in the form of a new academic/science wing consisting of several science rooms/labs, a ceramics lab, two computer labs, and a journalism room with its own computer lab. This bond will also pay for the renovation of the science labs in the existing main building as well as computer networking and electrical upgrades for the entire school to complement upgrades for computer writing. The proposed new wing will replace many of the "temporary" classrooms. We anticipate a \$750,000 Digital High School Technology Grant that will allow us to vastly improve the computer resources for students and staff throughout the campus.

3. The District review the adequacy of funding for Lowell High School, and seek means by which increased funds are available to support the complex and extensive instructional program and commensurate staffing needs.

(School Report: pp. F-9, 11; Conference with staff, students, parents; WASC Criteria; Staff, Library, Plant, Finance).

Response:

As of fall 1998, we lost 6 FTE teacher positions from the "program adjustment teacher allocation" due to District cutbacks. Although the District has provided five additional portable classrooms (and a restroom bungalow), we still have a variety of bungalows varying in condition dating back to the early 1960s. The basic budget for operating the school remains at \$35.60 per student per school year which has not been updated in the past 10 years, thereby resulting in decreased funding. Funding from professional development and Title 11 grants provide additional money. The Alumni and the PTSA add approximately \$135,000 in funds annually to programs throughout the school. One of their recent projects was the renovation of the teachers' lounge. A private endowment, the Steve Silver Foundation, has donated money to renovate room 110.

4. The site administration, faculty and staff develop and implement a staff development plan which fosters improved communications, cooperative instructional strategies and curriculum development and provides for integrated problem solving.

(School Report: pp. F-6-8; Conference with staff, WASC Criteria; Staff, Curricular Programs; CDE Criteria: Instructional Practices.)

Response:

See response #1 under Major Schoolwide Recommendations.

STUDENT COMMITTEE RESPONSES

1. The District office and Board of Education develop ways to provide additional counseling/guidance services to the students in areas of academic planning, personal counseling, and general adjustment to the Lowell program. (School Report: Student Committee Report, p. G3-5; Student Survey: Questions 42, 43, 44, 45; Parent/Community Report: p. 12-3, I-6,)

Response:

Although Lowell provides many resources to guide students in areas of academic planning, personal counseling, and general adjustment, the available counseling and guidance resources are not able to meet the existing demand.

Academic Planning:

Lowell provides a flexible policy, allowing students to pre-plan their choice of schedules and then adjust their schedules by adding or removing courses. This policy includes a 2-3 week period after Self-Scheduling Day in which students can discuss with their counselors, teachers, and fellow students which courses would be most beneficial for their school year. Students with incomplete or overlapping schedules receive special attention from the counselors, who seek to assign all the necessary courses the student is required to take during that school year.

The Lowell administration seeks to provide all the information students need to plan their courses. Students can review the prerequisite packet to determine their eligibility to take a certain Advanced Placement (AP) or honors course.

Students also receive information from the Lowell Student Handbook which is distributed to each incoming freshman. This handbook includes course descriptions, course prerequisites, general information about the school, its policies and its programs.

VICCI (Volunteers in College and Career Information) is a college resource center where students can obtain information pertaining to admission into universities/colleges, financial aid, and scholarships.

Personal Counseling:

Students can access counselors to receive answers to questions about academic or social issues. Several counselors also set up meetings with each of their students to discuss future college plans or career goals. However, it is up to the student to take the initiative to discuss any academic or social problems with their counselor.

Teachers also keep office hours during which time students can receive additional counseling.

The Peer Resource Center is an area where students can seek the counseling and support of the peer counseling teacher or fellow students. It is a place where students can discuss personal and/or academic problems in a casual school setting.

General Adjustment:

Lowell's Summer Bridging Program provides incoming ninth graders with an opportunity to develop skills to adjust to the Lowell curriculum as well as to acquaint themselves with other entering freshmen. Some Lowell teachers also participate in the summer program, thus giving the students a taste of what to expect in the fall.

The freshman orientation held before the school year allows new students to familiarize themselves with the school's faculty, campus, courses and policies. Students can also meet and develop relationships with other incoming students.

Necessary Improvements:

Students do not always take advantage of the various tutoring or personal counseling services that are available, and many students are not aware of them. Improved communication from the Counseling Department would increase student utilization of the available resources.

It is unrealistic to expect 2500 students to receive adequate counseling from three full time and four part time counselors. More counselors are needed if counselors and students are to develop

a rapport with one another. According to the Student Survey, 31% of the students felt that the Lowell staff has not provided them with help in choosing a career or college. Furthermore, the same percentage of students felt they are not comfortable talking to the Lowell faculty about personal problems.

Although Lowell does provide several services to assist students in their academic planning and program adjustments, the existence of services is not well communicated to students.

2. The District office and Board of Education study the admissions policy for Lowell High School with a specific focus on alleviating the overcrowded

ns that currently exist from housing 2,700 students in a facility

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d for 1,700 students.

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(School Report: Student Committee Report, p. G-7; Student Survey, H-9.)

Response:

Due to little improvement in Lowell's admissions policy, there is currently a severe overcrowding problem at Lowell. There are 2,538 students at Lowell in a facility designed for 1,800 students. This overcrowding has led to several problems including dirty and unsanitary bathrooms. Many facilities are overused and therefore are difficult to maintain, such as the language lab. Hallways are typically overcrowded during passing time, especially after registry. Many times crowded hallways lead to class tardiness and pose a safety hazard to students. In the case of a fire or earthquake, it is doubtful that students would be able to swiftly and safely exit the building. The excessive student population has forced Lowell to use temporary bungalows as opposed to regular classrooms. Because of crowded stairwells and hallways, the current five-minute passing period is not enough time to allow students from the bungalows to reach all areas of the main building in time for their next class. Another result of the large student population is that classrooms are utilized every mod, leaving students very little space to congregate and study. Finally, the excessively large student population has created litter problems in and around the school. In 1996, the Board of Education passed resolution 62-135P1. This resolution directed the District to gradually reduce the student body population at Lowell to approximately 2,400 students. The District has yet to comply with this resolution.

3. The District office and Board of Education address the serious needs of the school plant including:

maintenance

- Leaking Ceilings
- poorly maintained lighting and heating systems
- vandalism and graffiti
- broken ceiling and floor tiles
- roof leaks
- and the poor general maintenance and appearance of buildings and grounds

Many of the maintenance needs are in areas that directly affect student health needs. These include:

and staff

- unsafe storage of chemicals in science
- inadequate ventilation in science labs
- unsecured library book shelves
- broken windows

(School Report, F-8, F-9, Q-1, Q-13; conference with Science Department; observations of Science labs and overall school plant.)

observations

Response:

See Response #2 under in Schoolwide Recommendations.

4. The faculty establish procedures for sharing, in a more timely manner, feedback on student homework assignments, with specific suggestions that will guide students in improving the quality of their work.

(School Report, p. G-2; WASC/CDE Criteria; Curricular program, Integrated Skills; Conference with Student Committee.)

Response:

Teachers at Lowell are creating methods to communicate well with their students by providing specific suggestions on their returned work and helping them outside of the classroom. Many students feel that the method of tutoring outside of the classroom is beneficial; however, not all agree that teachers are responding effectively to student's written assignments.

Returned Work

In response to question #9 on the Student Questionnaire, 49.6% of students agreed that teachers' comments on essays justify the grades they receive, while 22.8% felt that the comments do not justify grades.

Outside Classroom Assistance

Teachers—Because so little one-on-one time exists during class, many students often seek the help of their teachers during their free mods. At the beginning of each semester, most teachers distribute syllabi to their students, which include teachers' office hours. With this information, students can set appointments with their teachers during their free time to receive guidance regarding their work. Locating a teacher throughout the day is not difficult since teachers' schedules are posted outside of the door at the Main Office.

Tutorial Services—Students may choose not seek help directly from their teachers. Instead, students may opt to seek academic support by going directly to the CSF room where they can sign up for a tutor. Some teachers will advise students to seek academic support from tutoring organizations at Lowell, such as CSF.

5. The faculty continue to provide varied activities such as written projects, oral reports, computer projects, labs, and small group work in order to provide students with a variety of alternatives to enhance student learning. (Self-Study p. G-2; WASC/CDE Criteria: Curricular Programs, Student Paths, Integrated Skills, Instructional Practices, Observations of classrooms; Conference with Student Committee.)

Response:

The WASC Student Questionnaire of 1998-99 shows that 80% of the faculty utilize a variety of teaching methods in their classes. However, the use of varied activities occurs mostly in Lowell's English, social science, science, world language, and visual and performing arts classes; they are much less frequently used in mathematics classes.

Analysis by Department:

Science

In addition to the typical lab experiments in the Science Department, students are shown simulations and videos and keep collection data books to supplement their lessons. Group work, oral presentations, and computer projects are also teaching methods used by the Department. In one case, a biology class had to conduct an Internet research project to complete their final exam.

The majority of students at Lowell reported that they are exposed to a variety of activities in their science classes.

Social Science

The Social Science Department uses a variety of activities to encourage learning. For example, oral reports, term papers, written assignments, and artistic presentations were all assigned in a ninth-grade Modern World History class. Also, teachers have presented documentaries and movies to support and enrich curriculum beyond the textbook. Alternate assignments are used in all levels of social studies classes. In Lowell's social studies Advanced Placement classes, students participate in group discussions, oral and silent debates, and reenactments of history. Students are exposed to the social sciences through slide shows and field trips to museums in the Bay area. Current events are incorporated into the curriculum through newspapers, magazines and the Internet.

English

The English Department also goes beyond the required reading. For example, students are encouraged to dramatize a reading, present their essays in groups, and discuss literary works in an open forum. Teachers also supplement their lesson plans with videos that mirror the themes in the required reading.

World Language

The majority of world language students are assigned written and oral projects in a foreign language. Many teachers choose to incorporate oral study through the language lab. World language teachers show videos, engage students in class discussions, and require students to read works of literature in the language being studied. The study of foreign culture is a part of the class curriculum and is disseminated to the entire student body through the celebration of Kermesse.

Visual and Performing Arts (VPA)

The VPA Department emphasizes the presentation of videos, discussion of related topics, and the creation of hands-on projects. VPA students receive free tickets to professional concerts and plays, and are asked to compose a short summary of their experience at the event. Students are encouraged to participate in the various visual and performing arts through competitions and live performances.

Math

In the Math Department, Pace Setter and CPM teachers use concept models, interactive experiments, and various videos to supplement their lessons. However, students feel that math teachers lack sufficient use of alternate activities. The bulk of math assignments consist solely of problem sets designed for class and homework. Most students believe very few, if any, of the math teachers venture to create lesson plans beyond the typical textbook lecture. The Math Department seems to use predominately traditional teaching methods; however, students do feel that the teaching methodologies are acceptable in this discipline.

Conclusion

Most students at Lowell High School receive instruction through a variety of assignments and activities. Over the past six years, teachers have incorporated more alternative assignments into their lesson plans, but students feel that in some departments, there is still a need for improvement.

**6. The site administration explore additional options to provide more study areas for students in order to accommodate the large student enrollment.
(School Report p. G-5, G-7, Observations, Conference with students).**

Response:

The three new resource centers have increased the amount of available study space. The paraprofessional in each resource room can provide the necessary guidance to guide each student. However, the resource center study space can only accommodate the freshman class. The administration needs to move the resource centers into larger classrooms, increase the number of resource rooms open to students, or reconfigure resource center attendance to allow more students to take advantage of this service.

The CSF room, like the resource centers, provides a cozy study area for all students. More of these types of comfortable study rooms would provide additional tutoring space and would be welcomed by students.

The hallways of the school serve as supplemental study areas. Although not very comfortable, the hallways could be made more acceptable if they were cleaner.

The courtyard was expanded and partially enclosed three years ago to increase the available outdoor study space. In addition, all tables were replaced and lighting was installed to create a more comfortable and pleasing study environment. The arcade and courtyard serve as an outside environment where students can study, socialize with friends, read and/or write.

The library serves as a very quiet environment for students who need total concentration while studying. The library has a number of cubicles for individual study, but students often find the room crowded or full. A larger library facility is necessary to accommodate the size of the student body.

The Foreign Language Lab is available for students at all times; however, a larger lab would allow more students to study, rehearse, or practice speaking.

7. The faculty make available to students at the beginning of each course, a syllabus which includes such things as course goals and objectives, teacher class expectations for students, and teachers' grading policies in order that students may assume greater responsibility for meeting course requirements. (School Report, p. I-7, conference with Student Committee, conference with Parent/Community Committee.)

Response:

After conducting a poll in forty-two registries, we found that approximately half the student body was receiving a course description, grading policy, and teacher expectations in all of their academic classes at the start of the semester. Although the administration requires teachers to turn in course syllabi which contain a course description, grading policy and expectations, the administration needs to ensure that syllabi are distributed to the students.

8. The site administration and district administration address the concern expressed by students for the need for additional security personnel during the hours immediately after school (1:00 pm - 4:30 pm) at the bus stops used by Lowell students to ensure their physical safety from violence. ("Petition to Increase School Security," a paper developed the Student Committee and signed by 1,000 students; Conference with Student Committee, Conference with Parent Community Committee.)

Response:

According to a dean and Lowell students, security at the lines 23, 28, and 29 bus stops is inadequate. At present, we have two full-time and two part-time security guards which are assigned to the school. Unfortunately, some of the security guards work at more than one campus. As a result, there are some days when there is only one part-time security guard who may conduct daily patrols in the area directly surrounding the aforementioned bus stops. During these daily checks, security guards conduct either walking or driving patrols. Patrols in front of the school last from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., whereas patrols at the bus stops end at 3:45 p.m. Students from several other schools use the bus stops and have at times mugged or harassed Lowell students at bus stops at or near and around Lowell's campus. Therefore, students feel strongly that for safety reasons the bus stops need to be closer to the school campus.

To ensure the physical safety of students from violence, deans estimate that five full-time security guards and four part-time aides are needed; however, Lowell High School suffers from a paucity in funding. Lowell is deemed the safest of all SFUSD high schools by the District, and thus, the District has not provided Lowell with adequate funding for tighter security measures. For many years, the site administration has tried to obtain the funding needed to improve student safety at the bus stops, but their efforts have been futile. Nonetheless, the deans state that the issue of safety will be one of their highest priorities. Increased building security both before school and after school hours should be examined. Frequently students are on various parts of the campus during very early or very late hours when not many adults are on site. In addition, there needs to be more effort made to keep outsiders off campus during school hours.

PARENT/COMMUNITY COMMITTEE RESPONSES

1. The District administration and site administration develop ways to provide additional counseling/guidance services to the students in areas of academic planning, personal counseling, and general adjustment to the Lowell program. (School Report: Student Committee Report p. G 3-5; Student Survey, Questions 42, 43, 44, 45; Parent/Community Report, p. 12-3, 1-6.)

Response:

Six years after the WASC recommendation parents still feel there are not enough counselors to serve the Lowell student body.

The District still allocates only 3.5 counselors to the school, even though the recommendation was to increase counseling/guidance services. It did however make an attempt starting in 1996 to decrease enrollment. Instead of having a student body of 2,720 (1994), we now have 2,520 and a ratio of 720 students per counselor.

To alleviate the extraordinary task of providing over 700 students with counseling services, portions of FTE allocations were borrowed from the Advanced Placement Program to provide three additional part-time counselors. Lowell has 7 counselors on staff, three of them are full-time and four are part-time. The student case load for each counselor varies according to whether the counselor is full-time or part-time. This helped somewhat to decrease the student/counselor ratio. However, this arrangement is not satisfactory and cannot be viewed as a permanent solution to the counseling ratio problem. The solution must be for the District to increase the current counselor staffing allocation. Even with this temporary arrangement, students and parents feel there are not enough counselors and time to give adequate advice in academic planning.

Evidence used: Spring 1998 WASC Parent/Community Survey

Statement 23: Students and parents receive accurate, clear, and timely advice from the school staff to help them choose the best sequence of courses.
(Strongly Agree/Agree = 42.6%) (Strongly Disagree/Disagree = 39%) * 489 Total Responses

Statement 36: Lowell has an adequate number of counselors serving the school.
(Understaffed = 56.5%) * 489 Total

2. The District administration study the admissions policy for Lowell High School with a specific focus on alleviating the overcrowded conditions that currently exist from housing 2,700 (now 2,538) students in a facility designed for 1,700 students. (School Report: Parent / Community Report, p. 1-4, 6; Student Committee Report, p. G-7; Student Survey, H-9.)

Response:

Despite policy changes since the 1994 WASC report, Lowell remains overcrowded, but admissions--the enrollment predictor--is only one reason.

The School District took up the size of the Lowell student body about the time of the last WASC report. Enrollment was then, and still is, enmeshed in the politics of admission and legal turmoil about school desegregation efforts. In 1993-94, with Lowell's enrollment at 2,733, with steady pressure from the Chinese-American community to make Lowell admissions racially equitable and counter-pressure from the black and Latino communities to continue affirmative action, a special District admissions committee began sorting options. While it met, enrollment in fall 1994 was flat at 2,720, decreasing the next fall to 2,635.

As a result of the *Ho v. SFUSD* class action lawsuit on behalf of Chinese-American applicants in 1994, former Superintendent Rojas ordered the committee to develop new Lowell admissions criteria that would set a single threshold for races and ethnicities but maintain an element of affirmative action. After committee work and hearings, in February 1996 the Board of Education adopted a new admissions policy. 70-80% of a class would be admitted on the basis of a composite score (two-thirds GPA and one-third standardized test score), another 20-30% on the basis of basic academic criteria and value-added factors such as residence in public housing and artistic achievement.

In the Value-Added Program, points were added for underrepresented minority applicants. When the *Ho* plaintiffs reached an advantageous settlement in early 1999, school assignments and Lowell admissions that fall were race-neutral, and subsequent court action made the fall 2000 process race neutral as well.

In addition to 80/20 admissions, there are two increments of special education students. A District committee admits a small number of students (10 in fall 1999) in the Resource Specialist Program (RSP), and last fall for the first time the District also enrolled about 18 Special Day Class (SDC) students.

In the 1996 admissions policy, the board addressed the size issue by resolving, "The District shall gradually reduce the student body population at Lowell to approximately 2,400 students, beginning with the entering freshman class [fall 1996] which shall be no larger than 600-650 students."

Except for the anomalous fall 1996 admissions, when enrollment shot up again, to 2,716, the size of the student body dropped substantially in fall 1997 to 2,517, holding steady in fall 1998 at 2,534 and in fall 1999 at 2,520. But enrollment remains stuck at about 125 students above the target of 2,400. The reasons for this are:

- Continued high pressure to get into Lowell:** The continued focus on Lowell since at least 1993 has led to continued publicity about "elite Lowell" and such. Even if some of this publicity is negative, it keeps up interest and consequently the number of applicants, while apparently disheartening black and Latino applicants.
- Continued enrollment pressure in the school District:** It is difficult for the District to trim the enrollment at Lowell when there is enrollment pressure everywhere else in the District.
- Relative unimportance of issue of Lowell size:** With the predominance of the admissions issue, the overcrowding issue has been relatively unimportant.
- Size of admissions brackets:** 70-80% of applicants are admitted on strictly academic criteria, and recently these have been only those in the top five scoring brackets, that is,

from 65 to 69 in the composite scoring system. In 1998-99 some 134 students had a perfect 69 score, the next year 158 did, and the four brackets from a score of 65 to 68 were similarly well-populated. As a result, there is no possibility of fine tuning to control the total.

•**Imprecise enrollment-size formula:** The official with the SFUSD Educational Placement Center who supervises Lowell admissions, said that the enrollment of about 70 more freshmen than expected in 1999 was the result of miscalculation using an admissions-to-enrollment formula.

•**Special Day Class admissions:** In May 1999, SFUSD made the post-admissions decision to place 18 Special Day Class students at Lowell as part of a broader program to reform special education in the District.

As Lowell administrators have no personal control over enrollment numbers, the SFUSD must again be encouraged to implement the 1996 admissions resolution which remains in effect except for the "special consideration" affirmative action clause in the value-added admissions program. SFUSD could:

•**Recalibrate the composite scoring system to create smaller increments.** Ten increments of an average of 50-60 students (as opposed to five increments of 100-140 students each) would allow finer control.

•**Revise the enrollment-size formula** as it underestimates incoming-class size by more than 10%.

•**Reconsider special admissions of Special Day Class students.** These students do not meet any of the academic criteria, even the minimal score of 50 or 55, and did not in any case choose to come to a very competitive high school.

The second reason for overcrowding of existing facilities was created by Governor Wilson's decision to promote smaller class sizes in ninth grade English and math, beginning in fall 1998. Lack of classroom space will be alleviated by the planned academic/science wing, to open in 2002, and eventual remodeling of part of the existing building vacated by the science teachers. The building plan calls for the removal of all but a few portable classrooms. In early 2000 the Lowell Alumni Association, which boasts 25,000 members, was to announce plans and a capital fund raising campaign for a new building, to be completed before Lowell's Thea anniversary in 2006. Though many of the facilities will be specialized, a block of space for academic use could include additional classrooms to relieve general overcrowding.

In all this, the parents must observe that since 1994 the District and school have not comprehensively studied the issue of ideal size with all its ramifications. For example, there are the dynamics of budget and curriculum: the higher the average daily attendance (ADA), the higher the budget. As well, the larger the student body, the easier it is to maintain the large number of AP classes. The more than 50 AP classes make Lowell the AP leader in California and fifth in the nation on the College Board's list of top AP secondary schools. Cutting enrollment, then, cuts the budget, which could impact both curriculum richness and Lowell's prestige.

3. The District office and Board of Education address the serious maintenance needs of the school plant. Many of the maintenance needs are in areas that directly affect student and staff health and safety needs.

(School Report, F-8, F-9, Q-1, Q-13; Conference with Science Department; observations of Science labs and overall school plant.)

Response:

Neither the District nor the school has a long-term, steady, focused, comprehensive or well-funded effort to address continuing maintenance needs. There is no comprehensive Lowell facilities plan to guide spontaneous projects or prioritize needs, and the annual maintenance budget is simply too small to have widespread impacts in any one school year. Money is lacking for such big projects as exterior repainting (painting was last done about 1990) or reroofing. The regular budget can cover, for example, broken windows but not window shades, additional or replacement chairs but not white boards in every classroom. Two block grants that arrived suddenly in the last three years were distributed among the departments and were not devoted to single, pressing needs. So long as education spending in California remains low, there is really no prospect for Lowell to look reasonably modern or even uniformly bright, clean, and well cared for.

Funding priority is usually on capital or major remodeling projects. Approved by the voters in June 1997, Proposition A, the first San Francisco school bond measure in years, will mostly pay for a couple of new schools to have Internet wiring and some remodeling at a number of of the District's 120-plus schools. At Lowell the new academic/science building, for which ground may be broken in late summer, with completion in 2002, is being paid for largely with Proposition A and the state's "Leroy Greene" program. Internet wiring and remodeling of the existing second-floor science rooms are the only other prospective large projects.

The PTSA has funded facilities projects of some size, such as remodeling the VPA hallway alongside the auditorium, the faculty lounge, and remodeling and enlarging the library computer lab. As well, teams of students and parents on the semi-annual Beautification Days always tackle a few visible, if not fundamental, maintenance or repair projects. Students have occasional independent projects, most recently repainting the center and front courtyards in the school colors.

But as no project can cover more than a small area, and not necessarily comprehensively, the school will usually look at least grungy in several places on any particular day, and a rainy spell always means new leaks in classrooms and hallways. Even then, the future visitor may go from one classroom with a wet floor and ancient blackboard to another where there may be 36 brand-new, Internet-connected computers-bought, of course, with special program money.

Parents have this year been pressing for a strategic plan, to be at least a comprehensive facilities plan, to guide both political action--e.g., at SFUSD budget meetings--distribution of additional general money and block grants, and availability of annual volunteer efforts and PTSA grants. To this end the PTSA has a standing Facilities Committee to try to gather scattered efforts at planning and application of labor and money.

