

Chapter IV

SELF STUDY FINDINGS

ORGANIZATION: VISION AND PURPOSE, GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND STAFF, AND RESOURCES

A1: To what extent does the school have a clearly stated vision or purpose based on its student needs, current educational research and the belief that all students can achieve high levels?

To what extent is the school's purpose supported by the governing board and the central administration and further defined by expected schoolwide learning results and academic standards?

When we revised our Mission Statement and developed Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLRs) in 2000, the following groups were fully involved:

- (1) Faculty- Members of the faculty drafted, revised, debated and agreed upon the final draft of the ESLRs.
- (2) Site Council- Members of the Site Council provided information and advice regarding the ESLRS based upon the experience of the members in developing El Molino's School Improvement Plan.
- (3) Boosters - Booster members worked toward fine-tuning and validating the faculty's drafts.
- (4) Student WASC Committee-Information from an all-school student survey and discussions at committee meetings provided information the was used in the formulation of the ESLRs answered surveys and feedback to assess the ESLRs as they were developed.
- (5) Administration - Administrators assisted the faculty as facilitators and participated in all stages of the development of the ESLRs as liaisons between all participating groups.

It is the recommendation of the Organization Committee that the Mission Statement and ESLRs be reassessed as to their relevance to educational process as it is today. We feel that this is also a good idea to promote the ownership of the current stakeholders. In other words, we think the process of re-visioning would be positive for El Molino.

Evidence

- District Mission Statement
- ESLRs
- Lion Lines
- Lion's Roar
- Bulletin
- El Molino High School Web site

A2: To what extent does the governing board have policies and bylaws that are aligned with the school’s purpose and support the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results and academic standards based on data-driven instructional decisions for the school?

Board policies are in place for all aspects of our school’s operation. They have been developed over time with input from the professional staff, administrative staff and the general public.

Six years ago an extensive effort was made to convert our school’s goals into Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLRs). At the request of the governing board, faculty common planning time was reserved for presentation and discussions to arrive at the final list of ESLRs, and a consensus was reached.

The West Sonoma County Union High School District developed academic standards before the development of the California standards. These grade level standards were developed by teachers in each academic area from our district and our partner districts. With the advent of the California standards, work was completed to adopt State standards. The governing board has encouraged and supported staff involvement at local and national conventions through their policies.

Achievement data are presented yearly to the governing board for decisions to support the achievement of students, especially as related to the ESLRs and academic standards. Such data come from results of CST testing, the CAHSEE, SAT and AP scores. In addition, the governing board and superintendent monitor school attendance records.

To what extent does the governing board delegate implementation of these policies to the professional staff?

The governing board has authorized the superintendent to establish a district wide management team. Among their responsibilities is the development of policy proposals that are in support of the ESLRs and that are aligned with the school’s purpose. This delegation process has been very effective, and the involvement of the professional staff when policies are created has effectively strengthened the buy-in when they are adopted by the governing board.

To what extent does the governing board regularly monitor results and approve the single schoolwide action plan and its relationship to the Local Educational Assessment Plan (LEA)?

Monthly school board meetings are scheduled in advance for each calendar year. School plans and assessment result are regularly reviewed. Reports are requested and provided in advance and the staff members involved in writing the reports appear at the meetings to answer questions or point out particulars in the report. The findings become the basis of future considerations for instructional program changes.

Testing programs required by the state and federal agencies provide data on a district and schoolwide basis which often is desegregated to the classroom level. In the past six years, departmental presentations were presented to the board at the regularly scheduled meetings.

Evidence

- ESLRs
- Mission statement
- California state standards
- Standardized test results
- CST
- SAT
- AP
- CAHSEE
- Staff development evaluations
- Department presentations to school board (binders)

A3: To what extent based on student achievement data, does the school leadership and staff make decisions and initiate activities that focus on all students achieving the expected schoolwide learning results and academic standards?

To what extent does the school leadership and staff annually monitor and refine the single schoolwide action plan based on analysis of data to ensure alignment with student needs?

The school leadership and staff at El Molino High School monitor student achievement data annually and ongoing. The analysis of these data is a driving force at El Molino. The assessment data analyzed include: regular student grades, CST and CAHSEE testing results, SAT scores, and AP test results.

Evidence

- Evidence of this analysis was found throughout the meeting minutes of the Department Chairpersons' Meetings, as well as the Department meetings. A sampling of this evidence is:
 - (1) November 13, 2001 Department Chairpersons' Meeting item: API #2 Plan, analyzing test results.
 - (2) February 19, 2002 Department Chairpersons' Meeting item: API #2 Plan, ESLR #1 and ESLR #2.
 - (3) February 11, 2003 Department Chairpersons' Meeting: "The best preparation for STAR is the good instructional alignment to the California academic content standards."
- June 13, 2003 New Department Chairperson Orientation: "Monthly: Lead ongoing review of curriculum and assessment results. September: Review STAR, SAT and AP testing and review curriculum based on these results."
- August 26, 2003 Vocational Ed Department Meeting: "Test scores discussed as to how they apply to department."

- January 29, 2003 memo from Co-principal Doria Trombetta describing the detail of the analysis of the *First Semester Grade Report Mark Distribution Analysis by Course*. The same data was looked at by the teachers in individual departments.

The staff involvement at El Molino is 100%, as analysis is done down to the department level, carried out through department meetings, as evidenced above.

To assure that all students' needs are met, there are many independent study programs at El Molino. El Molino's wide-ranging independent study program is described in a written summary. Student involvement in developing action plans is a noted weakness, as indicated by the student perception data generated during the 2004/2005 school year. At this writing, we anticipate including this as an action item arising out of our self-study.

Evidence

- November 13, 2001 Department Chairpersons' Meeting item: API #2 Plan, analyzing test results.
- February 19, 2002 Department Chairpersons' Meeting item: API #2 Plan, ESLR #1 and ESLR #2.
- February 11, 2003 Department Chairpersons' Meeting: "The best preparation for STAR is the good instructional alignment to the California academic content standards."
- June 13, 2003 New Department Chairperson Orientation: "Monthly: Lead ongoing review of curriculum and assessment results. September: Review STAR, SAT and AP testing and review curriculum based on these results."
- August 26, 2003 Vocational Ed Department Meeting: "Test scores discussed as to how they apply to department."
- January 29, 2003 memo from Co-principal Doria Trombetta describing the detail of the analysis of the *First Semester Grade Report Mark Distribution Analysis by Course*. The same data was reviewed by teachers in each individual department.
- Summary of independent study program, interview with Larry Deis

A4: To what extent does a qualified staff facilitate achievement of the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results through a system of preparation, induction, and ongoing academic development?

Employment policies and practices relating to qualifications and statutory requirements are handled at the district level through the Human Resources Manager. Potential new teachers to the school district are screened and qualifications are checked at both the district and site levels. Interviews for potential teacher candidates are conducted at the site with a variety of staff members, parents, and students involved.

New teachers are provided with a mentor teacher as well as instructional guidance administrators and Department Chairpersons to assure that they become familiar with the academic standards and ESLRs. In addition, all beginning teachers participate in BITSAs, a

two year beginning teacher program supported by the Sonoma County Office of Education, in which a new teacher is supported by a “support provider” and a contact administrator.

Administration and faculty policies, and responsibilities, student handbooks, and charts are distributed to all staff on a yearly basis.

The district provides an in-service at the beginning of the school year, which covers a variety of information that is both holistic and subject specific.

Faculty meetings, Department Chairperson meetings, and individual department meetings are held once a month.

To provide new and veteran teachers the opportunity to collaborate a Common Planning Time (CPT) was instituted a number of years ago. This is a 1 1/2 hour time period every Thursday. While the number of professional development days has diminished in recent years, No Child Left Behind funds provide ample funding for professional development.

Most faculty members teach exclusively in their area of expertise and are Highly Qualified Teachers. Information on background and qualifications is kept in the district Human Resources Office. All faculty members are credentialed.

Team building is important at El Molino. There are about four or five social events held annually, and they are very well attended. This socialization maintains the high level of cooperation that is part of El Molino’s culture and facilitates team building in an informal manner.

Several departments use No Child Left Behind professional development funds to hold departmental one-day retreats to articulate grade level curriculum and standards of the department. The English, Fine Arts, and Foreign Language Departments meet regularly.

Members of the Math, Physical Education, and Social Science Departments regularly attend statewide subject matter conventions. In addition to the workshops and classes, there are opportunities for collaboration and discussion of their academic programs.

Continuing education of teachers through conferences (e.g., AP conference) and classes, as well as summer school programs designed for high school teachers through the colleges (example: Savannah College of Art and Design High School teacher summer school program) are ongoing and funded by No Child Left Behind funds. Many teachers are also completing their course work for CLAD or its equivalent.

Collaboration between teachers happens on all levels. There is collaboration not only between teachers in each department, as one would of course expect, but also between departments. Drama puts on short plays for the English Department classes, including works the students are reading. Humanities and the Fine Arts work together in teaching the students about the history of art and music. A number of science teachers also teach in the math department, so there is a natural integration of programs. The GATE program has guest

speakers from all departments to provide interdisciplinary discussion of chosen subjects. The Culinary Program works with the art department and computer applications class for displays for lunches, menus, etc. These are just a few examples of strong collaboration throughout the school.

Teachers and the College and Career Center Coordinator provide guest speakers from colleges and the working community to inspire and inform students of opportunities and to inform them of the requirements necessary for post graduate jobs college admissions.

Evidence

- record of CPT uses
- NCLB budget for in-service
- teacher credentialing from DO
- list of Highly Qualified Teachers from DO
- district and site orientation schedule for new teachers
- minutes of department meetings
- minutes of staff meetings
- list of student services from the College and Career Center

A5: To what extent are leadership and staff involved in ongoing research or data-based correlated professional development that focuses on identified student learning needs?

