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**ABSTRACT**

This publication sets forth quality criteria that describe a high-quality school in the following areas: (1) English/language arts; (2) mathematics; (3) science; (4) history-social science; (5) foreign language; (6) visual and performing arts; (7) vocational-technical education; (8) students' paths through high school; (9) integrated skills; (10) instructional practices; (11) special needs; (12) improvement processes; and (13) the culture of the school. Each criterion consists of a narrative statement portraying the central features of high quality. This statement is followed by a series of concrete descriptions indicative of this quality. (JD)

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# Secondary School Program Quality Criteria

CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Bili Honig—Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Sacramento, 1985

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# **Secondary School Program Quality Criteria**

**Prepared under the direction of the  
Office of School Improvement  
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<sup>1</sup>The titles and locations given for the persons acknowledged here are those that were in effect when the publication was being written.

PREFACE

The Secondary School Program Quality Criteria is the first in a proposed set of three program review documents. The Secondary School Program Quality Criteria and the companion documents, Handbook for Conducting a Secondary Program Review and the set of State Department model curriculum standards, frameworks, and handbooks, have been designed to be used either separately or together. The program review documents are described as follows:

1. The Secondary School Program Quality Criteria--the quality criteria used to judge the effectiveness of the program for students
2. Handbook for Conducting a Secondary Program Review--the procedures and process for conducting a formal review and self-study
3. State Department of Education model curriculum standards, frameworks, and handbooks--resources used by team and school staff during the review process

The Secondary School Program Quality Criteria includes quality criteria that describe a high-quality school in 13 areas:

English/Language Arts  
Mathematics

Students' Paths Through High School  
Integrated Skills

Science  
History-Social Science  
Foreign Language  
Visual and Performing Arts  
Vocational-Technical  
Education

Instructional Practices  
Special Needs  
Improvement Process  
The Culture of the School

Each criterion consists of a narrative statement portraying the central features of high quality. This statement is followed by a series of concrete descriptions indicative of this quality.

The document, Handbook for Conducting a Secondary Program Review, provides a complete discussion of the process and procedures of program review and assists school staff and parents in conducting a self-study as well as preparing for a formal review.

Finally, the last set of materials will serve as resources available to assist curriculum planners, school leaders, and reviewers in program improvement efforts.

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Improvement

The national educational reform movement has as its central focus the adequacy of a high school education for preparing students to succeed in three ways:

- Compete successfully in the marketplace of the next decade.
- Contribute as literate citizens to the survival of our democracy.
- Participate fully in the cultural, ethical, and political life of our civilization.

The major voices of the reform movement--Ernest Boyer, John Goodlad, Theodore Sizer, and, in California, Bill Honig, Superintendent of Public Instruction, among others--all speak of the need for substantive changes in both the content and the processes.<sup>1</sup>

These four leaders of reform agree not only on why there must be changes in secondary education but also on what those changes should be. The most fundamental of these shared convictions is the belief that a high school education should offer a common core of knowledge that all educated citizens should possess. This core, they maintain, is both utilitarian in that it prepares students for postsecondary work and study and altruistic in that it helps each student develop in character and citizenry.

The common themes of reform shaped through this nationwide movement for excellence in education have been captured in the descriptions of high-quality education contained in the Secondary School Program Quality Criteria. The themes that are included in the criteria are of three basic kinds and have to do with (1) curriculum or what students are expected to learn; (2) students and the teaching and learning processes in the classrooms; and (3) the organization and the culture of the high school.

### The Curriculum

There is a common core of knowledge that all educated citizens should possess. By opening vistas for students into the broad achievements and issues of civilization, this core will empower the students to participate in and benefit from a higher-quality life. This core includes cultural literacy, scientific literacy, knowledge of the humanities, and appreciation of the values that undergird our society. In addition, through this core curriculum, students should develop fully the skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, calculating, and learning and the ability to think critically. All students should have access to the core curriculum. Most students are expected to succeed in this rigorous academic curriculum.

<sup>1</sup>For a sample of the work of these four educational reform movement leaders, see:

- Ernest L. Boyer, High Schools: A Report on Secondary Education in America. New York: Harper and Row, 1983.  
 John I. Goodlad, A Place Called School: Prospects for the Future. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1983.  
 Bill Honig, "The Educational Excellence Movement: Now Comes the Hard Part", Phi Delta Kappan Vol. 66 (June, 1985), 675.  
 Theodore R. Sizer, Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1984.

As students proceed through high school, care is taken to ensure that the paths they choose are directly related to their career, personal, and social goals; that bridges exist to help students move from one path to another as they mature and develop through their high school years; and that students are able to take the necessary prerequisite courses for their chosen paths.

Vocational education courses complement and reinforce this academic core; they provide alternative paths through the core in which the content is comparable to core courses. In addition, vocational education courses make students aware of different career options, help students evaluate various career choices, and prepare them to select a career.

### Students and Instruction

Students are engaged in their learning tasks. There is an emphasis on active, lively learning, with students discussing, questioning, and exchanging ideas; working at creating, constructing, and producing projects that give depth and significance to the curriculum; and using concrete materials and original source documents. Teachers use questioning techniques to encourage students to extend their thinking and articulate their reasoning. The subjects of history, literature, and science are used to engage students in discussions of events and ideas, in reflections about their own lives, and as links to other curricular areas. Teachers recognize the need for students to become independent learners; they take into account the knowledge students bring to each learning situation, build on it, and challenge the students to apply what they know in new situations while they steadily increase each student's own responsibility for learning.

Students with special needs--limited-English-proficient, educationally disadvantaged, and gifted and talented students as well as students receiving special education instruction and services--have access to the core curriculum. The special services students with special needs receive support their success in the core curriculum. When remediation is required, instructional strategies are modified; or alternative learning settings (other than pull-out programs) are developed so that students are successful in learning the regular curriculum. The regular curriculum is not replaced by a diluted, simplistic, remedial curriculum. Each professional staff member acknowledges and accepts his or her responsibility for the students with special needs, including the students at risk of dropping out of school. Staff members help students build a bridge to alternative learning settings and back again as appropriate to the student's career goal path.



## The Organization and Culture of the School

The principal, vice-principals, and departmental chairpersons are knowledgeable about and provide guidance in curriculum and instruction. Their focus is on professional educational issues rather than the management of the day-to-day functioning of the school. Time is recognized as a precious commodity, with meeting time spent on educational issues rather than on housekeeping matters.

The department works as a collegial organization, with teachers conferring about students, planning together, and sharing curricular information and instructional techniques. Teachers find their experience at school professionally rewarding. Staff development activities help teachers expand their curricular knowledge and refine their instructional techniques through effective adult pedagogy.

Teachers and administrators believe that every student can develop morally, intellectually, culturally, and emotionally to his or her potential. They further believe that an educated society is the sine qua non of a democracy. These fundamental beliefs are evidenced in how they care about their students, what the students are and are not learning, and how they are developing; how they work together, plan and conduct instructional activities, and carry out schoolwide activities; and how they communicate with students and among themselves. They are committed to high-quality education for all students, working at program improvement as individual, collectively as departmental members, and as a total school. Throughout the school there is open, candid recognition and discussion of the problems of the school on the part of staff members and collective and collegial efforts to eliminate the problems in order to increase the effectiveness of their school program.

These themes or attributes of a high-quality high school program emerge and re-emerge in the criteria contained in this Secondary School Program Quality Criteria document. The 13 criteria include seven curriculum standards and six schoolwide standards. The criteria for English/language arts, mathematics, science, history-social science, foreign language, and visual and performing arts reflect the major foci of the model curriculum standards for each curriculum area adopted by the State Board of Education in January, 1985. In the self-study conducted prior to a program review, staff members are expected to use the model curriculum standards in addition to these program review criteria in order to analyze the current effectiveness of each curriculum area.

Although these criteria were developed for the program review process, their greatest value to a school lies in their use in analyzing the various aspects of the school's program. Because the criteria are high-quality standards, they represent the standards toward which school staff members should be striving as they work to improve the quality of education experienced by their students. Staff members in all high schools should find these standards essential in setting program quality goals, for use as a yardstick in measuring progress toward those goals, and for use as indicators of direction for improvement. The secondary school program quality criteria should receive their greatest use as tools for planning program improvements.

The English/language arts program plays an important role in developing the ability of all students to communicate in the English language and to use critical thinking skills.

Students gain English language proficiencies by reading a central core of literary works that focuses on the significant issues of human civilization. The skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking are developed in a systematic study of

these enduring works. Students actively use their language arts skills to comprehend and develop the ideas and values that these works embody.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

The English/language arts curriculum is comprehensive, systematic, and developmental. The curriculum is organized around a central core of literary works selected from among the great essays, poems, short stories, novels, biographies, dramas, folktales, and speeches that preserve and embody the diverse cultural heritage of the United States. English teachers use literature both (1) as the medium for teaching the fundamental human, ethical, cultural, and political values that underlie our society and connect us as human beings; and (2) as the means for teaching reading, writing, listening, speaking, and thinking skills at all grade levels. The curriculum is developmentally sequenced so that all students gain an increased understanding of the works of literature that are studied and are better prepared to read and comprehend similar works on their own. The literature curriculum has three parts, encompassing a core, an extended, and a recreational/motivational reading program. The core program consists of those works that are intensively studied and discussed on a classwide basis. The extended program consists of similar works selected by students with the teacher's guidance. The recreational/motivational reading program develops the reading habits of students and instills in students the lifelong pleasures and rewards of reading.

Students engage in instructional activities and assignments that encompass significant human issues and values embedded in the best works of both traditional and contemporary literature. The students confront themselves, their ideals, problems, values, and interests in the light of the insights that the great works of literature offer. They regularly respond to literature through interrelated activities in writing, speaking, and listening.

The reading curriculum is extensive. District and English departmental staff members have selected a core reading list and have organized the list by grade levels to provide for range, complexity, and balance in style, content, issues, and genre. Teachers involve the students in sequentially designed lessons to enable them to encounter more difficult literature and to become aware of human issues. Students have access to a wide range of literature through the school's library. They are encouraged and expected to explore literature and language collections through adequate library hours and support services. Students are challenged to greater achievement and substantial mastery at each grade level and in all classes.

Reading, writing, listening, and speaking are integrated in a total learning program that emphasizes higher order thinking skills. Students learn to read with understanding, listen with purpose, write in their own style, speak with influence, and handle the proper conventions of standard English--all within the context of studying the central issues embodied in literature. Students develop their thinking skills as they connect their reading, writing, listening, and speaking to the great thinkers of the world.

Students write every week. They learn to write clear, cogent, concise prose connected to the literary works they study. They learn to use the writing process to prewrite, draft, revise, and edit and to help them develop their own style of writing. All teachers teach writing as a process with a purpose. Students show greater sophistication in their writing as they mature.

All students take at least three years of English/language arts courses in which they systematically develop their ability to read, write, listen to, and speak the English language and become more knowledgeable about their cultural heritage through reading literature. Courses are offered for students who want or need to gain greater proficiency in English for postsecondary or career goals. Opportunities are also available for students with limited English proficiency.

