

Pupil Achievement

Vallejo City Unified served about 20,000 students in 2004. Approximately 45% of the district's students qualify for free and reduced lunch and 25% receive English language learner services. More than 90 percent of the students are composed of four ethnic groups: African American, 30%; White, 23%; Hispanic/Latino, 20%; and Filipino, 18%.

There is a persistent performance gap between the proficiency level of African Americans and Hispanics, and Filipinos and Whites. Over the last four years, the percentage of K-5 students achieving a Proficient or Advanced Rating on the *California Standards Test* English Language Arts component in K-5 has ranged from 17% to 33%, while the percentage of students scoring Below Basic has ranged from 31% to 48%. The proficiency level on this state assessment decreases at the middle and high school levels. Middle and high school students scoring Below Basic and Far Below Basic in Algebra I comprise 54% of the students taking the assessment. This is a startling statistic considering that beginning in 2005, students will have to pass an algebra course to graduate.

These demographics and proficiency levels provide evidence of the serious learning issues in Vallejo and also point to a critical lack of leadership and academic focus at the district level. Uneven and inconsistent implementation of state standards may have impeded student achievement. Many students have not had access to standards-based teaching. This is significant because the assessment figures mentioned above measure student proficiency on the state standards.

The assessment of Pupil Achievement in the Vallejo City Unified School District is based upon 64 standards developed by FCMAT in the following instructional areas: (1) planning processes, (2) curriculum, (3) instructional strategies, (4) assessment and accountability and (5) professional development. The principal findings and the recommendations for the pupil achievement improvement plan are based on school visits, principal and teacher interviews, and class observations in 15 elementary schools and 4 middle schools, 2 comprehensive high schools, and a continuation/alternative school. Added to these data are interviews of county office and district staff, analysis of student achievement results, parent comments, high school course enrollments, school plans and other available program descriptions and student data. Finally, the review team studied many pages of policies, documents, workshop materials, and special project plans.

The findings indicate that 1) there is minimal central office direction; (2) there is little accountability and follow through; and (3) there is an insufficient data system to track students or the work of the adults.

The Governing Board and district administration need to commit to:

1. making the attainment of high levels of student learning for all students in the core academic subjects a primary goal;
2. developing a comprehensive, aligned and articulated curriculum which links to goals and standards adopted by the district;
3. implementing an assessment system which provides multiple measures of student achievement and progress; and
4. maintaining a high level of accountability process beginning with measurable goals for students and regular assessments that lets students, parents, and teachers know where

each student stands. Good accountability runs on a willingness to scrutinize one's self and the availability of data that helps answer probing questions. Fortunately, with new direction and expertise in the central office, these important commitments have already been made.

Instruction

The instructional program has suffered from a lack of consistent direction, monitoring, and support. Many aspects of the instructional program indicate a well-intentioned start but have been followed by periods of inattention and “piece meal” implementation, and a lack of a systems approach. As fiscal and personnel changes have occurred, individual special project coordinators and principals have assumed a major role in the implementation of the instructional programs. This has resulted in a district operating without the system or cohesion to address the needs of seriously under-performing students. There can be no accountability when there is no system to track the progress of individual students or monitor the actions of the adults.

Accountability

Accountability must be addressed by having clear and concise board policies and administrative regulations that express the what, who and how of the district's priorities; a data system that tracks students, teachers and programs; a professional development program that prepares teachers to expect more of students and support them in reaching high expectations; and an ongoing evaluation and improvement cycle for all students, teachers, administrators, and the system itself.

Professional Development

An effective school system directs and prioritizes the resources and programs for the district. Structured planning establishes the mission and vision for all district efforts, brings all district operations under one umbrella, and affords the district the opportunity to assess and re-assess its beliefs and values. Little evidence could be found in the material reviewed that there had been a well thought out plan for building the capacity of the staff to plan for the improvement of student achievement in a systematic manner. Resources provided by the state in AB 75 and AB 466 did not appear to be utilized. Use of publisher training for the materials adopted was inconsistent. Although there were individuals who made outstanding efforts to build the capacity of staff at local sites, there has not been a K-12 plan for the development and implementation of academic student programs.

Summary

The procedures and practices observed were based on existing practice and were for the most part insufficient although well intended. Many excellent educators in the district contributed their views, ideas, and suggestions. The present leadership's efforts represent a systems approach to improve student achievement. However, immediate attention must be given to the monitoring of student performance with an assessment system that can track students' progress. At the same time, and in a parallel fashion, a standards-based core curriculum must be fully implemented with a professional development program for principals and teachers focused on teaching to standards.

1.1 Planning Processes

Professional Standard

A common vision of what all students should know and be able to do exists and is put into practice.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board policy and regulations
2. Interviews with district and school administration
3. Classroom observations
4. School plans and other planning documents

Findings

1. There is a general understanding among staff members interviewed that “what all students should know and be able to do” is represented by the state standards for English language arts, mathematics, science and history/social science. Additionally, high schools, through the accreditation process, have developed expected student learning results (ESLRs). There is no policy statement or written district vision in evidence.
2. BP 2010 delegates long-term planning to the superintendent. BP 0200, dated 1994, establishes eight district goals, which include: a variety of settings; orderly and efficient campus; categorical needs; postsecondary preparation; professional development; individual needs; respect for oneself and others; and parent involvement. BP 6146 sets forth the course requirements for graduation from high school.
3. While color posters of the state standards are available, they are not visible in all schools and classrooms, nor are other vision/mission statements posted. This could be a result of schools and classrooms making moves during construction. However, the foyer, board room, and corridors of the school district offices do not display any vision statements, goals, pictures, or student work that would identify this building as a service center for education.
4. School plans show vision or mission statements developed by each school. Several school principals include these statements on stationery and various communications. Some, but not all, divisions of the district have mission statements posted on the Web site.

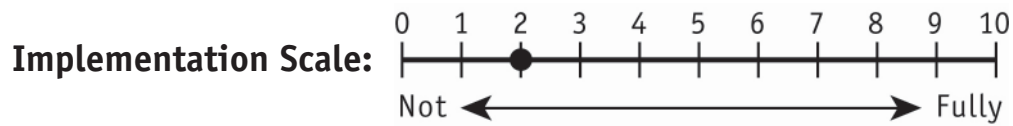
Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Develop a written vision of what all students should know and be able to do that includes the state standards but also addresses the other important areas of schooling, which are not necessarily included in the state standards, and the expected student learning results for high school students (the accreditation requirement). The vision should help the district in its efforts to focus on and provide access and equity.
2. Clarify in policy how to develop and implement the vision for what all students should know and be able to do by grade level and area. Indicate how frequently the board will review the statement, and who is accountable for monitoring its implementation.

