

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

**WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES
FOR**

BERKELEY HIGH SCHOOL

**2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way
Berkeley, California 94704**

Berkeley Unified School District

DRAFT
March 12, 2015 – March 24, 2015

Visiting Committee Members

**Diego Ochoa, Chairperson
Principal**

**Sandra Calloway, EdD.
Associate Principal**

**Jacqueline McEvoy, EdD.
Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources**

**Jason Reimann, EdD.
Director of Educational Services**

**Helen Smith
Lecturer, University Field Supervisor
San José State University**

I. Introduction (1/2–1 page)

Include the following:

- **General comments about the school and its setting and the school’s analysis of student achievement data.**
- **Significant changes or developments that have affected the school since the last visit.**

Berkeley High School is the only comprehensive public high school in Berkeley for a diverse population of 3,043. The Berkeley High School program provides students with academic choices including honors, college preparatory, compensatory, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, and CTE. The school faces some daunting challenges, such as a troubling achievement gap. Berkeley had a population of over 112,580 in the census of 2010. Berkeley High School has evolved from a single comprehensive high school into six distinct learning communities: four small schools of approximately two hundred and forty students each (one of which is being discontinued and currently only has seniors), and two larger programs of approximately 1,200 students each. One of the main goals of this evolution was to personalize education to meet diverse interests through rich curricular choices while meeting all students’ needs through a wide range of supports and interventions. The school has developed the Academic Support Index (ASI) to identify students needing interventions. The ASI rates students using the following factors: African American ethnicity, parent education level, socioeconomically disadvantaged, language proficiency, and special education. Through the use of ASI, Berkeley High School has been able to score each student and the intent is to identify students at-risk for academic underperformance and prioritize them for appropriate interventions.

The school has noted increased school-wide gains in CAHSEE achievement, Advanced Placement passing rates, and CELDT progress. The school reported decreased overall suspension rates, increased graduation rates, and increased school-wide attendance. The school reports that interim and summative assessments have been developed for many of the core courses and Constructed Response Essays are now being administered in ninth and tenth grade.

Berkeley High School has identified the need to address the disproportionately low enrollment of African-American and Latino students in Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses. The school recognizes the need to improve student achievement on the California High School Exit Exam specifically for African American students, students with disabilities, and English Learners. There is a focus on addressing low student participation on the site-created common assessments, as well as developing common assessments for the new math sequence being implemented in 2015-2016.

II. Follow-up Process (1/2–1 pages, but more may be needed)

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

The school reports engaging in a follow-up process that involved data presentations to stakeholders and input provided by stakeholders. The report was written, reviewed, and revised by a WASC follow-up committee that included the entire administrative team and

two teacher leaders. A draft of this report was presented to School Site Council and site teacher leaders.

The previous Visiting Committee provided Berkeley High School with numerous Critical Areas for Follow-up and Key Issues. Berkeley High School is to be commended for making substantial progress in the areas of professional development for Constructed Meaning (CM), implementation of the Illuminate program for recording student results on site-based exams, and implementation of structures to facilitate social/emotional support systems.

The prior visitation did, however, specifically identify the following Critical Areas for Follow-up and Key Issues that have not resulted in sufficient progress: (1) Increased proficiency and performance of all students in academic language and math, while accelerating the gains of African American, Latino, and English learner students (2) Creation of a culture of high expectations for academic achievement for all students, (3) Utilization of common formative assessments to drive daily instruction, and (4) Equitable student diversity among the Small Learning Communities and the two large programs.

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

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

Goal 1:

The visiting team found that Berkeley High School has addressed this critical area for follow-up through school-wide Constructing Meaning (CM) trainings and the implementation of its Constructed Response (CR) writing initiative. The work done at BHS with CR and CM has led to meaningful collaboration with district personnel and the expansion of CR to the middle schools. Additionally, the science department has demonstrated coordinated instructional planning along with systematically implemented instructional strategies. One of the positive measurable outcomes of this work has been a rise in the pass rate on the ELA portion of the CAHSEE for some demographic groups. From 2011 to 2014:

- The pass rate of African American students rose from 58% to 65%.
- The pass rate for Latinos fell from 83% to 80%.