Teachers interact with each other regularly at departmental meetings designed to provide continuous staff development and program renewal. Departments are organized so that curriculum and instruction are coherent and developmental. The integrity of the curriculum is maintained across different sections of the same course. Each teacher is committed to a systematic program that emphasizes progressive proficiency in the skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking as well as the higher level thinking skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The chairperson and teachers periodically evaluate the program to determine how well the instruction achieves substantial literacy for the students, the integration of writing, comprehension, and speaking, and the contextual acquisition of vocabulary and technical skills. Based on these evaluations, changes are made in the curricular and instructional methods used to achieve higher standards of students' achievement. The principal and departmental chairperson often interact to develop plans and promote activities that support departmental efforts for teachers to grow professionally.

- The curriculum is centered on a core of great literature that includes a variety of reading materials from myth to drama and from essay to biography. Literature is used as a medium and means to teach:
    - The significant human, ethical, cultural, and political issues and values in life
    - The skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and thinking
  - Teachers focus attention on the central human issues raised in literary works of the world in lessons that:
    - Focus on selected values central to human civilization.
    - Challenge the students to achieve greater understanding of the issues and their importance to the human condition.
    - Develop the students' maturity in thinking about the issues and articulating their ideas about them.
    - Engage the students in a reassessment of their own values based on those embodied in the literature.
  - Students regularly take part in discussions, panels, debates, and speeches on topics related to the central human issues found in the literature.
  - Students show increased facility for high-quality oral presentations as they practice their speaking skills at each grade level.
  - Students actively respond to central literary works through activities such as integrated writing, speaking, and development of listening skills.
  - High-level thinking skills are included in the integration of the development of skills and the study of literature. Students in all classes develop their ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate what they are reading.
  - Students learn to read with deeper comprehension and with sophistication, discussing the nuances as well as the larger meanings of a variety of literature.
- Students:
- Confront the complex issues in the literature through analysis and summarize the central themes.
  - Engage in comparing and contrasting activities.
  - Discuss various interpretations of the work and make inferences concerning the author's meaning.
- Draw conclusions and make judgments.
  - Appreciate the techniques of effective expression in the literature.
  - Learn about structural components as well as characterization and point of view.
- Original whole works make up the major part of the program rather than anthologies or watered-down versions of the works.
- Students demonstrate increased writing competence by learning and using the writing process in descriptive, narrative, informative, and analytical forms of writing. They experience a writing program in which they engage in:
  - Prewriting and writing their first drafts
  - Sharing their drafts with other students and getting feedback
  - Revising and editing their drafts
  - Evaluating their writing according to standard conventions and criteria
- Students write to develop their own style. They are familiarized with word processing and other computerized writing tools. Students' writing is published in the classes, school, and community.
- Students develop their listening skills as a result of direct teaching activities by the teachers. Students practice critical listening in a variety of settings (small and large groups and one-on-one situations) and learn to distinguish between the emotional and factual content of the messages they receive.
- Teachers use direct instruction to teach the conventions of the English language--grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and vocabulary--when those conventions have not been acquired through reading.
- Students show greater maturity in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and thinking as they progress from the freshman to senior years of high school. Teachers make more rigorous and challenging demands and expect more sophisticated skills from the older students than from the younger ones.
- Students are required to take at least three years of course work that develops proficiencies in reading, writing, listening, and speaking the English language. Elective courses and courses for students with limited-English proficiency are also provided.

- English teachers meet regularly to ensure that their courses are coherent and developmental for students progressing through high school, that the courses meet university requirements for the college bound, and that students are developing sufficient skills in English/language arts, in thinking, and in understanding, interpreting, and appreciating literature.
- English teachers periodically evaluate their program in order to determine the extent to which:
  - Students are becoming culturally literate.
  - Instruction and assignments integrate writing, comprehension, and speaking.

- Students are improving in their use of vocabulary and technical skills as evidenced in their writing and speaking.
- Specialized courses in the language arts are available to students who have specific interests or needs.
- The principal actively supports department goals and efforts for professional growth on the part of the faculty.

## MATHEMATICS

The ability to think mathematically is becoming more and more essential for all members of our highly complex and technological society. To accommodate changes in the way and extent mathematics is used, it is essential that students develop the ability to discern, conjecture, reason, invent, and construct; in short, that they be able to think mathematically.

The mathematics curriculum helps students gain this kind of mathematical ability first, by emphasizing basic mathematical concepts and second, by emphasizing higher-level thinking skills and

The primary objective of instruction is to develop the students' mathematical understanding--the ability to discern mathematical relationships, to reason logically, and to use mathematics techniques effectively. All students master the major concepts and skills of each strand of mathematics: number, measurement, geometry, patterns and functions, statistics and probability, logic, and algebra. The curriculum is organized to enable all students to learn these concepts and skills. Teachers in the department are committed to developing in each student this kind of mathematical understanding.

The curriculum continually reinforces and extends the previously learned mathematical concepts and skills through problem assignments that require the use of these concepts and skills in a variety of new situations with real-world settings. The relationships among concepts and skills, both old and new, are stressed in all classes so that students can connect new or extended concepts to what they already know. The students experience mathematics as a cumulative, unified subject.

Students learn problem solving as a process and experience the rewards of arriving at solutions through their own efforts. The thinking skills of problem solving are highly valued by both teachers and students. Each student takes an active role in problem solving. They systematically develop their ability to apply mathematical knowledge, skills, and experience to resolve new and/or perplexing situations.

Estimation is taught as a regular part of the instructional program. Students use estimation as an aid in computation, in problem solving to evaluate the quantitative aspects of situations, and to test the reasonableness of their conclusions.

Teachers and students routinely use calculators and computers in the mathematics classes. Calculators are used to decrease the time students must spend on computation and increase the time they spend on concepts and problem solving. The use of computers helps students explore, discover, and create mathematical relationships.

The primary focus in each course is each student's understanding and applying concepts rather than his or her ability to memorize rules and procedures. Instructional methods require interaction among students and between teachers and students to communicate

problem solving as a process. Requiring a new intensity of study, the mathematics curriculum requires students to achieve a depth of understanding that enables them to know why as well as how to apply their mathematical learning.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

mathematical reasoning and understanding. Students experience the fascination and excitement that mathematics provides through practical applications. Such applications engage the student in situations that reveal the way mathematics is used. Students have practical experiences in applying mathematics in other disciplines.

Teachers use concrete materials and real-world applications to help their students understand mathematical concepts and relate new concepts to those already learned. Students' understanding of concepts is enhanced by their use of concrete materials.

Instruction in each course covers the content planned for the course and is flexible enough to address the learning needs of each student. The mathematical knowledge of the students is regularly assessed so that specific areas of difficulty are identified and retaught as needed. Students who learn rapidly are given assignments of greater depth and extent. Students' performance in all courses is such that later courses in a sequence can be completed without extensive review of previously taught content.

The mathematics program offers alternative sequences of courses. There are sequences for students preparing for college, for honors and advanced placement students, for students ready to go beyond eighth grade curriculum but not preparing for college, for students who have not yet mastered the seventh and eighth grade curriculum, and for students who need individualized work in the elementary curriculum. Placement and counseling of students are based on thorough and ongoing diagnosis, with opportunities for students to transfer into a more appropriate sequence as their needs change. Students who need more time to master core content enroll in course sequences that allow for it.

The mathematics department meets regularly to discuss, plan, implement, and evaluate its program. The teachers and chairperson often interact to coordinate departmental objectives and collaborate on achieving the objectives.

Staff development activities aimed at improving instruction and students' achievement are held periodically, and the teachers are personally involved in the improvement process. Professional renewal is valued and recognized. The principal and chairperson often meet to collaborate on ways they will lead and support the raising of mathematical expectations among faculty, students, and parents.

## **Mathematics (cont.)**

- Students are regularly encountering new and unexpected situations, such as problems that can be solved with previously acquired skills but are different from and more complex than problems they have solved before in their mathematics classes.
- Students demonstrate their ability to think mathematically by their competence in constructing and inventing mathematical solutions to problems. They learn to:
  - Formulate problems.
  - Analyze problems and select strategies.
  - Find solutions.
  - Verify and interpret solutions.
- Students demonstrate the ability to use the following problem-solving strategies:
  - Estimate.
  - Look for a pattern.
  - Write an equation.
  - Guess and test.
  - Work backward.
  - Draw a picture or diagram.
  - Make a list or table.
  - Use models.
  - Act out the problem.
  - Solve a simpler but related problem.
- Teachers create a classroom atmosphere in which students feel comfortable trying out ideas; they model problem-solving behavior and encourage students to explain their thinking during problem solving. Students are encouraged to solve problems in a variety of ways and accept solutions in many different forms.
- Teachers utilize concrete materials and familiar experiences to assist students' understanding of mathematical concepts, to connect their understanding about real objects and their experiences to mathematical concepts, and to gain direct experience with the underlying principles of each concept.
- Each student has a calculator available in his or her mathematics class. Scientific calculators are used for common tables such as those for roots and powers, logarithms, and trigonometric functions.
- Computers are used often for creating problem-solving aids such as geometric displays, organization and graphing of data, simulations of real-life situations, and numerical sequences and patterns.
- Teachers assign practical application projects that enable students to solve problems that exemplify the use of mathematics in the everyday world. Applications are derived from the area of interest to the students such as:
  - Sports
  - Auto mechanics
  - Scheduling
  - Architectural space planning
  - Voting and elections
  - Surveying
  - Navigation
  - Projections onto screens
  - Loans and credit
  - Retail inventory and pricing
  - Population and census
- Instruction in all classes is flexible enough to address the learning needs of each student; lessons and assignments are based on ongoing diagnosis and assessment of each student and are designed to enable all students to master the essential concepts of the curriculum.
- Classroom instruction includes whole-group instruction, cooperative learning groups and individualized instruction, teacher-directed remediation using alternative approaches, and horizontal enrichment.
- Homework assignments are designed to give students the additional exposure needed to master a concept through meaningful and creative experiences that supplement classroom activities.
- A program for students of the lowest competency is available that concentrates on the student's "number sense," his or her appreciation of the sizes of numbers, and the estimation of results to be expected from calculations.
- Students who are competent in the basics of arithmetic but who have learned little of the measurement, geometry, functions, statistics, logic, and algebra have a basic or general mathematics course concerned primarily with these strands available to them.
- Students who were moderately successful in eighth grade but are not prepared for a rigorous college preparatory Algebra I course have available to them an academically oriented alternative (mathematics A of the framework) that moves beyond eighth grade in all strands and keeps open the option of subsequent transfer to the college preparatory sequence.
- The first course in the college preparatory sequence is for students who are strongly prepared and motivated. Students passing this course are prepared to take further college preparatory courses with little review or reteaching.
- A senior elective is available for average and above-average students who will not take college preparatory mathematics as seniors.
- An applied elective course is available for students who have passed the minimum competencies but who will not take an academically oriented course.
- Calculus, if offered, is given as an advanced placement course.
- The development of the weakest students is monitored closely. They are given individualized help and encouraged to enroll in regular classes after succeeding in the remedial efforts.
- Regular meetings are used by the mathematics teachers to develop and coordinate the objectives of the mathematics program and collaborate on the implementation and evaluation of those objectives.
- Staff developmental activities are designed to improve mathematics instruction. Teachers are committed to delivering a high quality mathematics program and are supported by the principal and department's chairperson as they work to increase their skills.

Because of the increasing technological demands on our society, the role of science in the academic spectrum is continually being expanded, revised, and updated. Science has assumed a new significance in the lives of Americans, and all students should have the opportunity to develop scientific literacy.