3. Set guidelines for the appropriate and consistent communication of the vision through district documents and home communications as well as district, school and classroom display. Utilize the district office and Web site to showcase the vision and student achievements.
4. Include the district vision (dated) in school plans and all other plans, such as those for categorical programs, facilities, human resources, etc.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 2



1.2 Planning Processes

Professional Standard

The administrative structure of the district promotes student achievement.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board policy and administrative regulations
2. Lists of departments, titles, and the district map
3. Interviews with district and school administration
4. Observations in schools

Findings

1. BP 2110 (5/8/95) refers to the existence of an organizational chart, but there is no current chart in use at this time. District office maps and offices indicate that departments for student instructional services exist. However, some administrative positions are open and others have been filled with new employees. Additionally, several administrative new hires have new titles and duties.
2. While they are encouraged by instructional messages from the State Administrator, school administrators and teachers have been out of the communication loop with district administration since early 2004, when principal meetings were canceled each month for the remainder of the year. Many principals were not evaluated for the last year and are unsure to whom they report. Key people in the district that they had trusted for quick responses and assistance are gone, and they are not sure where to obtain assistance.
3. The opening days of this school year have not been supportive of student learning with (1) staffing allocations unsettled into the second week of school, unbalanced classes on hold, and substitute teachers filling positions in many schools; and (2) the changeover of the student data system and a difficult phone system, all of which have hampered the data, information, and communications needed to get school smoothly under way.
4. Into the second week of school, some teachers were conducting worksheet-based lessons.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

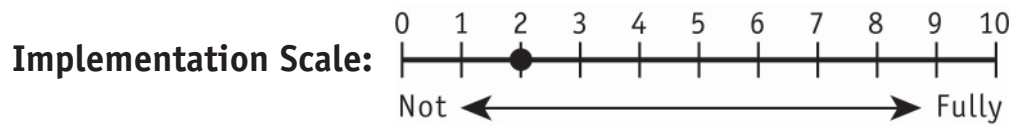
1. Provide an organizational schematic showing names, titles, and areas of responsibility to schools and community as soon as possible, even if it is to be revised shortly. The Web site should contain this information, along with telephone numbers and e-mail addresses.
2. Clarify for site principals the supervisors who will be available to support them and conduct their evaluations. Establish regular meetings with principals on student achievement topics. Develop a process for school administrators to receive information about district crises (e.g., phone trees) and a policy for informing parents and community, at the appropriate time, of district and school crises and how they are being addressed.
3. Form an “opening-of-school” team to debrief with the principals the issues that confronted them for the 2004-05 opening. This should lead to the development of a plan with

timelines to ensure that next year's opening is smooth, with instruction occurring in the first days of school.

4. The opening days of school are important in setting the expectations and overall tone for the year. Also, it is important that the first activities of the year reveal the high expectations of the teacher for the students. Some school principals mentioned using Harry Wong's *The First Days of School* and its helpfulness to staff.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 2



1.3 Planning Processes

Professional Standard

The district has long-term goals and performance standards to support and improve student achievement.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board policy and regulations
2. Student achievement data
3. School plans and consolidated program plans
4. Staff development calendar, 2003-2004; BTSA program description
5. Interviews with district and school administration and teachers

Findings

1. There are no written district long-term goals and performance standards for the improvement and support of student achievement. There are goals/objectives for improvement in the school plans but not agreed-upon performance standards. There is a 1994 board policy (0200) that identifies general district goals.
2. The State Administrator has set five goals, described as “My Goals” (8/27/04), which include a commitment to increase student proficiency in general and of each under-performing ethnic group in particular as well as to provide improvements in support areas such as climate, behavior, fiscal stability, and capacity to sustain achievements. The State Administrator presented these goals to district staff as well as a plan to increase the district focus on each student’s achievement through better and more regular diagnostic assessment.
3. The school plans have three-year goals. Based on these, there is a great deal of activity within the district aimed at supporting and improving student achievement. The categorical programs, particularly Title I, English language learners and special education, operate with the intention of improving achievement and providing services to under-performing students. There are grants that many schools have acquired in order to improve, including Immediate Intervention/Underperforming Schools programs. Before and after school programs, the Professional Development Center Best Practices project, and Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment are other programs that principals and teachers identified as exemplary in making strides in improving achievement.
4. From 2002 to 2003, all schools in the district, except one, met their schoolwide API growth targets and a majority met their comparable API targets. Students were tested at a high rate. Interviews indicated that a major push in this area (standards-based lessons and report cards) contributed to this effect. STAR data for 2004 suggest that API growth will not continue (2004 data were just becoming available at the time of the review). Nevertheless, the gains in API are small, with notable exceptions, and overall achievement in the district is low in comparison to other schools in the state. There are significant gaps between the performances of African American and Hispanic/Latino students and white and Filipino students. The API is one type of student measure, but it uses a compensatory statistic that causes higher performance in one area to make up for lower performances in other areas.

5. There are no district improvement goals for student behavior or health. There has been no development and maintenance of a comprehensive district database of student attendance, suspensions, and expulsions that can be used to determine the effect of these events on student achievement. There is evidence that student immunizations are not current and that district and school support for insisting on and maintaining immunizations is absent.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Write explicit district goals and performance standards for the support and improvement of student achievement for at least a three-year period to help provide direction and consistency to district programs and a basis for annually evaluating the effectiveness of the district.
2. Use the State Administrator’s goals to help formulate a vision of what all students should know and be able to do (Standard 1.1) and for the development of district long-term goals and performance standards (Standard 2.1).
3. Review categorical, grant, and school-based support programs for effectiveness in supporting and improving achievement, particularly analyzing the equity across the district: Do all students have equal access to the core curriculum? Are all teachers well-trained in subject matter and teaching methods conducive to student success? How do schools with fewer categorical funds provide key instructional services for students and teachers?
4. Thoroughly analyze new data from the STAR, CELDT, and CAHSEE as well as the rating information from the API and AYP both at the general district level and the school level so that objectives can be evaluated and revised as needed. District instructional staff should disaggregate the data by student grade, ethnicity, program, language designation, and teacher so that gaps in learning can be identified and targeted for specific interventions.
5. Continuously track numbers of student nonattendance and suspensions within the new student data system. These data, integrated with the student demographic data, can be disaggregated by school, age, gender, and ethnicity and thus provide ongoing information to school principals and district leadership that will allow for more timely and focused interventions. Vigilance in instructional minutes is an essential improvement strategy for student achievement.
6. Request the county health department to review the district’s immunization records and develop a process to remedy immediately any omissions. Review the immunization policy and regulation to ascertain that they are current with county recommendations, including a clear process for follow-through.