4. The site administration and faculty develop written guidelines explaining how access to honors classes is determined, thus addressing a concern expressed by the PTSA. The information should be disseminated to all parents as part of the orientation process to Lowell High School.

(Conference with Parent / Community Committee; Student Committee Report, pp. G-2 , 3, 5; Conference with Student Committee)

Response:

The standards for admission to honors and AP classes rests with the various departments. Some advanced courses have prerequisites, such as lower level classes in the same subject, and some of the requirements are simply arbitrary, aimed at screening out students who are perceived as not "honors material". (An example is Chemistry Honors, which requires the student to be finished

with geometry, even though geometry is not used in chemistry) or to limit the number of students in honors because of space limitations. When the Science Department was questioned about this prerequisite, the department chair stated that “success in math classes is considered a key indicator of success in a chemistry class, therefore, the geometry prerequisite was justified”.

General information is available in the Freshman Orientation packet. The requirements for specific classes are set out in the Subject Offerings catalog, which is available for student viewing in the registry. Generally two copies are given to each registry classroom for students to share. Thus, the information is not accessible to parents.

The choice of honors, AP or regular classes should be decided by the student in collaboration with parent and counselors. Teachers who have had the student in lower-level courses and who are familiar with the subject matter and methodology of the higher-level courses could have invaluable advice for families. But there does not seem to be time for much consideration of the choices. The students choose and often have no consultations with others to help them make informed choices. Parents, unless the student discusses concerns with them, are out of the loop.

As more courses put their syllabi on-line, there may be additional opportunities to share information with parents. For example, Chemistry Honors has its entire course outline on the Web where parents can see week by week what is expected of students. If the Web address could be made available to prospective students, and there was a comparative outline of regular chemistry and AP Chemistry, students and parents could make a more informed choice.

Aside from the difficulty of the material, other considerations come into play when a family thinks about AP and honors. College admission officers say that they examine a student’s transcript to see if he or she has taken advantage of higher-level courses offered at their high school. Thus, there is a great deal of pressure on college-bound students to take these classes. Most of the freshmen at many colleges already have had the experience of doing college-level work, have amassed college credit for their high school efforts and have proven that they are college material. On the other hand, the work load and pressure of honors/AP courses are considerable. Deciding how many AP or honors courses to take, and which ones to take concurrently, is as important as looking at the requirements of a specific course.

Finally, the notion of getting weighted grades is often misunderstood, and parents need more guidance in determining a strategy for academic success for their child.

5. The faculty and site administration create a syllabus which includes such things as course goals and objectives, teacher class expectations for students, and teachers grading policies for each course and update the syllabus as needed. The syllabus should be on file in a location accessible to parents upon request. (School Report: pp. 1-5, 1-7; Conference with Parent/Community Committee; Conference with Student Committee.)

Response:

Brief descriptions of courses with prerequisites can be found in the *Lowell Student Handbook* (last published in July 1997, but intended to be used for three years), and that content is reflected at the school's official web site, Lowell Online (<http://www.sfusd.edu/schwww/sch697/>).

Most teachers publish and distribute to students (and at open house to parents) syllabi for their courses. Sometimes these have week-to-week class/topic outlines and reading lists, sometimes they are barebones efforts. A smaller number publish their grading policies. But there is no uniformity to the effort, and presentation is free-form.

The Assistant Principal for Curriculum has a file cabinet with syllabi, but this is not readily available to visiting parents.

The Lowell Online Committee in 1998-99 investigated the possibility of putting a set of comprehensive, descriptive syllabi at the school's web site but decided it would take a large effort, directed by the administration, to get the faculty to develop sufficient interest to do this. Although a consistent set of detailed syllabi would be a boon to curriculum planning as well as more rational student choice of courses, the school lacks both the power and the will to persuade the faculty at large to produce such syllabi. So both on paper and online, syllabi publishing depends on the individual teacher's interest, initiative, and, to some extent, technology skills.

DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSES

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT REPORT

1. The District and site administration reduce English class size to insure an appropriate learning atmosphere for students and encourage quality assignments with timely feedback. (School Report, p. k-19; Conference with department)

Response:

Lowell has not met this recommendation. The elimination of positions that supplement the District staff allocation has increased class size in grades 10-12. Options to add more teachers or reduce the student body have not been implemented.

Ninth-grade classes comply with secondary school class-size reduction provisions. No ninth-grade class exceeds 22 students. The average is 20. Tenth-, eleventh-, and twelfth-grade class sizes must be reduced to meet the WASC recommendation. All regular and honors class sizes must be reduced to the contract class size goal of 25 in order for each student to achieve the ESLRs.

2. The English Department, site administration and District administration clarify the textbook selection process for Lowell's special student population. (School Report, pp. k-1, k-9, k-14, k-23; conference with department)

Response:

The District has not imposed special restrictions on Lowell's book purchases. Provisions have been made to allow Lowell-specific texts to enter and remain on the District's list of adopted texts. Much of this has occurred without specific clarification of the relationship between site and central bodies. Lowell English teachers have participated in the District's Textbook Review and Recommendation committees.

3. The English Department and site administration provide space for teachers to grade papers, store materials, hold student/parent conferences. (School Report, p. k-9; conference with department)

Response:

Because of severe space limitations, individual teachers are not able to have separate rooms. Space, in the form of shared desks and a few shared file cabinets, is provided in Room 133, the English Department office. This space is used for grading, conferences with parents and students, tutoring, the storage of some materials, and class preparation time.

There is no adequate space for confidential student or parent conferences.

4. The English Department establish a structured meeting time of at least an hour duration within the monthly modular schedule to enable curriculum revision, staff development and collaborative problem solving. (School Report, pp. k-3, k-8, k-11, k-19, d-7, d-8, d-15; CDE Criteria: 146,150; conference with department)

Response:

The English Department has met approximately once a month in conjunction with scheduled faculty meetings, WASC meetings, and other staff meetings, and it has dedicated a portion of that time to staff development, curriculum revision and problem solving. This amount of time is insufficient for department meetings. The scheduled periodic meeting time is used primarily for administrative demands rather than department-specific tasks.

5. The English faculty's course expectations and grading policies be clearly communicated to the students at the beginning of each semester.(Conference with department; conference with Student Committee)

Response:

All teachers in the department are required to file course expectations and grading policies with the administration. Teachers distribute copies in their classes at the beginning of each semester.

6. The English Department establish procedures to insure that the curriculum offered the students conforms to the department's written course outline. Any revisions to the curricular content should be reviewed by the entire department. (Conference with department, conference with students, WASC Curricular Program criterion)

Response:

The curriculum offered to students varies within the acceptable boundaries defined by the department's written course outlines. Individual teachers are encouraged to assert their strengths in presenting the material to students.

Revisions to curricular content and course offerings are made by department committees. A tenth-grade committee has reviewed expectations for that grade level. An Expository Writing committee met monthly last spring to establish standards for that course. A ninth-grade committee has been proposed.

The English Department contemplates further revisions to curricular content as meeting time is made available.

SOCIAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT REPORT

1. The District and school administration implement a textbook adoption policy and purchasing procedure in order to provide adequate curriculum resources appropriate to the unique student population served by the Lowell school community.

Response:

The current textbook policy does not recognize the individual needs of the various high school populations. At present, Lowell students are required to use textbooks which do not reflect their reading and sophistication levels. It is imperative that the District return to multiple-text adoptions, allowing each high school to meet the needs of their own student populations. The current textbook policy has forced Lowell students to be saddled with mediocre textbooks for the past 10 years. It is also imperative that Lowell be adequately represented on textbook adoption committees.

To ensure that the needs of Lowell students are met in the area of textbook selection, members of the Department have agreed to sit on any District textbook selection committees. Any department member is eligible for membership on an adoption committee. Currently two department members are serving on the 2000 adoption committee.

Lowell teachers do have significant power in choosing texts for elective courses, including the Advanced Placement classes, but there is no dependable source of funding for purchasing materials for these classes. To compensate for unreliable funding sources, Social Science teachers have had to resort to a variety of creative ways to pay for AP and elective class materials. For example, some teachers have collected funds from students to support optional AP readers and have integrated Internet sources into their curriculum. The lack of AP textbooks has had a detrimental effect on the department's ability to accommodate all the students who sign up for a particular AP course. During the fall 1999 semester, the District created an AP text adoption committee, creating some hope that state funds might be made available for AP textbooks in the near future.

2. The school administration and Social Science Department implement a structured staff in-service program that professional growth, includes technology infusion into the classroom, is teacher centered, incorporates appropriate teaching and assessment practices, and is directed toward improvement of instruction for students.

Response:

The teacher-centered SB1882 Professional Development Committee initiated a staff development program and had four staff-development days that were teacher prepared and teacher friendly. The Social Science Department, in coordination with the English Department, had speakers and information from the American Cultures Program at UC Berkeley so that we could begin to plan and infuse a multicultural component into both departmental curricula. Programs on staff development day also focused on training for teachers and their classes in the use of various technology, ranging from the very simple to the more complex, after we had identified individual teacher needs. The Department has implemented an afternoon sharing of pedagogical techniques with round table discussions of what works and what does not work in the classroom. In addition, Social Science teachers have attended various workshops, such as the training for Digital High School, in order to better incorporate technology into their classrooms.

The Social Science Department is the only department in the school that requires students to write a term paper. Thus it must also teach the students how to draft, write and rewrite.

Instruction is offered in research techniques and synthesizing information into a coherent, argumentative paper. The Department worked collaboratively over a series of months to author and publish a manual for writing term papers at both the ninth-grade and eleventh-grade levels.

Through funding from SB 1882, the Department helped incorporate multiculturalism into the Social Science and English Departments through a series of workshops. Two members of the Department offered a workshop on "Why Teaching Economics Is Not a Death Sentence."

Although the District provided for staff development days, it frequently usurped the on-site agenda in favor of its own. This year, 1999-2000, is the last year in which SB 1882 funds for staff development will exist. Our SB 1882 Committee has been disbanded in favor of a Professional Development Leadership Committee-directed staff development. The number of seven-hour site staff development days has been reduced from four to three and will be offered in increments after school hours or on weekends.

3. The District administration, school administration, and Social Science Department establish means by which increased and improved articulation may take place between Lowell High School and its feeder schools to insure a History/Social Science curriculum.

Response:

Since the summer of 1994, both the Social Science Department and the English Department developed program and curriculum for the incoming ninth-grade class. This program is multicultural in nature. It was also designed to inform students of the culture of the school and the many types of extracurricular programs that are available at Lowell. Department Heads also meet with the parents of incoming ninth graders during freshman orientation, just a few days before students arrive. Since the fall of 1995, individual counselors from major feeder schools have met with the Social Science, Counseling and all of the Departments so that information and programs could be planned.

The Summer Bridging Program is a tremendous step in the right direction but it would be nice to have formalized meetings with the middle school departments to see what their curriculum is and how it ties into the high school program.

The school has implemented the eighth-Grade Night, which has proven to be a great success. A large number of potential students come with many questions for the Department, and teachers are available to offer insight into all course offerings.

The incoming Ninth Grade Summer School Program ("Step Up to High School") continues to provide students with clear expectations of what will be required of them. There is clear articulation on the part of the instructor as to requirements and workload.

Lowell offers any parent the opportunity to "shadow" a Lowell student for the day in order to familiarize themselves with Lowell student activities each day.

4. The Social Science Department and site administration articulate the expectations of the department with district-coordinated special programs (e.g., GATE, Special Ed.), and other subject areas within the school for the purposes of improved integrated skill instruction and assessment.

Response:

GATE: We meet the expectations of GATE designated students by offering 22 sections of AP classes. According to the current employment contract, a .2 FTE is allocated for every 20 AP exams which are administered during the previous year. These FTE's should be allocated based on the number of exams given by each department. Common practice has been to spread the additional FTE allocations throughout the school, thereby impacting class sizes within departments which give the most exams, including the Social Science Department. While class size averages appear to be within the contracted class limits, frequently core classes have as many as 36 students. These class sizes could be brought down to acceptable levels if the Social Science Department were to receive more of the FTE staffing allocation that is generated by our department's AP exams. It is the expectation of the Social Science Department that the spirit of the contract be respected by the administration, and that AP generated prep periods be used to prevent any class within the Social Science Department from exceeding the contracted class size.

Prior to fall 1999, a GATE counselor was available for consultation as well as to provide GATE funds for the purchase of books or supplemental materials for GATE-designated students, who frequently enroll in AP classes. However, the .2 FTE allotment for the GATE counselor has been eliminated by the District.

The Social Science Department feels the need to work more closely with the Special Education Department. Too often teachers are unsure of a student's status or specific needs. They would like the opportunity to work with a specialist from the Special Education Department to provide one-on-one support. The Department could also benefit from a refresher course in mainstreaming and a review of various instructional method that can be used with Special Education students. This is especially pertinent considering that the administration has not yet clarified the status of the new special education students enrolled this year (ninth graders). If the goal of the District is to eventually mainstream these students, the department feels we should be notified in advanced and properly trained to accommodate their needs.

SCIENCE DEPARTMENT REPORT

1. The District office and site administration develop a plan to provide the necessary resources that will allow the offering of more courses in the Earth Sciences, thus allowing students the opportunity to experience a broader and richer program in science.

Response:

At present there is no course called Earth Science. The new course Scope, Sequence and Coordination is incorporating earth science into its curriculum. A telescope and a new lens for the scope have been donated and used by the instructor in his classes. As of fall 1999, a new GeoScience major has been hired, but there is no course titled Earth Science nor any FTE allotted for the course.

2. The District office and Board of Education address immediately the serious safety deficiencies in science classrooms, with particular emphasis on the proper storage of chemicals in science classrooms and safety needs in the Chemistry classrooms, that present risks to students and staff safety and reduce the range of laboratory experiences that can take place.

Response:

Chemicals have been inventoried in all of the classroom which use chemicals; a list has been placed in the computer and given to the Assistant Principal. Some dangerous chemicals have been removed by the Hazardous Wastes unit. The chemicals in the classrooms have been

categorized according to oxidizers, acid/bases and safe chemicals. Those chemicals that do not have a green label are still on shelves in the chemical labs. However, storage cabinets have not been obtained for the blue and white labels and storage is not in a secured location. There are no new ventilation hoods or showers. There are eye baths in each chemistry room. Students are buying safety goggles, as present goggles are not cleaned or sanitized.

Current departmental concerns are:

1. Earthquake barriers have been installed on chemical shelves but objects are still stored in a high location.
2. Repairs have not occurred for eye washes and leaky sinks.
3. We still need fire blankets and showers.
4. Exhaust fans and ventilation are needed in chemistry rooms. The fume hoods need to be upgraded, with two in each chemistry room to accommodate large classes.
5. The safety issue has not changed, with 34 students using a chemistry class built for 16 students doing lab activities.
6. Nonflammable cabinets are needed for chemical storage.

3. The Science Department faculty address internal departmental communication needs by establishing a time to meet regularly as a department to discuss, plan, implement, and evaluate its program. Specific focus is recommended to coordinate and align courses, plan programmatic improvements as needed and share resources among department faculty.

Response:

Administration has given time each month for department meetings. A master list of labs required by each teacher has been submitted to the department head, which was placed on a chart. Utilization, however, is not uniform. All departmental members have been trained on site, but the level of computer competency varies.

Many of the monthly meetings address school-wide issues such as WASC and Digital High School. We do not have enough time to meet by disciplines to discuss curriculum, but more attention needs to be given to sharing of ideas.

The Department must meet on a regular basis to resolve issues, discuss plans, and implement and evaluate its current programs. More emphasis should be placed on internal communications such as departmental issues and programs. Unlike most high schools, we have no common lunch time, and we also have different starting and ending times in our instructional day. However, for the first time, we have a common mod 11 for our B/C mods.

4. The site administration and Science Department develop a plan to increase student access to various technologies that can be utilized as tools to assist students in research activities and to reinforce learning and application of scientific concepts. The visiting committee further recommends that staff development activities be planned that focus upon the use of various technologies and software applications as a tool to assist students in the mastery of scientific concepts.

Response:

Physics classes are currently using a set of HP computers in room 255 and a MAC SE in room 260 which enable students to run labs on the computer and check results. Currently, room 212 has Macintosh computers that are inadequate for research projects.

The current biology staff have all signed up to use the SFUSD's biotechnology kits. We are therefore incorporating a biotech unit in our core biology classes and in Advanced Placement Biology.

As of fall 1999, the following improvements have been implemented:

1. A set of 15 new microscopes and one teaching scope was bought with State funds for each of six biology classrooms.
2. Macro/micro cameras which can be hooked up to a television were bought through the same grant for seven biology rooms.
3. A grant from the Alumni allowed us to purchase five new overhead projectors.
4. All science classrooms have installed overhead VCRs and monitors, thanks to the PTSA Grants committee.
5. With the advent of Digital High School, all classes and offices will have sufficient access. It is the Department's expectation that Internet/ e-mail access and printing capability will be available in all science classrooms.
6. We need computers in each classroom with Internet connections. There is no overall plan to provide computer access for all science classes.
7. Teachers need training to set up and maintain Web sites. It would most advantageous for the staff to put course descriptions, problem sets, class standing and assignments with answers on their Web sites. Some staff developmental activities have taken place on SB 1882 days in room 212 and have inspired many teachers to incorporate Internet use in their lesson plans.
8. Room 234 will have drop-in capabilities for students who need Internet access for supplemental readings, data analysis such as molecular modeling calculations, research, test taking, and Web site links. These computers would also be available for those students who have homework on-line with no access at home.

We do feel the Department could benefit from closer coordination with the Special Education Department in planning and developing curriculum and assessment tools for RSP students. The Department could also benefit from a refresher course in mainstreaming and a review of various instructional methods that can be used with special education students.

MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT REPORT

I. The Mathematics Department address internal departmental communication needs by establishing a time to meet regularly as a department to discuss, plan, implement, and evaluate its program. Specific focus is recommended in comparing the current Mathematics program to the State Framework in Mathematics.

Response:

Adequate planning time remains a continuing problem for the Mathematics Department. The department needs more time to allow for teacher review and integration of the new State Framework with the current Mathematics Program. The current schedule provides for departmental meetings, but that time is often usurped by WASC and other administration and District demands. Common planning time has not been integrated into the schedule. It is the opinion of this department that the overly political nature of the State Framework results in excessive use of teacher time to interpret its all-too-frequent changes.

However, in spite of the lack of organized time, there is a great deal of sharing and exchange of ideas and curricula informally within the department. The Mathematics Department office is set up to facilitate such an exchange and is utilized by all members.

In addition, members have organized in-house workshops to enhance the introduction of the Integrated Mathematics Program I and 2, which began this year for all Algebra 1 students.

2. Representative of the Mathematics Department and site administration continue to meet with representatives of the PTSA to resolve issues and concerns expressed by the PTSA regarding access to honors and accelerated Mathematics courses, grading policies, and other mutual concerns.

Response:

In response to the concerns of PTSA and others, the mathematics department instituted a new freshman Geometry 1.6 course, which enables students to take AP Calculus in their senior year without being enrolled in the honors program. In addition, every effort was made this year to ensure the correct math placement for freshmen, with several students being changed after retesting and/or consultations with parents, teachers/ counselors, students and administration. In addition, through the first six-week grading period, students are often moving back and forth between the honors and regular program to find the best fit. While the grading policies are still of concern, one member of the department has been meeting with the Academic Affairs Committee of the PTSA since the last WASC evaluation.

3. The site administration and Mathematics Department establish a process to ensure that dialog around issues of mutual concern can be acknowledged, discussed, and addressed.

Response:

There are weekly meetings established between department heads and administrators to discuss issues. In addition, the Mathematics Department head has a special time set aside every other week to discuss any issues or problems one-on-one with the Assistant Principal for Curriculum. There is also time every day during which the department head is able to confer with the administration on issues.

4. The Mathematics Department plan and implement staff development activities focused upon the use of various technologies as tools to assist students in the mastery of mathematical concepts.

Response:

On professional development days, there have been technology programs for the mathematics faculty and some staff development on calculators. In addition, members of the department have participated in Exploratorium activities and various math conferences. There is currently a training program on the use of computers, in which many members are enrolled. SAT prep programs have been purchased and several new computers have been added to the math office.

WORLD LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT REPORT

1. The site and District administration, along with the department chair, investigate possible solutions to the overcrowding in the lower level classes to help the beginning and intermediate students acquire foreign language skills.

Response:

The World Language Department is dedicated to maintaining the AP Program. However, the Department adopted a resolution that the teacher of an AP class with an enrollment of fewer than

15 students should not be granted an AP prep. A second resolution recommended that fourth-year classes with an enrollment of fewer than nine students should not be offered.

The intent of these resolutions is to make additional teacher hours available to alleviate overcrowding in the lower- and intermediate-level classes. Currently the District policy is that one AP preparation period is given for every 20 students who take an AP exam. The Department is making an effort to balance the demand for advanced-level classes with this current contract provision. The Department has a Spanish placement test for incoming freshmen so that these students can be assigned to second- and third-year classes.

2. The District office allow the Foreign Language Department (now “World Language Department”) to purchase the text books and materials unique to their students needs.

Response:

From 1994 through 1996, there was no District response to this recommendation. However, since 1996, the District has adopted BRAVO and HANYU as its district-wide textbooks. Although HANYU meets the needs of our students in Chinese, BRAVO is minimally adequate for our students in the regular Spanish program. The District is in the process of adopting a French textbook. The Department hopes that other world languages will also have the opportunity to adopt new textbooks that meet the needs of their students.

3. The Foreign Language Department (now “World Language Department”) develop a plan to support those students who have limited success in their first semester of foreign language study so that they do not fall behind a whole year.

Response:

The Department recognizes that this is an undesirable situation. Off-semester instruction in beginning Spanish was twice offered in an attempt to address this problem. The results, however, were not deemed satisfactory, and we have made no further attempt to correct this situation by offering special courses. In the meantime, students continue to enjoy a variety of support systems: a full and well-organized tutoring program through the local chapter of the California Scholarship Federation, additional volunteer tutoring by advanced students on a less formal basis, resource centers for ninth-grade students, and the opportunity for additional instruction and practice in the language laboratory. The Department would like to explore the possibility of staffing a tutorial center with students from San Francisco State University (SFSU) and City College of San Francisco (CCSF).

4. The Foreign Language Department (now “World Language Department”) and the site administration develop ways for teachers to hold regular department meetings to promote collegiality, to receive information, and to discuss shared concerns on a regular basis.

Response:

The Department is satisfied that now there are frequent and ongoing meetings which promote communication among department members to share concerns and curricular. The department chair will continue to keep teachers informed about District meetings for department heads and make available the minutes of the Staff Council, SB 1882, Committee and Site Advisory Council meetings in room 127 A for teachers’ perusal.

5. The Foreign Language Department (now “World Language Department”) meets with the site administration to address issues raised by department members related to how decisions are made and how department information is disseminated.

Response:

The administration has met with the Department and will continue to meet with members to address our concerns. Issues such as the loss of language classrooms and textbook ordering procedures have been satisfactorily resolved. The issue of programming of specific classes related to inadequate student enrollment is still under discussion between the administration and the UBC. The Department awaits the resolution at the school-wide level.

6. All departments establish a structured meeting time of at least an hour's duration within the monthly modular schedule to enable curriculum revision, sharing of resources, collaborative problem-solving and other matters of departmental concern.

Response:

The Department is currently given time by the administration to meet at least one hour per month. However, one hour is still insufficient when the administrative concerns, i.e., WASC and DHS, impinge on this scheduled time to discuss department issues. The Department has scheduled an additional 20 minutes per day, as needed, to address on-going departmental concerns; however, teachers prefer a longer block of time that will allow them to work together without interruption.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS DEPARTMENT REPORT

1. The Visual and Performing Arts Department provide the Counseling Department with information on the range and depth of course offerings available in the Visual and Performing Arts Department program in order that students can be better counseled in visual and performing arts course selection.

Responses:

The arts teachers, under the direction of former department chair Hugh Aanonsen prepared and duplicated a two-page, illustrated brochure outlining the course offerings and their prerequisites. This brochure is distributed to the counseling staff, at Lowell Open House, and at eighth-Grade Open House.