Science students learn scientific concepts primarily by engaging in the scientific process. Science experiments help

students internalize the content of science and give them an appreciation for scientific inquiry and problem solving.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

The primary goal of the science program is scientific literacy for all students. Students develop scientific literacy by: developing interest and enjoyment in learning how things work and why things are; learning fundamental concepts of science and how the application of these concepts affects their daily lives; learning techniques of the scientific method to validate science knowledge; developing thinking skills for lifelong learning; and using attitudes and knowledge about science to live as an informed citizen in a scientifically developed nation. Students have a positive attitude toward science and take an active interest in science.

The science curriculum is comprehensive, rigorous, balanced, and sequential and is built on the concepts learned in elementary and intermediate schools. As students progress through the sequential curriculum, they encounter basic scientific concepts repeated at higher cognitive levels. Teachers understand this spiraling nature of the curriculum and work on the articulation needed to make the spiraling concept work.

Students learn the facts, terminology, laws, and theories of physical and biological science by engaging in the processes of science and problem solving through experiments and other investigative strategies. Students experience the connectedness of science content and the scientific process and are able to integrate the two.

The curriculum emphasizes experiential learning, and instruction is activity-based. Students learn by hands-on experiments that develop both the rationale and intuitive thinking inherent in science inquiry and problem solving. They have the opportunity to explore natural phenomena, formulate experiments to solve specific problems of their own choosing, and develop alternative solutions to problems. Active learning is both serious and fun; students are learning in novel, creative situations.

All students achieve the level of scientific literacy necessary for them to function in our highly technological society. They apply their scientific knowledge to current situations and to life around them and discuss the societal implications of scientific and technological advances. Students have regular opportunities for in-depth analysis of ethical issues and for discussions of attitudes and values as they affect science and technology. They realize that science is a human endeavor, and not a value-free body of knowledge.

Direct instruction, independent and small group laboratory work, science projects, and discussion sessions are used to develop the students' conceptual understanding of major scientific phenomena. This variety of teaching methods is employed for each major curricular objective as reinforcement and to take advantage of different students' learning modalities. Students are frequently asked to explain their own ideas about natural phenomena and formulate testable hypotheses in their own words. Teachers facilitate such discussions with open-ended and divergent questions so that the students expand their views and understanding as they explore the complex ethical issues in applying science to a technologically advanced society. The school's library offers a collection of science materials that support independent research projects by students.

While concentrating on the essentials of the science curriculum, teachers foster and maintain students' interest in a wide variety of topics by using stories of great scientific discoveries, biographies, and other high interest science readings. Teachers relate science concepts to the major ideas of art, literature, history, and mathematics. They draw on and develop alliances with the science resources found in the community: museums, universities and colleges, educational television, industry, science fairs and expositions, science teacher organizations, and military and governmental agencies. Field trips and science fairs are important parts of the science program and are used to maximize students' interest as well as achievement. Teachers encourage parents to provide science experiences for their children.

All students receive at least two years of science instruction that incorporates a balance of physical and biological sciences. Science programs are flexible enough for students to prepare for advanced courses in biology, chemistry, physics, and earth/space sciences. Students planning for careers in science-related fields take at least three years of science and three years of mathematics. If they are interested and able, students who take general life science and physical science are encouraged to take more advanced courses.

The science teachers exemplify high standards of scientific knowledge and teaching expertise. They are regularly involved in staff developmental programs aimed at personal renewal and improved competence in science education. Teachers regularly collaborate on curricular and instructional issues. The curricula of various

courses and grade levels are carefully articulated and sequenced. Staff is committed to students' mastery of the articulated curriculum.

Efforts to plan, implement, and evaluate the science program are coordinated within the department. Teachers regularly meet to

• The science curriculum focuses on the content and processes of science through problem solving by experiments and other means of investigation. Students demonstrate their ability to integrate the content and processes of science by their competence in conducting experiments to learn science concepts. Science experiments put students in charge of their own learning.

• Students learn the basic concepts of physical science, including an understanding of:

- Atomic structure, molecules, elements and compounds, and their properties
- Phases of matter and the kinetic theory
- Definition of measurement of physical characteristics
- Chemical reactions and nuclear science
- Force and motion
- Energy sources, transformation, and conservation
- Waves: fluid, sound, and electromagnetic
- Heat and heat transfer
- Electricity and magnetism
- Geological processes
- Water cycle, climate, and weather
- Astronomy and space exploration
- California land forms
- Oceanography

• Students learn the basic concepts of biological science to include an understanding of:

- Structure, functions, and interrelationships of cells, tissue, organs, and systems
- Categories and roles of organisms in the web of life
- Animal and human behavior, growth, and development
- Plant functions, including the processes of photosynthesis and plant respiration
- Reproduction, genetics, and theories of evolution
- Ecosystems and ecology
- Technological advances in medicine and agriculture

• The science teachers build on the students' previous science education. Spiraling of knowledge and skills is evident in the courses.

• The teachers emphasize experiential learning through activity-based instruction. The students:

share instructional and experimental techniques. The principal and chairperson regularly discuss the science program and its role in the school's total program. Administrative support of the science program is translated into updated and well-maintained science facilities, equipment, and instructional materials needed for a quality program.

- Explore natural phenomena.
- Organize the data collected.
- Formulate experiments.
- Develop alternative solutions.
- Solve problems.

• Students have frequent experiences that develop their thinking, communication, and learning skills in science. These activities are open-ended, student-directed, and interdisciplinary.

• Students have regular opportunities for analysis and discussion of the ethical issues of science and technology. The discussions are based on an understanding of the scientific concepts and related to issues that students are interested in and care about.

• Teachers utilize community resources by forming alliances with:

- |                                     |                                      |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| - Museums                           | - Educational television             |
| - Science fairs and expositions     | - Universities and colleges          |
| - Organizations of science teachers | - Industry                           |
|                                     | - Governmental and military agencies |

• All science teachers are highly knowledgeable about science, skilled in the scientific process, and are able to instill in their students a positive attitude about science and a desire to learn more.

• All students take two years of the biological and physical sciences as part of their core program. Included in the two years are concepts of earth and space science. The science department offers other courses for students who want more scientific knowledge.

• The teachers utilize staff development opportunities to keep current with scientific advancement and to refine their instructional skills.

• The departmental staff works together to evaluate the science curriculum and instructional methods in order to ensure consistency, coordination, and alignment among the courses and to plan programmatic improvements as needed.

• The administration at the school and the district support the science program by providing the facilities, equipment, and materials needed to implement a high-quality science program.



Participation in the affairs of our society, as individuals and as group members, is an essential component of citizenship. The development of students' citizenship for the present and future requires a knowledge of history and an understanding of the impact of the past on both contemporary times and the future. To prepare for this responsibility, students study and understand United States and world history, geography, culture, government, civics, and economics.

The study of history and social science, because of its interdisciplinary nature, utilizes skills from each academic subject area to gain insight, make evaluations, and analyze problems inherent in the broad spectrum of today's society.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

The history-social science curriculum and instruction (1) vitalizes history as the link between past and present; (2) highlights the breadth of perspective by teaching students to experience history-social science through the mind and eyes of the historian, geographer, the economist, the anthropologist, the sociologist, the psychologist, and the humanist; (3) includes instruction in geography so that the critical role of the environment, location, resources, and demography can be better understood; (4) teaches the basic values and principles of our democratic, constitutional system and the pluralistic nature of our state and nation and compares it to other systems; and (5) promotes the acquisition of academic, civic, and social skills. The foundation of the curriculum is history: the narrative account of events and their development and consequences.

The students demonstrate increased proficiency in solving problems and making decisions both in the classroom and in school that portend effective decision making at home and in the community. Teachers emphasize the importance of this practical application of history and social science by giving their students ample opportunities to apply critical thinking skills to problem solving and decision making in a contemporary setting.

The curriculum enables students to understand and undertake their responsibilities as citizens through experiences in class and in the community that provide knowledge of the world at hand and at large. Central to the curriculum are the basic American values of justice, equality, individual freedom, responsibility, respect for the individual, widespread public participation in governance, and constitutionally guaranteed rights of citizens. These principles of democracy are linked with an understanding of how our institutions function. Students learn the prerequisites of democracy and the origins and consequences of totalitarianism and tyranny. This primary focus is evident in the course syllabi, in the instruction taking place, and in the assignments completed by the students.

Teachers use a variety of appropriate instructional techniques to teach specific objectives, with an emphasis on interactive methodologies. The courses are interdisciplinary in conception and execution of the scope, sequence, emphasis, and methods of instruction.

All students take at least three years of coursework in history-social science as part of the core required for graduation. These courses involve the students in the study of United States and world history and geography as well as American government, civics, and economics, and include the interdisciplinary study of these subjects. Beyond the core courses, students can elect to take specialized courses in order to gain a greater understanding and appreciation of history and the social sciences. The total curriculum is coherently organized throughout all grades and avoids needless repetition. What is being taught in the classrooms corresponds to what is to be learned, as described in course of the study.

Evaluation is ongoing and includes students' performance, instructional objectives, and classroom interaction as well as long-range goals. The instructional methods and the content taught in the courses are adapted to the result of this evaluation. The school's leaders encourage faculty members to renew themselves professionally and provide the faculty with significant in-service opportunities.

The curriculum of the history-social science classes provides a sound and broad-ranging knowledge base and is structured in a developmental sequence. Students are challenged to study seriously the major events, places, and individuals of history and governments in order to: (1) gain an understanding of the key ideas, concepts, and themes of the human experience; (2) recognize the central issues of the human condition; (3) make judgments about humankind and civilization; and (4) know what is essential to a good society. Aspects of world isolation and interdependence, the diversity of cultures and universal human experiences, and the dynamic and the static nature of human organizations are studied.

The curriculum and instructional activities and assignments engage the students in the lives and situations of the people and the times that they are studying so that the students feel a connection to the past and are able to examine and develop their own values in relation to what has been, is, and might be.

Through the curriculum and instructional activities and assignments, students are challenged to develop and demonstrate their creative and critical thinking skills. They learn to analyze critically the events, places, and individuals of history and governments according to established procedures of historians and social scientists. They demonstrate skill at organizing, interpreting, and synthesizing knowledge from a variety of sources and evaluating the content from an analytical perspective. The history and social science collections in the school's library enable students to research topics in depth.

- a Teachers of history-social science courses design instructional activities and give assignments that develop the students' skills in reading, speaking, writing, listening, and thinking.
- a Students, in each course, are developing the study skills, the critical thinking, and the social participation skills essential to learning history and social science. Students demonstrate increasing competence in these skills in the subject areas from the freshman to senior years.
- a Teachers develop the students' knowledge and understanding of history and the social sciences in an interdisciplinary context by using such methods as:
  - Employing small group discussions, debates, and role playing to study issues
  - Developing the students' ability to use literature, drama, art, and other cultural expressions in their study of history
  - Coordinating assignments with other subjects
  - Requiring projects that utilize specific English, mathematical, scientific, and basic study skills
  - Encouraging the student to participate in local school government, in civic activities, and political issues
  - Using individual and cooperative learning projects
  - Assigning long-range projects that require students to research, interpret, and apply history and social science concepts
  - Assigning projects that challenge students to investigate and participate in current events that clarify historical and social concepts and theory
  - Studying the major events, places, and persons in history and government to gain an understanding of the key ideas, concepts, and events of the human experience
  - Using the community as a resource
  - Using computer simulations and data bases
  - Focusing the history-social science curriculum on the basic values of the American experience:
 

- Social justice	- Respect for the individual
- Equality	- Private ownership of property
- Freedom and responsibility	- Widespread participation in public policy
- Authority	
- a Students are developing critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. They are able to:

Define the problem:

- Identify central issues or problems.
- Compare similarities and differences.
- Determine which information is relevant.
- Formulate appropriate questions.
- Express problems clearly and concisely.