Standard Implemented: Not Implemented

November 1, 2004 Rating: 0



1.4 Planning Processes

Professional Standard

The district directs its resources fairly and consistently to accomplish its objectives.

Sources and Documentation

1. School plan resource allocations
2. Consolidated Application, 2003, 2004
3. State and Federal Compliance Review
4. Staffing allocations
5. Interviews with district and school staff
6. School Accountability Report Cards

Findings

1. There appears to be consistency in the allocation of general resources to schools; the allocation of Title I funds is in compliance; and recent textbook allocations have provided each student with textbooks for reading and mathematics, which principals verify. With the current adoption, the district provided materials to English language learners for the first time in an equitable manner, including to high schools. There are, however, no written objectives (see Standard 1.3) and so no apparent process to link the allocation of resources (some of which are governed by law and some of which are discretionary) to district objectives.
2. The cutbacks in counselors have been disproportionately felt in the middle schools. Rather than an even reduction across secondary schools, all middle school counselors were cut. During the second week of school, many principals and teachers were in a holding pattern waiting for final teacher staffing allocations from the district.
3. Schools that do not receive a significant amount of categorical funds often have difficulty funding professional development or time for teachers to work together. However, there is pride in the achievement of these schools, most of which have been able to improve as much as schools with more funding.
4. The School Accountability Report Cards show the district allocation per pupil to be \$7,103 as compared to \$6,770 for similar districts and \$6,719 for all districts. The schools do not report individual school allocations and expenditures to the public. A building program has and continues to improve all of the district's school facilities.

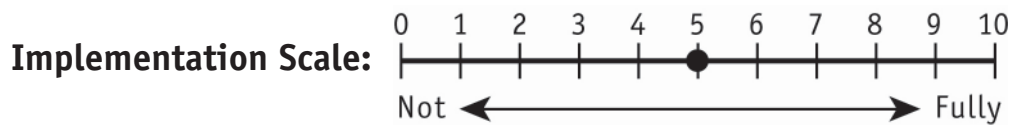
Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Develop the district vision (Standard 1.1); the long-term goals (at least three years) and performance standards for the district (Standard 1.3); and the academic objectives by grade and subject area (Standard 2.3). Use analyses of student data to make allocations of resources for student needs based on the vision and long-term goals. Where funds need to be rotated (as in the case of textbook adoptions), establish a multiyear calendar that is published and well understood. In the case of categorical funds, compliance is essential, but connections to the long-term goals and well-analyzed student data help make sense of these special allocations.

2. Include a plan in policy for evaluating, revising, and/or amending the long-term goals and a process for addressing fiscal shortages so that cuts in staffing allocations or other resources are as even handed as possible and the rationales are understood by staff.
3. Over the long term, plan for the core components of the instructional program (qualified teachers, professional development, planning time) to be funded at a basic per-pupil level, then use the categorical intervention funds to increase the support to schools with students who need assistance and differentiation.
4. Provide adequate information to schools and community on individual school expenditures, and/or the per-pupil expenditure by elementary, middle, and high school student.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 5



1.5 Planning Processes

Legal Standard

Categorical and compensatory program funds supplement and do not supplant services and materials to be provided by the district.

Sources and Documentation

1. School plan resource allocations
2. Consolidated Application, 2003, 2004
3. State and Federal Compliance Review
4. Staffing allocations
5. Interviews with district and school staff
6. School Accountability Report Cards

Findings

1. The planning materials and budget sheets available for review do not indicate any supplanting of funds; however, all current year program allocations and staffing information were not yet available. The pupil achievement activities of the district seem to be highly reliant on the availability of categorical and compensatory program funds. There is no identification in policy of the core curriculum, and there appears to be little coordination among funds.
2. Title I provides an instructional assistant position for each school whose role, among others, is to monitor the school plan and the related expenditures from the school and categorical budget.
3. Principals report not being able to pay teachers for Title I parent advisory meetings.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. This district has a large number of students who qualify for language and Title I services, and many schools are designated as schoolwide improvement, so the widespread use of funds for instructional services is not necessarily out of compliance. However, these funds are supplementary and are rarely adequate for the important instructional work of the district. The district should identify its core curriculum and services that every student will receive, and then use the categorical funds to support identified students or schools.
2. Schools view instructional assistance as an important additional resource. Those without Title I funds try to organize the funds available to afford the position. This is a position where coordination of funds is possible, but a strict accounting of time is required.
3. Clarify how the funds set aside for Title I parents are to be used and how schools access these funds for local meetings.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 4

Implementation Scale:



1.6 Planning Processes

Professional Standard

The district's planning process focuses on supporting increased student performance.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board policy and regulation
2. School plans
3. Consolidated plans (LEP, Title I, GATE, etc.)
4. Student assessment data
5. Interviews with school and district staff, Board President

Findings

1. Board Policy 2010 delegates the responsibility for long-term planning to the superintendent. The board has had various types of plans in the past, but currently there is no district planning process outlined in policy and no written plan. The school planning process is indirectly evident in the board's policies that outline parent and citizen involvement on school and special committees, such as BP 1221 School Site Councils.
2. Though there is no policy directing the elements of school plans, the plans show consistency in format and key elements, which indicates a degree of direction and assistance. These plans have three-year goals focused on improved achievement, though activities may not clearly tie to these goals. There was little evidence among school staff interviewed that the school plan was a guiding document in their work. In several instances, plans were referred to as "compliance" documents or "a joke."
3. The school principals receive STAR, CAHSEE, and CELDT information from the Assessment office as new test data become available. Principals report that the Director of Assessment is helpful in getting information that they ask for and explaining it to them as needed. However, the data reports from the district did not come in the form of graphs or charts, which are more helpful to many people and easier for principals and staff to utilize. In the past, the district has worked with Data Works and with other formats for analysis. Some principals use simple charts from the Just for the Kids Web site.

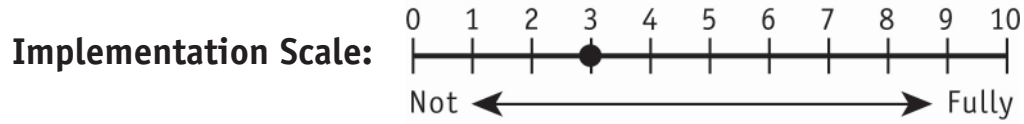
Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Outline in board policy the required planning processes for district departments and schools, with timelines for board approval and progress reports. It is clear that planning is occurring, but there is nothing written. It is difficult to maintain consistency of effort and accountability for planning efforts without a written board commitment.
2. Include in the policy an annual evaluation of progress toward objectives and key school plan activities to be reported to the board, which will increase the importance of the plans as well as provide district instructional leaders and principals impetus for reflection and refinements to the plans.