A complete set of course syllabi is now available for school-wide perusal in the Teachers' Collection in the Lowell Library.

A set of slides of Lowell student artwork is now ready to be shown at middle schools.

The department chair will meet with the Assistant Principal/Pupil Services to discuss outreach to middle schools and how we can help counselors make their outreach for the arts as effective as possible. The department will work together to produce whatever practical and effective outreach the counseling department suggests.

2. The site administration and Visual and Performing Arts Department address the facility needs of the ceramics classes in terms of space, storage, ventilation, cleanliness, and safety so that students and instructors will be provided with an adequate and appropriate physical facility.

Responses:

Electrical improvements were made to Bungalow T-2, the ceramics classroom.

An adjoining classroom in that bungalow was given to the Ceramics Program almost doubling the available floor space.

Department response - resolution before next WASC:

The new wing will include a ceramics classroom with adequate space, storage, ventilation, and safety.

Department 's continuing concern:

The problem of cleanliness will persist until the SFUSD provides adequate custodial coverage.

3. The Visual and Performing Arts Department establish regular departmental meeting times to address issues such as developing interdisciplinary curriculum, creating materials for feeder school articulation, reviewing State Framework alignment, and other departmental issues.

Responses:

The Department has used its departmental meeting times and selected professional development days to address the issues mentioned above. Some of the responses to Recommendation No. 1 were the result of work done during these meetings.

The schedule instituted in August 1999 has guaranteed official monthly department meetings during Mod 12. The Visual and Performing Arts Department has made frequent use of this to meet about the SDC issue and other matters of common concern.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT REPORT

1. The Physical Education Department collaborate to review the State Department of Education Physical Education Program Guidelines and the new California State Frameworks for Physical Education, making changes to the core program of instruction when appropriate.

Response:

The Physical Education Department has collaborated to incorporate both the California and SFUSD Physical Education Frameworks in our program. The Department has also added the latest in technology through the use of Heart Rate Monitors, the Futrex Body Fat Analyzer, computers, and Internet resources. With the addition of new staff members to the Department we will be continuing to review our compliance to the new frameworks.

2. The District office and the site administration develop and implement a plan of repair and on-going maintenance and a regular cleaning of the Physical Education facility to provide a safe, clean, healthy learning environment for students and faculty.

Response:

Despite the Herculean efforts of the Assistant Principal/Administration, health, sanitation, safety and maintenance problems continue to be a major concern. Response times for repairs by the District administration are unacceptable at the present time. Ceiling tiles, installation of outside

basketball backboard, repair or replacement of gym bleachers, gym sliding door, football bleachers, repair and sodding of fields are examples of long standing maintenance repair items.

3. The District administration and site administration move to resolve the problem of non-student activity (as well as Lowell students who are not in Physical Education classes) on the Lowell Physical Education outdoor facilities during school hours in order to insure that Lowell students have a safe and orderly physical education class.

Response:

Physical education classes have first priority for all physical education facilities during school hours. As of fall 1998, this problem seemed not to be an issue.

4. The District office, site administration, and Physical Education Department seek means of reestablishing the intramural program complementing the physical education program. This will provide students opportunities for regular strenuous exercise to foster a positive self-image, physical fitness, and sportsmanship and encourage participation in a lifelong program of physical health and fitness.

Response:

This is still an issue and has not been resolved. The SFUSD District Physical Education Office has implemented intramural programs at selected district school sites. Lowell has not been included.

JUNIOR RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING CORPS (JROTC) REPORT

1. The District administration and school administration review the JROTC contract with the Department of the Army and seek means by which the staffing provisions of the contract are addressed.

Response:

The District has hired an additional instructor since the WASC survey.

2. The District administration and school administration work to support the space requirements of the Lowell JROTC program so it may continue to incorporate those activities which foster team spirit, morale and efficiency for all student participants.

Response:

There are still unresolved space issues. Of primary concern is the lack of adequate outside space to conduct drill, battalion reviews and extracurricular team practices. The Athletic Director and PE Department Chair have been cooperative in letting us use sports fields. However, the high demand for those facilities and concern for maintenance of the fields sometimes results in JROTC needs not being met.

3. The District administration and school administration and JROTC staff establish means by which articulation may take place between the Lowell High School JROTC, its feeder schools, and other JROTC schools within the SFUSD and surrounding counties for constructive competition.

Response:

Coordination between feeder schools has been accomplished and JROTC has been prominently featured in the SFUSD High School Fair. Additionally, JROTC faculty and students are visible and available during Lowell eighth grade parent/student open house. Furthermore, competitions between schools within and outside the District have been expanded. The addition of the Drum Corps and squad and platoon drill competitions have expanded the opportunities for students to be involved and have increased exposure of the program.

VISION, LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE

A1: The school has a clearly stated vision or purpose based on its beliefs, student needs, and current educational research. Supported by the governing board and the central administration, the school's purpose is defined further by expected schoolwide learning results: what all students should know and be able to do by graduation.

Lowell High School has a formal statement of philosophy which, according to the Alumni Association historian, was written in 1969 when the Lowell Plan was implemented.

Lowell Philosophy

We believe that at Lowell, the young people of San Francisco retain their traditional option of attending a special high school emphasizing college preparation in the academic disciplines, a school in which the level and pace of instruction are such that academically talented students must strive to achieve success, a school in which the environment promotes academic, aesthetic and social interaction and leadership. Inherent in this philosophic belief are instructional and co-curricular programs that invite maximum use of self-direction and self-discipline.

The Lowell community endeavors to be a just and equitable society where individual responsibilities are clearly defined and where personal rights and dignity are guaranteed to all - students, teachers, parents, administrators and classified employees. It endorses the concept of an integrated school that fosters an understanding and appreciation of cultural and social diversity which enrich the lives of all students.

Lowell High School should be a humane and humanistic community dedicated to the pursuit of intellectual and moral excellence.

Lowell High School should transmit the existing culture and at the same time encourage a critical examination of its institutions and values.

The Lowell community should provide opportunities for the exchange of ideas.

The Lowell program should be designed to prepare students to enter and succeed at the college or university of their choice.

Lowell High School should develop in its students a sensitivity to the social and moral problems and dilemmas confronting their society.

Every aspect of the Lowell program (curricular and co-curricular) should promote in students the capacity to deal with their experiences intellectually and morally.

Every Lowell student should have opportunities both inside and outside the classroom to participate in decisions affecting his own educational program.

Emphasis should be given to individual initiative, experimentation and personal commitment as essential aspects of the educational process.

Lowell High School should develop in its students not only self-discipline, self-direction, and self-confidence but also a reasoned humility, a tolerance for the ideas of others and capacity for further growth.

Throughout the Lowell program emphasis should be given to individual and group responsibilities as well as to individual and group rights and privileges.

All members of the Lowell community should recognize and insure the right of every other member to be treated with fairness, dignity and respect.

The Lowell community should be a model of a just and equitable society, where the rights of every individual are protected and insured, and are the basis for study and interpretation wherever appropriate within the instructional program .

Lowell students should have maximum opportunities to experience, through the processes of teaching and learning, the excitement, joy, and satisfaction of intellectual inquiry, reflection and discovery.

In the Lowell program students should have opportunities to develop graphic, musical, manipulative and kinesthetic as well as linguistic and mathematical skills.

The Lowell program should cultivate in students a willingness and ability to utilize their resources and those of the social, cultural, political and natural environments so as to further their intellectual and personal growth.

Lowell High School, in addition to fostering mental growth, should provide activities designed to further the physical and emotional well-being of its students.

The goal of educational processes at Lowell should be the acquisition of knowledge for its intrinsic value and its application to lifelong learning.

Every facet of the Lowell program should be designed to help students to assess their own capabilities, strengths and weaknesses in order to make wise and thoughtful intellectual, moral and vocational decisions.

In September 1993, the PTSA organized a weekend retreat involving almost 100 Lowell students, teachers, parents, administrators, and alumni for the purpose of revisiting the philosophy behind "The Lowell Plan" initiated in 1969. Two former administrators responsible for that plan were invited to share their perspectives on such revolutionary ideas as "modular

scheduling," "resource centers," and the four-tiered student government organization. They helped the participants to gain insights into the unique and compelling philosophy behind Lowell's continuing quest for excellence. After the administrators' presentations, the participants discussed numerous topics using a group discussion format: 1) academic excellence, 2) admissions, 3) school spirit/publicity, 4) physical environment/ safety, 5) student/faculty interaction, 6) ninth grade orientation, 7) school district relations, 8) development of the whole student, and 9) the Lowell Plan into the 21st century. A series of recommendations were generated and several committees were created to formulate follow-up action plans that tie in directly to the WASC self-study.

In February 1997, the PTSA sponsored a second Lowell Retreat involving 85 participants representing all segments of the school community. At this one-day retreat, the participants had an opportunity to discuss current issues such as student safety, campus overcrowding, stress, and proposed graduation requirements and their relationship to the Lowell philosophy. Recommendations addressing each of the concerns were developed and shared with all the constituent groups in the Lowell community.

In March 1999, the PTSA and the administration co-sponsored an all-day "Professional Development/WASC Retreat" for the purpose of educating and preparing the entire Lowell community for the new WASC self-study process, Focus on Learning. The PTSA provided lunch and dinner for about 100 participants who met in focus groups to review a draft of the proposed ESLRs and to discuss the collection of evidence, the WASC criteria, rubrics, parent surveys, student surveys, expectations/standards, philosophy/school culture, etc. This in-depth session formed the foundation for all future WASC deliberations.

The Lowell philosophy statement is kept on file at the school and is quoted in abbreviated form in the *Lowell Student Handbook* and other documents as needed. The Lowell Plan, approved by the school board at its inception, has been sustained by board decisions over the years. The philosophy, central to the Lowell Plan, is consistent with, and supported by, board policies and district goals/philosophical tenets.

District Goals

- a. To improve teaching and learning to enhance the academic achievement of all students.
- b. To improve staff, parent and community participation in the educational process and thereby to improve teaching and learning.
- c. To maintain school environments that are safe, secure, and attractive, and thereby improve teaching and learning.
- d. To build a school environment that is fully integrated in all its programs and activities and provides equal opportunity for all students, and thereby to improve teaching and learning.

District Philosophical Tenets

- a. All individuals should learn to live and to work in a world that is characterized by interdependence and cultural diversity.
- b. All individuals are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity.
- c. All individuals want to learn and to be recognized for their achievements.

- d. All individuals can learn.
- e. Each individual learns best in a particular way.
- f. All individuals are both potential learners and potential teachers.
- g. If individuals do not learn, then those assigned to be their teachers should accept responsibility for this failure and should take appropriate remedial action.
- h. Learning has both cognitive and affective dimensions.
- i. Learning can be subdivided into a number of specific, concrete competencies that can be used as a focus for teaching.
- j. Parents want their children to attain their fullest potential as learners and to succeed academically.

Over the past thirty years, the philosophy and the Lowell Plan have kept pace with current research and educational practices. The underlying philosophy is based on the belief that all students can learn, and will learn best in an atmosphere of trust. All Lowell students are trusted with free mods during the school day which they use to study, to visit teachers for extra help, to see their counselor for guidance, and to use the library or resource centers.

In each subject area, course, and program, Lowell students expect and achieve rigorous content and performance standards. Each department offers a range of courses from introductory-level to college-level. According to the College Board's fall 1999 Advanced Placement (AP) rankings, Lowell has the fifth largest AP Program in the nation with students attaining a 90% passing rate on their May AP exams. These results attest to the students' and teachers' commitment to high standards of achievement.

As stated earlier, the administrators, faculty, staff, parents, and students collaborated during 1998-99 to formulate the ESLRs. On March 4, 1999, members of this focus group closely examined the philosophy and determined that it directly supports the ESLRs. Each classroom and office has been provided with posters listing the ESLRs and their subtopics. Parents have been made aware of the ESLRs through the PTSA newsletter, *LowellLight*. Students have read and discussed the ESLRs in a variety of classroom and group settings. The ESLRs are becoming the basis for decisions influencing teaching and learning at Lowell. For example, the 1999-2000 Digital High School Grant application, which has a total schoolwide curricular impact, was designed around the ESLRs as is the plan to utilize current GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) resources. However, more work will still need to be done to bring a closer correlation and alignment between the ESLRs and the school's curriculum and instructional methodologies. Throughout this effort, a revision process must be included to ensure that the ESLRs are kept continually relevant and an integral part of Lowell's culture.

Evidence:

1. Lowell High School Philosophy
2. Lowell High School Profile/Appendices
3. Lowell High School Accountability Report Card
4. SFUSD Board of Education Resolution (62-13SP1) of February 12, 1996
5. High School Graduation Requirements
6. Principal's Expectations for the Faculty
7. Lowell Site Plan
8. List of Extra-Curricular Activities, Athletics, and Clubs

9. Modular Schedule
10. Course Offerings (the "Announcer")
11. Admissions Policy Report from SFUSD to Judge Orrick 12/99
12. *LowellLight* (PTSA Newsletter)
13. GATE Plan
14. Digital High School Grant Application

Growth Needs:

1. That the Lowell philosophy be quoted in full in the *Lowell Student Handbook*.
2. That the school district continue to support Lowell as a college-preparatory high school with admissions standards that draw students from throughout San Francisco.
3. That the Lowell philosophy be reexamined on a regular basis to ensure that it continues to define the kind of educational experience the community desires for Lowell students and to monitor the connection between the philosophy and the ESLRs and the curriculum.

A2: The school leadership makes decisions and initiates activities that focus on all students achieving the ESLRs. The leadership empowers the school community and encourages commitment, participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility for student learning.

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, students, and 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.

The administrative team consists of the principal and three assistant principals and two deans who are responsible for a large number of functions. They meet every two weeks on Wednesday mornings following the district's high school principals' meetings. The principal shares information that he receives and solicits input from the administrative team on all matters pertaining to policies, personnel, budgets, and school operations that have an impact on teaching and learning. Over the years, the principal has involved and interacted with students, parents, teachers, and alumni in a variety of different ways. For example, he has included student and parent representatives on teacher interview panels. He confers regularly with the student activities coordinator and leaders of the Student Body Council (SBC) regarding student events and issues. He maintains regular communications with the PTSA president and attends the monthly PTSA Executive Board meetings and other PTSA-sponsored functions. He and the assistant principals meet with the Union Building Committee (UBC) once a month to address teacher contractual issues and concerns. And he routinely speaks with members of the Alumni Association concerning their support activities, such as donations and plans for the construction of an alumni building on campus.

The principal allocates the school's meager financial resources to support teaching and learning in each department. Textbook allocations are made by department heads in consultation with the Assistant Principal for Administration who is responsible for the overall allocation of supplies and textbook funds. In departments which receive an allocation for instructional supplies, the department heads allocate the funds in whatever manner is best for their department. Some

disburse departmental funds to faculty based on class size while others spend funds on items agreed upon by the entire department.

The Assistant Principal for Curriculum chairs the Administrative Council in which department heads meet once a week to discuss curricular concerns. The minutes of the Administrative Council provide an on-going record of the topics and policies under review and revision. At the time of writing, those topics include the improvement of the Field Trip Form, streamlining of the Add/Drop policies, and more. The Assistant Principal for Pupil Services also holds weekly meetings with school counselors to review student issues, such as tutorial services, parental communications, probation policy, scholarships, financial aid, and student referrals from teachers.

Administrators and department heads review and revise educational policies on an as-needed basis. For example, in fall 1998 the Assistant Principal for Curriculum initiated revisions to the self-scheduling process. Those revisions, developed in collaboration with the Counseling Department and the Administrative Council, significantly reduced the number of students left with incomplete schedules at the spring self-scheduling. For fall 1999, the Administrative Council adopted a revision to the bell schedule proposed by a faculty member and the UBC representative which provided extended time for the entire community to meet together. Much of the work for this WASC Report was done during those meeting times, but because of concern for loss of too much instructional time, the bell schedule was revised again for the spring of 2000.

Support for teachers is demonstrated through different avenues: endorsement of grant applications, letters of recommendation, help with school improvement projects, among others. Students are honored in a variety of ways. Teachers, counselors, coaches, and administrators publicize student awards and achievements in the Weekly Bulletin and announce them over Radio Lowell. The PTSA organized a huge celebration in 1996 when the school received the Blue Ribbon Award from the U.S. Department of Education. One of the counselors compiles an annual booklet listing the honors and awards earned by students and faculty. Most Lowell students place a very high value on learning and they work to become well-educated. Their achievements are reflected in a good grade point average, a spot on the Honor Roll or a high class ranking. As of this school year, the Counseling Department will calculate a class percentile rather than a class rank for each senior because, in a school with so many high achievers, a high grade point average often translates into an unfairly low class rank.

Examples of community involvement in shaping the school culture are numerous, but a prime example is the Site Advisory Council (SAC) which has played a major part in the school's consultation and decision-making process. The SAC publishes biweekly minutes which are posted in departmental offices and other areas of the campus to keep stakeholders apprised of its activities. It is neither mandated, nor feasible, for all matters to be deliberated upon by the Site Advisory Council, and in a community this large, it is not easy to consult with every element when making policy decisions. Some teachers feel that they are not consulted as often as they wish, and some parents have expressed the desire to be informed of policy revision and review as it is happening. It is noteworthy that the Staff Council (formerly Faculty Council) and Union Building Committee (UBC) have become more vocal over the past several years. They publish minutes of their meetings, solicit teacher input through surveys, and have recently made it clear that the Staff Council is primarily social in function, while the UBC deals solely with contractual issues and concerns.

Ideas, innovation, and input from all members of the school community are sought and valued. The PTSA and Alumni Association reward creative and novel teaching through their grant processes. They award funds to teachers who propose projects which demonstrate exciting new ways to help the students achieve the ESLRs. For example, both organizations have, over

several years, helped build a digital piano lab where students learn to play the piano and compose music.

One of the suggestions from the PTSA's Academic Affairs Committee is that Lowell needs to develop a "long-range strategic plan" for the school. The administration will be taking this idea to the Site Advisory Council (SAC) for discussion. The components of a strategic plan may include the following areas: admissions, facilities construction and maintenance, budgets, fundraising, student achievement goals, parent involvement, professional development, campus safety/security, facilities plan, college counseling, etc.

Lowell students have many interests beyond academics and have displayed their involvement and leadership in student government, numerous student activities, clubs, and athletics. Like others in the school community, they have contributed immensely to the development of Lowell's participatory culture. For example, in 1998, student government leaders on their own initiative completely revamped the Lowell Charter to allow for the reduction of the Lowell Student Association from 48 members to 36 members. This streamlining minimized overlapping roles and responsibilities, and made student government more efficient and effective. A similar, and almost as dramatic, result was achieved with the Shield and Scroll Honor Societies, the separate boys and girls service groups that have existed for almost 100 years at Lowell. In 1998, the two presidents decided that in the interest of gender-equality, the organizations should be united under one leader. Gender did not matter as much as cooperation, commitment to service, and unity of purpose. Again, this was accomplished entirely through the students' own initiative.

Evidence:

1. PTSA Bylaws
2. UBC Minutes, Teachers' Contract
3. *Lowell Student Handbook*
4. *SFUSD Student and Parent/Guardian Handbook*
5. 1999-2000 Administrative Responsibilities
6. Lowell Alumni Association Bylaws
7. Site Advisory Council Bylaws and minutes
8. 1998 Lowell Charter and Student Body Council minutes
9. Freshman Orientation Agendas for students and parents
10. "Counseling is Essential" Handout
11. District Certificated Staff Evaluation Process
12. Lowell Schoolwide Decision-making Process Chart (all major groups)
13. Lowell Site Plan
14. Cardinal Schedule, Fall 1999
15. Bell Schedule, Spring 2000
16. Administrative Council mission statement and minutes
17. 1998 Revision of Shield and Scroll Honor Society Bylaws
18. SFUSD Budget Operations memo 8/98
19. PTSA and LAA Grant Application Guidelines

Growth Needs:

1. That the school community collaborate to clarify the processes for decision-making within the school.
2. That the administration discuss with the Site Advisory Council the possibility of a long-range strategic plan for Lowell.

3. That the school community consider publishing a regular account of the issues being addressed by the various stakeholder groups.

A3: The support, utilization, and monitoring of staff facilitate achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results. Leadership and staff are a part of an organized structure that is committed to professional development.

Over the past several years, especially prior to 1997-98, many of Lowell's schoolwide and departmental professional development activities were planned, implemented, and coordinated by faculty members of the site-based SB 1882 Professional Development Committee and the Assistant Principal for Administration. After 1998, the direction and content of professional development were set primarily by the SFUSD's Office of Curriculum Improvement and Professional Development (CIPD) through the use of districtwide inservice days.

The SB 1882 Professional Development Committee members were confirmed by a schoolwide election and represented all subject departments as well as counseling. They worked collaboratively to determine SB 1882 budget priorities that met schoolwide goals set by the committee. These goals were, and still are, in alignment with the faculty's efforts to help students achieve the expected schoolwide learning results (ESLRs):

- To improve communication within the school that would encourage teachers to take advantage of professional development opportunities
- To expand use of educational technology to improve teaching and promote student learning
- To improve the use of data to support and maximize student achievement

Besides handling direct requests from individual teachers for funds to participate in professional development activities, the committee attempted to anticipate and plan for long-term changes that have significant impact on the curriculum and student learning. For example, in 1997, prior to Lowell's inclusion in the 1998-99 Digital High School application cycle, the committee devoted time to this subject at a meeting and subsequently developed information for the staff on the instructional implications of this state's technological initiative. To further clarify and amplify how Digital High School would allow Lowell to interface with the technology industry, the committee invited the vice-president of Protocol Interfaces, Inc., a networking firm, to meet with its members and also speak to the entire faculty.

There are many examples of Lowell's commitment to schoolwide and departmental professional development in the period following the mid-term visit by two members of the WASC Committee in the spring of 1997. For instance, during the 1997-98 school year, the SB 1882 Committee invited a University of California neurosurgeon and best-selling author, to speak on the interdisciplinary relationship of art and physics and how these two seemingly dissimilar disciplines are connected to themes in religion, education and technology. The faculty/staff, parents and students who attended were enlightened by his insights into how people learn and transmit knowledge. On that same professional development day, the English Department invited a staff person from the San Francisco Main Public Library to acquaint English teachers with popular literature and the variety of library resources available to students and teachers. These resources help teachers to develop effective literary and oral/written lessons and assignments that meet high content and performance standards and strengthen the students' knowledge-base and skills. The next day, Lowell counselors visited Gunn High School in Palo Alto to become better aware of another school's counseling policies/procedures, computer programs, and technical support systems. They were open to learning from others who have the resources to sustain a strong college counseling component at an academically challenging institution.

As in any sound professional development program, the participants should not only rely on outside sources, but they should also turn to the expertise of colleagues on the faculty and staff. In the Science Department, a retired teacher demonstrated to other science teachers on the instructional use of video disc players in the classroom. In the Physical Education Department, a mentor teacher and a colleague publicized the utility of body fat analyzers and heart rate monitors as an aid to having students take charge of their own bodies in a literal way. The knowledge and popularity of this educational technology was shared with colleagues on a professional development day and demonstrated to parents on Back-to-School Night. A mathematics teacher and a physics teacher developed a Web page as a means to increase communication between students and themselves about assignments, grades, and general information. They have taught other faculty members how to replicate this method. In the Social Science Department, teachers applied their collective knowledge and resources to develop two critical student guides entitled "Research Skills & Term Paper Guidelines for Juniors" and "Ninth Grade Research Paper Manual." A similar product called "Eleventh Grade Writing Guidelines" resulted from the collective efforts of teachers in the English Department. All three publications provide concrete evidence of the kind of professional collaboration at Lowell that ultimately facilitates the students' achievement of the ESLRs.