Judge information related to the problem:

- Distinguish fact from opinion.
- Check consistency.
- Identify unstated assumptions.
- Recognize stereotypes and cliches.
- Recognize bias, emotional factors, propaganda, and semantic slanting.
- Recognize value orientations and ideologies.

Solve problems/draw conclusions:

- Recognize the adequacy of data.
- Identify reasonable alternatives.
- Predict probable consequences.
- Test conclusions or hypotheses.

- a Students develop social participation skills by:

- Taking the perspective of others; empathizing
- Understanding multiple perspectives on societal phenomena
- Examining concepts and feelings of self
- Recognizing one's own biases
- Seeing people as individuals rather than applying stereotypes
- Balancing intellectual and emotional perspectives
- Working in groups
- Giving and receiving constructive criticism
- Accepting responsibility and demonstrating respect for others

- a All students take at least three years of history-social science that involve the study of:

- United States history and geography
- World history, culture, and geography
- American government, civics, and economics

- a Additional courses provide students opportunities to gain a greater understanding of history, the social sciences, and the humanities.

- a The teachers and the departmental chairperson regularly evaluate the history-social science courses to ensure that:

- The curriculum is coherently organized.
- Needless repetition is avoided.
- What is taught is what is contained in the course of study.
- The scope, sequence, and emphasis of the curriculum and instructional methods are enabling students' learning and the realization of departmental goals.

- a Teachers take advantage of staff development activities to develop or refine their knowledge of history, the social sciences, and appropriate instructional methodologies.

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Students need to prepare themselves to live in a global society where foreign language skills and multicultural understanding are increasingly essential. The mastery of a second language, enabling students to communicate meaningfully in that language, is the primary goal of foreign language instruction.

Students develop the ability to communicate in a second language by continually using the language for communication both in and

All students have the opportunity to learn a foreign language as part of their high school education. Several different languages are offered, so students have a choice of languages to study.

The language curriculum is designed to motivate students to continue study beyond the first year. Students with previous foreign language experience can profitably take advanced classes and study subject matter in the foreign language in order to gain greater proficiency in the language.

The focus of the entire foreign language program is on meaningful and useful communication in the language. All classes in each language are taught with communication as the primary goal and the dominant activity. Instructors and students speak in the language to the maximum extent possible. Students have the opportunity to improve their listening comprehension daily; they read the language to understand what is written; they speak in the language conducting meaningful, purposeful interchanges; and they write in the language to send messages to other people.

Each language is taught within the contemporary cultural context of countries where the language is spoken, including the United States. Learning activities emphasize that each language is an expression of a particular culture or of several related cultures. Students learn that many cultural universals exist but that cultures vary and are of equal value.

- Foreign language is provided for all students at every readiness level. Advanced courses and subjects taught in the foreign language are available for students who studied the language in elementary and intermediate schools and for native speakers.
- Meaningful communication is the main goal and the major activity evident in the foreign language courses.
- Classroom language interchanges include:
  - An obvious purpose in communicating
  - Personal significance in the content
  - Resolution of uncertainties as a result of communicating
  - The cultural features of the language and society
  - The spontaneity and unpredictability in conversational communication

outside of the classroom. Students learn the language in a contemporary cultural context.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

The courses in each foreign language are proficiency-based. Specific proficiency levels are established and articulated for listening, speaking, reading, writing, and learning the culture of the language. Teachers incorporate these proficiency levels in their objectives for courses and lessons, and they regularly assess each individual student's proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and knowledge of the culture. Grading guidelines focus on the successful performance of communicative tasks over a sustained period of time. These guidelines are given to the students early in the semester so that they know how their performance will be evaluated.

The language department meets regularly to plan, implement, and evaluate the program. The teachers and chairperson often interact to coordinate departmental objectives and collaborate on achieving the objectives. Changes made in order to develop higher standards for the teaching and learning taking place in the foreign language classes are the result of regular evaluation of students' achievement, instruction, and the curriculum. The principal and chairperson meet regularly to discuss the role of foreign language instruction in the school's total program. The department has implemented plans that make foreign language classes more accessible to all students. The teachers are involved in foreign language training programs that help them develop their communication and proficiency teaching skills. The school's leaders encourage and enhance such staff development efforts.

- Students are taught, in the receptive areas of listening and reading and the productive areas of speaking and writing:
  - Language functions
  - Structural differences
  - Vocabulary
  - Communicative and/or graphic signals
- Specific proficiency levels have been established for perceptive and productive skills, and means of assessment are in place.
- Students learn to understand and appreciate:
  - Cultural universals, the physical and psychological bases of cultural behaviors, and the unconscious ways in which they themselves prejudge behaviors different from their own

## Foreign Language (cont.)

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- The significance of special behaviors in target cultures
- Cultural skills in selected target culture contexts or situations
- Cultural connotations in selected key words and phrases, gestures, facial expressions, and other body language
- Administrators facilitate and encourage opportunities (language camps, travel abroad programs, students' exchange programs, and holiday celebrations) that integrate foreign language competency skills with on-campus activities.
- Departmental faculty members meet regularly to ensure a coordinated program that meets the needs of the students and the goals of the department.
- The regular evaluations of students' academic performance and proficiency, instruction, and curriculum have resulted in higher standards for teaching-learning in the foreign language program.
- Foreign language programs are accessible to all students.
- The staff development activities help teachers improve their methodological and language/cultural foreign language skills. The school's leaders actively support this staff development.

## VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Exposure to and involvement in the visual and performing arts are crucial to the education of our youth. Each student's education can be considered complete only as it includes the personal development through participation in the arts, the knowledge of our artistic heritage, and the understanding of the societal values of art contained within the arts curriculum.

The visual and performing arts curriculum helps students make connections to our cultural heritage as well as our diverse cultural

The primary focus of the arts curriculum is to prepare students to express their creativity and to incorporate art into their lives. Students are enthusiastic about their participation in the arts and are motivated by the success of their own artistic endeavors. Instruction concentrates principally on practicing artistic operations, developing artistic skills and techniques, and creating artistic products. The courses concentrate on gaining the knowledge and mastering the skills and techniques needed to make creative self-expression possible. The creative activities in which the students are engaged promote personal insight, emotional satisfaction, and spiritual nourishment.

A secondary focus is to develop and refine each student's sensitivities to the arts and to enable all students to critically appreciate their own and others' performances and work through an examination of the standards of excellence for each area. Taken as a whole, the arts curriculum promotes lifelong involvement and appreciation of the arts.

The visual and performing arts department offers a variety of courses, at least one of which each student takes as part of his or her core program in high school. Other courses offered by the department are taken as electives by students who want more specialized training and appreciation of the arts. The courses educate students in four disciplines of the arts: dance, drama, music, and visual arts.

Each of the fine arts is taught with the rigors of a discipline containing its own body of organized knowledge. The total arts program recognizes the interrelationships among the four arts disciplines and between the arts and other subject areas.

In the art courses students are connected to their cultural heritage; they develop an understanding of themselves within the

a All students take at least one visual or performing arts course as part of their core curriculum. The department offers courses in dance, drama, music, and visual arts.

traditions. The arts curriculum prepares students to express themselves creatively through artistic endeavors and to develop appreciation of the arts.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

context of our common heritage and the diverse cultural traditions that make up our culture. The art activities and assignments help the students develop insights into other cultures and enable them to recognize universal concepts and values and to express their own individual values and ideals.

Instruction and assignments in the arts stimulate the senses and the emotions of the students by having them encounter the sounds, movements, and graphic displays of the visual and performing arts media and by having them participate in and learn to appreciate the performances and products of dance, drama, music, and visual arts. Students appreciate the arts as a means of nonverbal communication.

Teachers demonstrate their own artistic abilities and creativity in the methods used to motivate students to high-level achievements in the arts and in arts literacy. Experiential methods predominate, but other methods are used to highlight the arts as an academic discipline and to focus on the higher level thinking skills, including analysis, interpretation, evaluation, problem solving, and application associated with the arts. Community resources are used to enhance the total arts program. Practicing artists are brought into the school's program on a regular basis to interact with the students about their artistic works and the students' art.

The visual and performing arts faculty is organized to work as a unit. Coordinated program planning is an ongoing, regular part of the departmental effort to provide high-quality instruction in the arts. The faculty regularly evaluates the arts curriculum and implements changes designed to increase the number of students who are literate in the arts and who are skilled in producing and performing the arts. The teachers are involved in ongoing staff development programs in arts instruction. The leaders in the school work together to provide the resources necessary for quality arts instruction, production, and performance.

a The visual and performing arts courses:

- Teach a common core of knowledge.
- Connect students to their cultural heritage.
- Develop and refine students' sensibilities to arts.
- Enable students to express their own creativity and experience moments of exaltation.

- Students, in developing a common core of knowledge, learn that:
  - Universal concepts are expressed throughout.
  - Artistic styles are influenced by social, political, economic, and technological events.
  - The arts are a means of nonverbal communication.
  - Both the western and nonwestern traditions have important styles.
  - The arts enhance and reinforce concepts and ideas in other subject areas.
- Students gain deeper insights into the role that the arts have played in the development and transmission of cultures throughout the world. Students learn that:
  - The arts reflect ideals and values of various cultures.
  - The arts contribute to the ceremonies and celebrations of the world's cultures.
  - A common culture can evolve from artistic contributions of various ethnic groups.
  - Their own values and ideals can be expressed through the artistic disciplines.
  - Culture is transmitted across generations through the arts.
- In developing and refining their sensibilities, students:
  - Develop and refine kinesthetic, aural, tactile, and visual sensibilities.
  - Learn to appreciate and enjoy works of art more fully.
  - Make aesthetic judgments.
  - Use higher order thinking skills as they observe unique interrelationships in art and nature.
- Students engage in creative activities that help them:
  - Learn to value their own efforts to think imaginatively through experiences in the arts.
  - Transform personal experiences into original artworks.
- Engage in activities directed toward refining and mastering artistic skills and performance/production techniques.
- Understand and appreciate the arts for lifelong involvement.
- Students have experiences with important works in dance, drama, music, and visual arts in the artistic, intellectual, and philosophical history of western traditions. Students also experience the arts of nonwestern traditions and thereby gain a better appreciation of other cultures.
- Students gain an ability to exercise judgment and discrimination in each area of the arts through an analysis of the criteria of excellence for that discipline.
- Students have ongoing opportunities to evaluate their arts performances, works, and compositions.
- Students' artworks are exhibited for recognition and appreciation throughout the school's buildings.
- Students engage in activities which promote their understanding of the arts for lifelong involvement, including the potential for careers.
- Teachers of the arts:
  - Teach the arts as an academic discipline.
  - Motivate students by demonstrating artistic abilities and creativity.
  - Employ experiential teaching methods whenever appropriate.
  - Use community resources, including practicing artists.
- A coordinated planning process is used to evaluate the fine arts program and to implement changes that will increase the effectiveness of the curriculum.
- Teachers participate in ongoing staff development in arts instruction.
- The necessary resources for arts instruction, production, and performance are secured through the joint efforts of the leaders in the school community, including parents and community members. Parents and community members also assist in securing the necessary resources.

## VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Vocational-technical education provides students an opportunity to explore, evaluate, and prepare for careers. Vocational-technical education complements and reinforces the core curriculum common to virtually all students.

Vocational-technical education is a continuum of well-planned, coordinated, articulated, and sequential education and vocational training experiences that prepare students for successful participation in the community, home, life, work, and college. It encompasses awareness of careers, exploration of jobs, vocational guidance and counseling, establishment of career goals, employability skills, development of personal skills, job skills' clusters, and general to specific job skills. It prepares individuals for job entry, job advancement, more advanced training, job retraining, and entrepreneurship.

Vocational-technical education in California comprises nine major subject matter programs: agricultural education, office education, marketing education, consumer and homemaking education, home economics-related occupations, health careers education, industrial arts education, technical education, and trade and industrial education.

Students learn about various careers so they can make meaningful choices related to careers and develop plans for careers. They develop general employability skills that are necessary for success in a career and apply to successful living. Students have the opportunity to study occupational clusters, and they have access to vocational-technical education programs to learn the specific occupational skills and concepts required for employment or advancement in a particular occupation. Students' basic academic skills are reinforced throughout the entire vocational education program by applying basic academic skills to hands-on tasks.

Students are assisted in making meaningful choices about their careers through their participation in awareness studies of careers and activities that include examining the prerequisites and the characteristics of various occupations. The students prepare plans that address career goals, the course sequences leading to the goals, and other integral components of the students' educational programs, including participation in supervised community-based educational experiences and students' vocational organization activities.

Students learn general employability skills, including job interview techniques; interpersonal relationships with customers, co-workers, and supervisors; and work ethics such as punctuality, accuracy, neatness, and efficient and effective use of time.

Students have the opportunity to participate in the study of occupations in the areas of agricultural education, office education, marketing education, consumer and homemaking education, home economics-related occupations, health careers education, industrial

Vocational-technical education has a dual purpose in its mission to benefit individuals as well as society as a whole. All students--males and females, the gifted and disadvantaged, the handicapped, and minority and nonminority students--have the right to select a career and receive education and training to make their goals possible.

Students whose career goals include employment immediately after leaving high school and who want to learn the skills and concepts required for an occupation have access to specific occupational training programs from a variety of sources: the comprehensive high school, the regional occupational center/program (ROC/P) associated with the school, the community college, adult education, and the community.

In applying the criterion for vocational-technical education, consider how the comprehensive high school, the ROC/P, the community college, adult education, and the community interrelate to maximize vocational-technical education opportunities for students. Consider also assistance given to handicapped students, students in nontraditional programs, pregnant students, single parents and homemakers, economically and educationally disadvantaged students, and to students with limited-English proficiency to help them succeed in their vocational-technical education courses and programs.

arts education, technical education, and trade and industrial education. Students gain broad concepts of an occupational cluster, general skills, specific skills with wide application, and they acquire an understanding of the nature of work in the various occupations within the cluster.

The comprehensive high school, the ROC/P associated with the school, the community college, adult education, and community cooperate in providing students whose career plans include job preparation with access to an articulated occupational training program. In these programs students learn skills and concepts identified by practitioners and representatives of business, industry, and labor as those that are currently required in specific occupations.

Students reinforce their basic academic and critical thinking skills by applying theoretical concepts to practical tasks, such as the application of English language skills to writing business letters and mathematical calculations to diagnosing and repairing electronic components. Skills and concepts learned by students in vocational-technical education are used as an alternative way to satisfy graduation requirements in core academic subjects when they are comparable to those taught in academic courses.

Students in vocational-technical education programs progress through sequentially structured units of instruction and courses offered by the comprehensive high school, the ROC/P, the community college, and the adult school, and in community facilities. The programs are designed with objectives of performance and provide adequate duration and intensity for the students to accomplish their objectives. Teachers in the schools and employers in business and

industry understand the sequential nature of the programs and work cooperatively to ensure that the units of instruction currently taught in schools and the skills and concepts reinforced through community-based experiences coincide.

Students participate in learning activities conducted in classrooms and laboratories in the schools and in supervised learning activities in the community.

Students having difficulty succeeding in the vocational-technical education program are given appropriate special assistance to help them successfully complete the program. Students with limited proficiency in use of the English language may be helped by a bilingual tutor and with textbooks and written instructions in the language with which they are most familiar. Students with learning handicaps receive special assistance or remedial instruction. Other students needing assistance receive help to overcome the difficulty that prevents them from succeeding in the vocational-technical education program.

Vocational-technical education organizations provide students with the opportunity to develop interpersonal, leadership, citizenship, and occupational skills as an integral part of instruction. Students experience the democratic process in action and gain self-confidence by participating in both cooperative and competitive activities.

- Students develop awareness of careers by making use of services and activities such as:
  - Receiving assistance in gathering and interpreting information on careers in the careers' center, in the classroom, and from guest speakers
  - Completing aptitude and interest tests for careers and having the results explained to them
  - Participating in exploratory and general work experience education programs, to realistically explore the world of work
  - Developing career plans, with the assistance of counselors and teachers, that contain immediate and long-range career goals
- General employability skills and concepts are interwoven throughout the entire vocational-technical education curriculum. Students learn job interview techniques and on-the-job interpersonal relationships in specific units of instruction in vocational-technical education courses. In all courses, work ethics, such as punctuality, accuracy, neatness, and efficient and effective use of time, are learned and reinforced during the daily activities of the course.

Vocational-technical education curricula are reviewed regularly by subject-matter advisory committees. The purpose of these reviews is to keep the programs pertinent to the workplace, to new and emerging technologies, and to the current labor market.

Vocational-technical education teachers are experienced in their occupational fields and keep current with changing technologies. The teachers meet regularly for formal staff developmental activities, for informal opportunities to exchange ideas and concerns, and for coordination in planning, implementing, and evaluating the program.

Each vocational-technical education subject-matter area lead person meets regularly with the school's principal to discuss the vocational education program and its role in the school's total program.

The administration of the school, the district, and the ROC/P support vocational-technical education by encouraging students to enroll in the program, making time available for the students to take the classes, providing qualified teachers, and providing students with access to adequate facilities that meet health and safety requirements, equipment currently being used in business and industry, and necessary materials and supplies for implementing quality vocational-technical education instruction. Such quality instruction is required for the students to prepare for the occupations of their choice.

- Students learn concepts and skills common to a variety of occupations within an occupational cluster. Examples of skills common to a cluster are typewriting/keyboarding that have broad application in the clerical and data processing clusters of occupations and to other clusters as well, and blueprint reading that is applicable to a wide range of mechanical, construction, and design occupations.
- Students whose career goals include immediate employment on leaving high school have access to specific occupational skills training programs. The occupations for which the training is provided have a present or projected demand for new employees, and interest surveys indicate students' demand for the training. The skills and concepts learned by the students are identified by practitioners and representatives of business, industry, and labor as those currently required for entry into the occupation. The skills and concepts are expressed in performance objectives.
- The curriculum is arranged sequentially and presented to the students in a variety of methods, including:
  - Large-group instruction
  - Small-group instruction
  - Individual instruction
  - Laboratory work
  - Simulated job site work
  - Supervised occupational experiences at sites in the community



## Vocational-Technical Education (cont.)

- Vocational-technical education students participate in the activities of students' vocational organizations that are appropriate to their occupational areas of study. The organizations are:
  - Distributive Education Clubs of America, DECA
  - Future Business Leaders of America, FBLA
  - Future Farmers of America, FFA
  - Future Homemakers of America - Home Economics Related Occupations, FHA-HERO
  - Vocational Industrial Clubs of America, VICA
- A subject-matter advisory committee, whose members include a practitioner and representatives of business, industry, and labor, regularly reviews the curriculum and makes recommendations concerning such areas as:
  - Curriculum content
  - Adequacy of equipment and facilities
  - Placement
- Vocational-technical education teachers:
  - Have adequate work experience in the occupation they are teaching.
  - Have professional preparation in the vocational subject in which they teach.
  - Remain current in their areas through activities such as participation in professional and technical conferences and workshops and by working occasionally in the relevant occupation.
- Each vocational-technical education subject-matter area lead person meets regularly with the school's principal to discuss the status of curriculum, facilities, equipment, and staffing, and to coordinate the goals and objectives of the subject-matter area with those of the total school.
- The administration of the high school, adult education, the district, and the ROC/P support vocational-technical education by:
  - Providing adequate vocational guidance and counseling services
  - Allowing appropriate vocational-technical education units of instruction to meet some of the core academic graduation requirements
  - Scheduling enough periods per day in the school for students to have time for vocational-technical education electives
  - Selecting vocational-technical education teachers who have sufficient and appropriate professional preparation and occupational experiences in the subject
  - Providing access to a properly equipped and supplied work station for each student in a facility that meets all safety and health standards
  - Providing necessary support services for special needs students in vocational-technical education
  - Providing teachers adequate time for any vocational-technical education program that conducts year-round activities
  - Providing teachers adequate time for integral activities that occur outside the classroom
  - Providing adequate opportunities for vocational-technical education teachers to participate in conferences, workshops, and other appropriate activities designed to help them keep current in their areas of vocational-technical instruction

## STUDENTS' PATHS THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL

During high school each student takes his or her own path through the courses offered. This criterion describes how these paths are constructed and the impact of the path taken on students' learning. Two fundamental curricula issues are:

- Does each student's path take him or her through a core of learning expected of all high school graduates?

All students achieve a core of common learning that enables them to understand, participate in, and carry on the civilization in which we live. Beyond this common core, electives and specialized courses of study give all students the opportunity to prepare themselves for higher education and/or the work place. Students are enrolled in the most challenging and engaging sequence of courses that suit their different talents, needs, and aspirations; programs for honors, advanced placements, college preparation, vocational-technical education, general education, and remediation are available. Taken together, the core and the specialized courses provide a four-year path for each student to develop to his or her greatest potential and be prepared to achieve postsecondary goals.

The curriculum experienced by each student as he or she progresses along his or her path through high school is broad-based and balanced. In addition to the core curriculum of English, history/social science, mathematics, science, the fine arts, and foreign language, students are guided to take the courses that will prepare them fully for entrance into higher education and/or employment for their chosen career. Each course selected along the student's path challenges him or her to be an active learner, to apply what he or she is learning, and to synthesize new ideas and concepts with those previously learned. Students have alternatives for acquiring core skills and knowledge; there are different courses with comparable core content.

The students learn about a wide range of careers and what they must do to prepare for careers of interest to them. They are encouraged to set career goals and plan a path through school that will prepare them to achieve their goals.

Students are able to move from one path into another by way of bridges that invite them to cross over to more challenging paths. The school has definite procedures for identifying potentially capable and/or underchallenged students in the lower or average levels of instruction, and has developed support systems that help these students to achieve in higher level classes. Where appropriate, transitional classes are designed to help students to be successful in a more challenging environment. The scheduling procedures facilitate transfers into more challenging paths.

- Students and parents are aware that there is a common core of knowledge that the students will be expected to master prior to graduation. They see the value of this core of studies.

- Does each student's path go beyond this common core through the courses and learning that enable the student to meet his or her goals and prepare the student for success in higher education and/or the work place?

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

Regular classes are being made more challenging so that all students will be better prepared to lead productive and satisfying lives after high school.