3. Provide a highly accessible data packet to each principal in the fall that includes disaggregations, trends, comparisons, and some keys to analysis (such as questions to be asked, gaps in the data, problem areas for discussion).

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



2.1 Curriculum

Professional Standard

The district, through its adopted policies, provides a clear operational framework for management of the curriculum.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board Policies 0200, 6140, 6141, 6162.5, 6162.52, 6161.1
2. District and school interviews
3. Other available curriculum documents
4. School plans, academic program surveys
5. Categorical program plans
6. Standards, Benchmarks, and Assessments (Santa Clara County Office of Education)

Findings

1. There is no policy that establishes how the curriculum is to be managed. The curriculum policies are general, such as philosophy, or they define a general process, such as curriculum development and materials adoptions. No process forms accompanied these policies in the book provided. The policies do not address standards or alignment of curriculum to standards and mostly predate current California curriculum practice.
2. At the time of this review, there was no one whose role was to supervise the curriculum and educational services. The district's Web site shows the vacancy of the department head and shows no mission statement for this area (whereas other district departments have them posted). Additionally, other district curriculum and instruction positions were vacant. School principals and teachers feel uncertain and out of the communication loop about the myriad organizational changes and how they will receive services and support.
3. However, new administrators are in the process of being hired and are getting acquainted with the district curriculum, as well as planning a more systemic approach to teaching and learning issues in the district.
4. Interviewees at both the district and school levels indicate that district direction for the curriculum management has been "convoluted" in that the directors of education did not necessarily provide curriculum leadership and management. For that reason, much of it fell to project staff, giving the district's curriculum a compliance focus. For example, the impetus for standards-based lesson training has come from the group of Immediate Intervention/Underperforming Schools Program (II/USP) schools where a disconnect between standards and classroom lessons was recognized. Secondly, communication across program and program managers/coordinators is not systematic.
5. There is uneven use of student achievement data and recognition of its role in curriculum development and renewal. Some principals describe focused staff development and collaboration and work on calibration with Data Works; others say that data are available to teachers if they want it. Secondary schools are less likely to have engaged in specific training or to use the data routinely for improvements.

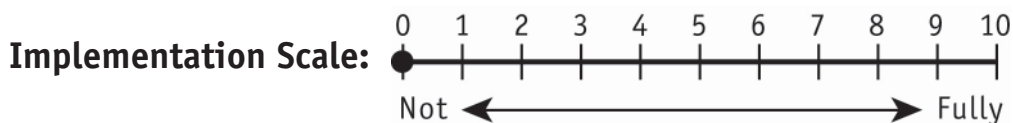
6. The instructional materials adoption process, until the last year, had been described as “haphazard.” Recently, K-8 reading and math textbooks have been adopted and are available in the schools. The adoption process has been placed on the state six-year cycle, though there was no written verification available for this change. The materials policy does not include a process or guidelines for library acquisitions.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Review the curriculum policies (largely 6000 series) and regulations and revise these so that it is clear how the curriculum is to be managed and which persons are accountable for the general development and maintenance of a high quality curriculum. Require a published description of the governance and delivery system, including what is to be taught, how student learning will be assessed and evaluated, and how all students in the district will be served, including differentiation, intervention, retention, and acceleration. Distinguish between standards and curriculum and clearly outline how ongoing alignment with assessments and materials will occur. Where processes are required by policy, ascertain that there are forms or checklists for use by those who are initiating curriculum change or materials adoptions.
2. Clarify in policy the relationship between the core curriculum and the categorical programs that help students achieve success in the core curriculum. This will establish a logical process driven by district vision and objectives for all students. The participation of program directors and specialists in curriculum decisions is important, but categorical programs should not be guiding the district.
3. Assess principals’ and teachers’ knowledge regarding student data and educational research, and develop a plan to maximize their knowledge and skills in working with data and problem solving. Provide achievement data in an accessible and useful format for principals and teachers.
4. Formalize the materials six-year adoption cycle in policy with appropriate professional development that follows the curriculum/materials cycle. Ensure that up to date forms are available so that adequate records are kept. Consider adding a library materials adoption process to the materials policy.

Standard Implemented: Not Implemented

November 1, 2004 Rating: 0



2.2 Curriculum

Professional Standard

Policies regarding curriculum and instruction are reviewed and approved by the Governing Board.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board policies 6140, 6141, 6146.1, 6162.5, 6162.52, 6161.1
2. District personnel and board member interviews
3. Board agendas and minutes

Findings

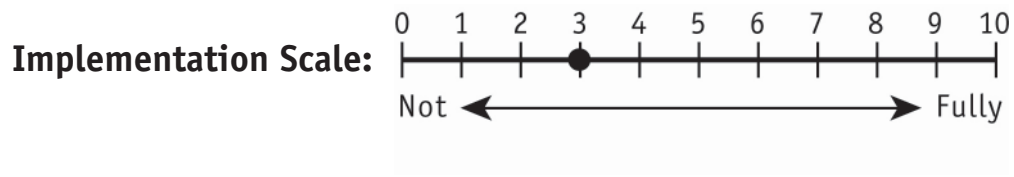
1. Most of the curriculum policies were developed in 1992. Though revisions have occurred, the policies have an outdated tone, especially with regard to state curriculum changes since the end of the 1990s. However, the board did review them at the time of adoption, and the board reviews those policies that are required by statute for annual review. No schedule of board policy review was available at the time of this review.
2. Policies often do not have the checks within them to monitor implementation. For example, important and basic areas for planning and leading the curriculum (e.g., BP 2010) are delegated to the superintendent without timelines for reports or evaluation of district progress. Another related area, Professional Development (BP 4131), directs that the superintendent shall prepare a plan and identifies the qualities of good staff development, but is not implemented as there is no current written plan or calendar for staff development.
3. Policies for student graduation requirements, the state and federal programs, and parent participation are generally more current. However, the high school graduation policy (6146.1) does not contain the algebra requirement for the class of 2005 (waived this spring from 2004) and does not show the correct class for which the CAHSEE is a graduation requirement. Some of the policies guiding state and federal programs have not been updated to reflect No Child Left Behind (NCLB) changes. The district does have especially strong parent participation policies.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. A thorough review of the curriculum policies and regulations should be conducted as described in Standard 2.1. The chief academic administrator should routinely review policies with the superintendent/State Administrator for potential reconsideration by the board.
2. The board and superintendent/State Administrator should review the value of policies that delegate functions to the superintendent without timelines and reports or that are not being implemented.
3. The graduation policy, where accuracy is essential, should be reviewed with other annually reviewed policies. The correct information about graduation requirements is contained in the documents collected in the schools and in parent notification materials that were in evidence. However, the policy itself should be revised right away.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