Beyond the organized schoolwide and departmental professional development efforts, Lowell has numerous teachers who engage themselves in individual professional growth activities in all subject areas throughout the school year and during the summer. A good illustration is the Advanced Placement Program. Lowell has a large and successful AP Program because many AP teachers participate in AP workshops and/or serve on AP test development and scoring committees for the College Board. The PTSA provides funds to send teachers to AP workshops. Several teachers have also served on the Golden State Exam development and scoring committees in Sacramento. In terms of conferences and workshops, SB 1882 funds have paid for registration fees and for substitute coverage to enable teachers to attend sessions at the Asilomar Math Conference, CUE (computer education) Conference, Annual Conference of Council of Social Studies, American Institute of Biological Sciences, California School Library Association Conference, and the MACWORLD Conference (partial listing). Many teachers use the new knowledge and experiences that they have gained from their participation to improve their teaching and share insights with colleagues. As a result of their innovations and/or leadership role in their field, some teachers have received grants, fellowships, Outstanding German Teacher Award, Disney's Outstanding American Teacher Award, Siemens Award for Advanced Placement, and the Mayor's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Other examples of teacher-initiated professional development activities:

- District drama teachers come together to learn and exchange new ideas.

- English teachers work with actors and actresses in PALM (Performing Arts Library and Museum Program), a very invigorating and inspiring experience.

- Lowell teachers make presentations at District workshops that benefit teachers from other schools.

- Social Science teachers meet voluntarily after school once a month to discuss pedagogy.

Given the large number of professional development activities funded and/or sponsored by different sources, the UBC and administration decided in fall 1999 to create a structure for overseeing and monitoring this entire area. A school "Professional Development Committee" was formed consisting of five teachers elected schoolwide, four representative department heads, and the Assistant Principal for Curriculum. According to the agreement negotiated by the District and UESF, this committee will be responsible for "coordinating and reviewing the professional development activities at Lowell, especially (but not limited to) those professional development activities contained in SB 1882, Digital High School proposals, and the 'Buy-back Professional Development' days for the spring of 2000."

For the most part, teachers are hired to fill open positions through an interview process that involves representatives from the administration, faculty, student body and PTSA. Candidates are selected based on their credentials, experience/work history, ability to teach, and willingness to work in a challenging academic environment. Once on board, they and other faculty members are evaluated in accordance with a process and timelines established by a SFUSD/UESF Contract. The procedures call for a pre-observation conference, class observation, post observation conference (optional), a written performance report based on the observation, and a summary evaluation report. The summary contains a performance rating that incorporates the classroom assessment and information about the teacher's use of student data in planning lessons and extra-curricular and professional development activities, if any.

The "modular schedule" structure provides flexibility in programming classes and encourages students to exercise responsibility and choice in the selection of their courses, teachers, and time schedules. The structure allows for the accommodation of 2,500 students on a campus originally designed for 1,800 students. However, it is not conducive to "organized collegiality." Teachers have prep period(s) but they do not have a common planning time during the school day because a classroom shortage (even with the addition of 23 bungalows) necessitates the spreading of courses throughout the day. Approximately one half of the teachers and students starts at 7:30 am and ends their day at 2:30 p.m. The other half of the faculty and student body begins the school day at 8:30 a.m. and finishes at 3:30 p.m.

The communication and coordination problems that arise from the absence of a common planning period in the master schedule are partly ameliorated by teachers sharing common office space. However, that unique environment which allows for easy and accessible professional exchange and interaction exists only in certain departments. The benefits of teachers sharing a common office space are enormous. Being together in the same room gives them more opportunities as a department to discuss grading practices, student work, content/performance standards, helpful strategies and resources.

One way in which Lowell has attempted in 1998-99 to address the concern about teacher isolation is to have "Faculty Teas." During fall 1998, the Staff Council, UBC, administration, and some departments held after school teas in the renovated Faculty Lounge to encourage collegiality. In December 1999, a Lowell counselor opened her house for a holiday social that was well-attended by the faculty and support staff. The other method used by the Lowell PTSA over the years to promote goodwill and camaraderie has been the dinners provided to teachers prior to Open House, Family/Faculty Night, and Lowell Night for 8th Graders. Given the size of the Lowell faculty and staff, the school community needs to continue to promote and support more opportunities for collegiality among teachers and other non-certificated personnel.

With regard to meeting schedules, Lowell needs to maintain flexibility and consistency in allotting sufficient time for faculty and department meetings to address both schoolwide and departmental issues. During 1998-99 many of the professional development days were devoted to WASC activities. In spring 1999, the Union Building Committee (UBC) in collaboration with the administration and department heads developed a new 21-mod bell schedule for the fall semester. The new schedule set aside blocks of time (1 hour 50 minutes) on Fridays twice a month to conduct department meetings, faculty meetings, professional development, and WASC activities. Due to concern for loss of too much instructional time on those Fridays, the bell schedule was adjusted for spring 2000 to bring back more classroom time while still preserving a reduced time block for meetings, professional development, and WASC activities. As of spring 2000, two 45 minute blocks of time a month are now reserved for faculty meetings department business, and professional development. As we monitor the effectiveness of this schedule, we will continue our WASC preparations and also give the departments adequate time to deal with curricular concerns and other departmental matters.

Many members of the Lowell Community have expressed concerns regarding high stress levels which have been generated by Lowell's fierce competition for outstanding grades. One suggestion for dealing with this problem is to have "Stress Management" workshops as part of the faculty's professional development agenda. These workshops may also include students and parents who need help coping with their anxieties and stress.

Evidence:

1. SB1882 Staff Development Committee Minutes
2. "Tech-Tuesday" Workshops
3. Digital High School "Bridging" Technology Training Program
4. UBC 1999 Professional Development Committee Election Results
5. District Certificated Staff Evaluation Process
6. Lowell Site Plan
7. SFUSD Beginning Teacher Handbook 1999

Growth Needs:

1. That the school urge the District to provide consistent funding for professional development with an emphasis on site-determined activities.
2. That the school community continue to create opportunities for stress-reduction and collegiality among all its members.

A4: The school is a safe and orderly place that nurtures learning. The culture of the school is characterized by trust, professionalism, high expectations for all students, and a focus on continuous school improvement.

Lowell has "Campus Rules" and District/school policies, such as the "Academic Honesty Policy," that set the common expectations and standards for all student conduct. These rules and policies are detailed in the *Lowell Student Handbook*, and/or the *SFUSD Student/Parent/Guardian Handbook* which are distributed to every enrolled student. There is consensus in the Lowell community that the pursuit of academic excellence requires high motivation and a strong commitment to learning and intellectual honesty. We also recognize there are certain responsibilities that must be shouldered by the student, parent, as well as the teacher. Those responsibilities are what binds Lowell together and become the prerequisites for the high level of academic achievement displayed by Lowell students for 144 years.

Although high academic standards have been maintained, Lowell has suffered from the lack of resources and deficiencies in several areas. Lowell has always enjoyed an orderly environment, however, the concern for campus cleanliness and deterioration of facilities has grown along with the massive budget cuts over the years. For a 26-acre campus, Lowell has been allotted only two day custodians and four night custodians with no on-site supervisor. The allocation is totally inadequate especially in light of the fact that over 51 student clubs conduct their activities on campus at some point during the week and a community Korean School is held at Lowell on Saturdays. Also on most weekends, especially when the weather is nice, the public has easy access to Lowell's athletic fields and courts because there is no fence to keep them out. Unfortunately, these neighbors often leave empty soda cans/bottles and other trash all around campus, which our day custodians have to address on Monday morning. Finally, the evening custodians' cleaning burden is made heavier by the fact that the district's night school program is conducted four days a week in Lowell's main building.

Because of the modular schedule, about one-third of the student body is always out of class and using facilities, such as bathrooms, throughout the day. Partly because of these circumstances, there are constant complaints about the bathrooms' cleanliness and maintenance. The Assistant Principal for Administration has attempted to resolve these concerns by asking students to report to him directly when problems arise. The student newspaper has also reported on the students' concerns and was instrumental in highlighting a problem with the lack of tampons in the girls' room. The Assistant Principal for Administration responded by installing two tampon-dispensing machines.

Besides the need for more resources, every person needs to be responsible for campus cleanliness. The custodians alone cannot maintain a clean school. Over the years, various student government officers have tried hard to organize a clean school campaign using various strategies and incentives. Unfortunately, the results have not been permanent.

Annually, the PTSA has attempted to support the clean school campaign by sponsoring two school beautification days, which usually occur on a Saturday or Sunday in the fall and spring. They provide parent volunteers who work alongside the students and staff in cleaning, painting and refurbishing various parts of the campus, from bathrooms to the Faculty Lounge. A few years ago, the PTSA provided funds to help renovate the music/art wing and expand the student arcade to provide a more comfortable and pleasing study area.

Because of the modular schedule and overcrowding, noise in the hallways has been a problem for many parts of the building. To reduce the disruption to classrooms and offices, the deans have put up "Keep the Area Clear" signs on the first floor and in the auditorium lobby. This has resulted in a quieter learning and teaching environment in those areas.

Lowell is widely regarded by students and parents as a safe school. Most of the problems, when they arise, come not from Lowell students, but from outsiders who victimize our students going to and from the campus. The problem is compounded when student victims are reluctant to report incidents for fear of retaliation, or when parents are afraid of going to the police. Each year during freshman orientation, a San Francisco police officer from Taraval Station is invited to speak to students about safety awareness on the streets and MUNI buses. When there is a serious flareup of incidents, such as the student muggings in fall 1999, the principal contacts the Taraval Station captain to request additional uniformed police presence and the assistance of undercover officers. Also periodically the administrators and deans put announcements in the weekly student/parent bulletin advising students to be vigilant and to report incidents on or off campus immediately so that they can be dealt with by the proper authorities. Safety and self-defense workshop ideas have been suggested to educate students and empower them to protect themselves from crimes ranging from muggings to date-rape.

Although our present security aides have been an effective deterrent, there is an insufficient number of them given the size of Lowell's campus. We have only two full-time security aides and two part-time security aides, all of whom are on a flexible schedule to best meet the needs of campus supervision. Since they cannot be everywhere, they need to be supported by all members of the faculty, staff, and students. The safety and security of all sectors of the campus can only be maintained with everyone's help. In fall 1998, the Lowell PTSA strengthened the school's security efforts by purchasing extra walkie-talkies and a "repeater device" to facilitate their use by the administrators, deans, and security aides.

The vital role and many contributions of the PTSA symbolize and reflect the Lowell community's commitment to a school culture that is characterized by trust, professionalism, high expectations for all students, and a genuine belief in continuous school improvement.

Many groups and publications contribute to sustaining this culture of active involvement on issues that have an impact on school improvement. They are described below:

The PTSA, like every other major group of stakeholders at Lowell, has an avenue or vehicle for expressing concerns and offering recommendations on a wide range of issues affecting the present and future condition of Lowell. The PTSA has a number of committees responsible for projects, activities, and events. Monthly Executive Board meetings are held along with periodic general membership meetings. The PTSA conducts an annual fundraising drive that yielded almost \$100,000 in 1998-99 and over \$100,000 in 1999-2000 to support faculty projects and schoolwide programs. The PTSA publishes the *LowellLight* newsletter that is mailed to all Lowell families four times a year.

The Lowell student newspaper regularly publishes articles, features, and editorials every three weeks without fear of interference or censorship (as long as ethical journalistic standards and legal guidelines are adhered to). They keep informed about the people, issues, and concerns in the Lowell community.

The Honors/Awards/Achievements booklet is compiled annually by a counselor and parent volunteer and is shared with all the departments and major groups (e.g., PTSA). It lists the accolades and acknowledgments received by the students and faculty members in the previous year.

Lowell Student Association (LSA)/Student Body Council (SBC) conduct student affairs in accordance with the Lowell Charter that its officers revised in 1998 to streamline student government operations. The SBC consists of 12 student officers, and each of the four classes (Senior, Junior, Sophomore, Freshman) has 6 officers.

Shield and Scroll Honor Society is a large student organization (over 100 members) with a long history of service to Lowell. Its members are selected by the faculty and current Shield and Scroll students based on the candidates' GPA, citizenship, and extra-curricular activities. The students assist with major school events and activities such as Freshman Orientation, Fall Open House, Lowell Night for 8th Graders, Self-Scheduling Days, and Graduation. In addition, they offer their help schoolwide by distributing a "Worker Request Form" to the faculty and administration each semester, and assigning students to meet these work requests.

The UBC/Lowell Staff Council consist of two separate entities. The Union Building Committee (UBC) represents the teachers and paraprofessionals in contractual matters. Members are elected at-large, as is a Building Representative. The UBC meets monthly with the administration on issues of concern. UBC-administration subcommittees meet on specific issues. Regular reports are made to the staff. The Lowell Staff Council represents the teaching and classified staff on non-contractual matters, such as bell schedules, school cleanliness, plus social activities. Representatives are elected from each department and the classified staff. The Lowell Staff Council meets with the administration as needed and issues reports to the faculty.

The Administration consists of the principal and three assistant principals who are responsible for the overall operation of the school. They supervise and evaluate the non-supervisory certificated staff and classified staff. They oversee the curriculum with the help of the department heads, and provide student support services with the assistance of counselors. The administrators work with the deans on student disciplinary issues. The administrators are responsible for following school board policies and District administrative directives. They work with the Central Office, PTSA, Alumni Association, and community groups.

The Lowell Alumni Association's executive director produces a semi-annual newsletter that is mailed to over 25,000 active alumni. The Alumni Executive Board meets monthly and disburses grants to teachers and scholarships to graduating seniors. The Board consists of 32 members with the principal as an honorary member.

The Site Advisory Council (SAC) has been in effect since fall 1994 and has 26 voting members who represent the parents, students, faculty/staff, administration, alumni, and neighborhood. The SAC is a forum to facilitate communication and decision-making on a variety of non-contractual issues affecting the welfare of the school community. It has played a major role in the following areas (examples only): selection of the architect for the new academic/science wing and disbursement of state site block grants.

Evidence:

1. WASC Student Survey
2. WASC Parent Survey
3. Security Aides' Schedule
4. Custodial Schedule
5. Supervision Schedule for Spirit Rally and Color Wars
6. Shield and Scroll Help Form to Administration and Faculty
7. Honors/Awards/Achievements Booklet
8. Campus Rules
9. Parent/Student Agreement Form
10. Academic Honesty Policy
11. 1999-2000 Major Calendar Dates
12. Academic Probation Dates
13. Faculty Handbook/Statement on Ethical Considerations
14. General Fund Site Budget Allocation, 1999-2000

Growth Needs:

1. That the school collaborate with all site constituent groups and the district administration to comply with state mandates for maintaining a safe and secure campus environment.
2. That the school maintain a clean and healthy campus environment.

CURRICULAR PATHS

B1: All students participate in a rigorous, relevant and coherent curriculum that supports the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results.

Evidence presented by departments, teachers and students from Lowell High School demonstrates to the members of the Curricular Path Committee that Lowell students participate in a challenging, relevant and rigorous curriculum that supports the written learning objectives for each subject area as well as the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results. Evidence includes course descriptions, classroom observations, honor rolls, test scores, graduation rates, Latino and African American Honor Rolls, non-existent dropout rate and honors and awards received such as: Blue Ribbon School Award, National Merit Awards, Bank of America Awards, Coca Cola Awards, Toshiba Science Awards, etc.

All of our programs and courses are consistent with the expected schoolwide learning results (ESLRs), as well as meet the a-f requirements of the UC system and the graduation requirements for the San Francisco Unified School District.

The diversity of AP and honors classes and classes in general offered at Lowell and the students' success with AP and SAT exams are testaments to the rigorous standards of the school curriculum. Great efforts are shown by different departments to enhance the content of subjects in planning class projects, career-related field trips, and other activities to enrich the curriculum. Some examples are: the Toshiba National Science Bowl, the High School Mathematics League Regional Championship, the Academic Decathlon, etc.

At present Lowell offers three distinct special education programs: the Resource Specialist Program (RSP) for students who are 100% mainstreamed; the Special Day Transition Program for Severely-Impaired students 18 years and older; and the Special Day Class for the Learning-Disabled students.

Our varied and extensive curricular offerings serve as a working model for other schools. This is evidenced by the various telephone calls, letters, school visits and inquiries that the administration and/or counselors receive.

The success of our students confirms the achievement of our schoolwide goals. All areas of the curriculum require Lowell students to think, reason, solve problems, construct meaning, make connections, be creative, productive and communicate well.

Parents, teachers and students are involved at different levels in many areas of planning, direction, and continuity of the program. Representatives from all these groups initiate and contribute to set guidelines for different aspects of the program by their active participation in the Academic Affairs Committee, the PTSA, and the Site Advisory Council (SAC).

As you walk through the hallways of our school, a supportive and healthy attitude of competition among Lowell students is evident. It is not unusual to overhear conversations among students discussing a particular assignment, a class topic, grade expectations and goals for school. Teachers and students in general are equally proud and confident displaying friendly and informal relationships with each other. An open-door policy is apparent throughout all offices.

DEPARTMENTS

English Department

All students at Lowell are required to take four years of English. From the time that students enter Lowell until the time they graduate, they are consistently provided with academically challenging college-preparatory courses in English.

Besides the required two semesters of World Literature classes for freshmen, two semesters of Ethnic Literature classes for sophomores, and one semester of Expository Writing for juniors, students may take in the eleventh and twelfth grades a variety of electives which include: Literature and Philosophy, Literature and Psychology, Comedy and Satire, Shakespeare, Film as Literature, Epic and Myth, Creative Writing, Poetry, Public Speaking and Journalism. An expository writing course is required for all students in the eleventh grade. Eleventh and twelfth grade students choose from the available literature and writing courses based on their needs and interests. The Lowell student newspaper has been rated among the 10 best in the nation since 1993.

Students select from 14 junior/senior elective courses, in addition to 10 honors and AP courses in English. Students who excel in their reading and writing skills can take honors classes. Teachers in the English Department provide a range of assignments which prepare students to think conceptually, solve problems and communicate their ideas effectively. Student assignments are aligned with District, state and national standards as well as the ESLRs. The English curriculum emphasizes analyzing subjects in depth, connecting new ideas to prior knowledge and constructing new knowledge. This is achieved with due consideration to the many varied learning styles and needs of our students.

In a recent survey of students' attitudes toward the English program, parents (84%) and a majority of students (66%) responded that the English coursework prepares students for college most of the time and is academically challenging.

The results of various state and national examinations reveal that the English curriculum is rigorous and relevant. Of 1,244 students who took the 1997 Golden State Exam in Written Composition, 82% received awards. The STAR Test results for spring 1998 reveal that our students achieved the 80th percentile on both the Language and Reading Tests, while the national average is the 50th percentile.

The results of the SAT II test in English, for the Classes of 1997 through 1999 show that the mean score for English increased from 572 to 588. The Lowell average on the Verbal portion of the SAT I has consistently exceeded the national, the California and the San Francisco Unified School District averages.

During the 1996-1997 school year, 88% or more of students taking the AP English Language examinations passed. In 1997-1999, 93% of the students passed the examination. Teachers in the English Department view the ESLRs as an integral part of the English program and reflective of the course content and performance standards. While student performance indicates strong mastery of the ESLRs, we plan for more individual improvement.

Mathematics Department

Starting this year there are four curricular paths in mathematics. Entering first-year students are placed in Math A, Algebra 1, Geometry 1.6, or Accelerated Math 1H depending on the results of their math placement test. In each of the paths students are able to complete four years of college-prep math. Students may also select AP Statistics, two levels of AP Calculus, and computer science electives, including 2 levels of AP Computer Science.

The addition of the Geometry 1.6 classes for incoming freshmen this year gives concrete evidence to the ongoing adjustments occurring in the Math Department to accommodate changes in students' needs. This new class is exclusively for incoming ninth graders who achieve the appropriate score on the math placement test. The content and methodology are the same as in a Geometry 1 class.

Students excelling at any level on a particular path are able to move to a more demanding path with teacher recommendation. At the same time, students finding difficulties are able to step down to a less rigorous path.

Specific subject graduation requirements have increased to the point that some present sophomores are already in danger of not graduating due to deficiencies in math.

Currently, eight accelerated math classes and seven freshman geometry classes qualify approximately 300 students for AP Calculus in the 2002-2003 school year. The number of eligible AP math students illustrates the need to increase the size of the current AP math program.

Physical Education Department

Students must complete two years of physical education, typically in the freshman and sophomore years. In addition to the required courses, we have nine elective courses in the Physical Education Department including gymnastics, tennis, weight training, volleyball, basketball, and swimming.

In order for students to participate in competitive sports they need to meet the eligibility requirement for the San Francisco Unified School District which is an overall G.P.A. of 2.0.

There are three sports seasons at Lowell. In the fall season, Boys Soccer, Girls Tennis, Volleyball, F/S Volleyball, Cross Country, F/S Football and Varsity Football are available. In the winter season, there is Girls Varsity Basketball, Girls F/S Basketball, Boys Varsity Basketball, Boys F/S Basketball and Wrestling. During the spring season, students can choose Badminton, Baseball, F/S Baseball, Fencing, Golf, Gymnastics, Girls Soccer, Softball, Swimming, and Track.

Health Education and Drivers Education are taught within the Physical Education Department. However, because of lack of staff and other considerations, the majority of students take these two subjects during summer school.

Science Department

The Science Department offers a variety of courses in biology, chemistry, and physics. In addition to traditional introductory-level instruction, the department offers courses at the honors, and Advanced Placement levels. All students are exposed to a science curriculum that promotes creative thinking, inquiry, and problem solving. Of particular interest to a large number of students are the Advanced Placement courses in biology, chemistry, and physics, although there is also high demand for the honors and advanced courses. Six honors and AP elective courses in science are offered. In addition, students can choose from the following advanced courses: Advanced Biology/Environmental Physiology, and Botany. All students are also afforded the opportunity to elect courses to suit their particular interest. However, all courses in the advanced curricula will provide additional avenues to enhance creative thinking skills, inquiry levels, and problem solving skills.

Students at Lowell fulfill their science requirement by following different paths. Entering ninth graders have the option of enrolling in a science class, choosing between Biology, Scope and Sequence (Integrated Science) or Conceptual Physics. The Scope and Sequence Course is a two-year integrated science course. Depending on their academic performance in their previous science course or through teacher recommendation, tenth graders may opt to go into the honors path, where they can take Chemistry Honors or Physics Honors. Other students enroll in the regular chemistry or regular physics path. In addition, tenth graders may elect to take Advanced Biology or Physiology. In their junior year, they have more options. Students can take Advanced Placement courses in chemistry, physics or biology. Even though taking more than three years of laboratory science is not mandatory, most students do. It is important to note that students are allowed to enroll in upper level science courses, as long as they satisfy the mathematics and science course prerequisites.

Several courses integrate computer-interactive programs into the curriculum, and students are encouraged to make use of facilities at school and at home. Science students have access to the Internet at school in room 212, the library, and the computer rooms. Some members of the Lowell staff are concerned that in the computer science department's curriculum courses such as computer science, networking, and/or operating systems, are not being offered because of funding constraints.

The Science Department also encourages students to participate in a number of local and national competitions. Students regularly participate in the Department of Energy-sponsored Science Bowl competition (regional and national), Toshiba/NSTA-sponsored ExploraVision Awards Program, Duracell Competition, and Dupont Science Competition. Students participate in the Jason Project at the University of California, San Francisco, and compete annually in the University of San Francisco Science competition. Physics students annually compete for a place on the U.S. and International Physics Team, and attend Physics Day at Great America. Students have enjoyed a pattern of repeated successes, at both the regional and national levels. Continued interest in such participation is growing, and we expect that the students will continue to perform at exemplary levels.

Biology students do fieldwork and environmental testing. They also do science demonstrations for parents and the community at night. They attend science fairs and enter other competitions. Lowell parents oversee student volunteers who contribute their time, energy and talents by helping the Friends of Lake Merced in their project to remove non-native species and replace them with native California vegetation along the shores of the lake. Additionally, several science students participate in the annual Academic Decathlon, where they have accumulated an

impressive track record of annual "wins". All of these activities augment the ongoing objective of developing creative thought, inquiry, and problem-solving.