All students have equal opportunities and experience widespread access to quality instruction. Attention to equity and access is apparent in the design and implementation of the curriculum and in the scheduling process. As a result, all students have access to, and receive support for, success in the core's program. Students from groups underrepresented in college are encouraged to enroll in college preparatory courses. Regardless of gender, ethnicity, or handicapping condition, students have access to vocational-technical education programs related to their career interests.

Parents, teachers, and counselors help students set a path that aims toward their highest, most realistic goals. Students are able to discuss their program of studies, life goals, and career ambitions with their teachers and/or counselors. A schoolwide system of guidance facilitates such interaction and emphasizes the collaborative nature of the processes of course selection. Parents are actively encouraged to participate in the processes of course selection as part of the established procedures. The timeliness of taking certain critical courses is emphasized in the counseling of students and is known to the parents. Teachers, counselors, and students regularly evaluate each student's path to ensure that it is both comprehensive and balanced. Information gained from these evaluations is used to make needed changes in course offerings and scheduling. Students' placement is based on standard criteria and not just on personal judgments.

Students and parents are given timely, accurate, and clear assessments and advice concerning the students' learning progress. These evaluations are given to improve performance and encourage each student to attain his or her highest potential.

Students are encouraged to develop a four-year perspective and to clarify their goals accordingly. They understand and experience how what they are learning is interrelated. They feel that what they are learning is important to their lives now and in the future.

- This core covers the skills, knowledge, and values each student needs to be an active and productive member of our society.

## Students' Paths Through High School (cont.)

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- Each student has access to courses that fulfill his or her needs and talents, enabling the student to meet his or her goals for high school and beyond.
- Students experience a program that is continuous in concept and development of skills:
  - The courses' content is not unnecessarily duplicated.
  - The courses' content is part of a continuum of learning--no gaps in learning exist.
  - Successful completion of the courses leads students to the acquisition of the identified base of knowledge of the core curriculum.
- Students and parents are encouraged to consider more challenging alternatives that will promote broader career opportunities on graduation.
- The school has a process that enables students to take advantage of bridging into more challenging paths.
  - Transitional courses are readily available.
  - Students have high expectations for their careers and maximize the educational options available to meet these.
  - Programs are offered to encourage the students to explore expanded opportunities.
- Students are encouraged to consider career goals that are nontraditional for their gender or background.
- Transitional classes enable students with lower skill levels to access higher level content.
- Students and parents have been made aware of the various options and paths available to them, based on the students' strengths and unique interests and abilities, and parents are actively encouraged to participate in the course selection process.
- Students have and take advantage of regular opportunities to discuss their various educational paths, life goals, and career ambitions with their teachers, counselors, and role models from business, industry, and labor.
  - The paths fulfill students' needs and meet students' goals.
  - Students are assisted by trained, interested, and concerned school-site staff.
- Teachers and counselors regularly review with the student his or her educational plans and progress toward them.
- Students understand how each course is an integral part of their own four-year program, and understand and experience how what they are learning fits together.
- The schools' personnel and programs focus on the students' personal and academic success. Students feel that what they are learning is important to them now and in the future.

## INTEGRATED SKILLS

Integrated skills are those skills that students must develop and employ in order to master the content of the courses they take during high school. Skills and content are integrated by both instructors and students to achieve learning outcomes. These skills have departmental and schoolwide agreement, and skill acquisition and development are an integral part of all course work. Consistent application of these integrated skills enables students to master content of the courses.

Students are developing and using the skills of thinking, learning, listening, speaking, writing, reading, and calculating. Written schoolwide policies and departmental implementation plans ensure that these skills are developed in all students regardless of the paths the students take through high school. Uniform expectations for development of skills are practiced departmentwide and schoolwide. All departmental plans specify the skills developed in each course offered by the department and describe how the skills are integrated in each subject matter area. Departmental plans set up a system that enables progressive and developmental skill training. Faculty members are implementing the departmental plans in each course syllabus.

As a result of this focus on these integrated skills, students in lower and average levels of achievement are able to move into a more demanding curriculum. An emphasis on integrated skills in the core courses in the first two years of high school gives these students both the skills and content needed to succeed in the more demanding curriculum. At the same time, strengthening the skills of the students in higher level courses challenges them to continually excel.

All students are expected to increase their thinking skills. Assignments require students to regularly use higher level mental processes that include analysis, interpretation, evaluation, problem solving, application of principles, and creativity. Faculty members

- The specific skills integrated into the curriculum include:
  - Reading--Students extract meaning from printed material. The process requires decoding, comprehension, interpretation, and learning.
  - Writing--Students communicate ideas effectively in written form, with correct usage and spelling.
  - Speaking--Students effectively communicate ideas orally in different situations: one-on-one, small and large groups, public speaking, and dramatic presentations.
  - Listening--Students understand both the content and emotional meaning from the oral language of other people. Attending behaviors and active listening are necessary components of this skill.

The continued development and use of these integrated skills is a significant objective of the school, which recognizes the need of all students for lifelong learning.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

Students continually model such skills, and the materials of instruction, the learning and teaching process, and the methods of testing reflect this emphasis on higher level mental processes. Schoolwide support for raising expectations for students' thinking is present; and parents, students, and community members understand and support the commitment to developing the thinking skills of each student.

Students receive regular feedback on their skill development progress. Time and effort are taken to extend the students' proficiency level in each of the integrated skills.

Students receive instruction and assistance in library and media use and learn how to access and use a range of information sources. The library offers ample collections of books that support extension of students' interest in the priority curricular objectives of the school, thus enabling students to explore and research in an in-depth manner. Libraries are open before and after school to encourage the maturation of students as independent learners. Libraries offer support services for teachers to integrate library use in regular assignments.

The faculty's in-service programs address the training needed by the faculty to become increasingly proficient in planning and executing objectives of skill development in their courses. Administrators and faculty members continue to raise their own levels of skills through both in-service programs and personal development programs.

- Thinking--Students reason and reflect, and use judgment to make effective decisions. Thinking involves knowing facts, comprehending the data, applying information to a particular issue, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating. Thinking engages the higher mental processes of problem solving, the application of principles, and creativity that enable students to relate what they are learning to the problems of day-to-day life.
- Calculating--Students use numbers, arithmetically and algebraically, in both conceptual and practical applications and to understand the relationships and logic of mathematics.
- Learning--Students gain knowledge and understand information in some systematic order and then use what is mastered in both an academic and practical life context. Learning is the continual discovery of better ways of acquiring knowledge and the ability to assess and use the knowledge. Learning requires the

## Integrated Skills (cont.)

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effective use of study skills. Students are encouraged to examine the organizational and conceptual strategies they use to learn and are helped in becoming more effective learners.

- A schoolwide agreement that all students need to develop the skills of reading, speaking, listening, thinking, calculating, and learning and the teaching of these skills is part of every teacher's curriculum and instructional strategies.
- The leaders at the school ensure that these skills are integrated into the courses both in the instructors' plans and in the students' work.
- Each teacher within each department infuses these skills into all aspects of the curriculum, building on skills learned in a variety of other contexts. A cumulative advancement of all students' skills is present.
- The development of thinking skills is central to instruction:
  - Instructional materials include a higher mental process emphasis.
  - Instruction includes observations, reflection on observations, use of firsthand information and daily experiences, primary source material, and experimentation.
  - Students learn the nature of the subjects and the ways of thinking they represent along with factual content.

- Instruction tends to be based on inquiry with higher mental process questioning.

- Testing includes formative tests with feedback and corrections on higher mental process questions.

- Emphasis on these skills is especially evident within the core curriculum required of the students during the first two years of high school. A schoolwide plan organizes this effort.
- Students needing specific help in the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and mathematics receive help in special classes or at special times in regular classes.
- Transitional classes enable students with lower skill levels to have access to higher level content and place special emphasis on the integrated skills to facilitate students' mobility between courses.
- The libraries' services and hours and teaching practices encourage students to explore and use the library for assigned work and their own interests.
- In-service programs on development of skills enable faculty members to receive appropriate and timely instruction on integrating each of the skills into their instructional program and on refining their own skills.
- In all courses at all grade levels, students receive regular feedback on their development of skills in each skill area.

Instructional practices focus on the teaching and learning that is taking place in every classroom in the school. It includes methods for teaching content and design of methods of thought and communication of a discipline; design of lessons to promote students' learning; methods and materials used in instruction; students' assignments and classroom activities; student-teacher interaction in the classroom; and teachers' expectations for the students' success.

Teachers know the central issues, the major works and people, and the primary methods of thought and communication associated with the subject area they are teaching. They model genuine interest and enthusiasm for the subject, show the students what is interesting, and excite in them a desire to learn more about the subject. Learning time is concentrated on the important priorities of the subject, and students are taught how to learn the subject and how to evaluate the relative importance of its varied content. School leaders support staff members' efforts to improve instruction and are knowledgeable about curriculum and instructional practice.

Students engage in the methods of thinking and communicating characteristic of the discipline. Classroom activities encourage students to develop and elaborate ideas, to synthesize new knowledge with their own previously acquired ideas, and to express these ideas orally and in writing. Students periodically explore selected topics in an in-depth manner as part of projects completed over extended periods of time. The proportion of learning time allocated to such projects and the average length of time per project increase over the duration of the course and over the grade levels.

Lessons are designed so that students experience a complete learning cycle. Students are prepared for the new content; the content is introduced, then taught to the students; the students apply the content first with guidance and feedback, then independently; finally, they transfer the content to new situations in synthesis with other content. Throughout this cycle, more frequently in the early phases, the teacher monitors the understanding of the students, adjusting and reteaching as necessary. Teachers employ a wide repertoire of teaching methods to match the kind of learning desired, style of learning, style of teaching, type of content, and resources available. The instruction the student receives provides him or her with the skills and knowledge necessary to develop the capacity to think and learn on their own.

Students have frequent opportunities to employ their strengths and interests in learning activities. Variations in assignments and teaching methods are utilized when needed to match students' needs

- Teachers in each curricular area are thoroughly knowledgeable of the subject. They know and are able to teach the central issues; they are familiar with the major works, know the roles and impact of the major people associated with the works, and are able to use

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

and we of learning; help is given when students need it. Pace, depth, and focus are adjusted to keep students of every ability level engaged in learning common topics. Students understand the purpose of their assignments and what they are expected to do; they know what they will learn by completing the work; and they have a good chance of doing so successfully. Students with language difficulties engage in guided language development activities appropriate to each subject taught. Students' motivation to learn is recognized and encouraged throughout the school.

Classroom discussions are used to help students recognize the central issues of the subject and to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate what they are learning. Students of every level of ability are asked questions of appropriate difficulty. Classroom discussions stimulate students' interest in the subject. All students feel free to participate in classroom learning activities; each student takes an active part in the class. Teachers respond frequently and informatively to students' responses.

Expectations for learners' behavior are clearly defined and consistently maintained. Grading policies and standards are known to students and parents; they are applied fairly. Students are alerted to their progress and provided specific suggestions for improvement at regular intervals. Students receive prompt feedback on their completed assignments.