2.3 Curriculum

Professional Standard

The district has clear and valid objectives for students, including the core curriculum content.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board policies and regulations
2. School plans; WASC evaluation/plan
3. LEA Plan, 2003-04
4. Master Plan for Instruction of English Learners (no date)
5. Report cards
6. Accountability Report Cards
7. Interviews with teachers, school and district administrators
8. Classroom observations

Findings

1. There is no identifiable core curriculum policy or written description, though there are references in documents to the core curriculum. As with the common vision (Standard 1.1), there is a general agreement in the district that the state standards are the core curriculum. There are other core curriculum subjects (EC 51220-51230 and 51210-51212) beyond the four areas of English language arts, mathematics, science, and history/social science that should also be included in policy.
2. Considerable work is needed to make the standards stand as clear and valid objectives. They should be teachable and measurable. Interviews and some documents show that several schools have embarked on this process. There are district language arts and mathematics committees working on standards implementation; there have been professional development activities for standards-based lessons; and standards-based report cards are in use. However, this work has progressed under less than supportive district conditions, including uneven funding (often from categorical sources), little time for teacher collaboration, and the voluntary nature of much teacher professional development.
3. Clear and valid outcomes for students are contained in the Expected Student Learning Results (ESLRs) of high schools, required for the accreditation process. These represent broad outcomes of schooling that school programs should aim for, but are not expressed or currently assessed in a manner that can provide information about individual student attainment. The indicators for the ESLRs provide measurable objectives. Some high schools do this with ESLR portfolios.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

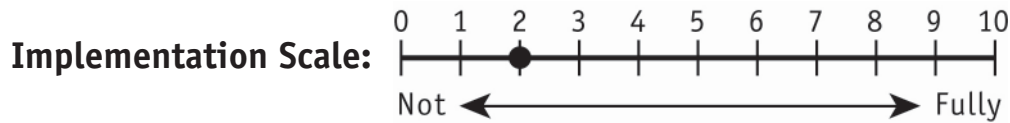
1. Develop a core curriculum policy/regulation that, at minimum, identifies the written source of student objectives and services for each grade level, K-8, and references the high school graduation policy for grades 9-12. This policy should be the basis of district allocation of funds, and the reference policy for differentiation, intervention and support services provided by state and federal programs. If the district's objectives are to be the

state standards, that should be stated, along with the source of objectives for curriculum areas not included in the state standards. The policy should identify approved alternatives to the core curriculum and a commitment to equal access.

2. Develop a plan to identify clear and valid objectives that makes use of and honors the work that has already been done, but is distributed evenly across the district. Clarify the relationship between and among district vision, goals, student objectives, and state standards. The main purpose should be to put into writing what the district clearly intends for all students and gets behind it with research-based teaching practices and regular measurements.
3. There is no relationship between the WASC process and the school plans for the high school. Many high schools effectively merge these two processes, removing some duplication of effort and giving more credibility and weight to both processes. Furthermore, the ESLRs provide a good beginning point for developing a district vision for what students should know and be able to do. Though these are high school outcomes, they have to begin, in most cases, at the start of a student's schooling. The standards measured on the CAHSEE need to be coordinated with the ESLRs and the district objectives for students.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 2



2.4 Curriculum

Professional Standard

A process is in place to maintain alignment among standards, practices, and assessments.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board policies and regulations
2. School plans; WASC evaluation/plan
3. STAR and other assessment reports
4. LEA Plan, 2003-04
5. Master Plan for Instruction of English Learners (no date)
6. Report cards
7. Accountability Report Cards
8. Interviews with teachers, school and district administrators
9. Classroom observations

Findings

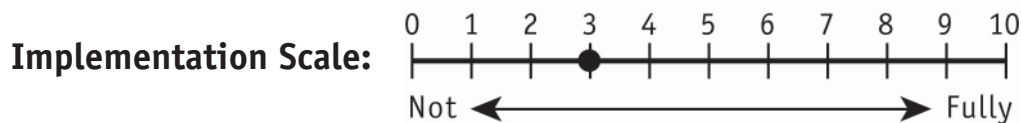
1. There is no written policy or formal written process for alignment, but many school-based activities, as identified in the school plans and through interviews, are exactly that: efforts to align standards, practices, and assessments. District English language arts and mathematics committees have taken on some of this work, including the recent piloting and adoption of aligned K-8 instructional materials and the development of a standards-based report card. There is a standards guide developed by the Santa Clara County Office of Education that is in use in some schools.
2. Because much of the standards alignment work that has been done in the district has occurred in elementary schools and reflects school resources dedicated to this purpose, alignment in district schools is uneven. In a few cases, there have been holdouts on reading approaches and methodologies that may not align well with the state standards, materials, and assessments. There is less evidence that significant alignment work has occurred in the high school courses of study or in subject areas other than English language arts and math.
3. No interviewee reported receiving the AB 466 math and reading training or the AB 75 principal training designed to align with the state-adopted materials. Some staff described training at Sonoma State that trained trainers, and most reported publisher trainings. The Academic Program Survey (completed in the spring of 2004), which measures nine essential components of state curriculum implementation, also verifies the general absence of these trainings with comments from schools that the “district had not been able to create a cost-effective consortium to provide the appropriate services.” However, a few staff members have been sent to trainings outside the district.
4. The district has developed standards-based report cards, which principals and teachers report as helpful in their alignment work and in communicating with parents.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Using the information contained in the Academic Program Survey as a basis, find out what fundamental alignment work has been accomplished and what still needs to be done. Most elementary schools rated themselves as only partially having implemented the instructional minutes for reading and math intervention, curriculum-embedded assessments, and pacing schedules. One element of the survey that has since been accomplished is the adoption of ELA and math standards-based materials for use in K-8 beginning this fall. The APR survey (in every school plan) identifies the level of implementation of the nine components of the state alignment program. These are the bare essentials, so a plan to address standards alignment should minimally contain these.
2. Seek a provider(s) and establish a cycle that allows teachers and principals to catch up on reading and mathematics training (AB 466 and AB75), particularly Cooper Elementary, which is designated for state sanction, and other schools in the II/USP or program improvement process.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