El Molino High School students' learning needs are determined in various ways. Staff, students, parents, and community members collaborate formally and informally to provide specific assistance for students, to strengthen curriculum, and to prevent teacher burnout. Formal support services for students include provisions for Student Study Teams, Individual Education Program conferences, Title 1, as well as consideration of CAHSEE results, STAR Test Scores, GPA's, referrals, counseling, and conferencing.

Staff members participate in a wide range of activities to further support students. Common Planning Time (CPT) for an hour and a half every Thursday allows teachers the time needed to strengthen and integrate curriculum. CPT enables teachers to work together interdepartmentally and intradepartmentally. Furthermore, each fall El Molino holds a CPT for all teachers of freshman students to discuss their perceptions of each student's transition into high school.

Other opportunities for staff development include attending professional conferences, classes, and visitations to off-campus schools. Staff development priorities are determined by the ESLRs and the SIP recommendations based on input from various sources including student and parent survey results. Teachers and counselors attend conferences and then share and publicize their experiences and knowledge at faculty and department meetings as well as in the form of a written evaluation. The written assessment of each staff development conference is available for all to peruse in a binder stored in the teacher workroom. In addition to attending professional conferences, teachers are allowed paid leave time to visit and observe programs at other schools.

Leadership committees, such as the Department Chairpersons, Impact, and the Site Council, along with mentor teachers also provide direction and guidance to further support students' needs. The BITSA program provides new and intern teachers with a veteran teacher who serves as a mentor through conferencing and arranging for visitations to observe successful classroom instruction. Funding for staff development varies. Currently, most conferences and activities are funded by SIP and NCLB. Despite reductions in funding, El Molino maintains extensive staff development involvement that focuses on the identified needs of students.

Evidence

- Student study teams
- IEPs
- Title I reports
- CAHSEE
- STAR
- GPA report
- List of professional conferences attended
- SIP plans
- Staff Development plans

A6: To what extent are the human, material, physical, and financial resources sufficient and utilized effectively and appropriately in accordance with the legal intent of the program(s) to support students in accomplishing the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results?

There is no doubt that that our financial resources are stretched beyond their being fully sufficient to adequately support our students in accomplishing the academic standards and the ESLRs. However, the impact is felt mostly in our class sizes, as evidence elsewhere easily illustrates. Our physical facility is in good shape, every teacher has her or his own classroom, and in all other respects, El Molino is using our resources to the best advantage of our students.

Evidence

The following lists specific evidence in support our effective and appropriate use of our human, material, physical and financial resources:

- The El Molino Site Council goes through a formal annual process for the distribution of the \$38 to \$42 thousand dollars allotted to us from the state's School Improvement Program. Those who seek the use of these funds - and all may apply, must make a proposal in person to the site council. The allocations (School Plan) for 2004/2005 are included in the attached support.
- Almost all teachers teach within their credential area. For 2004/2005, only seven sections were taught by five teachers outside their area.
- Also attached are the 2004/2005 and the 2005/2006 Site Allocations from the district, as well as the 2005/2006 Master Schedule broken down by sections showing which are funded by the District and which via categorical funding.

- The 2005/2006 Textbook/Instructional Materials Budget, attached, outlines our expenditures for a little more than half of this year's textbook purchases. The rest are allocated according to 7156 IMFRP guidelines.
- An interesting and helpful report for each subject area tested in the Star Testing is the annual California Standards Test Analysis. It compares the STAR test results with both the grades given in each area and the previous year's STAR testing and its grade analysis. This report is very helpful in monitoring both weak and strong areas in the subjects tested and shows a thorough use of the resources available to us. (This analysis includes a comparison between El Molino, Sonoma County and the State of California.)

Standards-based Student Learning: Curriculum

B1: To what extent do all students participate in a rigorous, relevant and coherent standards-based curriculum that supports the achievement of the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results?

All El Molino students are supported and encouraged to participate in the selection and successful completion of classes that lead to their educational goals and successful student outcomes as described in our current ESLRs. For many students, these outcomes occur coincidentally as they pursue the goal of a 4-year college directly out of high school. For the senior class of 2006, 33% will be going directly to a college or university in the fall, another 50% plan to pursue further education in the California Community College system. We continue to work with two student groups that present unique challenges. Our ESL students confront the challenge of achieving success in a second language. We also deal with a small but ever present number of students who struggle with the issue of poverty and homelessness. Survey results and perceptual data indicate that across groups, a majority of respondents believe the student is participating in a curricular path that helps him / her achieve individual educational goals.

El Molino faculty members continue the transition to standards based curriculum and assessment. Departments regularly look at the standards pertinent to their academic area and use this information to critique curricular offerings and teaching methods. Our ESLRs are being re-examined, in this context. A possible distillation of current ESLRs could occur, resulting in ESLRs that are fundamental and more measurable than current ESLRs. Administrators, faculty members, and counselors analyze student grade breakdown to gather information regarding the consistency between grades and student achievement of standards.

Students are provided with choices, based on educational goals, ability, teacher recommendations and grades, in their selection of English, math and science levels; and in their choice of electives. A generous class change policy has allowed counselors to remain responsive to student needs and requests for personalized class selection. Ongoing district budget difficulties, resulting in fewer sections and larger class sizes, has made it more difficult to accommodate all student and parent requests. Accurate planning of student schedules in the spring is one way to ensure the best student schedule fit in the fall.

Over the past two years, 2004-2005, standards-based state test scores in the passing range (Advanced or Proficient) for Language Arts students have remained about the same: 51% average pass rate for the two year period, for all three grade levels-9-11. Widespread agreement exists among English department members, that a rigorous, relevant and coherent standards-based instruction is a necessary ingredient for preparing students to take the state mandated standards exam.

Beginning two years ago with the purchase of California standards-based textbooks for the tenth and then the ninth grade English classes, the curriculum for both classes is gradually being modified to help students with greater standards-based proficiency levels. (However, more funding needs to be made available for the purchase of additional 10th grade texts.)

Eleventh grade standards-based texts will be purchased in the coming year, as soon as funding is made available.

For the past two years, the 10th grade performance on the state standards test (average of 41%) has been lower than either the 11th grade (average of 50%) or 9th grade (average of 56%). About half as many non-college prep 10th grade students pass as compared with college prep students. The results of the state test indicates that certain groups: non-college prep, Title I, ESL and special education students need to receive more help in addressing the standards, in order to achieve higher scores on the state standards-based tests.

The English Department is currently researching ways of instituting a standards-based curriculum and assessment for all English classes, which would be considered appropriate for all levels of English classes and which will support the achievement of the Language Arts academic standards mandated by the state of California. The department has planned a day long seminar this year to discuss how such a plan will be implemented across the English Department curriculum and beyond to other subject areas.

In the Mathematics Department, the courses are aligned to State Standards. All of the college prep courses have textbooks that meet all of the state standards. The courses that are not college prep meet the standards appropriate for the level of the course. At the beginning of each school year 85 to 90 percent of all students are enrolled in a math course. Through discussions at department meetings teachers of the same course stay in touch with each other to see that all sections have a similar amount of rigor and equal student expectations. This helps to guarantee consistency of teaching and evaluation of student progress. All sections a course use a common semester final. The quality of the program is verified through the excellent pass rates of students in the CAHSEE and on the Advanced Placement exams.

The El Molino Science Department bases its curricula on the California State Science Content Standards. Three areas of the curricula have state standards: biology, chemistry, and physics. The other two content areas, physical science and agricultural science, have guidelines but no official state standards. All textbooks used cover the state standards and students are given copies of the standards. In preparing for the STAR tests in science each standard is discussed and students are given numerous exercises to assist them in mastering each standard. The Science Department uses STAR test results to assess the effectiveness of the each subject's curriculum. Curriculum is then modified or adjusted as needed to better the students' understanding of the standards.

Prior to the publication of the California State History-Social Science Content Standards our district developed Grade Level Assessment Standards (GLASC). These were the result of a yearlong project for the combined Social Studies Departments of the West Sonoma County District and our partner schools. We established teaching specific benchmarks and supporting activities with assessments that all teachers were to use as guides for the delivery of their curriculum. After the publication of the California state standards these guides were aligned with the California Standards for the Social Studies (History-Social Studies Content Standards). The Social Studies Department Chairperson formed committees for each of the twelve classes (and for Health). The committees were made up of instructors that taught the

particular disciplines (always at least two per committee). In September of 2004, "Courses of Study" were completed by each of the groups for each class taught by the department. Materials, objectives, outlines, assessment procedures, and standard specifics to each part of the outlines are all included. Members of the department were also given CDE guides for the percentage of questions asked from each area on STAR tests. These three instruments have given us uniform direction to present a rigorous, relevant and coherent standards-based curriculum for each student. Finally, all members of the department are CLAD or SDAIE certified which helps the diversity of the teaching staff deal with an ever changing student population.

Foreign Language doesn't have state standards. We follow the national framework as well as the ESLRs. The categories specified by the national framework include: Communities: creating communities within and beyond school. Communication: communicating in the target language orally and in writing. Culture: comparing, contrasting and learning about each other's cultures.

Comparisons: comparing the languages and cultures and learning from similarities and differences. Connections: making connections across the curriculum.

The following activities are examples Foreign Language Department curriculum that offer challenging learning experiences to achieve academic standards and ESLRs. We use a variety of strategies and resources. These activities include oral and written exercises, debate, cultural projects, study of art, poetry and literature, service learning, peer tutoring, current events, and outside language experiences. Students can tap into their talents in many ways in our foreign language classrooms.

Some areas of growth /concern to consider: (1) Development of opportunities for teacher collaboration regarding student progress, (2) Staff development should continue to provide information regarding best practices in teaching to standards and changes in assessment, (3) Materials should be regularly updated as needed, especially in the areas of standards and assessment.