As a whole, the Science Department encourages and promotes not only interactive classroom learning but also extensive application of these learned concepts outside of the classrooms. Science graduation requirements for the Class of 2001 and all future classes have been increased by the District. This increase places pressure on students to meet the higher requirements in a timely manner so as not to jeopardize their graduation.

Because classes are scheduled on a semester basis and students can select new teachers for the second semester of a year-long course, such as chemistry, this creates a problem regarding the continuity of content. The department needs to ensure that all teachers are moving at the same pace, teaching from the same book and maintaining similar expectations of student work.

Social Science Department

All students at Lowell are required to take three years of social science: one year of Modern World, History, one year of U.S. History, a semester of Economics, and a semester of American Democracy. In addition to the required courses, we provide a variety of one semester electives in the social sciences which include Psychology, Sociology, Women's Studies, World Religions, Asian American History, Peoples of U.S., etc. The year-long AP classes include AP Economics, AP U.S. History, AP Government, AP European History, AP Art History, and AP Psychology. All classes follow District and site guidelines.

The respondents to both the parent and student surveys indicate that classes offered in the Social Science Department are either "very or mostly challenging" (83% of parents, 70% of students) and prepare students for college. Overall, students indicate the department has a strong curriculum which allows them to think critically, solve problems, and communicate ideas effectively.

Lowell students do very well on standardized tests. Lowell's 1999 Academic Performance Index (API) of 925 placed the school second among all high schools in the state. We have expanded our AP offerings to meet student demand over the past few years. Lowell's national AP ranking has gone from eighth in 1994 to fifth in 1999. More students are taking the Golden State Exams as well as receiving recognition. Students scores are high on the SAT II in U.S. History despite the fact that the test is geared to a national standard rather than the state framework. Teachers have expanded the curriculum framework to prepare students for the national test. Comments entered in the parents' survey indicate across grade levels that the Social Science Department is seen as "excellent" and "challenging".

Some students criticized the department for having outdated texts and limited use/access to technology. Additionally, students stated they would like to see African American Studies and Latin American Studies offered, however, when these courses have been offered, there were often insufficient student sign-ups to justify the class.

Visual and Performing Arts Department

Lowell students must complete two years of visual and performing arts in order to graduate. The visual and performing arts curriculum is very rich with challenging classes such as: Drama, Art in Architecture, Ceramics, Drawing, and Painting, Choir and Instrumental Music. Art exhibitions, musical and dramatic performances provide ample opportunity for all students to display their talents. There are 24 visual and performing arts courses including advanced courses such as Jazz Band, Symphony Orchestra, Symphonic Band, AP Music theory, AP Art History, AP Art Studio and Advanced Drama.

All students have access to beginning visual and performing arts courses, regardless of their grade level, except incoming ninth graders cannot take Piano or Ceramics. Our courses are academically rigorous and comply with the National Standards for Arts Education.

World Language Department

Lowell offers 11 languages including AP and honors courses for 6 of the 11 languages. Incoming ninth graders can elect to take an honors placement test in Spanish or French.

The World Language Department uses a wide range of activities to encourage usage of the target language. The students have the opportunity to watch videotapes, create Web sites and write plays in the languages that they are learning. Student assessment covers all the listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills of the target language. Although the students feel their coursework is academically challenging, they sometimes question whether it is varied and interesting. The majority of students responding to the survey think the World Language Department allows them to also think creatively.

The students are required to attend language lab two mods (40 minutes) a week on their free time in order to develop their oral-aural skills. Audio and computer equipment is available in the lab to develop these language skills.

Kermesse, an annual world language festival, is coordinated by the World Language Department. It takes place in the spring and gives all Lowell students the opportunity to learn and enjoy the food, customs, music, dances, and costumes of all the countries represented. It is by far the most anticipated multicultural event at Lowell.

Although the average GPA in this department is comparatively low (2.92) the success of students is shown through the percentages passing the AP exams. The French, German, Latin and Spanish languages have had a consistent 100% passing rate in 1996, 1997, 1998, and 1999. In addition, the Chinese language SAT II average score in 1999 was 730, a very high score.

Scheduling classes on a semester basis has some drawbacks. This is particularly true in year long courses such as language courses. Because students can select new teachers for the second semester, the continuity and pacing of the content may be affected. Departments need to ensure that all teachers are moving at the same pace, teaching from the same book and maintaining similar expectations of student work.

World Language graduation requirements have been increased by the District. This increase will put pressure on students to meet the higher requirements in a timely manner so as not to jeopardize their graduation.

Students who get a "D/F" in the first semester in languages are not able to repeat the class during the second semester, because of the unavailability of staff to offer "off-semester" sections. In spring 1999, negotiations and meetings between the World Language Department, the Counseling Department and the Pupil Services Assistant Principal were begun to develop a plan to address the "D" problem. (See Counseling Binder) This plan is now completed and will be implemented for the first time during spring 2000.

As in other departments, the demand for some courses exceeds our ability to provide them. This is particularly true of some world languages offered at Lowell. Beginning Spanish and Chinese classes for instance, are very popular and consequently become too large for optimum participation of all students.

PROGRAMS

Advanced Placement Program

Lowell High School has an extensive and rich AP curriculum. Six out of seven departments offer AP and honors courses. The curriculum of all AP courses is geared to have students research topics, think critically, solve problems and communicate their ideas effectively. This is evidenced by student reports and other assignments generally given to AP students.

In 1999, 731 Lowell students took 1,621 AP exams and 90% of the students received grades of 3, 4, or 5. While not all students are enrolled in the AP or honors courses, the rest of the curriculum is also challenging. Nearly 50% of the Lowell student body are GATE-designated and course curriculum reflects the academic potential of our students.

Cooperative Vocational Education Program (CVE)

The Cooperative Vocational Education program at Lowell integrates classroom learning and on-the-job training to expose the students to business concepts, computer literacy, and career exploration. Students spend three days per week in the computer lab learning business writing skills, business spreadsheets and Internet research. Students produce a career portfolio that demonstrates their mastery of these subjects.

Students meet twice a week to study business and marketing. CVE classroom strategies include cooperative group learning activities, video case studies, current event case study readings, slide shows, field trips, and the use of "actual" materials (EZ tax forms, advertising examples, packaging designs). Historically, career education has not been part of the mission of the academic departments at the District. The school's career education efforts are mostly centered on the CVE courses. An initiative is underway to offer career awareness forums as a collaboration between CVE and GATE. Professional development may be needed to broaden the school's efforts in this field.

Special Education Program

At present, we have three distinct and separate Special Education programs at Lowell.

- **Resource Specialist Program (RSP)**: This program began at Lowell High School in the spring of 1984. Designed to meet the academic needs of students with disabilities, this program has been very successful. More than 95% of the total students assigned to the program attend a two-year or four-year college or university. Graduates have successful careers in hotel management, computer science, biochemistry research, law, music, teaching, etc. Currently, the Lowell RSP program services approximately 40 students. Of the 40, 23 are classified by IEP. The other 17 fall under Section 504, or AB 362, or are designated "at risk" students by their counselors. There are approximately 23 Special Education students who are under the guidance of a resource teacher and are fully integrated into the curricular offerings.
- **Severely Impaired Program**: This is a community-based transition program for 18 to 22 year old severely impaired adult-students. There are two teachers and seven paraprofessionals to handle a case load of approximately 22 students. The students work in places such as Home Depot, Ross, etc., in various capacities. They spend part of their day on the Lowell campus and eat lunch here. They also arrive and depart by school bus from Lowell. They do not participate in the curricular offerings because they receive life skills/job training under the supervision of two Special Education teachers. All students have a Person-Centered Planning meeting before their IEP's to plan individual curriculum. Students have a Functional Assessment to see what skills (especially vocational) they have. A review of students' individual goals happens periodically to ensure the success of their program.
- **Special Day Class-Learning Handicapped**: For the 1999 fall semester, Lowell has a new Special Education class (LH - SDC) which is staffed with two teachers and two

paraprofessionals. Currently, there are 18 students in this class with an enrollment cap of 24. In compliance with federal inclusion legislation, these students are mainstreamed into the visual and performing arts and P.E. classes. They take their academic classes with their Special Education teachers. There are many questions which need to be answered regarding the curriculum, standards, diploma and responsibilities of the general education teachers with respect to these students.

Value-Added Program

As a result of litigation by the Chinese community, the previous superintendent changed the system of admissions to Lowell in 1996. According to the new system 70 - 80% of the entering freshman class is admitted solely on the basis of GPA and SAT-9 scores; each student is required to meet the same minimum score regardless of race/ethnicity. Approximately 20-30% of the entering freshman class is approved by a selection committee using a "value-added" criteria.

The selection committee, which includes central office officials, teachers, administrators, students and alumni and PTSA representatives, considers a number of factors, including the following: extenuating family circumstances, social/economic status, coursework, extracurricular activities, achievement in the arts, residency within the City, etc. Value-added students have access to all Lowell classes. In addition, the Summer Bridging Program, Strategies for Success classes, the resource centers and the computer class were put in place in order to supply additional support for these students. Due to budget problems in 1998-1999, the District defunded the teachers for the Strategies program thereby eliminating these support services for the value-added population.

In 1996, Lowell was asked to design a program of academic support for the value-added students: 1.0 F.T.E. to provide tutorial services, a second 1.0 F.T.E. to provide counseling and guidance services, and a third 1.0 F.T.E. to provide computer classes to all value-added students. Three additional paraprofessionals would staff the three resource centers which together with the library and the language lab, would give easy access and tutorial assistance in all subject areas. (These requests were approved by the previous superintendent in their totality for the first year.)

Evidence:

1. Curricular Paths Flow Charts for Departments
2. Subject Offerings and Prerequisites
3. The Lowell "Announcer"
4. Lowell's "a-f" approved course list from UC
5. Lowell Profile
6. Honors/Awards/Achievements Booklet
7. SFUSD Drop-out Rate Report

Growth Needs:

1. Long term funding needs to be found in order to reinstate the Strategies for Success program.
2. The staff needs to encourage the District to review the 240 credit graduation requirement and specific subject increased requirements in Math, Science and World Language.
3. Evaluate site allocation of staff to better meet student course demand.
4. Permanent sources of funding need to be found to support the computer science curriculum. The Computer Science program should be expanded to include courses in computer application, programming and other subjects appropriate to this discipline.

B2: All students have access to the school's curricular paths, assistance with the development and ongoing adjustment of personal learning plan and knowledge of realistic post-secondary opportunities.

Evidence presented by departments, teachers, parents, and students demonstrates to the members of the Curricular Paths Committee that most students have access to the school's curricular paths, assistance with the development and ongoing adjustment of a personal learning plan, and knowledge of realistic post-secondary opportunities. The evidence is found in department binders, class lists, counselors' records, procedures for admissions, articulation, self-scheduling, selection of courses, program adjustment, deadlines for adding/dropping classes, curricular paths, etc.

Given the complexity of the curricular and cultural needs of the Lowell student body, and the lack of sufficient resources, the Lowell staff and students do a remarkable job of programming the student body.

Articulation with Feeder Schools

Because Lowell draws qualified students from throughout San Francisco, the Lowell counseling staff has to make an extra effort every year to stay in communication with all the feeder middle schools, especially those in the SFUSD. For instance, in May 1999, the counselors visited 14 middle schools to assist incoming eighth graders in the selection of their courses for fall 1999 and to answer questions from students and eighth grade counselors. Incoming ninth graders indicate their choice of fall courses via a special program selection card.

Admissions/Population

Approximately 70-80% of the admitted students score above an annually determined cut-off score based strictly on their GPA's and test results in middle school. The remaining 20%-30% of the students who score below the cut-off score are admitted through a formula of value-added points. Once at Lowell these value-added students in the past have received support and tutoring in their academic classes through a program called Strategies for Success. Due to loss of funding, we are no longer able to offer this program. Other supports available to Lowell students have included Upward Bound, CSF, MESA, O.M.I., P.A.C.T., Math Club, and resource centers.

There is concern about possible grade inflation because many middle school students who have achieved high GPA's do not seem to have attained the basic skills needed for success in high school. For example, the results of the math placement test show great inconsistency between some students' middle school grades and their scores on the standardized placement test.

If we all agree with the philosophical tenet that instruction can be best imparted and students can best learn when the materials presented take into consideration student preparation, student goals and student ability, then it would seem that having homogeneous instructional groups would be beneficial for the student as well as for the instructor.

The District has placed the 18 new SDC ninth grade students at Lowell this year without going through the Lowell admissions procedures. They are presently mainstreamed in two departments, Visual and Performing Arts and Physical Education. They may in the future be included in more classes. Their low academic skills make it difficult for them to be successful in Lowell's rigorous academic environment. The placement of SDC students to Lowell was done without preparation. Teachers and administrators were not given any training, information, and/or guidelines to deal effectively with their special needs. In addition it appears that the students' IEPs are overdue and in some cases were not on campus at the beginning of the fall semester.

Since 1996, Lowell has been required to accept students who not only do not go through the process of admissions, but who are actually "staffed" out of their particular schools because of serious disciplinary offenses. Some of these students do not fare well at Lowell and transfer out after a couple of semesters.

Programming All Other Students

All Lowell students have access to a wide range of classes and a state and District-driven curriculum that lead to a high school diploma. There are elective and/or honors classes in each of the subject areas. Placement in honors and Advanced Placement classes is based on grade requirements, reading scores or other standardized test scores and/or teacher recommendation. Placement in elective classes is based on student interest and space availability.

For example, the Social Science Department considers the students' grades in English and social studies classes, test scores, and teacher recommendations before they invite students to enroll in AP courses. In order to continue for the second semester in an honors/AP class, a student must earn a minimum grade of "C" during the first semester.

A student's program in grades 11 and 12 is particularly self-directed. Students are assisted in their course selections by counselors, department chairs, and teachers. When there is not enough space in a class for all who wish to take it, a lottery system as well as a first-come, first-serve process is used. Inadequate teacher allocations and funding limit our course offerings. The shortage of available slots for student enrollment in many of the AP social studies courses has been a consistent problem. In past years a lottery system was used to try to give all qualified students equal access to classes that were in high demand. While we no longer use that practice, a shortage remains in certain AP social studies classes, AP Statistics, AP Computer Science, and beginning Chinese and Spanish courses.

The following courses in visual and performing arts receive more requests than can be accommodated: Piano, Vocal Music, Ceramics. When graduation requirements increased in visual and performing arts, there was no commensurate increase in teacher allocation.

Members of the Lowell community have opportunities to provide input and direction to the school curriculum. For instance, the Filipino and Korean populations were instrumental in working with the school and the District to initiate Filipino and Korean language and culture classes at Lowell. The increased interest in the Korean program is reflected in the College Board's recent decision to institute an SAT II Examination in Korean.

Some Lowell staff members voiced concern that current funding levels prevent us from offering additional computer science courses such as networking, graphics, and operating systems. We have, however, been offering a C++ computer course as well as an AP Statistics course which prepares our students to take the AP Statistics exam. Students who have not been able to reach Calculus but who want an AP Physics class have been offered an AP Physics Technical class, which does not require the same level of math. Also, this year a Physics Honors class is offered for the first time.

In response to students' interest expressed through the "Student Course Request" (SCR) process, electives such as African American Studies, Latin American Studies, Asian American Studies, World Religions, Peoples of the U.S., Women's Studies, Sociology and Psychology have been offered by the Social Science Department .

All students at Lowell take a world language. Besides the classroom activities during their two to four years of study, students have access to the World Language Lab where numerous programs are available. Both audio as well as interactive computer software are used to support the classroom curriculum. This material is available for students to reinforce their language

skills on an individual basis and at their own pace. Some of the software is remedial in nature (grammar review) and gives the student the necessary reinforcement. Other programs are interactive and allow students to develop their comprehension and oral-aural skills.

DEVELOPMENT AND ADJUSTMENT OF PERSONAL LEARNING PLANS

The development and adjustment of a personal learning plan is undertaken by students with assistance from their counselors, registry teachers, department heads, parents and VICCI volunteers. Lowell students select their courses every semester through a long and elaborate process of course selection. This process starts approximately three months before the beginning of the new semester. Students complete a "Student Course Request" (SCR) form which is reviewed by the registry teacher and the counselor.

During SCR Day in November for the following spring and in April for the fall, students bubble-in the counselor-approved selection of courses form for the following semester. All these efforts culminate with an "arena" activity in the gym which at Lowell is called "self-scheduling".

During Self-Scheduling Day, students sign up for the courses their counselors have approved. Students choose teachers and their preferred time schedule. For the first two weeks of each semester, students may see their counselors to request adds/drops and other adjustments to their program. The counselors and the data processing secretary enter all the course changes in the computer.

The extent to which students have access to curricular offerings depends to some degree on a student's ability and motivation to read and analyze the written materials presented to him/her prior to self scheduling day. This material includes the weekly bulletins, subject offerings, self-scheduling announcers, grade level requirement sheets, UC and State requirement information leaflets, senior bulletins, the *Lowell Student Handbook*, the *SFUSD Student and Parent/Guardian Handbook*, and many other flyers and information sheets provided by counselors, registry teachers, department heads, and the VICCI volunteers.

In addition to registry visits, counselors make an effort to provide additional information on a one-on-one basis. This, however, is limited by the number of responsibilities assigned to a counselor and by the high student-counselor ratio. Students meet individually with their counselors, at least once a year, to make out a four-year graduation plan, to explore career possibilities and post-secondary choices, and other educational interests and options. PSAT and SAT exam results are used to guide students in their selection of a college or university.

The Student Survey indicates that students find the curriculum at Lowell to be excellent. However, counselors, teachers, parents and students would like counselors to be more available to assist students with program adjustments and to guide them in their selection of a personal learning plan. Due to the high student-counselor ratio, a student may not get enough individual attention. A lower counselor/student ratio would enable counselors to reach those students who are not assertive or knowledgeable about the available resources at Lowell. Knowing students on a more personal level would enable counselors to serve student needs. This includes gifted students as well as those with greater needs. The lack of personnel to perform the tasks alluded to in B2 leads to inadequate access to information. No educational institution can be expected to fully reach its objectives unless it is given adequate resources to achieve them.

All the counselors at Lowell, in addition to their counseling load, have many other responsibilities which take up large portions of their time. Among those are AP coordination and assisting with test administration; class sponsorships; club sponsorships; articulation with the University of California system, the California State University system, and the Community College system; coordination and screening of scholarships; training parent volunteers; and

coordinating many other activities, such as the tobacco prevention grant, health programs, condom distribution, AIDS Awareness, OMI (mental health services), coaching the Academic Decathlon team, etc. Three of the counselors are also part-time teachers.

While our modular system brings many advantages and flexibility to the Lowell program, the Counseling Department experiences one of the drawbacks of the modular system. Approximately a third of our students are free at any given time during the day. This allows for unscheduled "drop-ins" by students which makes it very difficult for counselors to complete paperwork without having to put in many additional afterschool hours. The fact is counselors are unable to find uninterrupted blocks of time during the school day to do the paperwork.

Monitoring Students Progress

Parents, students, faculty and staff collaborate very actively in the development and monitoring of a student's progress towards graduation and educational goals. The Lowell PTSA is a positive and visible presence at this school. The Academic Affairs Committee and the PTSA Grants and Fundraising Committee help the school financially and politically, and have a voice in the creation and development of curricular activities. PTSA volunteers run a small bookstore (Book-to-Book) for the students' benefit. They also work as volunteers in the VICCI Center, assisting the Counseling Department in the effort to inform students about their academic/career options at the school and after graduation.

Lowell students have great willingness to tutor and to help struggling students, as exemplified by the work of the California Scholarship Federation (CSF) tutors. It has been a long tradition at Lowell to seek peer tutors in the CSF Room for all areas of the curriculum.

The Pupil Services Assistant Principal, counselors, and deans monitor the students' grades and attendance at each report card period. Counselors then use the report card to adjust student's programs accordingly. Teachers report students with unexcused absences to the deans who in turn place students on a "cutters list" prepared three times a semester. Parents and students are informed about absences through daily telephone calls (from the Attendance Office) and through written notification from deans. Each dean is traditionally assigned half of all registries for monitoring attendance and discipline. However, they are also assigned supervision and monitoring of student lockers, parking spaces for staff and students, and the supervision and guidance of one freshman registry each among many other responsibilities.

Lowell also has an academic probation policy that applies to students who experience academic difficulties. Students who receive three below "C-" grades at any given time are sent a letter requesting a parent conference with the dean, counselor and teacher if needed. In addition, students on probation may be assigned to go to the appropriate resource center for additional assistance.

KNOWLEDGE OF REALISTIC POST-SECONDARY OPPORTUNITIES

Lowell's Cooperative Vocational Education (CVE) program has expanded from two classes in previous years to a third late afternoon class last spring. CVE accommodates some students who have a job, while concurrently enrolled at Lowell. The CVE course offerings, though limited, give a number of students the opportunity to have internships on the job as well as learn skills in resume, writing, successful interviewing, letter writing, data processing, etc.

In 1999 Lowell had its second annual Career Day. That event involved the CVE teacher, counselors, and a large number of professional parents and alumni who volunteered as members of professional panels and imparted a great deal of practical knowledge to many students who attended a variety of career sessions.

At this time, the use of the Internet is in its infancy at Lowell. Because Internet wiring and associated hardware are not yet available throughout the school E-mail, Web Pages, and classmate interaction, as well as E-mail correspondence with students from a school in the foreign country of the target language, are developing slowly. However, by June 2000, Lowell will receive hopefully a Digital High School (DHS) grant. This will allow us to fully develop our technology in the classroom and across the curriculum.

With DHS funds, the World Language Department will be able to purchase a video/satellite antenna in order to record and preview student broadcast in French, Spanish, Italian, German, Japanese, Hebrew, Russian, etc. This would be an extremely valuable device for exposing students to the language and the culture of their target language in the classroom. It would also instill a love of the language and relevancy to the curriculum and prepare the student for the global job market.

In 1999 the Lowell PTSA raised more than \$98,000 which were used to support teacher projects and purchase materials that benefited the students. The Lowell Alumni also plays an important role in providing incentive awards to graduating seniors. Last year they granted over \$25,000 in scholarships to Lowell seniors.

Across the curriculum at Lowell students engage in learning experiences beyond the textbook and classroom by doing independent research in the library and on the Internet. They enter contests in various academic subjects, and go on local, state and national field trips. Science students go to the Academy of Sciences, the Exploratorium, the Arboretum in Golden Gate Park, the American Association of Cellular Biology at Moscone Center, etc. World Language students go to the International Film Festival and the Legion of Honor Museum. Students in English attend A.C.T. performances, and social studies students participate in Forensics tournaments and mock trial debates.

Students listen to outside speakers, participate in academic clubs and community services activities. These activities require students to be self-directed learners who are able to allot time outside of their studies and apply what they have learned to benefit the larger community. They also afford students opportunities to show that they are knowledgeable and skilled across the curriculum.

Co-Curricular and Extra-Curricula Activities

Lowell High School offers many extracurricular activities for students. Currently there are 51 clubs at Lowell ranging from the Young Women's Lives Club to the Ski Club to the Martial Arts Club to the Film Club. These clubs support the ESLRs in many ways. In preparing students to become pursuers of academic excellence, many clubs such as the Biochemistry Club, the German Club, and the Architecture Club are extensions of what is being taught in the classroom. In part, students participate in club activities to enhance their comprehension of the curriculum.

Clubs such as the Drama Club, *The Myriad* (Lowell's student literary magazine), Forensics, and the Junior Statesman of America all allow students to explore and further develop their creativity and critical thinking skills. Lowell also has many clubs that have a specific social service orientation, such as the Volunteers Club, the Kids Helping Kids In Crisis Club, the Habitat Restoration Club, the Recycling Club, and the Help The Needy Club. All clubs at Lowell must participate in or develop community service projects. The intent of this requirement is to produce positive and productive citizens who contribute their time, energy, and talent to improve the quality of life in their communities.

Additionally, many clubs such as the Chinese Club, the Filipino-American Club, the Black Student Union, the Korean Club, and La Raza Unida exist to promote understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures. Other clubs, such as the Pre-Med Club and the PC Acceleration

Club, help students to become purposeful and responsible learners who recognize career opportunities in specific fields. By participating in any club where students must organize themselves, set goals, and try to accomplish tasks, students become effective communicators and managers of information.