2.5 Curriculum

Professional Standard

The Governing Board has adopted and the district is implementing the California state standards and assessments.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board agendas and minutes
2. Board policies and regulations
3. School plans; WASC evaluation/plan
4. STAR and other assessment reports
5. LEA Plan, 2003-04
6. Master Plan for Instruction of English Learners (no date)
7. Report cards, K-5
8. Accountability Report Cards
9. Interviews with teachers, school and district administrators
10. Classroom observations

Findings

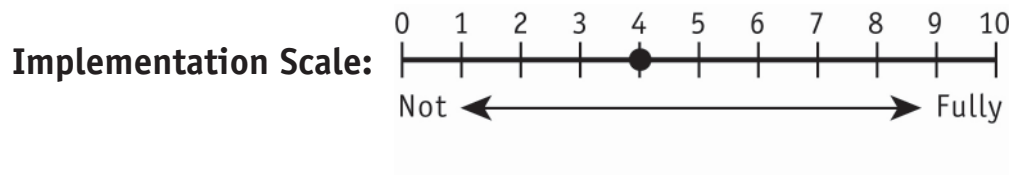
1. The board has adopted the state standards in English language arts, math, science, and history/social science, and implementation is under way in the schools. The degree and unevenness of implementation across the district after almost five years, coupled with overall low achievement scores, indicate the lack of a systems approach to implementation, one that includes:
 - policy revision and development that reflects the standards;
 - a public document showing the standards with the Vallejo City Unified School District name on it (as opposed to only the state);
 - a written plan for implementation (not all work can be done in one year so a multi-year plan for implementation should have been developed);
 - the identification of leadership responsibilities and roles;
 - an allocation of district funds and dedication of district staff to help schools get the work done; and
 - a routine evaluation of the work completed and an annual updating of the plan.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Develop a district plan to implement standards and assessments fully as recommended in Standard 2.4.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 4



2.6 Curriculum

Professional Standard

Sufficient instructional materials are available for students to learn.

Sources and Documentation

1. Interviews with principals and teachers
2. School Accountability Report Cards
3. Board agenda and minutes for public hearing
4. Classroom observations
5. Academic Program Survey Results

Findings

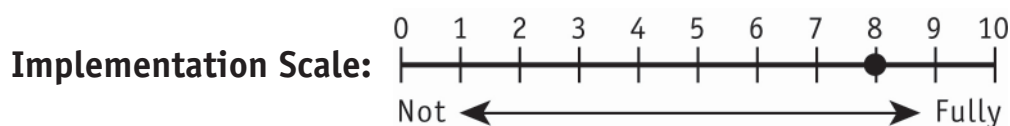
1. All 19 principals interviewed reported that they had adequate textbooks for students, though some materials were just arriving as school started. This was a good year for K-8, with new math and reading materials. Materials were also purchased for English language learners.
2. The School Accountability Report Cards for 2002-2003 (published during 2003-2004) did not contain a sufficiency statement.
3. After a public hearing held on November 19, 2003, the board declared the textbooks sufficient by adopting Resolution 2252 for FY 2003-04.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Follow up to check on the potential need for a redistribution of texts after enrollments are settled. Another public hearing on textbook sufficiency should occur for FY 2004-05.

Standard Implemented: Fully - Substantially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 8



2.7 Curriculum

Legal Standard

In subject areas for which the state has adopted standards, sufficient instructional materials are available to students that are aligned with the state standards.

Sources and Documentation

1. Interviews with principals and teachers
2. School Accountability Report Cards
3. Board agenda and minutes for public hearing
4. Classroom observations
5. Academic Program Survey Results, if available
6. State adoption list (on Web site)

Findings

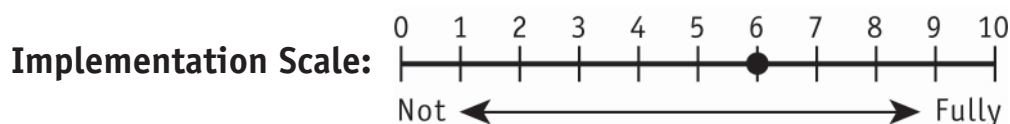
1. A recent adoption and purchase of standards-based reading and math materials for K-8 has allowed schools to begin the year with sufficient materials for the current school year. State-adopted materials were also purchased for English language learners, including high school.
2. Texts for science, social studies/history, high school mathematics, and foreign languages have been adopted and purchased since the advent of state standards. The instructional materials policy requires consideration of standards.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The district should proceed quickly with implementing the other components of the Academic Program Survey so that the new textbooks purchased can be optimally utilized for learning.
2. There was little evidence of a standards-aligned process for high school textbook adoptions, which are more complex and require a clear district process. There should be a thorough review of the availability of materials for struggling readers, as well as mathematics support materials in secondary schools.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 6



2.8 Curriculum

Professional Standard

Students in K-8 have access to state adopted standards-based materials; students in 9-12 have access to standards-based materials through an adopted process outlined in board policy and regulation.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board Policy 6161.1 Selection and Evaluation of Instructional Materials
2. Interviews with principals and teachers
3. School Accountability Report Cards
4. Board agenda and minutes for public hearing
5. Classroom observations
6. Academic Program Survey Results
7. State adoption list (on Web site)

Findings

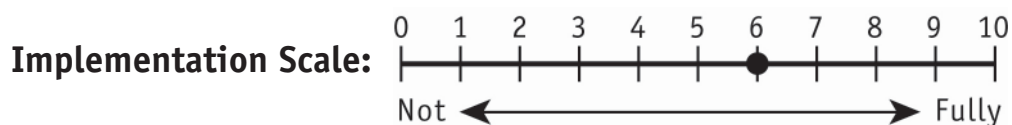
1. BP 6161.1 indicates that the criteria for materials selections must align with state standards, curriculum frameworks and It's Elementary, Caught in the Middle, and Second to None. No forms/requisitions accompanied this policy.
2. Principals indicate that new standards-based textbooks are available, though some workbook materials and teacher editions were just arriving in the second week of school.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Revise the instructional materials policy to update the language. Additionally, the policy should provide guidelines for the review and purchase of library materials.
2. Ensure that adequate, age-appropriate middle and high school reading and math materials are available for teaching students who are behind in these areas and need additional support.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 6



2.9 Curriculum

Professional Standard

Teachers in K-8 are provided with professional development in reading and mathematics by a state approved provider; teachers in 9-12 are provided with defined professional development in implementing content standards.