Evidence

- Department minutes
- Perception data comparisons
- STAR results
- ESLRs
- Disaggregation data
- AP results
- SAT / ACT results
- Class change data

B2: To what extent do all students have access to the school's entire program and assistance with a personal learning plan to prepare them for the pursuit of their academic, personal and school-to-career goals.

Starting while students are still in the eighth grade, the students and their parents attend individual academic counseling sessions to formulate an educational plan and choose appropriate classes that lead to academic and career goals. Counselors help to develop a four year educational plan for the incoming students. Early each year counselors and teachers of freshmen meet to identify and assist students who are struggling academically. In the tenth grade, all students are guided through career activities that help to develop career and educational goals. With assistance from the Career Center, students are encouraged and supported in developing and maintaining a learning plan and career portfolio.

El Molino is fortunate to have a 7 period day. This affords the student the opportunity to participate in classes that are part of various career paths (e.g., culinary, pre-engineering, music and dance) as well as courses that provide the foundation for standards-based specific academic outcomes. Every spring, students, with the support of teachers, counselors, and parents, review educational plans and make class selections for the subsequent year that are consistent with their unique plans.

El Molino provides a structured process for making class changes once the year has begun. Student abilities and interests are considered, and changes can be made with the approval of the student's parent and teacher. These changes are considered in light of stated goals and plans. Budget difficulties, resulting in fewer sections and larger classes, will make it more difficult to respond to more personalized requests, such as a class that can only be offered during one specific period.

Each department supports the schoolwide effort to place each student in the appropriate, most challenging class. Counselors visit social studies classes in March to explain the registration process for the next year and to distribute registration materials. Registration forms require a parental signature and offer parents and students the opportunity to request a conference with the student's counselor.

All students are required to complete four years of English. Incoming freshmen are placed in English I based on their CST scores from the 7th grade (these are the most current scores available at the time of registration), recommendations from the students' eighth grade English teacher, and a parent/student/counselor conference held at the time of registration. Students are placed in English I (P), English I (Title I), RSP English 9/10.

At the end of the freshman, sophomore, and junior years, the English teachers review each student's progress and recommend the appropriate English class for the next year based on set criteria. At the end of each year, students may apply for advanced classes (Accelerated English II (P), English III (AP), and English IV (AP). The application process consists of a timed writing, a review of grades in previous English classes, and the recommendations of the students' previous two English teachers.

All incoming 9th grade students are required to enroll in a math course. Students are first placed in a course according to their CST scores from 7th grade. The 8th grade teachers give

their input as to the validity of the placement and recommend changes, where needed. The final step is for each student, with their parents, to sit down with a faculty member and to register for courses for the freshman year. Through this individualized approach all students are well informed of the classes available to them. Based on their achievement in classes, students move through the curriculum taking courses that are suited to their own needs and goals. After this initial placement, in the spring of each year, every math teacher makes a recommendation for each student as to the best math class to take in the following year. Options are shown in the department Flow Chart and the El Molino curriculum guide.

The Science department has a two year requirement for graduation. The Science Department maintains multiple pathways for students to complete their requirement. Most content areas have three levels (e.g., General Biology, Lab Biology and AP Biology). Beginning with freshman registration, students select the level which meets their academic and career goals. In the spring of each year science teachers counsel students as to their options for sciences classes the following year. Counselors join in this effort and pay particular attention to student who may not be enrolled in science in a given year. The pathways allow students to move between levels and content areas, thus nearly all students fulfill their graduation requirement. Many Students fulfill the UC requirement D as well.

Four years of Social Studies are required for graduation at El Molino High School. Students are offered options at each grade level. These options are in the form of varied intensity (AP, Accelerated, Title I, Humanities) and teacher variety (always two instructors to choose from at all grade levels). Beginning with freshman registration, social studies teachers work to appropriately place each student. CST scores are used for freshman placement, along with conferences with parents and students. Students have access to all classes. In the next three years, students are informed as to their choices and the path they must follow to pursue their chosen pathway. We have met our API growth target for two of the past three years and we have met our AYP for the past three years. Our students have performed above state averages on the Exit Exam (CAHSEE) and SAT testing over the past three years. Also, AP classes in Social Studies are offered at the junior and senior level with our students consistently scoring very well.

Departments follow a similar process in elective areas. In this way students have access to classes in the school's program, guidance from teachers in each academic area, as well as from counselors. Students with interests in specific areas often rely on relationships with teachers for advice in planning for the pursuit of their interests in college, trade school, or employment. Armed with this advice, the College and Career Center coordinator helps to provide information and assistance with applications.

Strategies exist for the smooth transition to post high school settings. A senior year program is in place to help students to smoothly transition to Santa Rosa Junior College. In 2005, approximately 120 students participated in this program. Students may also participate in "job shadows", following various professionals in a typical work day. The College and Career Center Coordinator sets up this program, along with numerous visits from college and trade school representatives. Funding cuts in the coordinator's position in September 2005

adversely affected access to College and Career Center services. However, some funding will be restored in January 2006, which will allow for greater student access.

An area of possible growth includes the following survey result. Although all students have the opportunity to participate in an appropriately rigorous curriculum, perception data indicates that a small percentage of students believe not all students take advantage of the opportunity. Identifying which students do not participate in a meaningful way is an important next step.

Evidence

- Attendance figures for 8th grade registration
- 4 year learning plans
- Counselor – student ratios
- Number of counselor contacts
- Perception data
- Career center data
- Parent night agendas
- College / career materials available to students

B3. To what extent are students able to meet all the requirements of graduation upon completion of the high school program?

All students are encouraged, within the framework of El Molino’s standards-based curriculum, to formulate an educational plan and select classes that support their vocational and educational goals. Our curricular paths allow students to obtain real world experience and the opportunity to apply classroom knowledge. Various clubs, programs, productions, and community links enable students to blend their interests and abilities.

Academic support of student progress is a collaborative effort of teachers, counselors, administrators, parents and students. Counselors routinely review various grade and progress reports through the semester to help monitor student progress. Weekly meetings of administrators, counselors, teachers and staff help identify student needs that interfere with learning. Parents are encouraged to meet with counselors and teachers as appropriate whenever they have concerns about their student. Student study teams can be called by anyone who has a concern about a particular student. A student welfare fund allows financially needy students to purchase class materials and to participate in extracurricular activities. El Molino continues to offer summer school and senior year credit makeup programs to enable a student to commence with his classmates in four years. Counselors identify at the end of junior year the graduation status, including total and subject credits, as well as the CAHSEE, of each and every senior. Through multiple letters and contacts in the senior year, everyone is kept apprised of the student’s graduation status. At the end of 7th semester and 3rd quarter, each senior’s record is examined for possible problems.

This year we have the funds to provide supplemental instruction for seniors and juniors who have not passed the CAHSEE. In addition, we are planning additional support for all sophomores and additional support for those sophomores who we feel may have difficulty passing the CAHSEE.

Students are encouraged to begin and routinely update their plans for after high school. Each year students are afforded the opportunity to select English, math and science levels based on interest, goals and recommendations. A traditionally broad selection of electives has also encouraged students to explore new areas. Continuing budget cuts, resulting in fewer sections and larger class sizes, will result in less flexibility to more personalized student / parent requests for classes.

Graduation rates are broken down into individual student circumstances to determine why a particular student did not graduate in the prescribed 4 years. Counselors spend a great deal of time in the last semester of senior year monitoring senior progress. This year's senior Graduation Status letter, routinely sent to parents, was modified to make graduation requirements even more transparent for all concerned. For non-graduates, a plan is developed to help him /her finish requirements in summer and / or subsequent semesters though the district's summer school program, the local community college, or adult education.

Areas of growth include (1) better integration of career development into regular curriculum, (2) better use of personal learning plans in student scheduling, and (3) working toward the reinstatement of a full -time College and Career Center Coordinator as an integral part of full student participation in education / career planning.

Evidence

- CBEDS graduation information
- CAHSEE results by grade level
- CAHSEE results by population (EL, RSP)
- Math articulation and pathways based on new Algebra I requirement
- Articulation information from SRJC
- Limited CSU and UC articulation information
- Counselor letters to parents
- Senior teacher communications
- Credit makeup programs (independent study and after school)
- Perception data
- Senior exit survey

STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: INSTRUCTION

C1: To what extent are all students involved in challenging learning experiences to achieve the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results.

Curriculum at El Molino involves students in challenging learning environments which are tied closely to academic standards and expected schoolwide learning results where appropriate to support student learning. Each department tackles this goal in a variety of ways, offering students opportunities to excel in their respective subjects with emphasis on critical thinking and hands-on learning.

The Fine Arts Department is comprised of several distinct areas. The classes in theater arts are arranged by ability (beginning, intermediate, advanced) and the assignments at each level become more sophisticated, difficult and complex. These classes are also multi-level within themselves to address and challenge all learning levels represented in each class. For example, RSP students are expected to complete the same assignments as the higher learning level students, but the assignments may be modified to meet special needs. Varied assignments and strategies supports a challenging environment as students work on improvisation, theater games pantomime, original scenes, memorized published scenes and original film work. In Stagecraft, students who have taken the course previously will be given increasingly more difficult tasks and assignments and serve as mentors and leaders in the class to scaffold new students. Thus, these classes are also multi-level, challenging students at all learning levels. Students are given multiple methods to ensure student success, ranging from individually completed assignments such as solo acting, oral interpretation, set, lighting, costume research and design as well as group assignments such as group interpretation, duet scenes, and play production from acting and technical perspectives.

In the area of music, objectives of lessons are tied to the Visual and Performing Arts Framework which are posted in the room. Student increase their aesthetic sensitivity by performing literature and reflecting on the digital recording of their performance. Students are challenged to increase their abilities as well as their aesthetic appreciation of music.