Along with the many clubs on campus, Lowell's student government further enhances the ESLRs by providing many activities for students to participate in, and opportunities for development of, organizational and leadership skills. Currently, Lowell has two annual Spirit Rallies, ten dances, and many assemblies a year. Lowell's student government also puts on "Winterfaire" in December and "Cardinal Carnival" in the spring to allow students to display their talents in music, dance, cooking, art, and to have fun.

As an academically rigorous school, Lowell tries to ensure that students have healthy, positive ways to relax and be adolescents. By being the primary organizers of these events, students develop a greater sense of responsibility, become better communicators and managers of information, and promote activities to support the rest of the school.

Lowell students won 15 varsity sports titles last year, the most number of varsity titles of any high school in San Francisco. So, along with our outstanding academic achievements, Lowell students excel in athletics as well. There are three sports seasons at Lowell: Fall, Winter and Spring. In the Fall season, Soccer, Girls Tennis, Girls Golf, Volleyball, F/S Volleyball, Cross Country, F/S Football and Varsity Football are available. In the Winter season, students may participate in Girls Varsity Basketball, Girls F/S Basketball, Boys Varsity Basketball, Boys F/S Basketball and Wrestling. During the Spring season, students can choose Badminton, Baseball, F/S Baseball, Fencing, Boys Golf, Gymnastics, Girls Soccer, Softball, Swimming, and Track.

Recently the athletic director and interested faculty members joined with the PTSA to form the Lowell Sports Foundation, a non-profit entity, whose sole purpose is to raise funds to support the various athletic activities at Lowell. The Board consists of four members: the athletic director, a teacher/administrator, a PTSA member and an Alumni Association representative.

Incentives Through Scholarships And Awards

Individual students with a 4.00 GPA are recognized each semester by being named to the Honor Roll and are given a Principal's Award Certificate. Seniors with a 4.00 GPA are recognized at the graduation ceremony.

Each year students are given an opportunity to update their transcripts with awards earned in school. Registry teachers record this information on the high school transcript.

An "Honors/Awards/Achievements" booklet is published yearly. It lists all the accolades received by students and teachers during the preceding year.

Students are encouraged to read the weekly Senior Bulletin, search the Web and check out the printed materials in the VICCI Center which offer a myriad of scholarship information of all kinds.

Each senior receives a special Senior Bulletin each week which lists scholarships/financial aid opportunities, requirements and due dates. Some scholarships allow the student to self-nominate. Others require a selection committee nomination. Our VICCI Center volunteers, and our PACT volunteer assist the counselors to match students with scholarships, especially those who have a special interest group in mind.

Annually, the Alumni Association, the Lowell Counseling Department, and administration recognize a group of approximately 40 seniors by awarding them generous scholarships made possible through donations from alumni families.

Community Service

American Democracy classes require a 15-hour community service commitment that relates to the curriculum. J.R.O.T.C. requires community service, and the T.I.E.S. program has students volunteering in a local elementary school. The Volunteer Club has 200 members who do community service on and off campus. The choir, band, and orchestra perform in the Bay Area community or at various functions. Finally, the Shield/Scroll Honor Society members perform many voluntary tasks for the Lowell community.

Evidence:

1. 2000-2001 SFUSD Lowell Application for Admission/Value-Added Supplementary Form
2. Ninth Grade Programming Packet/Program Selection Card
3. Subject Offering and Prerequisites
4. The Lowell "Announcer"
5. Career Day Program
6. List of Extra-curricular Activities, Athletics, and Clubs
7. Honors/Awards/Achievements Booklet
8. Weekly Student/Parent Bulletin
9. Tuesday Senior Bulletin
10. Lowell Student Handout
11. Lowell Academic Probation Policy
12. Digital High School Grant

Growth Needs:

1. Improve the student/counselor ratio to meet a 300 to 1 target ratio.
2. Increase teacher allocation to meet increased course requirements without reducing the existing Advanced Placement and elective programs.
3. Increase staffing and funding to support the Advanced Placement Program without compromising the core program.
4. Find permanent sources of funding to support the computer science curriculum. The Computer Science program should be expanded to include courses in computer application, programming and other subjects appropriate to this discipline.
5. Create a staff development program and/or guidelines to deal effectively with the special needs of SDC students.

B3: Upon graduation all students are prepared to continue the pursuit of their academic and occupational goals.

In accordance with the Lowell philosophy and ESLRs, the staff strives to prepare students to be disciplined and self-directed learners who can contribute their time, energy and talent to improve the quality of life in their school, community, state, nation, and the world. They recognize career opportunities across the curriculum. Most courses are rigorous and prepare students to succeed and pursue their academic and occupational goals after Lowell. Efforts are made to apply the same high expectations to all students throughout the curriculum.

Academic Goals

The extensive offerings of the Advanced Placement (AP) Program at Lowell amply prepare our students for college. In fact, many Lowell students start college with sophomore status. It is not uncommon for seniors to graduate from Lowell with five or six AP courses on their transcripts.

In 1997 the District proposed increasing the graduation requirement from 220 credits to 240 starting with the Class of 2001. The administration and the counseling staff knew that a majority of our students usually graduate with more than 220 credits. To ascertain this, the Lowell staff looked at the transcripts for the graduating class of spring 1996. The results of this analysis showed that a large number of students that year had graduated with credits ranging from 230 to 280. Only a small minority (10%) graduated with the required 220 credits. This is possible because we have had a standing policy of allowing students to take up to seven classes if their G.P.A. is 3.00 and many seniors are able to only take 5 classes since they have met all requirements and have accumulated the necessary graduation units.

All the major academic classes are college preparatory and 90% of the course offerings meet the University of California a-f requirements, as well as the California State University requirements. All teachers, counselors and parents expect students to seriously consider post-secondary education after high school. Lowell's close and historic association with the University of California at Berkeley, in particular, provides our students with many opportunities for information, role models, and participation in courses and programs, such as ATDP. Lowell students can be concurrently enrolled at UC Berkeley, San Francisco State University and City College of San Francisco through the XL Program for high school students.

The Lowell Counseling Department maintains close relationships with the UC system admissions offices as well as the California State University system and the Community College system in the Bay Area. Each counselor is assigned to act as a liaison to one of these college systems. In the Class of 1999, the graduating seniors indicated the following post-Lowell plans: 72.4% will attend a 4-year college; 24.2% will attend a 2-year community college; 39.3% will go to a UC campus; 21.8% will attend a Cal State school; 11.3% will attend other 4-year private colleges in California as well as out-of-state private and public colleges; 3.5% chose to delay their education for at least one semester. To assist students with their academic options and to make the proper connections and decisions regarding college admissions, the counseling staff coordinates activities, such as College Night, Financial Aid Night, Counseling Orientation Night, and New Parent Orientation Night. Most juniors attend a District-coordinated "college fair." African-American students participate yearly in a "Black Colleges and Universities Transfer Day" organized by City College of San Francisco.

All students are encouraged to attend functions to acquaint them with college offerings and admission procedures. Some African-American students participate in the annual Black College Tour. Each year the Counseling Department organizes a College Night presentation at the school where representatives from the UC, CSU and CC systems are invited to engage parents and students in discussions about the options available to them. There is also a Financial Aid Night presentation where financial aid officers and representatives from P.A.C.T. review financial options with parents and students.

During most of the fall semester (beginning early in September), college admissions representatives visit our campus throughout the day. Visits are coordinated, organized and advertised by the parent volunteers at the VICCI Center. Each Tuesday seniors receive a special Senior Bulletin which contains information about college admissions timelines, scholarships, visits of college representatives and much more. Any interested student can obtain this information and can talk to college representatives, apply for scholarships, and in general be ahead of the game regarding college admission timelines/procedures.

Lowell relies on both formal and informal reporting from parents, students and college reports to learn about post-graduate student successes. The Lowell counseling staff developed an informal questionnaire to get input from alumni who regularly visit the school. The results of this questionnaire revealed that 82% of the respondents took AP/honors classes, (1 to 20 honors and AP classes); 76% received full college credit for those classes; 76% felt those classes were advantageous for college admissions; 69% felt that the challenging academic classes were what best prepared them for college. They also mentioned other factors that prepared them well: self scheduling, developing study skills at Lowell, the teachers/counselors, sense of independence, and being made aware of their talents and abilities. When asked if there was anything Lowell could have done better, 82% responded "no" and praised their counselors and teachers.

Occupational Goals

Based on the 1999 Senior Survey, approximately 3.5% of Lowell's graduating class did not plan to go on to college immediately. Occupational guidance for this segment of the student population is provided by the CVE program (described in B1) and the Enterprise program. Career Day has become an annual event which expands each year. Speakers from a myriad of professions address the interests of college and non-college bound students alike. Some teachers attempt to make connections between course curriculum and career options, but more needs to be done in this area. Professional development may be needed to broaden the school's efforts at career awareness. An initiative is currently underway to offer career awareness forums as a collaboration between CVE and GATE.

Evidence:

1. SFUSD High School Graduation Requirements
2. UC "a-f"/Cal State University Requirements
3. VICCI Graduates Report
4. Tuesday Senior Bulletins
5. Counseling Orientation Night Agenda
6. CVE Course Offerings
7. College Night Flyer
8. Financial Aid Night Flyer
9. Black Colleges and Universities Transfer Day Flyer

Growth Needs:

1. The Lowell community needs to recommend that the SFUSD reevaluate the increased graduation requirements in Mathematics, World Language and Science.

POWERFUL TEACHING AND LEARNING

C1: To achieve the expected schoolwide learning results all students are involved in challenging learning experiences. Teachers utilize a variety of strategies and resources, including technology, that actively engage students and help them succeed at high levels.

Lowell High School, a public city-wide college preparatory school, challenges its students with a coherent and rigorous program designed to prepare them to be accepted into and succeed in the most demanding college programs. Parents and students are self-selected for their commitment to this goal and traditionally students meet entrance requirements to ensure that they are prepared to experience success within a rigorous academic environment. These factors determine teachers' expectations, the strategies, resources and technology they use, their lessons which require independent self-directed learning on the part of students, and the consequent development of higher order thinking skills to achieve the ESLRs.

The school's climate and structure are strongly department-based. In each department students are required to pursue academic excellence, demonstrate critical thinking, and apply skills and content to their personal lives or to projected professional futures. The District's development of proficiency goals is uneven; in some cases the District has developed such goals and in other cases the District has not. Within departments, individual teachers vary in the extent to which their strategies for helping students pursue excellence and develop critical thinking adhere to national and state content standards and existing District proficiency goals. The range of adherence within departments has not been analyzed. The recent revision of the schedule to include a common planning time will enable each department to work together on such content standards and goals in order to increase consistency among courses within a department in the context of academic freedom and mutual respect.

When the WASC/CDE rubric was received at the Focus Committee C meeting in March 1999, the consensus was that while all departments offer students challenging learning experiences, the departments vary in their practice of traditional and non-traditional methods. It was felt most teachers in the school move back and forth between the second and third columns in the rubric; some teachers, however, exemplify the fourth stage and model such innovations in their classrooms and in their assignments. In the use of technology, Lowell fell into the second stage; the Digital High School program will significantly advance technology literacy for both faculty and students. At times, teachers rely on students' access to technology outside of school to enhance their learning.

Before, during, and after classes, Lowell's teachers actively plan, direct, and facilitate student learning through a variety of individual and group activities. The Lowell teacher possesses expertise in subject matter, and is able in a variety of ways to communicate that expertise to students. Teachers lecture, generate and facilitate classroom discussion, and provide hands-on learning opportunities that incorporate both group and individual activities. Effective classroom management is usually evident, and teachers and students create classroom environments in which all are respected. Teachers, classroom and resource center paraprofessionals and some clerical staff facilitate learning by enhancing the physical space in which they work to stimulate and inform with visual displays, student work, and/or teaching aids.

A number of documents describe the school's existing curriculum. Each department describes the scope and sequence of its courses, and the departmental focus. Departments keep these in a Department Portfolio, which is used internally as a school and department resource document. The Department Portfolio also contains the departments educational philosophy, professional development involvement, examples of individual course descriptions, recommended instructional practices, procedures and assessment methods, and textbook information.

Teacher Expectation

Teachers provide course descriptions and syllabi during the first days of classes and distribute them to parents at Back-to-School-Night. A course description includes a summary of course content, policies regarding homework and attendance, testing and grading standards, behavioral expectations, and avenues of student-teacher-parent communication. A teacher's course description often includes rubrics, time lines, progress check-ins, and project and portfolio descriptions. Teachers use a variety of techniques to communicate these expectations to students; they may also post daily and weekly assignments in the classroom or issue written handouts. These policies, standards, expectations and practices vary among teachers, even for the same course within a department.

Challenging Learning Experiences

Across the curriculum, the above documents reflect the expectation that all students will show evidence of the ability to communicate effectively, to think conceptually, to exercise skills and use knowledge appropriate to the various disciplines. The methods of showing such evidence are varied. These include oral and written exercises, notebooks, class participation and discussion, quizzes, objective recall and essay tests, laboratory practical, unit reviews, essays and research papers. In addition to challenging learning experiences in regular classes, many students take the equivalent of a college program through the extensive Advanced Placement program. (There are 50 sections of AP courses.) Each semester a final exam schedule allows for blocks of one hour and fifty minutes per class so that students have the opportunity to write a comprehensive final exam or produce a final project.

Students with diagnosed learning disabilities who participate in the Resource Specialist Program are offered instruction with modifications which are expressly stated in each student's I.E.P. Such modifications include extra time for assignment completion, extended time for testing, abbreviated assignments. The addition of a Special Day Class for ninth graders in fall 1999 presents challenges for staff and resources. Given the needs and abilities of this latter group and Lowell High School's academic college preparatory mission, an examination of the appropriateness of these students' placement is recommended.

The Lowell community believes that in today's world a "challenging learning experience" needs to provide students with the opportunity to engage in meaningful exchange of ideas and perceptions with people of differing ethnic and racial backgrounds. This is especially true in the Social Science discipline. The recent changes in our admissions policy, has reduced the diversity within our student population, thereby decreasing the opportunities for meaningful multiethnic/racial discourse.

In order to encourage students to achieve at their highest level, freshmen whose report period grade is "C-" or lower in any subject are required to spend a number of mods each day in a resource center (fall 1999, two mods; spring 2000, three mods). Counselors and/or parents may request that students who are performing below "C" level in a class obtain weekly progress reports. The school periodically notifies students who are not meeting academic expectations and their parents of co-curricular ineligibility. The number of students needing help has increased as a result of the SFUSD's having made three years of mathematics and three years of science a graduation requirement. Expanded admission requirements at institutions of higher learning have compounded the problem. Students and parents are notified each semester if a student is placed on academic probation. Sanctions associated with academic probation, such as limiting participation in team sports and other co-curricular activities, are often not applied. The Deans are attempting to address this problem.

The faculty's growing understanding of the need to address different learning styles has resulted in assessment methods that increasingly include projects, presentations, problem-solving, and the application of developed skills in realistic academic and life situations. In one assignment for Architecture, for example, students use their analytical and creative abilities to identify and collaboratively resolve problems related to building site conditions, spatial relationships and proposed functions. Although such projects as these show faculty willingness to use alternative assessment mechanisms, individual teachers have expressed a need for an articulated course of professional development focusing on alternative assessment strategies.

Historically, career education has not been part of the mission of an academic department and the school's career education efforts are currently centered in the CVE program. An initiative is underway to offer career awareness forums as a collaboration between CVE and GATE. Professional development may be needed to broaden the school's efforts in this field.

Curriculum, instruction and assessment are all influenced by the allocation of our school's resources. The teachers' greatest resources are expertise and time. In addition to each teacher's assigned office hours, during which they give additional tutoring and support to students, teachers, counselors and administrators volunteer time to work on curricular issues.

Technology

Use of technology is evident in all disciplines:

- All students have access to the library with its electronic and research options. While only 15 library computers have Internet access, the library anticipates having 26 online computers by March 2000. Plans through the Digital High School propose to expand library Internet capability to approximately 45 machines.
- The MacLab in room 212 has 32 Macintosh computers with CD-ROM drives and Internet access which are available to individual teachers on a drop-in basis. The MacLab is also reserved by English and social science instructors to work with groups of students on computer tasks during class time.
- The Social Science Department is utilizing the "Speakeasy Cafe Program" in Women's Studies, where students post responses to discussion questions and engage in thematic discussions online.
- The Math Department uses TI 83 and TI 85 graphing calculators. This department has yet to integrate software into their curricular presentations other than in the advanced classes.
- The World Language Resource Center in room 209 has 12 PCs and 6 Macintosh computers; all of these computers have CD-ROM drives and 11 have Internet access. These computers are available to students for individual work, and in some cases have been incorporated into class assignments and projects. The World Language Resource Center also has 49 posts for listening and speaking practice and 2 videocassette players available for students to play tapes, and each World Language classroom is equipped with a monitor, a VCR, and an overhead projector.
- In Physical Education students use Polar heart-rate monitors to self-monitor their exercise and a Futrex machine to analyze body fat; they use computer printouts to score their fitness.
- The Science Department requires students to use a variety of laboratory equipment and computers to collect, graph and analyze data.
- The two journalism staffs, "The Lowell" and "The Lowell on the Web", use 16 Internet accessible computers and a variety of peripherals in room 251 to produce their print and electronic publications.

Currently, these are inadequate facilities for a school of this size. Teacher leaders in technology, in conjunction with administrators and representatives of the PTSA, are currently working on a grant for the Digital High School program. The PTSA is currently funding a "Bridge Program" provides faculty and other staff members experiences and skills to facilitate Lowell's introduction to the Digital High School program. The "Bridge Program" is expected to increase opportunities for staff training, access, and use of appropriate computer technology.

Evidence:

1. Philosophy of Lowell High School
2. Admissions materials
3. Curriculum guide
4. Department Handbooks and Evidence Binders
5. Course descriptions and syllabi
6. Classroom visit report forms
7. Rubrics
8. Student contracts
9. Probation/ineligibility lists
10. Student work of all kinds, including projects, tests and portfolios
11. Teacher office/tutoring schedules
12. Individual and/or department participation in professional organizations and workshops

Growth Needs:

1. The professional development in-services for the faculty needs to be more thematically structured.
2. There is a need for more innovative use of technology.
3. More tutoring services are needed to help all students successfully meet the SFUSD's increased graduation requirement of three years of mathematics and science.
4. The issue surrounding the academic requirements for entrance to the school should be promptly resolved so that parents, students and staff can plan their efforts appropriately.
5. The school needs to develop clear and consistent standards for academic probation and co-curricular ineligibility, and uniformly enforce said sanctions as appropriate.
6. The District and school should continue to explore ways to increase the diversity of Lowell's student body.
7. There is need for increased computer facilities with more access for students.

C2: All Students experience learning opportunities that emphasize higher order thinking skills and integrate applied content. Collaboration about teaching and learning occurs (1) among staff, (2) between staff and students, (3) among students, and (4) between school and community.

The Teaching Assistants Program (which involves 10% of the student body), the Inside Work Experience program (which involves 10% of the student body), the Library Training program and the Independent Study program are venues in which students demonstrate higher order thinking skills and integrate and apply skills and knowledge learned earlier. All of these programs also require students to direct their own immediate education; students decide what needs to be done, how it is to be done and to how to structure their time accordingly.

Departments differ in the ways they encourage the inclusion of higher order thinking skills in their assignments. The department evidence binders show the degree and the ways in which students are required to integrate and apply knowledge and skills to a variety of tasks. The District's development of proficiency goals for the state curriculum standards is uneven. The evidence binders reflect the extent to which the District has developed proficiency goals for the state curriculum standards and provided professional development to link these to the classroom.

Self-Discipline and Independent Learning

The Lowell community is committed to engaging students as the primary agents of their own learning; therefore, each pupil is actively involved in the learning process.

- Self-scheduling, introduced with the Lowell Plan in 1969, requires students to take the initiative for planning and designing their program of study. Within the parameters of graduation requirements, students select preferred courses, faculty and class meeting times. Choice and freedom develop responsible learners.
- Students are expected to initiate consultations with teachers during the teachers' office hours as needed. Lowell students are encouraged to see counselors on a drop-in basis, in addition to responding to counselor requests for conferences.
- The number of students assigned to each counselor is a factor that limits access.
- Members of the California Scholarship Federation provide individual tutoring to students who request help.
- Elected representatives of students plan and execute most co-curricular activities, including interviewing and contracting the services of vendors associated with co-curricular events such as dances.
- The school's official Web site, "Lowell Online", is largely the work of students. A subcommittee of the SAC, Lowell Online, oversaw the design of the Web site. This Web site provides information on admissions, counseling, class scheduling, links to teacher Web sites, "The Lowell" (the electronic version of the school's award winning newspaper) and other areas of interest.
- Students actively make use of the many resources available to them in the Lowell Library and resource centers as they prepare projects and papers. The librarians each year solicit from faculty information about resources needed to augment materials used in classes precisely so that students will be able to complete tasks independently.

One can observe Lowell students leading a class or directing an activity in large or small group settings.

- In some social science classes, students integrate 15 hours per semester of service learning at a community organization.
- In all science courses students must set up labs; this includes organizing, cleaning equipment, obtaining supplies executing the lab, and analyzing results.
- In the Journalism program elected student editors-in-chief run day-to-day operations; students select their own story topics and work largely independently in teams to produce their work.
- This is especially evident in the JROTC program in which all lower division classes are taught by upper class cadets; the JROTC cadets also provide CPR training to physical education students. In this way cadets show themselves to be creative and critical thinkers, effective communicators and productive citizens
- Students are seen being directly involved in their own learning in the visual and performing arts programs where student performance is evident among musicians, singers, dancers, actors, set builders, sound and light technicians, among others. Through these activities students pursue excellence, show themselves to be creative thinkers, effective communicators and positive citizens while applying learning to benefit their personal lives.

Higher Order Thinking Skills

In all classes, in both traditional and innovative courses and across the curriculum Lowell students are expected to demonstrate higher order thinking processes. This expectation is communicated to all through emphasis on critical skills, content knowledge and problem-solving at all levels, and reinforced by the sequential nature of the curriculum. Examples include:

- Studio Art, in which students bring to bear skills in lettering, use of a limited color palette and specific media to designs a postage stamp.
- Cooperative Vocational Education (CVE) students work in private businesses and in government offices. Students utilize the business and computer skills they learn in class at their job sites. The CVE instructor and the employers

communicate about the students' progress. Employers suggest curriculum component that would improve students' performance on the job. CVE students study marketing and business ethics case studies in class. CVE essay exams require students to apply concepts learned in class to a new case situation. •Modern World, in which students do research about a current event, using both newspapers and magazine articles on the same subject. After summarizing the issues, students write a critical analysis that details the issues, questions that remain unanswered, writer bias, and connections to other issues. •Scope, Sequence and Coordination, a two-year integrated science course in which students build original toys and explain physics principles. •Honors and Advanced Placement courses in all departments require a "B" or better for student advancement to the next sequenced class.

Collaboration

The PTSA and the Lowell Alumni Association each collaborate with administration and faculty and other staff to improve the quality of education through participation in the Site Advisory Council and by supporting curricular initiatives through generous grants for professional development and acquisition of equipment and materials such as the equipment provided each World Language classroom (see Technology, above); whiteboards donated to the mathematics and World Language classrooms; the Link-to-School Computer Project which provides e-mail and other Internet access; and the voice mail system that provides parents and teachers and students a reliable and convenient medium for communication.

Instructional planning by individual teachers and departments includes creation and implementation of a range of student learning experiences. Instructors teaching the same level course often collaborate informally on course development, planning, and assessment.