The allocation of the teacher's attention to groups and individual students is balanced, timely, and fair. Positive verbal and nonverbal support encourages learning effort and progress. Interactions are guided by the evident belief that all students can and will learn. Time is managed to maximize learning. Students' attention to the learning activity is not disrupted by other students, announcements, or other noninstructional events. Nor do they have to wait for directions, clarifications, or required materials. Excellence in work on assignments is exhibited by students at all levels of achievement; the craft of learning is taught and nurtured in day-to-day activities. Students are taught to help each other learn.

these works and people in assignments that give life to the subject for the students. They know the primary methods of thought and communication of their discipline and are able to teach those methods to their students.

## Instructional Practices (cont.)

- Teachers' knowledge of their subject enables them to concentrate instruction on the important priorities of the subject and to teach students how to evaluate the relative importance of the ideas, events, works, and people by using knowledge of the subject.
- Teachers are interested in and enthusiastic about their subject and are able to instill a like interest and enthusiasm in their students.
- Teachers design classroom activities that require students to develop and elaborate the ideas of the discipline, to combine these new ideas with their own ideas, to write regularly about them, and to discuss them.
- Individual and group projects are assigned to allow students to explore areas of the discipline in depth. These projects are extended over time and become more frequent and more in-depth as the students progress through the discipline.
- Lessons include all the steps of the learning cycle:
  - Students are prepared for the new content by a review for continuity with previous learning and a check for knowledge of the prerequisites to the new content.
  - Advance organizers, such as the purpose and objectives of the lesson, some ideas of what will be learned, activities and assignments to be used, and so forth, further prepare the students for the new content.
  - The content is introduced.
  - Students participate in interactive learning activities suited to the content.
  - They use the new content with guidance and feedback.
  - They work independently with the content.
  - They transfer the content to other knowledge and skills.
- Teachers monitor students' understanding, giving feedback, adjusting the activities and assignments, and reteaching as necessary. These feedback-corrective procedures occur at regular, frequent intervals.
- Teachers have and use a wide repertoire of teaching methods to ensure students' learning.
- Instruction emphasizes the students' capacity to think and learn on their own.
- Lessons are designed to engage students' interest and employ their strengths; and pace, depth, and focus are adjusted to keep each student engaged in the lesson and motivated to learn.
- Students know what they are expected to do and what they will learn, and they expect to succeed.
- Students with limited-English proficiency, those using nonstandard English, and those with underdeveloped language skills are provided guided language developmental activities appropriate to the subject being taught.
- Class discussions regularly are used to help students identify the major issues, ideas, and events; to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate what they are learning; and to stimulate interest in the subject.
- In class discussions:
  - All students participate.
  - Students at all levels of ability are asked questions of appropriate difficulty.
  - Teachers direct questions to keep all students involved.
  - Students who are stuck or answer incorrectly are cued or coached to a correct response.
  - Time is given to allow students to formulate an answer.
  - The questions help the students analyze, synthesize, and evaluate what they are learning.
  - Teachers respond by acknowledging, supplying additional clarification and illustration, modifying, applying, comparing, and summarizing students' responses.
- Class time is used for learning activities that benefit most from teachers' interaction; homework time is used for assignments suited to independent work.
- Students know what is expected of them as learners; they understand grading policies and standards, and they believe the policies and standards are consistently and fairly applied.
- Students receive regular progress reports in addition to prompt feedback on assignments, including homework, and specific suggestions for improvement.
- The teachers' attention to groups and individual students is balanced, timely, and fair.

● Instruction is managed to maximize learning.

- Students know how class time is organized, what they are supposed to be doing, and when assignments are to be completed.
- Time commitments are kept.
- Students do not have to wait for directions, clarifications, or required materials.
- Use of scarce equipment or materials is scheduled to minimize unproductive waiting.

- Class interruptions by announcements, other students, or other noninstructional events are kept to a minimum.
- Learning is encouraged, supported, and valued in the day-to-day interactions between teachers and students.
- Excellence in work and assignments is exhibited by students at all levels of achievement.
- Students help each other to learn.



## SPECIAL NEEDS

Special needs programs in secondary schools are those that provide services for educationally disadvantaged students, limited-English-proficient students, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education services. The services provided to these students support their acquisition of the core curriculum and their participation in the school's total program and enable them to become successful learners. Students with special needs are not isolated from their peers; they enjoy access to this core of common

The special services the students are receiving support their acquisition of the core curriculum, and each student with special needs is expected to master, to the extent of his or her ability, the core curriculum provided to all students. The total curriculum experienced by the students is comprehensive, balanced, and appropriate to the students' career goals. Special services help students complete and learn from the assigned work of the regular curriculum, rather than displacing the regular curriculum. Students are experiencing success in learning the skills and concepts of the curriculum commensurate with their highest potential and are feeling positive about themselves as learners.

The methods, materials, and assignments used in the course work are appropriate to the special needs and activities of each student whether those needs result from a handicapping condition, a primary language other than English, or achievement levels significantly above or below those of the majority of students. Special services provide access to the core curriculum by providing comprehensive instruction that promotes normal progress. Beyond the core curriculum, students with special needs have access to vocational and college preparatory programs that fit their career goals. Students develop their potential by means of challenging course work, appropriate course placements, mentorship, and advanced placement whenever possible. For the high-ability or high-achieving student, special services remove ceilings, raise the conceptual level, and extend the breadth and depth of the core program.

The school environment encourages academic success for special needs students. Each adult working with the students is knowledge-

able about their needs, capabilities, and learning progress and expects them to be successful in school. All adults enthusiastically assume the responsibility of helping the student with special needs realize his or her potential as a learner by planning and coordinating efforts to provide a coherent and well-articulated program. Work with students is supported by appropriate staff development activities relating to special needs and is focused on curriculum, instruction, assessment, and students' achievement.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient (LEP) students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, school-age parents, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

Counseling and personnel services for students provide a strong link between special needs students and core classes. Personnel practices for students ensure access to, and support success in, this core by coordinating the students' schedules to maximize participation in the school, facilitating the ease in which students move from one path to the next, and focusing students' attentions on choices likely to lead to a strong foundation in the skills and knowledge necessary for postsecondary education and/or a career. Students regularly use the services available in addressing a wide range of concerns and feel comfortable doing so.

The schoolwide policies and procedures reflect equity in providing opportunities that maximize the students' potential and create an environment where all students realize success in learning. The academic success of the students with special needs is actively supported by the administration, staff, parents, and community. Ongoing communication and collaboration among teachers, specialist staff, counselors, and parents have resulted in an integrated program for each student, allowing him or her to experience a continuity of learning.

- a Students with special needs have equal access to the core of common learning provided for all students.
- The curriculum received by students with special needs is well balanced. It includes literature, mathematics, history/social science, science, and visual and fine arts.
- The student's primary language is used as a vehicle of instruction to the degree necessary for him or her to have access to the regular core of common learnings, to make normal progress through the curriculum, to experience success, and to sustain adequate psychosocial adjustment.

- Opportunities exist for gifted and talented students to take challenging courses and move rapidly through the core curriculum.
- Students with individualized education programs (IEPs) participate in the core curriculum to the full extent permitted by their handicapping condition.
- a The special services received by each special needs student support his or her participation in the core curriculum.

- Special services focus on providing students with the skills they need in order to be successful learners in the regular curriculum.
- Special services instruction is coordinated with regular instruction through the use of textbooks and other instructional materials, as well as through articulation of the skills and concepts being learned in each curricular area. Special services instruction includes the major concepts being addressed in the regular curriculum.
- The curricular materials, methods of instruction, and assignments in each course are appropriate to the student's needs, abilities, and language proficiencies.
- Learning activities in each course build on and extend the student's current level of knowledge. Initial and ongoing assessment of students' learning is timely and employs a variety of modes as appropriate to the learner, including assessment in the student's primary language.
- Students with special needs work on cooperative projects and assignments with other students; when they need help with a specific skill or concept, it is provided in class by the teacher, a peer tutor, a volunteer, or a paraprofessional.
- Special services are provided with minimum disruption to the student's participation in the core curriculum.
- Special services supplement the quality of the instruction students would receive from the core curriculum.
- The lessons and assignments received by the students with special needs are as rigorous and challenging for their diagnosed level as those received by all students.
  - Lessons and assignments challenge each student to exercise creativity and to develop the critical thinking skills of inquiring, analyzing, solving problems, and evaluating situations.
  - Students use information and ideas from several content areas to solve problems.
  - Students are expected to reason and reflect and use judgment and problem-solving strategies to make effective decisions.
  - Staff and students expect all students to be successful learners and to achieve their highest potential.
  - Gifted and talented students are encouraged to use the integrated content areas to investigate, design, and create beyond the expectations of the regular curricula. They are encouraged to develop learning and inquiry habits in order to become producers of knowledge.
- Students' work shows that students are experiencing success in learning skills and concepts of the curriculum, and it is evident that they feel successful as learners in each curricular area.
  - Students master the skills and concepts of each part of the curriculum before moving to new material.
  - A variety of materials and activities are used with students who need additional time on a given concept or skill.
  - LEP students are moving at a pace and at a success level commensurate with their diagnosed ability, and English is not an impediment to normal academic development.
- Academic success for students with special needs is enthusiastically supported by administration, faculty, and specialist staff.
  - Faculty and specialist staff work together to plan and coordinate efforts to provide a coherent and articulated program for students.
  - Both initial and ongoing assessment data are shared between the regular faculty and specialist staff.
  - Ongoing opportunities exist for regular faculty counselors and specialist staff to meet and share information about the student's progress and to plan instructional and support services for him or her, such as through team teaching or a student study team approach.
  - Parents are kept fully informed of the student's progress and participate in discussions with the student, counselor, and specialist staff regarding his or her program or courses.
  - Adults working with students model effective thinking behaviors, including withholding judgments, searching for alternatives, striving for clarity, and other strategies that reveal the valuing of thinking skills.
- Administration, teaching staff, and counselors are trained to understand the varying needs of students with special needs and are aware of learning opportunities appropriate for these students. They are:
  - Trained to interact with students and provide opportunities to enhance students' status in the school and in the classroom
  - Trained to provide comprehensible instruction in English to nonnative speakers for second language acquisition and subject matter
  - Trained on the role of the primary language at school and at home to support academic achievement and psychosocial adjustment

## IMPROVEMENT PROCESSES

The improvement processes are all those activities that involve the school and its staff in continuous organizational, curricular, and personal development in order to improve the quality of the instructional program, the environment and culture of the school, the skills of the staff, and students' learning. The criteria for assessing the professional and institutional renewal efforts at the school revolve around the extent to which the activities promote a high-quality educational program. A key goal for the school as an

organization is the institutionalism of an effective and meaningful improvement process.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

The school's decision-making processes are clearly defined and widely known, and all involved understand their roles in these processes. The processes emphasize broad-based collaboration and include parents, students, and the community at large. The school site council is integral to the school's decision-making process and it plays a central part in the decisions made to improve the school.

with special needs are maintained through ongoing planning efforts by teachers, specialist teachers, the principal, and other administrators.

Improvement goals reflect a strong academic orientation throughout the school, and the school's improvement processes focus on preparing students to lead productive and satisfying lives. Changes in the larger society as well as the local community, demographic changes, intellectual and cultural transformations, technological changes, political movements, and changes in the expectations people have for schools are considered in the setting of improvement goals.

An open and trusting rapport is evident among teachers and administrators. Administrative and faculty leaders recognize that teachers are the primary decision makers in their classrooms and actively support their efforts to improve instruction. Teachers readily participate in the development and implementation of improvement efforts throughout the school.