In dance, students are involved in varied challenging learning experiences which are tied to state and national standards for dance as well as the ESLRs. All students are expected to participate in group projects requiring them to choreograph and perform in that group. More advanced students are expected to choreograph and perform solo pieces. All students perform in at least one full scale dance performance where they reflect on the process and experience, challenging themselves to improve. Advanced and intermediate students also participate in a yearly research project which requires multiple resources including a research paper and a class presentation complete with graphics and/or video clips.

The visual arts program, including Art Studio I, Art and Design, Sculpture, Advanced Art and Advanced Art (AP), offers students hands-on learning where students must produce a product to learn. It is taught from a sequential perspective with various mediums, techniques and artistic styles. Students are challenged to not only create a product, but investigate art

history, present oral and written work, learn the principles and elements of art, how to apply these elements to their work, and how to defend their work through these elements. Our photography curriculum proceeds sequentially, using various mediums, techniques, and styles. Students learn the history and significance of photography through written projects. Students study great photographers, write reports, and emulate the style of chosen photographers. Students learn art elements as well as the art of fine print-making.

In the Math Department, tests and assignments emphasize higher order thinking skills. Students are challenged to take previously gained knowledge and apply that knowledge to new skills. Critical thinking skills are assessed in homework assignments and on tests in many word problems. Students must interpret the question being asked and then apply their math skills to solve the problem. Title I provides Basic Math instruction in small classes with the support of an aide to support student with low math skills. Recently the Math department made changes to their curriculum in response to standardized test scores and academic standards. For example, with Algebra I becoming a California state graduation requirement, the creation of a two-year Algebra program was initiated in order to scaffold struggling students. Class size reduction monies have also aided the implementation of a challenging curriculum. In RSP math, students are challenged as skills are taught and re-taught. These skills enable students to perform on competency exams and move on to Basic Algebra. Students are challenged to learn study skills as they transfer knowledge and process data from the board to their desk and notes. Peer education and one-on-one instruction is utilized to scaffold students and encourage success. Students are also challenged to participate in daily class lessons and the small class size makes this challenge safe because of the comfortable atmosphere. There are many different learning abilities and disabilities which are dealt with using varied tools to enable student success. Strategies include presenting lessons and then presenting them again at a later date to help with concept mastery. The growth of skills is determined by standardized test scores.

In the Vocational Education Department, instructional practices innately incorporate varied strategies and learning modalities into its curriculum and program implementation. This is done through the learning 'skills' and 'knowledge' under-girded through the multiplicity of inter-curricular links required for standards (industrial and business) projects which are required. This range of learning dynamics typically includes Bloom's Taxonomy in all three learning domains as well as inter-subject applications in math, language, science, art and history. Proficiency is also required in introductory course work for students to be able to participate in project work which challenges them to find meaningful solutions to the problems resident in their projects.

In the English department, a variety of assignments and strategies support challenging student learning experiences which accompany standards-based education. Preparation for standards based assessments is planned at all grade levels. The first departmental step towards supporting standards was the purchase of standards-based textbooks, provided at the sophomore and freshman level. As funds become available, these standards-based textbooks will replace textbooks at the junior and senior level as well. Students also complete each of the standards-required essay styles at each of the corresponding grade levels. Examples of

challenging standards-based instruction can be seen in all classes, but some notable references follow: In Integrated Humanities, a freshman level combined English/Social Science course, students complete a personal anthology assignment which increases cultural knowledge of non-Western societies. Analytical essays interpret literary and art selections as well as geographical regions where they learn the structure of the argumentative literature essay and research style evaluative essay. Freshman projects are also required combining a saturation report reflecting on how a topic reflects and affects society, and an in-class multi-media presentation is also required. Technology has been integrated into many aspects of the English curriculum, most obviously with the use of word processing programs, but also with the use of PowerPoint as a presentation tool. Another notable assignment is from AP English IV in which students create individual art work reflecting the symbolism of Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*. In one senior level English course, students write their own sonnets and read them to the class. A discussion of rhyme and meter is incorporated as evidence of understanding of iambic pentameter and various combinations of rhyme. This assignment coordinates with a British sonnet writers unit and as a prelude to the study of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*. These are but a few examples of challenging and creative assignments employed by the English Department which support standards-based learning as well as ESLRs while employing varied strategies and resources to enable student learning. All seniors complete a Senior Project which requires a MLA documented research paper to compliment 30 hours of field work. Senior Project presentations to a community panel are required for graduation.

In the Social Studies Department, several programs and practices are in place that encourage students to get involved in the curriculum. Several teachers make use of the mobile computer lab in their classroom to integrate into lesson plans. The department focuses on higher-level learning through Socratic questions in discussions and smaller groups working together on projects and assignments while instructors observe and further contributions from all group members. Advanced Placement courses are available for accelerated learners at both the junior and senior level. Both courses utilize a variety of learning strategies including teacher directed lessons, research of primary documents, debates and document based writing to address college-level prompts. The Social Studies Department also has a college prep focus in all of its classes. Classes other than AP and Title I replacement sections are organized into sections of wide ranging student achievement, all heterogeneously grouped. Several teachers introduce state standards on a daily basis to enable student understanding of expected performance levels for various subjects. For students learning English, the department has ESL courses as well as mainstreamed students who cooperate with resource specialists for students needing assistance in completing assignments.

The Foreign Language Department does not have formal state standards, so the National framework is followed. Categories include: communities: creating communities within and beyond schools; communication: communicating in the target language orally and in writing; culture: comparing, contrasting and learning about each other's cultures; comparisons: comparing the languages and cultures and learning from similarities and differences; connections: making connections across the curriculum. These challenging goals of the National Framework are integrated into the foreign language curriculum where students are encouraged to tap into their talents in many ways to enable success.

In the Science Department, laboratory work constitutes a great deal of the learning process. These include both group and individual work, including oral and/or written presentations and reports. The standards are clearly outlined in the lab instructions and by the teacher before the lab day. All of the science faculty members arrange lab groups to have students of diverse backgrounds and abilities. Students help one another in the learning process. All students are required to participate and facilitate one another's learning; this participation is usually part of the grade on the lab. In addition to labs, most courses require written homework and papers requiring some research on the part of the students. Projects with presentations are also part of most of the courses. The difficulty and amount of research vary with the type of course. The difficulty and amount of research varies with the type of course.

Evidence:

- Department minutes
- STAR Results
- CAHSEE Results
- AP Results
- SAT/ACT Results
- Perception Data
- assignments & lesson plans
- Standards-Based Textbooks (in acquisition process)

C2: To what extent do all teachers use a variety of strategies and resources, including technology and experiences beyond the textbook and the classroom, that actively engage students, emphasize higher order thinking skills, and help them succeed at higher levels?

All departments involve students in varied experiences throughout the academic year which take students beyond the textbook and classroom. Students are actively engaged through varied instructional and departmental strategies. Technology is utilized where appropriate to scaffold and enhance student learning. These varied strategies are geared towards challenging students to excel by emphasizing critical thinking and evaluative skills.

In theater arts, acting students are given a variety of assignments throughout the year. Class work and projects include improvisation, theater games, pantomime, original scenes, memorized published scenes, and original film work. These activities are sometimes individual but many times are group oriented. Assessment comes from teacher observation and critique as well as peer observation and critique. Many assignments are videotaped and replayed to enable the student to assess his own work as well. In Stagecraft, class work includes vocabulary, set construction, lighting and costume design, and play production. Technology used in Theater Arts classes includes: computers (iMovie, Final Cut Pro, ProLux Lighting Design software), digital video cameras, digital still cameras, Melange lighting board, and sewing machines. Students work on projects that are individually completed (solo acting, oral interpretation, set, lighting costume research and design). Some

work is also done in groups (group interpretation, duet scenes, play production (acting and technical aspects)).

In the area of music, students study and perform a variety of music literature in its historical and cultural setting. Background information of Western and world music from other countries is found using the Internet and reference books and recordings. Students learn the elements of music by teacher presentations, guest lecturers, video, ear-training, writing notation, and on higher levels, composing and improvising.

In area of dance, dance and choreography students are involved in numerous challenging learning experiences that involve a number of teaching strategies and resources. They learn material through daily exposure to dance technique, videos, reading and writing assignments as well as from watching and participating in formal and informal dance performances. All students participate in at least one full scale dance production and must then reflect in writing on the process of preparing for and participating in, the performance. Evidence of students' progress is captured on video and then reviewed for self and group evaluation. Oral discussions, lectures, lecture-demonstrations, journals, written response are also part of the yearly dance curriculum experienced by dance students. Advanced and intermediate students participate in a yearly dance related research project that includes dance-related careers. The project requires multiple resources, a research paper and a class presentation including use of graphics and/or video clips.

The visual arts program provides hands on learning in which the student must produce a product to learn. It is taught sequential with a various medium and techniques and artistic styles. We offer Art Studio I, an art survey class, Art and Design, sculpture, photography, and advanced drawing and painting classes. Beside the product they create, they also investigate art history, complete oral and/or written work, learn the principles and elements of art and how to apply to their work and how to defend their work through those principles and elements. They also produce journals and portfolios. Students enter this program with a variety of levels of skills and all are usually ignorant of the principles and elements of art. In the end, they not only know what these principles and elements are, they know how to apply them to their work to produce a better quality piece of art and they have learned to recognize and defend art through them.