Sources and Documentation

1. Interviews with principals, teachers and district administration
2. Academic Program Survey (state pre-intervention survey)
3. School plans
4. Professional development plan or calendar

Findings

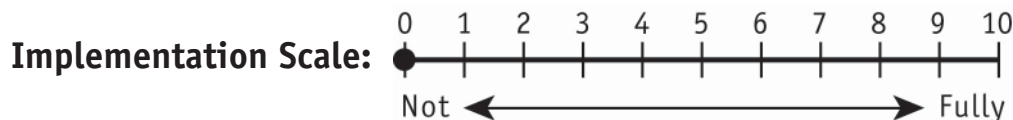
1. Most of the district's teachers and principals have not received the AB 466 reading and math or the AB 75 principal training modules, according to the Academic Program Survey administered in the spring. The exception is fifth grade mathematics. In some cases, schools (mostly those with II/USP funding) have sent an instructional assistant or two teachers to be trained. The reason provided is that the reduced state funding of these two programs prevented the district from locating a "cost-effective" provider.
2. Interviews with principals and district administration verify the information on the survey.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. As recommended in Standard 2.4, the district should develop a plan for finding a provider and beginning the AB 75 and AB 466 training, giving highest priority to Cooper Elementary and other schools in II/USP or program improvement cycles.

Standard Implemented: Not Implemented

November 1, 2004 Rating: 0



2.10 Curriculum

Professional Standard

The district has adopted a plan for integrating technology into curriculum and instruction at all grade levels.

Sources and Documentation

1. BP 6162.7 Use of Technology in Instruction
2. BP 6163.4 Acceptable Use of District Network and Internet Access
3. District Technology Plan, 2001-2004
4. Title I EETT Technology Plan Requirements
5. School plans
6. Digital High School plans
7. Interviews with school and district administration
8. Classroom observations

Findings

1. The district policy (6162.7) lists several objectives for technology in the curriculum: new information resource, problem solving resource, practical skill, life skill, meeting a range of learning needs, and supporting variety of grouping structures.
2. The district technology plan included goals for technology integration. The next phase of planning should meet the Enhancing Education Through Technology planning requirements, which are more intensely focused on integration and the use of technology for improving learning.
3. The most recent CTAP survey of Vallejo teachers (at <http://ctap2w1.assessment.org>) shows that only 11% of teachers consider their computer knowledge and skills to be at the proficient level and 45% consider their skills to be at the beginning level.
4. Classroom observations during the second week of school showed that the most common technology in use with lessons was the overhead projector and VCR. Students were also observed working at computers in the class, while the teacher was working with other students.
5. During the previous year, a virus interrupted the district's use of computers and the network, and technology was not available while the district staff were trying to repair it and load virus software on to all of the computers. Additionally, the district phone system is a source of frustration. There were times that some principals felt out of communication with the district as a result of these two systems.

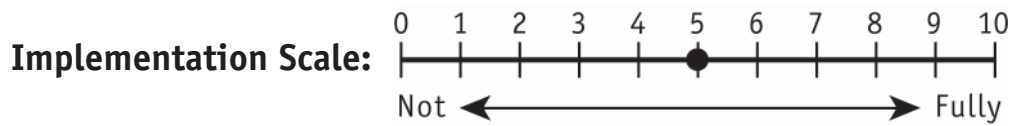
Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Evaluate the technology plan objectives for technology in the curriculum to see how well the last cycle of technology planning helped achieve these goals. A study of this type would yield data different from that collected by CTAP, which focuses heavily on levels of teacher and student knowledge and skills and types of uses.

2. Revise and update the technology plan, using the EETT requirements. It would be especially helpful if a section of the plan could focus on using technology to support and teach struggling students more effectively, particularly if it is research-based.
3. Pursue the use of technology by teachers in classroom lessons, particularly for better visualization, and in giving and receiving feedback from students and parents on Web sites. Determine if teachers have adequate skills and equipment to integrate the technology into lessons.
4. Establish a standard of practice about what software each computer added to the network should have, including virus software. Viruses are a fact of everyday life and cannot be completely avoided, but preventative software can reduce the impact.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 5



2.11 Curriculum

Professional Standard

The district optimizes state and federal funding to install technology in its schools.

Sources and Documentation

1. District Technology Plan, 2001-2004
2. School plans
3. Digital High School plans
4. Interviews with school and district administration
5. Classroom observations
6. Technology Use Policy

Findings

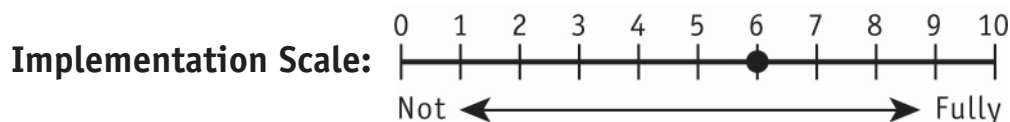
1. The last technology planning phase allowed the district to maximize state Digital High School funding: Vallejo High - \$702,600; Hogan High - \$500,700; Bethel High - \$503,100; and Peoples - \$84,600. According to the state Web site, Hogan High and Peoples have not yet submitted a Certification of Completion.
2. The last two years of federal allocations to the district through Title II, Part D, Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) have been in the amounts of \$141,076 and \$121,624.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Close off the high school grants and consider a formal evaluation of the effects of this much technology funding: what was learned and how technology funding contributed to student achievement.
2. Develop a new plan following the EETT guidelines and using data about the learning issues in the district's schools. Seek additional funds from competitive grants as they become available.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 6



2.12 Curriculum

Legal Standard

HIV prevention instruction occurs at least once in junior high or middle school and once in high school and is consistent with the California Department of Education's Health Framework (EC 51201.5).

Sources and Documentation

1. Board policies 6142.1 and 6142.2
2. Interviews with coordinators of PAPA and prevention programs
3. Parent notification materials
4. High school HIV lesson
5. Health clinic

Findings

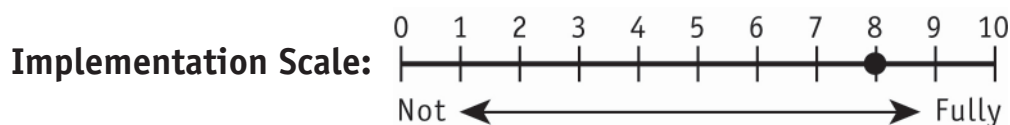
1. The Parent Notifications Required by Law document informs parents of the district's intent to provide instruction in human reproductive instruction and disease prevention and of their rights to refuse the participation of their child. The instruction occurs once in middle school and once in high school.
2. The district identifies the HIV curriculum as that provided by the PAPA program, a collaborative between the district and Planned Parenthood.
3. The PAPA consultant who is available with the HIV lessons (as well as pregnancy prevention and other human sexuality topics) goes to classes at the request of the teacher. This can be any teacher. For these presentations, the consultant, as required by Planned Parenthood, collects parent permission forms.
4. Human reproduction is taught in the science curriculum, so science teachers are also teaching these topics.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The PAPA materials are excellent, and since the approach is behavioral and interactive as well as scientific, it is suitable and adaptable for the range of teenagers being addressed. What is less clear in this arrangement is who may miss out on the required curriculum. Middle and high school principals should discuss how and when important topics are made available to students and their parents.