Individual teachers working together informally have created courses or modified course content to reflect economic, social, environmental, and technological changes and issues of gender, race, and ethnicity. For example, writings by women and authors of color were integrated into the English curriculum, and journalism has been incorporated into the English core; environmental issues were included in the science program; English and social science teachers developed a multicultural reader; and world language teachers discuss ways of integrating proficiency and communicative goals into the language department offerings. math teachers collaborate on lesson development and test design. The Math Department created a new geometry class for ninth graders thereby establishing another path for students with the goal of taking calculus in high school. To implement fully proposed courses or certain types of lab work in the Science Department, there is a need for additional and more appropriate space; this is currently the focus of a planned new academic/science wing.

Additionally, some departments are informed of their students' results on national standardized tests (PSAT and SAT I and II), or of university assessments of their graduates through such mechanisms as reports from the University of California Subject A Writing Examination, California State University math and English assessments, and the Golden State and Advanced Placement exams. The English Department's emphasis on the writing process is an example of how the faculty, through participation in such institutions as the Bay Area Writing Project has responded to such information. Historically, similar information was available for world language, but in recent years information on graduates has been limited to Advanced Placement results.

Collaboration will be facilitated by a schedule revision that will allow for professional meetings and planning time during the school day. Common planning time will provide teachers the opportunity to apply curriculum across departments, develop career strands and coordinate community involvement projects.

Evidence:

1. Department Handbooks and Evidence Binders
2. Course descriptions and syllabi
3. Classroom observation report forms
4. Rubrics
5. Student contracts
6. Student work of all kinds, including projects, tests and portfolios
7. Individual and/ or department participation in professional organizations and workshops
8. Notices of grants by or applications for grants from PTSA and Alumni Association
9. Minutes: Site Advisory Council, Staff Council, Administrative Council, Union Building Committee, Departmental Meetings, WASC committees

Growth Needs:

1. The school needs to develop and implement a regular time for planning, communication and professional development.
2. The school needs to develop systematic interdisciplinary coordination, management practices, and units of study to expand student achievement and faculty collaboration through cross curricular activities.
3. The District and school should discuss the appropriateness of the placement of Special Day Class at the school
4. The professional development in-services for faculty needs to be more thematically structured, for example, mainstreaming SDC classes.

C3: Students routinely use a variety of resources for learning and engage in learning experiences beyond the textbook and the classroom.

Across the curriculum at Lowell High School students engage in learning experiences beyond the textbook and classroom by doing independent research in the library and on the Internet, entering contests in various academic subjects, going on field trips into the community and beyond, organizing, attending and participating in performances, assemblies, and athletic contests, listening to outside speakers, and participating in academic club and community service learning activities. These activities require students to be self-directed learners who allot time outside of their studies in order to apply what they have learned and to benefit the larger community. They also afford students opportunities to show that they are knowledgeable and skilled across the curriculum.

Lowell High School's library is one source of research facilities in the school. The library is open from 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m., and during this time all Lowell students have access to the print collection of 21,000 titles as well as to five computer stations to access the card catalog, 15 stations with Internet access for research and another eight stations for word processing and using academic software programs. In addition, the library has purchased data bases to support research in several curriculum areas, which may be accessed via the Internet from any computer station in the school and from students' home computers. Most departments assign their students to use these facilities for a variety of purposes. Students have supervised access to other computer facilities scattered throughout the school and departments.

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Many students in English classes use the library and the Internet to find literary criticism, background information on authors, films, myths, news stories, and outside reading. Through the English Department, students enter contests, such as the NCTE, publish a literary magazine, organize a poetry club, and run the school's paper recycling program, and oversee the California Scholarship Federation tutoring program. Alumni grants have brought actors from the Ashland Shakespeare Festival into the school and poets from California Poets in the Schools into World Literature I classes for the 1999-2000 school year. In addition to helping students become effective communicators, these activities may help them recognize career opportunities. In producing one of the nation's top-ranked high school newspapers and Web sites, Journalism students: attend and review plays, films, book and poetry readings; attend workshops; state and national conventions; and hold summer journalism internships. Students also participate in (and sometimes dominate) local, state and national journalism contests; attend meetings of public groups; conduct interviews with members of the community, politicians, and local, national, and international experts on story topics; and listen to guest speakers including professional journalists and politicians. Students have also been interviewed by the local and national professional press about issues affecting Lowell and students in general. The newspaper and Web staffs compete with the professional press in their stories and one staff member has testified before the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to detail her work.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS DEPARTMENT

The Visual and Performing Arts Department affords its students many opportunities to learn outside the classroom and requires them to contribute their time, energy and talents to improve the aesthetic quality of life in the school and community, as well as recognize career opportunities. Many participate in the San Francisco Youth Arts program by submitting work to the Youth Arts Festival. In the music program, five or six students participate every semester in the American Composers forum to take composition classes and have their works performed by professional ensembles. All music students are required to attend and write a critique of at least one concert every semester, and about two hundred music students receive one or more free and discounted tickets to attend "main stage events" around the city. San Francisco Performances bring artists to perform in music classes and the San Francisco Symphony Education program funds double bassist Barry Green to coach and direct the double bass players in both the Advanced and Symphony Orchestra classes. Every year 15 students participate in the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences "Grammy in the Schools" career day at San Francisco State University. Lowell student musicians--the Symphony Strings, the Advanced Orchestra and the String Quartet--perform for numerous school, District and community events throughout the year and during the holiday season. These students exhibit self-discipline and accept individual and group responsibility in coming together for these performances. They participated in the 1998 CMEA Competition and a Musical Theater Workshop with Melissa Carrey at the School of the Arts and worked with visiting artists from China, Chanticleer, barbershop quartets, as well as opera singer Rodney Gilfrey.

Students of the visual arts explore career opportunities by visiting museums every semester, attending San Francisco State University gallery tours and talks given by faculty and artists, participating in the annual Elks Club Contest and National Portfolio Day, and receiving information about jobs and internships at art organizations. Likewise, ceramics students learn to market their art by selling their works to raise money for materials. Architecture students participate in the Annual High School Design Competition sponsored by the San Francisco Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. In the Architecture program, guest architects critique student design projects and speak on career opportunities in design. Under teacher supervision outside school hours, students have designed and painted the murals that grace the walls of Lowell's Art Wing. Their art, which is displayed in cases around campus is enjoyed by the many members of the community who visit the school.

Students interested or enrolled in drama and stagecraft show their abilities as effective communicators by putting on a play in the fall and a musical production in the spring. Twice yearly, 75 students compete at Ohlone College. All drama students have the chance to recognize career opportunities by participating in acting workshops and attending two performances at the American Conservatory Theater each year. Students produce a yearbook which is on display in various locations on site. Lowell's approximately 100 forensic students show their self-discipline and abilities as effective communicators by competing frequently in city, state and national contests sponsored by the Lions, Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs. The community has recognized the achievements of students in forensics with the many trophies that are on display in the cabinet outside room 135.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The department offers students an extensive physical education program. Athletic teams and spirit groups participate in sporting events and enter state and national competitions. Likewise, Lowell's teams and team members show their ability to accept individual and group responsibility by regularly distinguishing themselves in city, region, state and national contests. Students use the library and departments' computers to evaluate their fitness through the Futrex (Fitness) program and demonstrate an interest in mental and physical health. Some teachers assign students projects using the Internet to become self-directed in researching new game activities, dance company programs or upcoming performances. Students also participate in physical education activities beyond the classroom as teaching assistants, team managers, and umpires. Many sports team members benefit the larger community by volunteering at city events, such as the Bay to Breakers. Dance students attend workshops at San Francisco State University and participate in master dance classes. In the JROTC program, 80% of the learning occurs outside the textbook and classroom. Students demonstrate mental, physical and social health by successfully competing in regional and national events. Community service, weekend adventure outings, and an annual encampment are also a part of Lowell's JROTC program.

WORLD LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

Across the department students use their language skills beyond the classroom to benefit the community. Each spring the individual language clubs in the department organize Kermesse, at which each language group performs and sells typical food and crafts in order to raise money for supplementary equipment and materials. This activity affords the diverse cultural and linguistic student body the opportunity to work together for a common goal. In addition to organizing the Kermesse and cultural celebrations for Lunar New Year and Cinco de Mayo, world language club members perform community service by sponsoring clothes drives for citizens in Russia or working with the elderly in convalescent homes. They participate in community events, such as the Day of the Dead activities at Mission Dolores, the Cherry Blossom Festival in Japantown and San Francisco's Chinese New Year's Parade. They practice their language skills by learning to order in restaurants that serve the food of the culture they are studying. Language students compete in the following; the National Russian Essay Contest, French competitions and essay contests, the Language Academy's theme contest in Spanish and Italian, and various Latin, Filipino, and Korean language competitions. The Language Lab gives students access to videocassettes and CD-ROMs, Internet and e-mail to research news, cultural events such as Oktoberfest, cultural sites and a variety of events. Through the Internet, world language students explore foreign travel and research writers from other cultures. Examples of guest speakers heard by language students include a Mexican film-maker, an Argentinean student, a former Peace Corps volunteer, Chinese educators, the German consul, a student from Milan who gave an Italian cooking lesson, officials from the Filipino consulate, a member of the Filipino Lions Club, speakers on Chinese New Year's customs and the immigrant experience in America, and Lowell alumni speaking on the uses of the various languages in college and the world. Hebrew

students have listened to speakers from the Jewish community and have participated in international exchange programs. Many language students attend the International Film Festival and exhibits at local museums. These activities allow students to be effective communicators in foreign languages and to appreciate the diverse cultures they are studying.

MATH DEPARTMENT

Math students participate in contests sponsored by the California Math League, the UC Santa Barbara contest, the Bay Area Math Olympiad, the Polya Competition at Stanford University, the American Math Competitions, the American Invitational Math Exam, and the American Math Olympiad. In addition, Lowell's weekly bulletin includes a challenging "Math Problem of the Week". They have access to original documents and the Internet in the computer labs in rooms 262 and 334 throughout the day. Students are asked to find real world applications outside of class for the math they have learned and have heard about from visiting Lowell graduates and engineers. The Math Club contributes their talents to the school by tutoring other students, and they develop their creative and critical thinking skills by working on challenging math problems.

SOCIAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

The Social Science Department exposes students to a wide array of educational experiences beyond the textbook and the classroom. Service Learning, which integrates a community action program with academic learning, is central to many of the American Democracy classes and various other courses. Independent research is also a focus of many courses, requiring significant outside investigation at local public and university libraries, community resources, and through the Internet. To encourage students to consider a variety of viewpoints, significant amounts of outside readings, speakers, and field trips are incorporated into the classroom experience. Field trips to the Mayor's Summit on Women, the local art museums, ACLU Student Rights Conference, Glide Memorial Homeless Program, and a Buddhist monastery are just a few examples of field trips taken in the last year. Also, several mayoral candidates spoke at Lowell, including the current mayor, Willie Brown, and many of these presentations were broadcast on local television. Lowell's American Democracy classes, along with a public high school in Virginia, participated in a three way audio-visual connection for an interactive discussion, with Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer, who is a former Lowell graduate. The department also supports a variety of activities outside of the classroom. Some of the most prominent include mock trial, Model United Nations, Volunteers Club, student government Forensics, Close-Up's annual trip to Washington, D.C, and the Junior Statesman of America program. The department sponsors Shield and Scroll, Lowell's student honor service society.

SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

Science students have access to the Internet in room 212. The District does not provide money for field trips, but students do collaborate with professors and students on projects at UCSF and UCB; they participate in the Jason Project (National Geographic/NOAA) and compete annually in the University of San Francisco Science Competition. Physics students annually compete for a place on the U.S. and International Physics Teams, and attend Physics Day at Great America. Biology students do outside planting, and environmental testing, and use biotechnology equipment. They also do science demonstrations for parents and the community at night and listen to guest speakers. Science students attend science fairs and enter the Toshiba Competition. Students contribute their time, energy and talents by helping the S.F. Recreation and Parks Department on habitat restoration at Lake Merced.

CAREER AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

All Lowell students may do a college/career exploration using the Embark.com Internet program set up on the computers in the VICCI center. This program surveys student's interests, suggests careers for exploration, and provides information about careers and colleges. The career advisor in the VICCI center assists all students with career guidance, resumes and job placement, which includes: private business positions, City wide Mayor's Youthworks government internship program, and school District Summer Youth Employment and Training Program. Career Day is a collaborative effort between the CVE teacher and other staff members. By bringing speakers from various professions onto campus, students are invited to apply the concepts taught in their classes with the professions that exist in the real world. The CVE teacher also advises teachers of job opportunities for students related to their subjects. CVE students participate in field trips to marketing trade conventions in order to experience marketing in action. Examples include: the international gift show and the international auto show.

SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The Special Day Class for ninth graders at Lowell High School began the fall of 1999. The students who attend this class are classified in special education as disabled due to learning and behavioral handicaps. They have access to a variety of resources for learning. At the beginning of the semester, students went through an individualized introduction to the library with the assistance of a paraprofessional. The goal of this orientation was to teach SDC students appropriate social behavior in situations both inside and outside of this classroom. It was also our goal to provide these students with an understanding of available resources to aid in future academic assignments. We use a variety of curriculum to address issues of a special needs population. Students have been taken to the grocery store for a community based outing, on nature walks to Lake Merced to discuss science topics, to local parks for group counseling sessions which promote a sense of community and group identity. Learning experiences beyond the textbook and classroom have an academic and social importance to SDC students. Each SDC student receives an orientation in the computer lab and attends field trips. The orientation of these field trips is both academic and social, e.g., the Exploratorium to learn science, a theme park to promote and reward appropriate social behavior. Our present budget for field trips is limited. The class may have to do fund raising in order to facilitate future outings. It should be noted that many of the students in this class come from economically disadvantaged families and therefore have no personal funds for extra or co-curricular school activities.

It is clear from all of this information that there are many extra-curricular learning opportunities available to students; however, unless a person is involved in a particular activity, he will probably know nothing about it, and, as a result, students may not be informed of such activities across the curriculum. It would be helpful to have clearer and more uniform publication of all extra-curricular events, competitions, and performances. Improved communication about these activities would increase public recognition for student achievements in addition to their grades and encourage students to be healthy, involved citizens.

Evidence:

1. Mission Statement/Philosophy
2. Curriculum Guide
3. Department Handbooks
4. Lowell/District Handbooks
5. Course descriptions and syllabi
6. Notice of grants by or applications for grants from PTSA and Alumni Association
7. Departmental Questionnaire created for question C3
8. Evidence binders and evidence boxes
9. Lesson plans
10. Classroom visit report forms

11. Rubrics
12. Grading Records
13. Student Contracts
14. Progress report forms
15. Minutes: Site Advisory Council, Staff Council, Administrative Council, Union Building Committee, Department Meetings, WASC committees
16. Admissions materials
17. Probation/ineligibility lists
18. Programs of recognition ceremonies: awards, graduation, student performances
19. Multi-cultural awareness activities and projects: Kermesse, La Raza, BSU and other assemblies
20. Student work of all kinds, including projects, tests and portfolios
21. Individual and or department participation in professional organizations and workshops:
22. Teacher office/tutoring schedule

Growth Needs:

1. The school should explore ways to assure a common awareness of all out-of-class activities regardless of one's involvement.
2. All students should receive recognition for their achievements in addition to their academic grades.
3. There should be more contact with university departments.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

D1: All students receive appropriate support to ensure academic success

Lowell has arena self-scheduling, which enables students to select their own classes and teachers. All students may enroll in any class for which they meet the course requirements with the exception of Special Day Class ninth grade students. While classes appear to reflect the diversity within the school population, at present there is no computerized program that tracks the ethnic breakdown of class enrollment. Therefore, we manually computed the ethnic enrollment of AP and honors classes (see Appendix pp. 29-33). While many ethnic groups are represented in AP and honors classes, there are still certain ethnic group which are not represented.

In examining the structures that exist for student support, it was noted that subject and registry teachers are the first line of support since they are the only ones who see the students on a daily basis. The teaching staff at Lowell endeavors to provide students in need of assistance with one-on-one help whenever possible. Every department and teacher maintains an open door policy with office hours to aid students with problems or issues regarding academic subject matter. Students are encouraged to seek help from their subject teacher or another teacher within that specific department before academic deficiencies occur. According to a staff survey (in which there were 88 respondents) 53 teachers tutor everyday while 27 teachers tutor at least once a week. All math teachers are available for tutoring during at least one mod of their daily schedule; many tutor more often than one mod daily. Nevertheless during focus group discussions and in interviews with students on academic probation, some students indicated they felt uncomfortable seeking help/tutoring from teachers. This sentiment poses a barrier to student-teacher relationships and an obstacle to students seeking teachers' assistance. This barrier can greatly affect academic success.

In addition to the support provided by teachers, Lowell currently has in place the following programs that support students in achieving academic success: California Scholarship Federation (CSF) tutoring program, Math Peer Tutoring, the resource centers, the Summer Bridging Program, and library and media services.

CSF provides peer tutors and one-on-one teacher tutoring in most subject areas: mathematics, science, and foreign language. Support is personalized to meet the need of the tutee. A teacher sponsor acts as coordinator of the CSF program to ensure the success of the program as well as of the students that the program serves. In fall of 1999, CSF had 175 tutor volunteers. According to the program coordinator, the numbers of students requesting tutoring services was expected to exceed 800 for the fall 1999 semester alone. The CSF Tutoring Program while providing needed services lacked consistency in scheduling of tutors because the demand for tutors exceeds the existing supply. Clearly, there is a need for additional tutors. The ratio of tutors to tutees indicates that many tutors may be seeing as many as 4-5 students each. There is a great need for science and math tutors, especially in geometry and higher-level mathematics.

Currently, Lowell has three resource centers which are designed to meet the academic support needs of students. The Math/Science and English/Social Studies Resource Centers provide study space as well as paraprofessional staff to help students in the above subject areas. Currently, the

resource centers are used to provide additional study time for those ninth graders that received grades of C- or below in any of their classes. The resource centers provide tools for support, but lack a program of instructional assistance either individually or in groups. The paraprofessionals who staff the centers work to provide and maintain a quiet learning atmosphere but are obviously not able to tutor multiple subjects beyond their level of expertise. In the fall of 1999, a Computer Resource Center was established to provide more computer resources for student usage. The Computer Resource Center is used to provide additional study space.

As of October 1999, 75 students were on academic probation and 58 additional students were in danger of academic probation. Students on academic probation or in danger of academic probation have been targeted as a population "at-risk". In a plan to support the aforementioned students, the resource centers' efforts were expanded. The current plan is to network students with resource personnel who will coordinate support efforts by arranging for tutors, making connections between subject teachers and students, and providing study skills support. Additionally, the progress of each student will be monitored by the resource paraprofessional. This plan is too new for this committee to evaluate its effectiveness, but it appears that it will address the needs of students at risk of academic failure and will strengthen the relationship between students and staff.

The Lowell library has approximately 21,000 book titles and 25-30 periodical titles available for student use. In addition, the library has 23 computer stations available for students; 15 of these stations are equipped with Internet connections. Parents conducted a library survey in the fall of 1998 which revealed some problems with library services. According to the survey, only 2% of the students surveyed felt that it was very easy to get help locating library materials and only 3% felt it was very easy to get questions answered. Four percent felt that computers were readily available, and 1% found books and periodicals that met their needs. Furthermore, students indicated they would like to see increased hours of operation, places for collaborative work, and improved computer access. The library has received a \$10,000 PTSA grant to expand and upgrade its facility. The library staff is currently purchasing additional book titles based on faculty recommendations. Additional shelf space and computer stations are part of the PTSA plan. When the project is completed, the library will have 35 computer stations, 26 of these will have Internet access.

In the summer of 1995, the Summer Bridging Program was created out of a need to orient and prepare incoming freshmen for the rigors of the academic requirements of the school. The Summer Bridging Program requires students take English/social studies and math/science. In addition to academic preparedness, the summer program orientates students to the physical campus and enables students to meet new classmates. Over the last three years, the ratio of students to teachers has increased by one-third. These classes have experienced overcrowding to the point that pertinent curriculum has not been covered because of the large student numbers and the four week time constraint.

Beginning in the fall of 1996, Lowell began admitting students under the value-added admissions process. In order to increase their chances for success, these students were placed in the Strategies for Success program, which had a curriculum tailored to improve their performance in all academic subjects. In the Student Survey of 1998, 59% of the students who had taken the Strategies for Success course felt that the program did not effectively prepare them for success at Lowell. In the fall of 1999, the Strategies for Success classes were discontinued because of District budget constraints. Still there is a clear need to have a program in place to support those students admitted with the value-added status.

Students identified as Special Education learners are supported within the Special Education Department as described in Curricular Paths B1. Services are provided to support the needs of these students such as special scheduling of students' classes to facilitate the planning and

scheduling of other support services (e.g., therapy sessions, pullout support) and special classes, such as tutoring and college-preparatory classes. Two Special Day Classes (SDC) were added to Lowell's student population in the fall of 1999. These students were mainstreamed into classes in two subject areas, physical education and visual and performing arts. San Francisco Unified School District placed these students at Lowell without providing adequate support and without providing sufficient time for the staff to prepare for these students. The staff has expressed concern about the lack of teacher training and professional development provided to support the faculty to help facilitate the inclusion of SDC students into the Lowell community.

Evidence:

1. WASC Parent Survey
2. WASC Student Survey
3. Staff Survey
4. Library Survey
5. WASC School Profile
6. Counseling lists and reports
7. Student Interviews
8. 1998-99 School Accountability Report Card

Growth Needs:

1. Create places where students can work together.
2. Develop ways to encourage students to seek the help they need in their academic courses during their free mods.
3. Increase teacher training and professional development in the areas of teaching students with specific needs, sensitivity training, and working with at risk populations.
4. Develop a system to evaluate the resource centers.
5. Explore ways to reduce class size in the Summer Bridging Program
6. Develop a system for assessing the curricular paths of subgroups within the student population.
7. Make the library more student centered.

D2: To what extent do students have access to a system of personal support services, activities, and opportunities at the school and within the community.

To the extent resources allow, Lowell, either directly or in collaboration with community agencies, offers a wide variety of support services, activities, and opportunities for students to pursue their varied interests. These services include but are not limited to school club organizations, the VICCI Center, the Counseling Department, the Peer Resource Program, and a host of grade level and whole school events.

Lowell's Counseling Department offers a wide range of services to help support students during their time at Lowell. In the beginning of the school year, the Counseling Department distributes copies of the Lowell and SFUSD Ninth-Grade Handbooks (in English and Spanish) to all ninth graders. The Lowell Handbook gives a complete overview of Counseling Department services. Counselors provide a similar overview to parents at PTSA meetings. Separate counseling

publications list places where students can get tutoring and other services. Finally, the Counseling Department publishes a weekly bulletin for all students, and a special senior bulletin containing information about college and college visits. Both bulletins inform students of activities, scholarships, internships, and summer programs.

In general, staff members are aware of support services available to students. When they have specific questions, they consult the dean of students or a guidance counselor. Staff members who see students in academic trouble can refer students to resource centers, tutoring programs, or require students come in for help during office hours.

With the exception of the two new SDC classes, students have access to a wide range of academic opportunities according to their individual needs, interests, and skills. Counselors advise students on course selections and career choices as well as personal and academic problems to the extent that their time allows. After considering each student's ability and academic record, counselors work with students and their families to ensure that each individual is prepared for college.

Currently, 51 clubs and an extensive sports program provide students with extra-curricular and co-curricular activities before and after school hours. Such activities support social growth. All clubs contribute to the enhancement of students as socially responsible individuals. Each club includes a community service component as part of the clubs' activities. Student clubs organize outings and a host of events that student members enjoy (e.g., speeches, field trips, guest lecturers). Lowell's clubs and sports teams collectively reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the school population although the diversity may vary from club to club or team to team. According to the Student Survey, over 60% of Lowell students participate in extra-curricular activities at least once a week. Focus committee members noted that the demanding academic curriculum or other responsibilities outside of school (such as part-time jobs, home needs, etc.) might prevent all students from more fully participating in extra-curricular activities.