In the Math Department, assignments and tests require higher order thinking skills. Students are asked to take previously gained knowledge and apply it to new skills in a way that challenges them beyond simple repetition. Students use a variety of technological resources as well as basic measurement tools. Graphing and scientific calculators as well as the Geometrics Sketchpad are examples of the technology used. For many Geometry assignments, measurement tools are required. Graphing calculators are used in many classes. They are used regularly in class and homework assignments in Pre-Calculus and Calculus. In RSP math, students are given daily lessons and instruction is done via dry erase board as a group. Students learn study skills as they transfer knowledge and process data from the board to their desk and notes. Calculators, rulers, and life experiences are used in addition to the book. In RSP study skills, students have library, encyclopedic, computer, and peer help as well as teacher help to complete other class work in a comfortable and quiet atmosphere.

Teachers help enable students to achieve his or her goals. Students work towards passing the math competency exam which is given five times during the school year in the RSP classroom. Basic Algebra concepts are also beginning to be incorporated into the curriculum. The growth of skills is determined based on test scores. Text books, calculators, and rulers are used and well as life-examples in the study of perimeter, area, and other mathematical concepts.

The Vocational Education Department the instructional practices innately incorporate a variety of instructional practices and learning modalities into its curricular and program implementations. This is accomplished through the learning of skills and knowledge under girded through inter-curricular links that business and industrial standards require. Students are afforded opportunities to develop computer and SCAN skills through the many assignments that require those skills to support a higher proficiency of success. The Vocational Education department also requires proficiency in its introductory course work for students to be able to participate in project work that challenges them in finding meaningful solutions to the problems resident in their projects. Culinary Arts exemplifies these practices. This career pathway leads students from introductory coursework to professional levels of coursework with job entry skills or placement in post secondary institutions. Our other vocational pathways also exemplify these instructional practices.

In the English Department, a variety of assignments and strategies support challenging student learning experiences accompanying standards-based education. Teachers utilize technology as a tool in teaching including lecture and discussion via PowerPoint or overhead projectors. PowerPoint and projectors are also used in student presentations and discussions. The mobile lab can be checked out by teachers and used for in-class student research and essay writing/editing units. The library is also utilized as a tool for student learning. At the freshman year, students participate in a library orientation and are instructed in how to effectively use the library. At the sophomore year, students apply this knowledge in their research reports. This knowledge also extends into Senior Projects. Senior Projects are multi-dimensional and often utilize technology. These projects take students outside the school to research and participate in a community project which interests them. All seniors create and present a Senior Project that requires 30 hours of field work or service as well as an extensive research paper.

In the Social Studies Department, higher order thinking skills are emphasized. In both AP and college-prep classes, daily strategies include inquiry, problem solving and teamwork. All students are involved in collaborative activities in constructing diverse projects such as historical newspapers, metaphor boards, jigsaw presentations, visual representations and mapping ideas. Student survey data suggests that a majority of students feel they do critical thinking in class. Parent involvement is an important aspect of the social studies curriculum. They contributed to formulating the schoolwide learning results and participate in several advisory groups concerning curriculum development and program evaluation.

In the Foreign Language Department, challenging learning experiences encompass varied activities including: Reading and presentations regarding newspaper articles in the target language; Watching TV broadcasts in the target language; Listening to songs and doing cloze

exercises; Student debates based on articles read; Cultural projects and presentations (in target language in more advanced levels); Making movies; Watching videos in the target language; Presenting dialogues and skits in class; Listening to tapes in class; Doing outside language experiences such as speaking, listening, reading and reporting back; Poetry reading and writing; Service learning project with peer tutoring with native Spanish speakers; Peer evaluation of presentations and writing; Essay and paragraph writing; Poster creating; Grammatical themes; Inductive teaching; Vocabulary projects; Use of class libraries of a variety of levels of books in target language; Writing children's books.

In the Science Department, science teachers all teach a range of classes and there is a wide range of abilities within each class as well. A variety of strategies is used by each teacher within each class period: some lecturing and note-taking, some video and/or computer imagery, some group discussion, written assignments, lab activities, individual discussions, and group activities such as "Tree Walk" around campus and the "Solar System to Scale" walk. Teachers often recommend further reading to students (such as Brian Greene's books) and television to watch (such as NOVA) on their own. Some teachers take additional classes themselves (for example, classes at the Exploratorium in San Francisco on Saturdays) during the school year and often bring in activities and learning experiences to share with students. Unfortunately, there are no monies available to take students to the Exploratorium which is a sad waste of a local resource. Many science teachers encourage them to go with their families. All of the science faculty are enthusiastic and well informed about the world of science and try to instill in students at every level some degree of excitement about the possibilities science has for all our lives and futures. Recent El Molino graduates commented on their experiences in first year college science classes by stating "My freshman year was so easy because El Molino prepared me so well. Other kids weren't as lucky; I breezed through." Sometimes unsolicited testimonials can provide the most meaningful data.

Evidence:

- Department minutes
- Individual teacher assignments & lesson plans
- School Technology Plan & Inventory
- Field Trips (in certain departments)
- Presentation Tools (PowerPoint, DVD, VHS, Etc)
- Site Council Requests for additional equipment/supplies/texts
- Perception Data
- Guest Speaker schedules (in certain departments)
- Elective Course Opportunities

STANDARDS-BASED STUDENT LEARNING: ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

D1: To what extent does the school use a professionally acceptable assessment process to collect, disaggregate, analyze and report student performance data to the parents and other shareholders of the community?

Individual results of standardized tests, including the STAR test and High School Exit Exam are mailed home to every student. Overall results are published in our parent communication newsletter *Lion Lines* and also in local and regional newspapers. We have become aware through the Parent Survey that many parents do not feel that test results are communicated to them. We will work to remedy that situation. This year the school has posted a link to CST and CAHSEE results on the school website. While we communicate results in Lions Lines, we will look to publishing the results in greater detail and with more explanation.

El Molino has a process in place to collect, disaggregate and analyze and report student performance data to parents and other members of the community. Parents receive eight individual progress reports throughout the school year. Parents who request a weekly progress report are easily accommodated.

At several critical points in his/her high school career, the counseling staff reviews the individual progress of each student toward meeting graduation requirements and toward meeting college entrance requirements. The counseling staff has several evening informational meetings (Frosh/Soph Night, Junior Night, and Senior Night) during the school year designed to focus on updated requirements for each class. Information is also available in the Student and Parent Handbook mailed out to every student.

Evidence

- CST results
- CAHSEE results
- SAT results
- AP test results
- teacher, parent surveys
- Student and Parent Handbook
- Lion Lines
- El Molino High School web site

D2: To what extent do teachers employ a variety of assessment strategies to evaluate student learning? To what extent do students and teachers use these findings to modify the teaching/learning process for the enhancement of the educational progress of every student?

El Molino High School takes pride in a diverse student body, a supportive community and high student achievement. The El Molino community appreciates the multitude of meaningful assessment venues integrated into the educational process, utilized by students to enhance their learning experience and by educators to constantly upgrade curriculum in alignment with local, state, and national standards. Formal and informal data on student achievement is routinely gathered and reviewed in an effort to improve instructional strategies. Teachers, in response to the analysis of assessment results, develop goals that encourage sustained achievement and excellence in education.

Educators involve El Molino students in an array of assessment tasks that address each student's ability to analyze, organize, interpret, explain, synthesize, evaluate and communicate important experiences or ideas. Strategies vary across and within department, as well as across teachers in like subject areas. An analysis of student and teacher surveys revealed that on any given day a student might participate in a formal performance, a science lab, a group project, graphic technology, a peer or teacher evaluation, and a variety of other assessment tools and strategies including the following: standardized and teacher originated tests, homework, portfolios, behavior and participation in classroom activities, essay writing and review, oral exams, reports and presentations, individual projects, demonstrations, contests, debates, student generated discussion and dialogue, peer-editing, self evaluation, problem solving, troubleshooting, multimedia, notebooks. The formal assessments used at El Molino include CAHSEE, STAR, PSAT, SAT, and AP Tests.

Each year the Department Chairpersons are given a report that shows the grades that students earn in the classes in their department in order to complete an analysis with the members of their departments. This is done to support student learning and the assessment of learning. Grades are looked at to determine the level of student success and are compared to STAR test results in the specific academic areas. Teachers look at the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and instruction practices in order to celebrate what is working and to plan improvements. In some cases it has become obvious that the needs of a specific group of students are not being met. The grades in specific classes that are taught by different teachers are studied to make certain that they are comparable and fair. If there is a discrepancy, that discrepancy will be discussed in terms of curriculum, instructional practices, grading rubrics to determine areas that may be improved. This process of analysis and reflection has strengthened curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices. It has also made teachers more aware of the issues involved in meaningful assessment and how consideration of these issues is a professional practice that lead to the growth of the teachers as well as the students.

Each year a Co-Principal completes an analysis of STAR California Standards test scores. The report includes El Molino scores, county scores, and state scores. Information is reported for all level of achievement and as the total percentage of students who scores advanced or proficient and the total percentage of those who scored at the lower levels. The

analysis includes a breakdown of grades students received by class for each of the CST areas so that teachers can compare the local evaluation of students with the results of the CST.

Educators and administrators use assessment results to modify the curriculum and instruction practices towards alignment to state, and national academic standards. Weaknesses are identified and some departments engage in dialogues to modify curriculum and assessment strategies to improve student achievement.

English teachers at El Molino High School use a wide array of assessment strategies to evaluate student progress and assess the learning. The standard multiple choice, true-false, fill-ins, short answer, and essay types of tests and quizzes make up a portion of the evaluation process. Other types of assessment include projects, oral reports, experiments, theme graphics, writing portfolios, video productions, Socratic discussion sessions while dealing with various readings as well as various types of writer's workshops and/or journal writing exercises used to help students improve speaking, thinking and writing skills. In some English classrooms, students create projects that revolve around the ideas presented in a play or novel. In September 2005 the writing of all juniors was assessed using the Early Assessment Program test provided by the California State University system. Analysis of the students' scores will be used to strengthen writing instruction. The low results of this test for some students have resulted in many questions about the role of motivation and attendance in the achievement of less able students and strategies to overcome deficiencies in these areas.