Goal 2:

The 2012 WASC Visiting Committee identified the need for the Math department to continue and to develop the use of *common assessments aligned to the state curriculum standards*. In response, the Math Department developed and administered a common pre-assessment for Algebra 1, Geometry, IMP 2, Algebra 2 and IMP 3 in many classes. The current focus of the Math Department is the shift to the new international CCSS Math curriculum for incoming 9th grade students. BHS leadership hired a .6 Teacher on Special Assignment in Math. Math Professional Development in 2014-2015 has focused on the transition to the new course and curriculum. A core group of Geometry teachers has met regularly to pilot 3 different possible curriculums for

the new CCSS course.

The math department has employed new math intervention programs including the CAHSEE preparation iMentorcorps intervention and the use of MyMathLab. One of the positive measurable outcomes of this work has been a rise in the pass rate on the math portion of the CAHSEE for some demographic groups from 2011 until 2014:

- The pass rate for African American students from 59% to 74%.
- The pass rate for Latino students rose from 75% to 86%.

Goal 3:

The WASC visiting team presented several Key Issues in the area of "Creating high expectations for academic achievement." In terms of instruction, the issues included a need to increase the use of "common formative assessments" in order to inform and adjust instruction to promote greater achievement. In this area, BHS has improved the use of common assessments by creating a professional development calendar that supports teachers in using information from assessments to think about instruction. The school has aligned common assessments to the CCSS for World History, English 9 and English 10. Biology teachers have created and implemented common formative assessments for every unit. In the classroom, training for Constructing Meaning has supported teachers in more regular use of daily, measurable learning objectives. On a classroom level, assessing students using daily objectives represents a powerful form of tracking student progress to adjust instruction. The school has taken effort to train staff in the utilization of Constructed Meaning to ensure structured language production.

Goal 4:

All BHS teachers have been trained in Constructed Meaning (CM). Multiple professional development sessions have continued to address deepening teacher practice around CM strategies. The implementation of CM directly addresses one of the Key Issues raised in this area by the WASC visiting team, which was the need to continue to explore and implement effective instructional strategies that raise the levels of student engagement and understanding. Berkeley High School implements a professional development system in which teachers serve as instructional leaders. There is an effort to provide Cultural Competency training for teachers. Thus far, all administrators, counselors and Professional Development Teacher Leaders have participated in a Cultural Competency three-day training.

Goal 5:

Berkeley High School has worked to ensure that *students are familiar with the school resources that will help them achieve their goals* by creating an Intervention Coordinator as well as forming an Intervention Team. Counselors at all BUSD middle schools use the high school transition rubric to assess student needs prior to 9th grade. This tool assesses needs in the areas of academic, behavior, mental health, family/home life, social and peer interactions. BHS uses the results of the rubric together with students' ASI score to connect students with appropriate interventions. Students noted that the Dean of Students has been particularly helpful in facilitating productive discussions on positive behavior and how to work with the school to improve student systems.

B. Priority and/or Additional Areas for Improvement: Identify and note any areas that need to be given priority for the school's ongoing improvement. (This may also include additional critical areas for follow-up.)

Goal 1:

Implement a schoolwide accountability system, led and monitored by the school principal and administration, to ensure the collection, disaggregation, analysis, and reporting of student achievement data. There is a need to educate the school community (students, teachers, and parents) regarding the purpose of assessments and their use.

Goal 2:

Address low participation rates on site-based common assessments. When all students take the corresponding common assessments, teachers are able to utilize the data to drive instruction.

Goal 3:

Address the lack of clarity regarding the definition of high expectations at Berkeley High School for all students. The school currently maintains separate systems (Student Learning Center database, Professional Development Report, Executive Summary, Constructed Response Essays) for collecting, disaggregating, reviewing, and reporting on student achievement.

Additional Critical Area for Follow-Up:

The 2012 Visiting Committee Report identified the need for the entire student population to be mirrored in each SLC in an equitable manner. This key issue has not been addressed. Members of multiple stakeholder groups expressed concerns regarding ethnic disproportionality and the low enrollment of African American and Latino students in the Berkeley International High School and Academic Choice programs. The current system of enrollment appears to perpetuate the disproportionality among the three SLCs and the two programs. The Visiting Committee found that the three SLCs and two programs do not have equal access to advanced courses and African American Studies.