The school's leadership promotes and supports improvements in the schools' program consistent with the school's and district's goals. Time is allocated to a regular process of analyzing and evaluating data about students' performance and motivation, staff's performance and morale, and implementation of the instructional program. Based on discussion and understanding of what causes the results evident in these data, plans for improvement are made and implemented.

Staff development activities are ongoing and are planned, carried out, and evaluated for the purpose of improving the job-related knowledge and skills of principals, teachers, instructional aides, classroom volunteers, and other student support personnel, including parents, who regularly interact with students. Commitment to continued participation in staff development activities is obvious. Time allocations reflect the importance attached to personal and organizational renewal by individual faculty members and administrators and collectively by the school community. Adult interaction at the school sustains high interest in professional growth and improvement.

The goals and objectives of the program are clearly defined, and standards and expectations for students' achievement and behavior are known and shared by staff members and students throughout the school. The allocations of resources, including time, and the working relationships of everyone at the school are focused on achieving these goals and objectives. The school's plan provides a focus of alignment of curriculum, instructional practices, and evaluation. The coordination between the regular program and services for students

Supervision of instruction is ongoing and systematic. The procedures are understood by all staff members; the process is clearly aimed at instructional improvement; and the results demonstrate the efforts of the entire staff to make supervision effective and purposeful. Teachers receive feedback that facilitates instructional improvement as it is related to their teaching methods and students' learnings. The feedback is based on data collected in classroom observations, students' work, and discussion. Principals and other supervisors receive feedback about the process and their skills used in making the process work.

- Teachers, administrators, parents, students, and community members work collaboratively to plan, implement, provide follow-up, and assess the school improvement efforts.
- The improvement efforts are designed to involve the school and staff members in continuous organizational, curricular, and personal development and to affect students' learning outcomes.

- A regular assessment of staff and school improvement activities helps promote better student learning.
- The schools' staff is knowledgeable about the decision-making process:
  - Who is responsible for what
  - What kinds of evaluation data are routinely collected

- How those data are analyzed, by whom, and how they are used in planning programmatic changes
- How to use the ongoing planning process to institute programmatic changes
- The school-site council is at the center of the improvement efforts at the school:
  - Council members participate in the assessment of schoolwide needs and establish priorities for improvement efforts.
  - Council members, working with others at the school, establish improvement goals and objectives and design strategies to achieve those goals and objectives.
  - Council members determine how resources, including school improvement funds, will be used to achieve the goals and objectives.
  - They periodically monitor the implementation of the improvement activities and at least annually evaluate their effectiveness.
- The improvement goals and objectives focus on enabling students to lead successful and productive lives. They address concerns beyond the immediate school, such as:
  - Changes in society
  - Technological changes
  - Demographic changes
  - Intellectual and cultural transformation
  - Political movements
  - Expectations for the school
- The improvement efforts of the school are consistent with the district's and school's goals.
- Administrators and faculty organize, manage, and support an ongoing improvement process that has broad-based staff and parental participation and commitment. This process includes:
  - Evaluation of students' and staff's performance
  - Evaluation of the curriculum and its implementation
  - Analysis of symptoms and determination of cause
  - Plans for action
  - Strategies for implementation
- Time is regularly allotted for collecting, analyzing, and evaluating data about the school's program and students' learning and for discussions about probable causes and solutions in areas in need of improvement.
- A broad-based collaborative planning process results in:
  - Standards and expectations for students' achievement and behavior are known and implemented throughout the school.
  - The efforts of everyone at the school are focused on achieving the goal and objectives of the plan
  - Alignment exists among curriculum, instruction, and evaluation in each department.
  - Services for students with special needs are coordinated with the regular instructional program through the ongoing planning efforts of those providing the services.
- The teachers demonstrate commitment to the school's ongoing improvement process:
  - A trusting and open rapport exists among teachers and between teachers and administrators.
  - Teachers are recognized and supported as the primary decision makers within their classrooms.
  - Teachers are motivated by their sense of efficacy--the belief that what they do makes a difference in students' learning.
- Staff development activities are teacher-directed, experiential, and problem-centered.
  - Staff development is school-based and addresses individual and schoolwide goals and specific student needs.
  - The assessment of students' progress in relation to the curriculum determines the instructional areas requiring either individual or whole staff instruction and support.
  - The assessment of the participants' strengths, competencies, interests, and needs determines the content of the staff development program.
- The staff development activities are helping staff members refine existing skills as well as learn new skills, attitudes, and behaviors that are more effective in the classroom setting, and gain knowledge necessary for effective implementation of the curriculum.
- The staff development activities use effective teaching practices, including:
  - Modeling
  - Guided practice
  - Coaching
  - Peer observation, support, and assistance
  - Follow-up support for staff

## Improvement Processes (cont.)

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- Staff are directly involved in planning and evaluating staff development activities and are committed to continued participation.
- The administrators actively support the program through participation, allocation of time, and use of fiscal and personnel resources.
- Instructional supervisors give timely feedback to teachers based on observations of classrooms, students' performance, and discussion. Feedback and coaching include:
  - Implementation of goals and objectives of the curriculum
  - Management of the classroom, including maximum use of time for instruction
  - Interaction with students
  - Design and presentation of lessons
  - Development of thinking and communications skills
  - Opportunities to express creativity

The culture of the school relates to the impact of the school's total environment on those who are a part of the organization and those who interact with it. The school's culture affects not only the faculty and students; it also affects the parents and the community at large.

Culture is a tone, an atmosphere that is apparent throughout the school. The culture reflects the school's shared values, its sense of mission, its dominant ideas, its philosophy. Culture identifies what is important; it provides meaning to staff, parents, and students; it integrates the several objectives of the organization into a sensible whole.

Culture is communicated by symbols, ideologies, language, and stories. While the culture is primarily shaped by the school's

The school's culture is directed toward students' learning. Principals, faculty, parents, and others working with the students demonstrate a shared purpose to develop each student's cultural, moral, intellectual, and emotional character to its greatest potential. There is evident belief that this purpose is primary for the school and possible to achieve for virtually every student. The school's goals, policies, practices, and attitudes reflect the primacy of this purpose.

The school's leaders (administrators, faculty, students) actively shape and promote the culture of the school; they build purpose into the social structure of the school; they shape the vision of the school; they promote and protect the school's values; they strive to develop the school into an institution that responds to the highest academic, moral, and social standards. The school's leaders initiate activities that focus the creative energies of the organization so that the school's purpose and vision shape the everyday behavior of teachers and students inside the classrooms.

The environment of the school is safe, orderly, and supportive. Students find school a good place to study and a pleasant place to be. Schoolwide standards for students' behavior are perceived by students and staff members to be fair and equitably enforced. Instances of vandalism and/or violence on campus are very rare; students' absenteeism and dropout rates are maintained at a minimum level. The faculty's and students' expectations of students' behavior help make the school's environment conducive to learning.

- The school's focus on learning is commonly shared by administrators, teachers, students, and parents.
- The educational mission of the school is easily identified by people who visit the school.
  - The school seems vibrant, healthy, successful, businesslike, effective.
  - The atmosphere evidences the learning that is taking place.

leaders, it is communicated most effectively by the people who make up the school. The more that the students, faculty, and parents speak of what is really important to the school, the more pervasive are the shared values that make the school what it is. A school's culture that is well articulated by its storytellers is effective in enabling the school to achieve its mission.

In applying this criterion, consider all students, including limited-English-proficient students, educationally disadvantaged students, those students achieving at a level significantly below their peers, gifted and talented students, and students receiving special education instruction and services.

Leadership is shared among administrators, faculty, and students, and collaboration among the leaders is evident. Departmental chairpersons provide leadership in their departments and throughout the school that promotes high standards of faculty professionalism. Teachers' and students' organizations and their leaders contribute significantly to the promotion and protection of the school's culture, including the school's mission and purpose.

A climate of innovation and experimentation allows faculty members the professional freedom to pursue the school's mission with greater accomplishments. The teachers feel a strong sense of efficacy, and they believe in their own ability to attain high levels of students' learning. They are inspired by the vision of the school's educational mission and work to translate that vision into reality in their classes.

Administrators and teachers continually seek to develop themselves as professional educators and as human beings. Peer relationships include frequent informal discussion on educational issues, mutual help, mentoring support, training, and retraining; they help in defining and redefining school values; they support the notion of educating and reeducating. Problems and weaknesses are openly recognized, and there is a candid search for improvements. The values of serving students, professional development, and self-renewal are integrated in the school's culture.

- The behavior of the people in the school reflects the learning mission.
- The academic achievements of students and faculty are evident.
- Faculty, students, parents, and administrators communicate the school's culture by:
  - Recounting the tales of its heroes
  - Acting out its myths

## The Culture of the School (cont.)

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- Participating in its rituals
- Developing its image
- Clarifying its metaphor
- The school's focus on students' learning is reflected in:
  - School's philosophy and policies
  - Daily decision making
  - School's climate
  - Attendance and discipline policies
  - School and classroom management practices
- The values of the school are known to all. Administrators, faculty, and students are able to articulate the values and are comfortable sharing them with outsiders.
  - The leaders are known to protect and promote the enduring values of the school.
  - The values affect the behavior of the people in the school.
- The school's leaders promote transcending values that motivate faculty, administrators, students, and parents to raise themselves and the school as an organization toward higher ethical and social purposes.
  - These transcending values are clearly articulated in the school's philosophy.
  - Justice and equity are evident in the interactions of teachers and students, administrators and faculty, the school's staff and parents.
  - High expectations of behavior promote an environment that bespeaks the transcending moral and social values.
- Standards and expectations for students' behavior have been established schoolwide and are equitably and consistently enforced. The consequences for violating schoolwide rules are well established, widely known, and fairly enforced.
- The school's culture places a high priority on a safe and orderly environment.
  - Disruptive behavior is at a minimum.
  - Personal safety is not a problem in the school.
  - The classes, library, corridors, and lavatories are monitored to prevent discipline problems.
- Students are motivated to exert self-discipline and to develop high expectations of behavior for themselves and other students.
- A clear system exists for recognizing and rewarding outstanding students' and faculty's accomplishments.
- Absenteeism of both students and staff is not a problem at the school; established procedures exist for maintaining attendance at a high level.
- Violence and vandalism are rare occurrences.
- The students' dropout rate is minimal.
- The schools' leadership is shared among administrators, teachers, and students. The educational leaders of the school:
  - See their major function as shaping the culture and the vision of the school.
  - Speak often of the school's mission, and their behavior reflects a deep commitment to it.
  - Work to develop the community's consciousness of the school's mission.
- The school's leaders, including leaders of teachers' and students' organizations, engage others to improve themselves and their school continuously. They:
  - Influence others toward personal and organizational improvement.
  - Interact with others to develop mutual goals for the school and themselves.
  - Care about others, their professional development, and their creative application of the school's purpose to their offices and classrooms.
  - Instruct others in the school and then work with them closely over a period of time.
- Teachers enjoy a large degree of professional autonomy; they are encouraged to use their best professional judgment in carrying out the school's mission of achieving high levels of students' learning.

## Publications Available from the Department of Education

This publication is one of over 500 that are available from the California State Department of Education. Some of the more recent publications or those most widely used are the following:

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Apprenticeship and Blue Collar System: Putting Women on the Right Track (1982)	10.00	Nutrition Education—Choose Well, Be Well: A Resource Manual for Parent and Community Involvement in Nutrition Education Programs (1984)	4 50
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