This year an English Department Co-Chairperson completed a detailed analysis of English placement, grades and student scores on the CST and the CAHSEE. The reports contains detailed information about specific classes throughout their years at El Molino, as well as scores of students in specific levels of English classes, and their performance compared to state wide average scores. The analysis also details achievement levels for the various scoring clusters. This report will be used to evaluate current curriculum and instructional practices in order to make changes to foster greater student success.

English teachers use assessment to modify the teaching/learning process of students. The English department uses assessment results to set up classes after ninth grade by ability groups. Students with grades lower than a 'C' are enrolled in regular or non-college preparatory classes in an effort to help them improve on the skills they lack. Though the basic curriculum for both college prep and non-college prep is similar, the generally slower pace and attention to more basic reading and writing skills allows the non-college prep students to attain a level of success they did not achieve in the college prep classes. In some cases, the move generates the work ethic and confidence to make the move back into college prep classes after a semester or year.

The Math Department successfully uses assessment results from the Algebra I Challenge Test to place eighth grade students into the appropriate math course freshman year. Ninth grade Algebra I students who demonstrate mastery of the subject have the opportunity to accelerate their math progress by participating in a rigorous Geometry independent study program during the summer and upon passing they are enrolled in the accelerated Algebra II/Trigonometry course in the fall. Within the last year, the math department needed to make

a curriculum change with Algebra I. Many students had difficulty passing Algebra I, especially the second semester. Since this is a graduation requirement, the math department and administration decided to add Algebra IA and Algebra IB that covers the Algebra I curriculum in a two-year period. These students are able to go at a much slower rate and still cover the areas of college prep Algebra I.

After careful examination of STAR Test results, the members of the Science Department closely evaluated the content of each science textbook to make sure that every science standard tested on the STAR Test was covered in each course textbook. Some of the curriculum in science classes has been rearranged so that standards tested on the CST are covered before the administration of the exam.

One of the most important roles of the Special Education department is to collaborate with general education teachers in regards to the accommodations/modifications needed to assess individual special education students. Assessment strategies for individual students are agreed upon by the IEP team (which must have a general education teacher in attendance), and is written into that student's Individual Education Plan.

In Foreign Language Department classes, detailed teacher evaluations of students' oral presentations are given to students, outlining areas students need to improve upon before completing the next assignment. Study of student achievement in foreign language classes led to changes in the ways students are placed in foreign language classes so that the students are placed in the appropriate level for the next year. Students may be asked to repeat a level if that is deemed the best choice for that student. Foreign language teachers scrutinize the list of student sign ups for each level and move students as necessary. They take English placement into account, and visit English teachers to discuss student study habits and achievement in English. They also attend the Freshmen Registration Nights to interview students and to consider standardized tests scores in the placement in foreign language classes.

The Vocation Education Department operates primarily on a Career Pathway model. As this model incorporates aspects of many academic courses, vocational education teachers look STAR, AP, CAHSEE, and other test results to determine the manner in which the vocational education classes can integrate academic skills and knowledge into the curriculum. The goal is to design curriculum that is relevant and supports student achievement. Each discipline within the department requires projects and activities that involve writing, research, analysis, and oral presentations. Technological and scientific knowledge is taught and reinforced with "hands on" activities. Students are in Career Pathway courses by choice based upon individual interest. As students see the relevance to their area of interest of what they are learning in other classes, they become more motivated and successful in the other academic classes.

Students from classes in the various departments at El Molino report a variety of ways in which they use assessment results to modify their learning in order to enhance their educational program. Through career and subject-area or career portfolios, some students establish goals and reflect on subject area or career oriented progress throughout their school

career, often creating self directed rubrics for future success. Across the curriculum homework encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning and is often a stimulus for class discussion. In reviewing corrected errors on homework, students can immediately see their areas of deficiency and ask questions and set goals to clarify understanding. Peer and instructor feedback allows students the opportunity to reassess strengths and weakness and engage in self-directed learning opportunities that encourage success.

Evidence

- student, parent, teacher surveys
- teacher evaluations
- department meeting minutes

D3: To what extent does the school with the support of the district and community have an assessment and monitoring system to determine student progress toward achievement of the academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results?

The manifold assessment strategies and methods currently practiced with El Molino students provide numerous avenues and levels for review of their progress. At the most immediate level, teachers review and reflect to their students their progress through standard practices (feedback and discussion on tests, homework, notebooks and various class projects; use of pre- and post-tests; classroom demonstrations) and through the use of a variety of more interactive techniques (e.g., student contracts, class decisions on presentation material, journals and notebooks, student generated dialogues and oral presentations and exams).

Departments regularly review student progress both formally by reviewing and analyzing student performance on tangible measures and informally through thoughtful discussion and reflection. Departments and the larger school community routinely use summary assessment data (STAR results, PSAT, SAT, AP, CAHSEE) as one means of analyzing program effectiveness and overall student achievement in discipline-specific curriculum. Counselors and administrators make use of summary data in decisions and about course offerings, college and career advising and in providing feedback to teachers. The Career Center's implementation of a Career Planning Folder for each student provides another means to relate student achievement and experience to future education and career paths. The Planning Folders are accessible to all members of the El Molino community who play a specific role in school to career decisions.

The counseling staff monitors student progress towards graduation requirements including the passage of the High School Exit Exam. Progress toward achievement of these standards is sent home to parents and is discussed in annual evening parent information meetings.

Results from the California High School Exit Exam and course grades help guide the counselor and student to choose an appropriate course of action to meet graduation requirements and to choose a career pathway. Students meet individually with their counselor to review their progress and to adjust their schedules to continue their progress.

In the instances that placement on Special Education is indicated, the Woodcock/Johnson Revised, considered to be the most comprehensive test for learning disabilities, is always available for Special Education teacher's use at this site. The district provides us with updated versions as they become available. The school psychologist works closely with the teachers in the Special Education Department in the administration of this test and the analysis of test results.

Parents and community members are involved in panels that assess the oral presentation of the Senior Projects of each graduating senior.

This year our new superintendent is working with the superintendents of our partner districts to share assessment information. If a system can be put into place it would facilitate monitoring of student progress and in program improvement. In addition, we are working to establish vertical teams with teachers at partner schools. In the past we had an effective system of articulation with our partner schools, but the buyback staff development system resulted in fewer professional development days and less opportunity for articulation. Hopefully, with our superintendent's interest in working with our partner districts in the sharing of assessment information, we may find renewed support for articulation with teachers in these districts.

Evidence

- CAHSEE results
- PSAT, SAT, ACT results
- AP test results
- teacher, parent, student surveys
- Back to School Night/Open House agendas
- Freshman/Sophomore, Junior, Senior, and Financial Aid Night agendas
- Senior Projects

D4: To what extent does the assessment of student achievement in relation to academic standards and the expected schoolwide learning results drive the school's program, its regular evaluation and improvement and usage of resources?

The CAHSEE and STAR tests have become the driving force behind education in California. Departments have closely monitored the cumulative results of these tests over the past three years. Checking scores of those who took the tests from one year to the next, though clearly not a very scientific method of determining results, has led the departments to grade students on material outlined in state standards.

Though the English program at El Molino is not driven solely by the state standards, the assessment of standardized test scores has played a major role in the attempts to improve student achievement. English Department members meet regularly to discuss not only pertinent current issues related to the department, but also to review semester grade reports, to evaluate CST and CAHSEE results. After review of standardized testing results, the English Department members often exchange ideas and lessons that they feel could improve

weak areas of study based upon the test results. We have purchased standards based textbooks for all ninth and tenth grade students. Hopefully, funds will be available to purchase textbooks for the eleventh and twelfth grade English students during the next two academic years.

During the past school year, twelfth grade teachers have explored ways to improve student writing scores on the CSU Early Assessment writing portion of the CST by attending in-service activities put on by the CSU system. As a result a teacher is offering, for the second consecutive year, a tutorial for interested students on time writing skills on Thursdays after school. When it was discovered that some educational testing services return group and individualized results, the English Department was able to obtain and complete the tests in September 2005. The necessary funding for the tests was provided by the Site Council. All junior English students participated in the tests. The English Department Chairperson has analyzed the results and the members of the department are working with these results to modify curriculum and instruction and to assist individual students in areas of need. It is believed that annual samples of writing could be submitted and progress of classes and individuals could be monitored more efficiently than at present.

The Science Department has closely examined STAR Test results and reviewed the textbooks to make sure that the standards are covered. After examination, the curriculum of biology, chemistry, and physics courses were rearranged in order to cover the standards before administration of the exam. The academic standards and testing results affect selection and approval of math textbooks.

Evidence:

- student, parent, alumni and teacher surveys
- CAHSEE, STAR, PSAT, SAT, AP Tests
- Freshman/Sophomore, Junior, Senior, and Financial Aid Night agendas
- department meeting agendas
- Career and subject area portfolios
- CSU Early Assessment in Writing results
- French III and IV detailed teacher evaluations
- Subject area journals and projects
- Student generated dialogues
- El Molino High School Website
- Lion Lines

SCHOOL CULTURE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

E1. To what extent does the school leadership employ a wide range of strategies to encourage parental and community involvement, especially with the teaching/learning process?

El Molino is continually looking for ways to encourage parental and community involvement in the school. Many of our evening events are designed for parents, and our parent newsletters and fliers encourage participation in their student's high school life.