The VICCI Center offers college counseling and college-related information, as well as career information. A cadre of parent and community volunteers work in four-hour shifts as frequently as three times per week in Lowell's VICCI Center, helping students with their college applications. Students are introduced to the VICCI Center during Freshman Orientation. In addition, each junior registry is given a tour of the VICCI Center and all juniors receive a college information packet. The VICCI Center provides a wealth of other information, such as information on financial aid and scholarships. A separate PTSA meeting to cover the topic of financial aid with college representatives from area colleges. Throughout the year, hundreds of college representatives visit Lowell. The VICCI Center also offers information on taking the P.S.A.T. and other college entrance requirement exams.

Lowell has a Career and Job Counselor who runs a highly successful Career Day. Curricular choices include Cooperative Vocational Education (CVE) classes as a work-study option for students. In addition, Enterprise, a non-profit organization that trains students in interview skills and in job searching, operates a program on our campus.

Students attending Lowell encounter a number of pressures including those related to the demanding academic curriculum. Dealing with problems that arise in the course of adolescence can lead to stress and problems with coping. Students coping with the pressures of stress, drugs, violence, and other adolescent related issues have access to several sources of support. The Peer Resource Center, a jointly funded program of the San Francisco Unified School District and San Francisco Education Fund, offers several services to students. These services include a peer education program, drop-in services for students with problems that they want to discuss, and a peer advocate component for students who want a one-on-one mentor. Last year, Peer Resource students held 81 workshops with 1900 participants; conducted weekly support group sessions to

a core group of 177 students; counseled 95 students in 340 counseling sessions; and gave weekly student education presentations to over 450 ninth grade students. With the aid of interns, the OMI Family Health Center delivers mental health services on campus as needed. In addition, counselors can refer students and their families to appropriate physical and mental health services that are available in San Francisco. Student government plays an active role in planning events and dances to relieve stress. Careful planning of such activities is done so as to minimize conflicts with major exam dates, i.e., AP exams, finals.

Lowell has a Health Team that presents a series of Health Awareness Days including the Great American Smoke-Out, Red Ribbon Week, and World AIDS Day. There is an ongoing condom distribution program which operates in conjunction with the San Francisco Medical Society. Until spring 2000, there were very few physical health services provided on campus (either directly in collaboration with outside agencies). In February 2000, the District assigned a nurse two days a week to help Lowell address the students' health care needs.

Numerous student events are planned throughout the school year. There is Spirit Week, which is held at the end of September, and the Winter Faire held in December. There are culturally based events such as the Filipino-American Assembly, the Chinese/Lunar New Year Assembly, the Black History Month Assembly, and the Cinco de Mayo Assembly. Furthermore, Kermesse, which is a festival of all cultures, is held every spring.

There is no formal procedure of informing the staff of the support services available to students. However, most staff members are aware of the support services that do exist. The staff is not systematically made aware of District or community services that may be available to students.

Evidence:

1. WASC Parent Survey
2. WASC Student Survey
3. WASC School Profile
4. Staff Interviews
5. Focus Group Discussion

Growth Needs:

1. Increase staff access to information regarding services available to students, their families and staff
2. Provide staff development opportunities that focus on students issues that are non-academic (e.g. mental and physical health).

D3: The school leadership employs a wide range of strategies to encourage parental and community involvement.

Due to the large student population and the limited financial and physical resources of the school, there is a real need for parent and community involvement in school. Parent and community involvement is strongly encouraged by the school. In the Parent Survey conducted in the fall of 1998, 85% of the respondents felt that "The school encourages me to be involved in my child's education." Ninety-six percent agreed with the statement "Parents are offered the opportunity to become involved in school improvement activities, open house, PTSA general meetings, visits to the school." Parents sit on the Site Advisory Council, the WASC Leadership Committee, and the Academic Affairs Committee (and many other PTSA committees). In addition, parents, alumni parents, and community volunteers staff and operate the VICCI Center

and Book-to-Book Center. Parents support athletics, performing arts, clubs and fall and spring Beautification Days. Parents are participants in the Student-for-a-Day, and Career Day activities. Yet there are some parents who because of work schedules and language barriers are not able to be as involved as they would like. The most popular response (38%) to survey question "Have you attended Lowell PTSA meetings?" was "I would like to, but I cannot." Finally, there are major policy questions where parent input is necessarily limited, such as school budget decisions, teacher union issues, etc. Still, parent and community involvement can be seen in many areas of the school.

Lowell employs a wide means of communication to inform its large and diverse community of opportunities to participate. At the beginning of the school year, all ninth grade students receive the Lowell and SFUSD Ninth-Grade Handbooks (in English and in Spanish) which provides an overview of school services. Students are expected to share the Handbook with their parents. Additionally, parents can obtain up-to-date information on school meetings and events from the Lowell web site. The Lowell PTSA communicates with parents via the LowellLight newsletter, which is published several times a year and is mailed to every student household. In fall 1999, the PTSA purchased a voice-mail system for the school. The school utilizes the District automated telephone system to phone reminders to parents about specific events such as the Fall and Spring Open House. There is a weekly Parent/Student Bulletin, but many students do not share bulletin notices with the parents. Finally, there are frequent personal communications by the Counseling Department, teachers, and other faculty members which keep parents, informed of their child's academic and social performance, upcoming school events, and activities which need parent involvement. Lowell has a diverse parent population, yet only a handful of parent notices are translated into Spanish, Chinese, or other languages. Most communications are in English only.

In the WASC Parent Survey, the majority of parents felt there was a good communication between staff and parents (#9). However, with a student population of over 2500, only 489 parents, or roughly 20%, participated in the survey that was mailed home. When problems arose, 65% of parents felt they had access to teachers and administrators. Only 48% of the parents felt informed about negative events related to sex, drugs, and alcohol.

Lowell students participate within the Lowell community in a variety of ways. Through the student government, students have a voice in the decision-making process. Students participate on the Site Advisory Council, the PTSA, and the WASC Leadership, Student, and focus committees. Students are actively engaged in a number of community service projects throughout the city such as T.I.E.S. (Trainees in Educational Service) which provides tutoring services to students at a nearby elementary school.

The Lowell community relates to its immediate physical neighborhood as well as the city at large. A neighborhood representative sits on the Site Advisory Council, and Lowell administrators have attended meetings of the Neighborhood Association to address concerns about noise, traffic, litter and parking. Currently, two police officers work closely with Lowell's two deans to prevent crime and provide security. While these officers cover other schools in their district, the deans feel they have a good working relationship with the SFPD and that assistance is readily available at any time.

Evidence:

1. WASC Parent Survey
2. WASC Student Questionnaire
3. WASC School Profile
4. Various school documents (e.g. the Athletics and Extracurricular Activities at Lowell High School insert to the Lowell Night for 8th Graders)

Growth Needs:

1. Provide translation of printed/electronic materials in a wider range of languages.
2. Improve communications with parents by posting Weekly Student/Parent Bulletin and Senior Bulletin on the Lowell web site.
3. Inform the community on campus issues with regard to issues of sex, violence, alcohol and drugs.

D4: The human, material, and financial resources, as well, as facilities available to the school, are sufficient and effectively used to support students in accomplishing the expected schoolwide learning results (ESLRs).

The Lowell students and staff are its most valuable assets, but the committee felt that in many instances, the staff is overworked. Currently, many Lowell students find it difficult to get enough individual attention from teachers; those teachers who have 30-38 students per class are equally frustrated with the tasks associated with such large classes. In addition, there is a great disparity between teacher-class loads. In past years, elective classes with low enrollments have been allowed to stand. Such instances have a negative impact on class size. The administration is working closely with the UBC to make sure class sizes are more uniform throughout the school. As a result of the teachers' and the students' busy schedules, it can be difficult to find common time for tutoring, advice, or just the chance to get to know one another as individuals. Similarly, because guidance counselors handle a caseload of hundreds of students, students sometimes feel only procedural questions are appropriate for a counseling appointment. On the WASC Parent Survey, 57% of parents said that the number of counselors at the school was inadequate. There is a high student to counselor ratio. Lowell's official counseling ratio for 1999-2000 is 3.5 to 2,538.

School leadership utilizes some resources that are available in the larger community such as volunteers from the San Francisco School Volunteers, PTSA, and student teachers from Bay Area universities. Upward Bound, PACT, OMI, and the Enterprise Program are some examples of additional community support organizations that help students. While many of these resources are utilized, there is no formal mechanism for identifying and communicating available resources to the staff. Funding from the state and the District is inadequate to provide for students fulfilling their greatest potential. There is no systematic program that informs the school community of state, federal, or local resources that might be available to the school.

While multiple resources are utilized to support the student, non-counseling staff may be unaware of the resources/services the student may be receiving. This communication gap reduces the effectiveness of the support system which is in place.

The committee unanimously agreed that Lowell High School is in a physical state of disrepair and filth. Among the many complaints registered by students, parents, and staff alike are that: blackboards are not cleaned regularly, desks are falling apart, dirt and dust are accumulating in prodigious and unhygienic quantities; and both faculty and student bathrooms are often without bare essentials. According to the WASC parent and student surveys, there was an overwhelming consensus that the school is in dire need of repair, remodeling, cleanup, and improved appearance. This concern outranked every other. In the free response section of the WASC student questionnaire, the plea to fix Lowell's "dirty, rundown campus and facilities" was echoed again and again at every grade level. The bathrooms in particular seem to be in urgent need of rehabilitation. The numbers of janitors and repairmen that are necessary to maintain acceptable standards of cleanliness and repair in the building are insufficient. Getting buy-in from the

student body to help maintain/keep clean their school premises is very difficult. Requests for students to police areas are often met with "I didn't do it"; or with "Why do I have to pick it up;" or by glares followed by reluctant compliance. Students need to be made aware that they are part of the solution to this problem.

One major cause of both the uncleanliness and disrepair of the building is simply that it is in use continually from 7 in the morning until 8 or 9 in the evening on weekdays (night school), on weekends for special events (such as, testing, and weekend schools), and for summer school. Lowell's present building was built to hold 1800 students but presently accommodates 2,500 plus students through the use of 23 temporary bungalows. Lowell's "temporary" bungalow classrooms have been in continuous use for years. The library accommodates only a hundred or so students at one time, a woefully small number given the hundreds of students who are not in classes during various periods of Lowell's modular day. Resource rooms for English, math and social studies are literally bursting with students at the beginning of each term, and thereafter seem only to be used by freshmen. Consequently, during their free periods, students struggle to find clean and quiet areas in which to study.

Not only does all this produce excessive wear and tear on the physical plant, but it also leaves very little time to undertake larger-scale cleanup operations, such as washing floors. This situation is of course exacerbated by the decrease in custodial staff from eight to five people in recent years. Custodians have little time to do more than sweep and empty trash in the classrooms. Difficulties continue to arise with keeping up with the amount of graffiti around the school. Small amounts of graffiti is immediately painted over by custodial staff, but larger amounts of graffiti must be removed by a District work crews. The same is true for all major maintenance. The more major maintenance problems, such as painting, defective ceiling tiles, holes in walls, wiring problems, etc., have to be handled through District channels, where delay-producing conflicts often arise between the Building and Grounds Department and the Facilities Planning and Construction Department.

Classroom space is at a premium; generally every classroom is utilized every mod of the day. Currently, 23 bungalows substitute for permanent classrooms to support the large student body at Lowell. Most of these bungalows are scheduled to be replaced by a new science wing, which will house 10 new classrooms. These 10 new classrooms will not alleviate the classroom shortage dilemma.

Lowell's library is also in need of remodeling and upgrading. In the Parent Library Survey of fall 1998, students noted the inadequacy of the library collection and its lack of relevance to the needs of the classes, the level of physical discomfort (lack of ventilation, loud noises coming from the adjacent courtyard, lack of comfortable seating). As of fall 1999, the library has received a PTSA grant to improve and update its collection. There is plan to additional shelf space and more computers.

The school has been conditioned over the years to make do with scare resources. The community views resources as inadequate. Lowell lacks sufficient funds to support xeroxing by the Advance Placement Program and the school. Supplies and services which directly support the classroom are rationed (such as reproduction services). Some TV/VCR's are in poor shape. There is a small budget for repair of equipment, e.g. overhead projectors are rationed and underfunded. Major repairs must be done by the District which translates to lengthy delays before equipment is returned to working condition. Basic supplies such as pencils, pens, dry erase markers, chalk, notepads, and tape seem scarce. Most teachers have to supplement school supplies with their personal funds.

Severe textbook shortage impedes student learning. Many of Lowell's textbooks are outdated or in bad condition. Teachers frequently request PTSA grant monies for supplementary reading

materials not on the state framework's listing. Oftentimes, teachers are forced to buy instructional materials with their own money or abandon the teaching of certain curriculum because appropriate materials are not available. Teachers often have to photocopy teaching material to compensate existing shortages. Some subject areas such as science, English, and art receive very little for supplies. In the fall of 1999, there was a \$1.50 per student allocation for art supplies and \$2.75 per student for science supplies. The current instructional supplies allocation in the District's budget for the school allots approximately \$8.00 per student. The textbook budget is stretched rather thin. Monies to pay for AP and elective class texts comes from the District's general site allocation. In recent years, District adopted textbooks have not been sufficiently challenging for Lowell students. Many teachers have retained and continue to use previously adopted texts to avoid using books they regard as inappropriate. Consequently, a valuable financial resource, the state textbook allocation, is being spent on books that teachers do not use or do not want to use. Books which fail to challenge our students do not support Lowell's ESLRs.

Recognized needs are discussed with District staff members, and specific requests for assistance are taken to the District for support, but that support is not always forthcoming. Too frequently the District policies and decisions have been viewed as contrary to the best interest of the school, i.e., the District's unyielding policy on the use of textbooks that do not suit the needs of our student population or the District's refusal to fund AP textbooks.

Evidence:

1. WASC Parent Survey
2. WASC Student Survey
3. School Budget
4. Staff Interviews
5. WASC School Profile
6. Focus Group Discussions

Growth Needs:

1. Remodel and repair the school facilities.
2. Seek additional funding sources for materials and supplies.
3. Institute school-wide systems to deal with the general cleanliness of the school (e.g. custodian accountability, student responsibility for clean-up).
4. Additional support staff and faculty.

ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

E1: Teachers employ a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate students and to modify the curriculum and instructional practices. Students use assessment results to modify their learning to enhance their educational program.

Teacher-based Assessment Strategies:

Teachers employ a wide variety of assessment strategies to monitor student achievement. Students are expected to be critical, self-directed learners, and for the most part, they are.

The greatest challenge in implementing an assessment strategy and the other techniques is the follow through required to revise subsequent lesson plans and to address the result of the exams and quizzes. The teacher's mantra "less is more" is essential to allow reteaching material to the entire class. Reteaching often requires the revision of goals for content coverage. Requiring students to have read novels by Christmas must give way to the teacher's commitment to reviewing evidence of the students' performance.

Multiple editions of tests and quizzes are required to accommodate special schedules and to assure test security. Special attention is required of both teacher-made and standardized assessment instruments to account for students with limited English proficiency or learning deficiencies.

After the focus group discussed the use of essay exam question, the consensus was that Lowell's educational goals need to be addressed in terms of assessment economics (an economics of time). For example, an essay exam that has Lowell's level of difficulty takes a minimum of 15 minutes to grade. A teacher with 100 students will devote a minimum of 25 hours per week grading papers in addition to the time required for class preparation. Each subject, whether biology, history, or English has some type of assessment cost, be it preparation, presentation or evaluation. These costs need to be part of each discussion concerning the allocation of resources. Achieving certain goals may require more AP classes, more electives, different core classes, readers or teaching assistance.

The Role of Standardized Testing:

Exemplars of Lowell's achievement in standardized tests are the Advanced Placement exams, the SAT, the STAR, and Golden State Exams. These tests form a communication link with the outside world and provide an internal monitoring system for the improvement of the instructional program. This is evidence of self-directed learners and positive and productive citizens who are able communicators. One of the main reasons Lowell places large numbers of students in excellent universities and attracts talented students is that Lowell students perform well on standardized exams. Student performance constitutes a powerful internal dynamic by which the campus is managed. These exams are part of the transmission lines through which the school's identity is communicated. Every member of the student body, faculty and administration benefits from the historically excellent performance. Everyone has a strong stake in continuing this tradition.

In a world attempting to distribute educational opportunities equitably amongst members of diverse cultures, standardized tests are a source of institutional discrimination. Standardized exams are not predictors of success outside of school. They are good predictors of performance within educational institutions. Lowell traditionally has placed a great emphasis on faculty-generated priorities, where individual teachers in departments determined which subject areas were to receive emphasis. The emphasis on performing well on the standardized exams potentially subordinates the goal of faculty direction by consuming significant periods of instructional time and reducing time for teaching subject matter. The faculty and administration find themselves caught up in the dilemma of instructional time versus testing. Standardized exams, specifically the STAR and its predecessor, the CTBS, are not used extensively to drive curriculum evaluation and revision. Because Lowell scores in a very high percentile, these results are used to monitor individual student achievement and adjust programs accordingly.

In addition to the assessment measures mentioned, Lowell also uses student-driven peer evaluation of projects, student portfolios in visual and performing arts, social science, science, and physical education.

The Impact of Technology on Student Research:

Across most of the curriculum, essays are the preferred method of assessment. The academic skills in these fields are founded in precise verbal communication. Thus, the idea of assessment is greatly weakened unless the material can be written effectively by the student. In almost all fields at Lowell, sciences and liberal arts, research papers are introduced at the freshman level and become a vehicle for teaching research, expository writing, and bibliographic skills. The fact that all the students are working on these projects places pressure on library resources. Evolving demands on library resources have led to a new form of research work utilizing the computer, a hybrid approach where the librarian is definitely necessary for both technical advice and verifying the validity of resources but in which the actual documents being searched for are electronically stored. Lowell students are making progress in learning to discriminate between research using sources that may be easily accessible but lack authority and those often found with the help of the librarian from which a citation with credibility can be derived. The growth of sources on the Internet challenges faculty members and students alike to be up-to-date and informed on both the advantages and pitfalls inherent to Internet research.

Other Assessments:

Students do evaluations of classes for their teachers and these are used to improve teaching methodologies. Some of these evaluations are posted on Lowell's Web page to promote more informed decisions about methodologies most appropriate to ensuring student achievement.

In the course of developing the WASC self-study, teachers were able to provide feedback to their colleagues about the correlation between their classroom activities and the expected schoolwide learning results. In addition, teachers modeled strategies for other faculty members that could be incorporated into their lessons. Teachers involved their students in discussions of the relevance and linkage of the ESLRs and actual practices in the classroom and the school. This is especially true in defending points of view, exemplifying good citizenship through community-based learning, and communicating benefits of their experiences to schoolmates.

Based on the focus committee's assessment of department binders, the committee members felt that departments need more time to align course standards and rubrics across each department.

In an attempt to improve instructional practices, many teachers and administrators attend professional development workshops, seminars and alike to observe best practices via WASC visitations, California Distinguished Schools evaluations, Advanced Placement test development, grading, teacher workshops, Golden State Exam development and grading, and PRAXIS (professional assessment for beginning teachers).

Self-scheduling is another form of course/teacher assessment. Successful teaching methodologies in the classroom are reflected in the pattern of teacher sign-ups on self-scheduling day. Students choose teaching methodologies that are most appropriate to their individual learning styles. Students on the focus committee expressed a concern that inequities exist within the self-scheduling process which negate self-scheduling as an effective assessment tool. Namely, there are parameters controlling teacher choice, e.g. class size; some students select classes/teachers they perceive to be "easy"; students select

"favorite" teachers; other students use the system to try to obtain an "illegal schedule". All of these factors impede the school's ability to use the self-scheduling process as an effective assessment tool.

Evidence:

1. Classroom observations
2. Departmental binders
3. Teacher/student interviews
4. State frameworks and content standards
5. SFUSD content and performance standards
6. Course expectations/ grading standards
7. Administrative Council proceedings
8. *The Lowell* (student newspaper)
9. Digital High School Proposal
10. SB 1882 Professional Development proceedings
11. School initiatives
12. Skill based contests and competitions
13. Golden State Examinations (GSE)
14. CTBS/STAR tests
15. Principal's Expectations for the faculty
16. SFUSD/UESF Teacher's Contract.

Growth Needs:

1. Teachers need to align site standards and rubrics for each course, in each department, and across the curriculum. A set of rubrics for basic assessment would be helpful so that student work can be evaluated in a timely and efficient manner.
2. The short and long term values of standardized tests needs to be communicated to staff, parents and the students.
3. The school needs to look critically at the self scheduling process.
4. Training for faculty and students on the critical evaluation of Internet sources needs to be provided.

E2: The District and the community regularly review student progress toward accomplishing the expected schoolwide learning results.

The Student/Community Profile, results of standardized tests, report cards, telephone communication, e-mail are all used to report student progress in a timely and meaningful way. The District sends reports of tests disaggregate in numerous ways to be of value to students, parents, teachers and counselors.

The Lowell Summer Bridging Program generates a large body of anecdotal and academic information on the incoming ninth grade class. The focus group noticed that none of this data is readily available to staff in the regular school session. Interviews with summer school teachers and students reveal that a body of information, student portfolios, attendance, anecdotal evaluations of students and co-curricular and field trip experiences are gathered and turned in to the summer school administration. The group is aware that a summer school

binder of the entire summer school is compiled and sent to the summer school office. However, it would be beneficial to all if the ninth grade experiences were organized as a separate section and shared with counselors and teachers of ninth grade students. This information would promote more timely intervention from existing support services and development of new assistance and enrichment paradigms.

Regarding utilization of standardized testing results, the focus group found Advanced Placement results are immediately used to refine teaching methodologies and materials in AP courses. However, the consensus of the staff was that the STAR and GSE results are not disaggregated in a way as to be of true benefit to students, care givers, counselors, and subject matter teachers. For certain groups within the school, GATE-identified, Resource Specialist Program, and students admitted through various special admissions processes, more information should be generally be available to celebrate achievement and devise interventions that target specific students.

The availability of post secondary data on the success of Lowell graduates needs to be placed in the hands of department chairs, counselors, administrators, parents and others for scrutiny. The availability of such information would be used to modify and fine-tune instructional practices to ensure student achievement in college preparatory courses.

Evidence:

1. Classroom Observations
2. Departmental binders
3. Teacher/ student interviews
4. State frameworks and content standards
5. SFUSD content and performance standards
6. Course expectations/ grading standards
7. Administrative Council proceedings
8. *The Lowell* (student newspaper)
9. SB 1882 Professional Development proceedings
10. School initiatives
11. Golden State Examinations (GSE)
12. CTBS/STAR tests
13. Advanced Placement examination results
14. Individual and/or department participation in professional organizations and workshops

Growth Needs:

1. Summary student evaluations from the Summer Bridging program need to be collected and disseminated to the staff at the beginning of the fall semester.
2. The District should be requested to disaggregate standardized test scores in ways that would support curriculum adjustment.

E3: The assessment of expected schoolwide learning results drives the school's program development and resource allocation.

To date, the allocation of school resources has been on an ad hoc basis. Teachers who have taught at Lowell for several years have been in a better position to obtain resources than others less familiar with past practices. As a consequence of staff turnover, the consistent introduction of new programs and initiatives, and the complexity of funding sources (Site money, GATE, EIA/LEP, AP rebates, Lowell Student Association, PTSA, and the alumni),

the focus group felt that it was time to open the budgetary process to a body representative of all the stakeholders in the Lowell community. The group voiced a hope that the Site Advisory Council (SAC), duly trained and provided with information in a timely manner could make the site budget process more responsive to the general needs of the school. The group further noted that the SAC has had two opportunities in past years to allocate funds as a result of a block grant from the state. With training of its members and alternates, this committee could make the process less closed and more effective.

ESLRs are new to the school and ways to incorporate their assessment into the school program are in the process of being developed in and implemented by each curricular department.

Evidence:

1. Classroom Observations
2. Departmental binders
3. Teacher/student interviews
4. Alumni association grants
5. PTSA grants
6. Administrative Council proceedings
7. *The Lowell* (student newspaper)
8. Digital High School Proposal
9. SB 1882 Professional Development proceedings
10. School initiatives
11. Block grants
12. School budget

Growth Needs:

1. The SAC should be the vehicle for bringing equity to the distribution of resources between the core and elective programs.