The two biggest events on campus during the school year are Back-to-School Night in the fall and Open House in the spring. All families of high school students receive fliers regarding these events. At Back-to-School Night, parents move through their child's schedule meeting all of his/her teachers and hearing about the academic expectations of each course. Open House is a showcase for projects and work that students have been doing all year in different departments. Parents can look at student work, eat food prepared by the Culinary Arts Department, purchase bowls made by students in the sculpture classes with the proceeds going to the Empty Bowls Project. Parents can talk to teachers, administrators and counselors. At these events, parents can receive information about participating in the Boosters' Club, Friends of Music and the Site Council.

Many other opportunities exist for parent participation in the school. Starting with the spring orientation for parents of incoming freshmen, parents are encouraged to attend many school events. In August the school hosts a welcome party for the incoming freshmen. Food, entertainment and information are provided for both the students and their parents. Then in September all parents are invited to Back-to-School Night.

The counselors have four evenings designed to help parents with the secondary and post-secondary school process: Senior Night, Financial Aid Night, Junior Night and Frosh/Soph Night. Information concerning these evening presentations is mailed to all families.

El Molino's English Learners Advisory Committee meets twice a year, on Back-to-School Night and the night of Open House. At these meetings, parents are informed about the program for second language learners, school requirements for attendance and graduation, and other information applicable to them and their students.

By having the meetings in conjunction with these special night events, the parents are also involved in the Back to School and Open House activities. All parents of bilingual students in the school are invited through the school newsletter, *Lion's Line*, and through invitations in Spanish that are sent home with students. The meetings have speakers on topics concerning the health, welfare, and education of migrant and bilingual families.

The Title 1 Parent Advisory Committee meetings are held on site the evenings of Back-to-School Night and Open House to encourage school involvement and support. At the

meetings, in addition to having input into planning the program, parents have an opportunity to suggest to site and district staff program improvements and to evaluate parental activities. Meetings of parents of the GATE students are also held the same nights. These parents are encouraged to attend to discuss the school program.

At site parent meetings, through letters and/or by phone calls, parents are given suggestions of activities, strategies, and materials for helping their children succeed, and they are kept informed about issues facing their students. Parent/teacher conferences are held as needed through suggestions by parents, counselors or teachers. We have now compiled a voicemail and email list so parents can contact teachers.

The Site Council and the WASC groups all include parent representation. The Boosters' Club is a very active parent organization that does everything from running the snack bar at athletic events to helping with Back- to- School Night and Open House. They contribute funds to many different campus groups and provide members to help with a wide variety of events. Many parents and adults volunteer to run Project Graduation. They organize a safe, fun- filled all night party at Scandia for the seniors on graduation night. Parents do fundraising and provide supervision for the alcohol and drug free event.

Parent volunteers are a vital part of the leadership for Challenge Day and Every 15 Minutes. They also assist with drama, dance and music productions.

Although efforts are made to inform parents of what is happening at the school, both the geographic size and remoteness of some of the communities we serve makes it difficult for some families and community members to feel connected to the school. It is not easy for many families to even attend evening events at the school, not to mention attending afternoon planning sessions.

Evidence

- *Lion Lines*
- Fliers and agendas for Back-to-School Night, Senior Parent Night, Financial Aid Night, Junior Parent Night, Frosh/Soph Parent Night, Eighth Grade Parent Night, Eighth Grade Registration, Freshman Welcome Party
- Minutes from the English Learners Advisory Committee, Site Council Minutes and Title I Parent Advisory Minutes.

E2. To what extent is the school a safe, clean, and orderly place that nurtures learning? To what extent is the culture of the school characterized by trust, professionalism, high expectations for all students, and a focus on continuous school improvement?

A number of years ago our district was fortunate to pass a bond measure that provided for renovation and construction of facilities on our campus. A beautiful new library complex was built. It includes a career center, three classrooms and a room that houses the West County branch of the Sonoma County Library. The old library renovation was just completed and it now contains five classrooms, a book storage room and the office and workshop for our technology specialist.

The main office, the science rooms and the culinary rooms have all been remodeled. The other classrooms have all been painted and new carpet installed.

The physical plant is very attractive and, although the custodial staff has been hit by several rounds of lay-offs, they work very hard to keep the school clean and the grounds in beautiful condition. With fewer custodians, rooms now have to be cleaned on a rotating basis and not all areas of the campus can be cleaned daily. Teachers try to keep their rooms orderly and pick-up items off the floor. Students also help to maintain their classrooms, and the Associated Student Body has had various clean-up campaigns to encourage students not to litter the campus. It is not unusual to see our retired Drafting teacher after school edging the lawn.

State and district funding cuts have had a direct impact on our classrooms. Although there is class size reduction funding for ninth grade English and ninth grade math classes which keeps those classes at 20 to 1, the district class size ratio for all other classes has grown over the last few years. The ratio used to be 26 to 1 and now it is 31 to 1 for 2005-06. Larger classes have led to a shortage of desks and a cramped atmosphere in many rooms. Teachers feel it is more difficult to physically move around the room and some are concerned that this is a safety issue. Also, larger classes do not nurture learning. It makes it harder to give each student one on one attention.

This year the school initiated a Bell to Bell program in an effort to improve attendance and reduce tardies. The statistics show that the program has been successful in reducing the tardy problem. It is hoped that with fewer tardies, more students will benefit from the full range of instruction and that there will be fewer interruptions for the teacher and the class.

Our Impact Team, which was formed nearly twenty years ago, continues to meet on a weekly basis. This group is composed of the administrators, the counselors, the health tech, the career center coordinator and several teachers. Each week they discuss students that are of concern because of behavior, grades, attitude or other issues. Their mission is to see that all students are offered some type of assistance to help them be more successful academically and personally.

Evidence

- Minutes from Student Council Meetings
- Master Schedule by Course and Period
- Statistics from last year and this year on tardies and cuts
- Minutes from the weekly Impact Team Meetings

E3. To what extent do all students receive appropriate support along with an individualized learning plan to help ensure academic success?

There are many different avenues of support for students at El Molino High School. There is assistance in academic areas, for special needs and for personal support. We have tutorial programs that are available to all students. We have assistance for parts of our population in

the form of programs such as the English Learners Program (EL), the Resource Specialist Program (RSP), the Special Day Classes (SDC), the Title I Program, Gifted and Talented Education (GATE), Russian River Ramparts (RRR), and Nuevo Leon, a Necessary Small School.

Although we no longer have our weekly tutorial program, students can still receive tutoring at the school. In 2004-05 the members of CSF and NHS were required to perform ten hours of community service in the form of tutoring. The Career Center Coordinator facilitated connecting tutors with tutees, but this year the Career Center position has been cut in half so she no longer has time to oversee the tutoring. The Science Club has a drop-in tutoring program that meets twice a week at lunch. Any student can go to the lunch program for tutoring in any subject. Peer Support students also do tutoring on a one-to-one basis. Peer Support students are often asked by counselors and teachers to help students who are failing.

Our English Language Learners Program at El Molino is designed to promote rapid acquisition of English listening, speaking, reading and writing. The program includes ESL I for beginners, ESL 2 for advanced beginners, ESL Lab for students in ESL 1 and 2, ESL 3 for intermediate/advanced students, ESL Reading and Writing Workshops and META (Movement in Education Through Achievement) classes. As soon as EL students have acquired adequate English skills, they are placed with support in mainstream classes. Most students in ESL 3 are also enrolled in regular English classes. Students take the mainstream social science classes utilizing support of the bilingual aide and the META class.

All English Language Learners are expected to master district graduation requirements established for all students. These requirements include unit requirements and a passing score on the CAHSEE. English Language Learners at El Molino receive personal and academic support from the bilingual aide. The META class teaches students the study skills of successful students and gives the students tutorial help with the work for their mainstream classes.

The Title 1 Program serves those students in greatest need and who are most at risk of failing. Placement in the program is based on STAR Test scores (20th percentile or below) combined with teacher, counselor, and parent recommendations. The Title 1 Program is a ninth, tenth and eleventh grade English (reading/language arts) program, ninth grade Geography, and a ninth grade math program. Students move out of the Title 1 program and into other English and math classes as their skills improve and they demonstrate they are ready for a more challenging curriculum.

All teachers of freshmen students meet with the counselors at the end of the first progress report period to identify students who are not experiencing academic success. Efforts are made at that time to offer additional support to these students, to adjust their class schedules and to meet with their parents to brainstorm means of helping them. Students with other special needs such as behavior problems, attendance problems, social issues, or health problems are also identified and referred to appropriate programs for assistance.

Our Special Education Department serves both Resource Specialist Program (RSP) students and Special Day Class (SDC) students. In May of each year, a Special Ed. teacher and a counselor attend IEP meetings at all of our eight feeder schools for our incoming Special Ed. students. These meetings give both parents and students the opportunity to discuss any problems or concerns so our school can better serve the students from the very beginning. Once these students are in high school, the Special Ed. case manager routinely pulls all of the progress reports for students on his/her caseload and monitors the students' progress. If a student is not progressing after teacher/parent conferences, the Special Ed. teacher may suggest additional Special Ed. help. Besides getting help in math and English, RSP and SDC students can take a study skills class designed to teach organizational skills and to improve study habits as well as to assist students with their homework from other classes. Some Study Skills classes incorporate career skills as part of the curriculum, supported by the Workability Program.

There is an alternative education program open to El Molino students. This is Nuevo Leon. Nuevo Leon is a Necessary Small School program housed on our campus that targets students who have adequate academic skills but are failing due to attendance problems, poor study habits or apathy concerning the traditional school program. This program did have two full-time teachers but because of budget issues, it is now six periods a day and has one full-time teacher and one period of another teacher who work with about twenty-two students. Students are usually in the program for a year and a half or two years. Mainstreaming back into the comprehensive high school is required for their senior year. All students are helped to be on track for graduation by their senior year. There is also a heavy emphasis on self-esteem building and group counseling.

Russian River Ramparts is the name of El Molino's long-term independent study component. Independent Study is an alternative method of instruction, rather than an alternative program, and it is geared toward learners who enjoy individualized instruction and one-to-one student teacher contact. Students meet with one of the two instructors each week to review assignments and to discuss future assignments. Students follow the same curriculum as their comprehensive high school counterparts. The same instructional materials are used in some cases, and the teachers have the ability to use other materials appropriate to individual student needs. Russian River Ramparts students have access to all services at El Molino, as well as at RRR. Students choose independent study for a variety of reasons. There are those who have conflicts at El Molino. Some need the individual attention. Some have commitments such as motherhood, or the need to support themselves, which preclude attendance at El Molino. Some have a need to make up credits toward graduation, or wish to transition out of high school through the California High School Proficiency Exam. Finally, there are those who are pursuing interests or careers in areas such as music. Students are encouraged to mainstream back into El Molino, if appropriate, but they may also complete credits and requirements for their high school diplomas through Russian River Ramparts if that is in their best interests.

Every student at El Molino is assigned to a counselor based on the first letter of his or her last name. The counselors meet students and parents at registration nights in the spring and help them plan their freshmen schedules. At this time, the student and parent fill-out a four-year

high school plan that is updated each year. Each counselor follows his/her counselees for the next four years, helping them select a path to follow during high school and beyond. The counselors also talk to students about personal issues that may be interfering with their progress at school. The negotiated student to counselor ratio is 375 to 1. Even at this ratio a common complaint, especially at the beginning of the school year, is that students have to wait too long to see their counselors.

In 2004-05, the district took a bold step and hired as district employees two licensed therapists who had been working in the school but were employees of West County Community Services. One of the therapists has worked almost twenty years at El Molino doing group and individual counseling. As a district employee, he was at El Molino three days a week this last school year. A portion of his time was paid for by the Title I Program so he could give additional support to Title I students.

El Molino was very fortunate to have the services of a full-time College and Career Center Coordinator but because of budget cuts this summer the position was cut in half. In January eight hours will be returned to this position at each comprehensive school in the district, so we have our Coordinator four days a week. The College and Career Center has a comprehensive program that touches all grade levels, and all students have access to the resources as they make decisions about post-secondary plans. Freshmen students complete a Career Center orientation in the fall and record information on their Career Planning Folders. Sophomore year, students complete the Career Interest/Skills Inventory and review a list of matching careers. Students do research on two or three areas, and complete a formal job application and resume. They also update their Career Planning Folders. Juniors do post-secondary education research in the Career Center and attend the College Fair. Students may also update their resumes and Career Planning Folders. Seniors receive support as they complete their post-secondary plans, including assistance with their college applications and the financial aid and scholarship process. Seniors and juniors are encouraged to participate in job shadowing and internships that relate to their career goals.

El Molino has a Health Technician who provides care for students and staff with illnesses and injuries. She is here every day to monitor students with special health needs such as medication or chronic ailments. She is a vital participant on our Impact Team.

The Gifted and Talented Education Program (GATE) is another support system for our students. It sponsors an Independent Study AP Psychology for students and organizes after school speakers in conjunction with the class.

Evidence

- Lists of tutors
- The Title I Program
- Minutes from Title I Parent Meetings
- Seventh Grade STAR Results
- Summer School Classes
- Four Year Career Center Plan

- Student and Staff Surveys
- Student Career Folders

E4. To what extent do students have access to a system of personal support services, activities and opportunities at the school and within the community?

At El Molino High School, there are many avenues of support for our students. The staff offers both formal and informal times for help with all students, as do the school counselors. Specific groups such as ELL, RSP, SDC, NSS and RRR have additional programs in place to offer assistance to their particular school population.

Staff members encourage and assist students in a wide variety of ways. They offer verbal and written encouragement daily to students both in and out of the classroom. Many make extra time to meet with students to discuss not only academic issues but also personal problems. Students feel comfortable with many staff members and know that they care about what is happening in their lives not just in class.

The counselors provide academic and personal counseling on a daily basis. All students have access to the counselors concerning any issues. They are very experienced in crisis counseling and can see students on an ongoing basis if needed. The counselors also work closely with all students regarding high school graduation and post-secondary opportunities. They assist students with the college application process and financial aid forms. They also refer students to the Career Center to do interest inventories and investigate career possibilities. Each counselor stays with the same students for four years. The counselors can therefore get to know the students better and address their individual needs more effectively.

Our Impact Program is a prevention and early intervention program designed to promote the physical and emotional health of our students. The core team consists of administrators; counselors and teachers who meet on a weekly basis to review students that have been referred to the Impact Program. At these meetings information is shared regarding students that have been referred, and assistance in the form of parent meetings, support groups, individual counseling, tutoring or outside referrals is offered to the students. The outreach counselor who is on campus three days a week leads our support groups. He became a member of our district's staff this year after being employed for many years by West County Community Services.

The Impact Team sponsors Challenge Day that is open to all students. Challenge Day is a program which uses games, small group activities and large group activities to help build self-esteem, break down stereotypes, and foster a sense of belonging to the school community. Usually around 100 students and twenty to twenty-five staff members and parents participate in the daylong event. Judging from the written evaluations, Challenge Day is extremely successful and the highlight of the year for many students and staff members as well.

Peer Support is made up of a cross section of students who either volunteer or are recommended by a staff member. They must apply for the program with letters of recommendation and complete a four- hour training that covers active listening, mediation skills, and referral sources. Peer Supporters are assigned to new students to help them assimilate into the school culture. They check with them weekly for the first month. They spend time with students one-on-one, listening to issues and taking action as stated by school guidelines. They are also trained in mediation and do mediation sessions with an adult or another Peer Supporter. This is a very active group on campus. The students are very committed and make the program successful. They work closely with counselors, administrators and the Peer Support Coordinator.

All students are encouraged by teachers, counselors and administrators to participate in clubs, activities and sports. There are twenty-nine official clubs on campus and many staff members are club advisors. The ELL teacher and a Spanish teacher, for example, are the advisors for the Diversity Club. The Diversity Club was formed to raise awareness of stereotyping and discrimination and appreciation of diversity on campus. The club holds events to give students a way to get to know each other on a personal level through fun and reflective activities. The club organizes Unity Week, during which there are speakers and films on other cultures and on stereotyping and discrimination, as well as multi-cultural performances and a food fair in which the entire school is encouraged to participate.

A further outgrowth of the Diversity Club is the Panel of Young Americans, a group of El Molino students whose goal is to raise awareness of stereotyping and discrimination through personal stories, skits and thought-provoking activities.

Our school is involved with Summer Search, an organization that provides low-income students who have leadership potential with challenging summer experiences. The program fosters personal growth and a commitment to helping others. Four to six students per year have been chosen in the last three years to participate in this program. They have done every thing from backpacking in the wilds of Montana to going to New Zealand. Every student has returned feeling empowered and able to take on new challenges. They have all returned with a new sense of self worth and confidence in their abilities.

The El Molino Student Council meets on a regular, monthly schedule. Each social studies section elects a representative to attend the meetings. The Council's agenda always includes information on upcoming events such as schools dances/programs, new clubs and other activities on campus. Student Council regularly charters new clubs, an indication that students feel empowered to create school activities that reflect their needs and interests.

The graduating classes have made it a goal that every senior participates in the Senior Picnic and Senior Breakfast. To this end they have given scholarships to all needy students. The classes work effectively with the ESL Coordinator, administrators and school counselors to promote scholarship awareness.

Due to the size and structure of our Small School Program, Nuevo Leon, students can interact on a daily basis with their two Nuevo Leon teachers. There was more support for the students when both teachers were full-time in the program, but the students still feel very connected to the instructors. Classroom discussions are frequent and students can meet individually with their teachers when needed. Because of the level of trust that develops in the class, many students discuss personal issues with their teachers. There is a weekly group counseling session lead by the outreach counselor. Students can also meet with the El Molino counselors to discuss academic or personal problems.

Because the Title 1 classes are small in size, teachers frequently know their students better and in a more positive, personal manner than in a larger class. There is a full-time classroom aide also helping students in the Title 1 classes. Increased parent contact is a part of the program so there are more calls between parents and teachers about the needs of the students than in other classes.

Our goal is to have every senior graduate and to this end, there are two senior credit make-up programs at El Molino High School. Students that need three credits or less in a course complete them through our Independent Study Program. Students that need more than three credits in a course can attend the after school credit make-up class. This class meets for two-and-a-half hours in the afternoon, two days a week. All seniors are notified by the counselors of these options and are encouraged to use them to become eligible for graduation.

The students at Russian River Ramparts (RRR), our independent study program, have a personal relationship with their teachers who facilitate immediate personal support at any time. Students have access to support at El Molino either directly through testing by our school psychologist or indirectly through teacher/counselor consultations. They also can meet with the El Molino counselors if they choose to go to the high school, and there have been times that the counselors have gone to RRR to meet with students or do crisis counseling. RRR teachers have an involvement with students out of class as advisors, support group leaders and even drive students to or from school in cases of emergencies. Because of the one- to -one contact RRR teachers have with their students, they immediately intervene if a student is in need of help, special tutoring or different materials.

Although there are many opportunities for involvement and support at El Molino, not all students seem to know about them or feel connected to the school. We have discussed this at our Impact meetings and at general faculty meetings. The class size reduction money has allowed us to reduce the size of English and math classes for the freshmen from thirty down to twenty. This means these students get much more teacher time and attention than they would in the large, regular classes.

Evidence

- Lists from Challenge Day
- Fliers from Senior Parent Night and Financial Aid Night
- Minutes from Impact Team Meetings
- School Psychologist's Agenda

- Roster of Russian River Ramparts Student
- Eighth Grade Parent Night
- Eighth Grade Visitation Day (written plan, agenda, pamphlet)
- GATE Minutes
- Student and Staff Survey