Standard Implemented: Fully - Substantially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 8



3.1 Instructional Strategies

Legal Standard

The district provides equal access to educational opportunities to all students regardless of race, gender, socioeconomic standing, and other factors (EC 51007).

Sources and Documentation

1. Board Policy 6145.5 and administrative regulation
2. Interviews of school and district administration
3. Classroom observations
4. Adopted Board Goals (no date)
5. Parent notifications required by law
6. Student attendance and suspension data

Findings

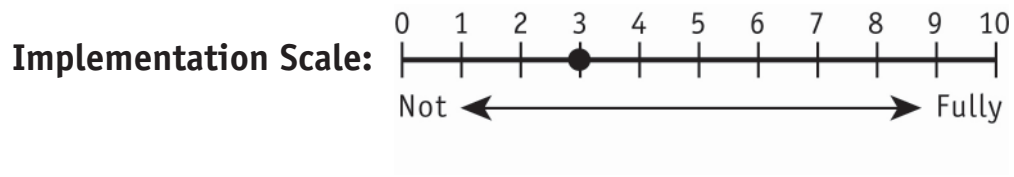
1. The district policy is in compliance with federal and state laws. A non-discrimination statute is in the parent notifications. It is important to note that equal access is more than non-discrimination. Providing equal access to opportunity is proactive.
2. Student achievement data show a consistent gap between African Americans and Hispanics and Filipinos and Whites on the California Standards Test (CST) and the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE). A sampling of suspensions for December 2004 showed that 7 of 10 student suspensions in an elementary school were African American and Hispanic; 14 out of 15 student suspensions in a middle school were African American and Hispanic; and 33 out of 47 student suspensions in a high school were African American and Hispanic.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Reference equal access on all district publications and post a statement in visible places, including Web sites.
2. Print district publications in Spanish and other languages as needed, and stress the equal access policy and statement.
3. Principals and teachers are aware of the gap in learning between the ethnic groups. However, STAR reports provided to principals had not been disaggregated by groups. Data on attendance, suspensions, course enrollments, and grades should be disaggregated by gender, age and ethnicity routinely. Educational opportunities are lost when instructional minutes are lost and when groups of students do not have access to higher levels of curriculum.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



3.2 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

Challenging learning goals and instructional plans and programs for all students are evident.

Sources and Documentation

1. 2004-2005 school plans
2. School sites
3. Principals and school staff members
4. District staff members
5. Board policies and administrative regulations

Findings

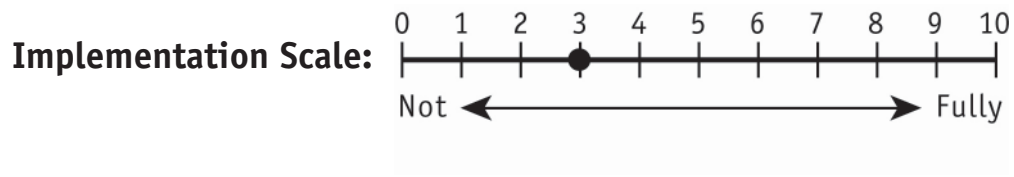
1. There are no written goals and objectives, but the board has adopted the state standards for English language arts, math, science, history/social science.
2. There is little evidence of a coordinated and planned instructional program that challenges all students, nor is there evidence of district leadership and guidance in providing a challenging program.
3. The school plans for each school provide for students' needs and program improvement. However, there was little evidence that the district provided the resources to support and implement the activities listed in the plans beyond the designation of categorical funds for that purpose.
4. Observations and class visits during the second week of school showed some challenging lessons being conducted. But a preponderance of unengaging work was observed as well.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. If the district continues to use the state standards as its learning goals, develop a board policy that identifies the state standards as the basis of learning goals and objectives.
2. Develop and publish the district's expectations for challenging instruction, and develop and fund a professional development plan.
3. The school plans need to be more realistic with reference to services and programs that can be financially supported. The plans need to be monitored and evaluated, with the principal accountable for implementation.
4. Instructional programs need district leadership, including resources and training, for teachers and administrators to provide the appropriate experiences for students. Program directors need to be sure that gaps don't exist in programs for teachers or students. The instructional program needs to be formalized, have field staff input, and be funded and communicated in the most visible manner possible.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



3.3 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

Every elementary school has embraced the most recent California School Recognition Program Standards

Sources and Documentation

1. 2004-2005 School Plans
2. School site observation
3. Principals and school staff member interviews
4. District staff interviews
5. Board policies and administrative regulations

Findings

1. None of the district's elementary schools have currently embraced the California School Recognition Program, though Elmer Cave Elementary applied and was selected as a California Distinguished School in 2004.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Review the California School Recognition Program and determine if the involvement of elementary schools is a priority. The elementary principals should be advised of the decision. The standards for this program and the rubrics for the federal Blue Ribbon School program provide criteria and benchmarks that are very useful in school evaluation and planning.

Standard Implemented: Not Implemented

November 1, 2004 Rating: 0



3.4 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

Students are engaged in learning, and they are able to demonstrate and apply their knowledge and skills.

Sources and Documentation

1. 2004-2005 school plans
2. School sites
3. Principals and school staff members
4. District staff members
5. Board policies and administrative regulations
6. County office personnel

Findings

1. The students at the elementary level were mostly engaged in meaningful instructional activity in the classes observed, though some teachers and substitutes were marking time while schedules and classes were settled. Students in middle school and high school classes observed were less likely to be on task than students in the elementary schools.
2. The elementary schools focused on the reading and mathematics state standards. In a few instances, the state standards for science were being taught. There was some focus on the state standards at the middle school and almost none at the high school level.
3. Every elementary school was using test data to strengthen the classroom instructional program. The faculty met regularly with the site instructional assistants to restructure the classroom activities to meet the needs of students. This did not appear to be happening in the middle or high school classrooms.

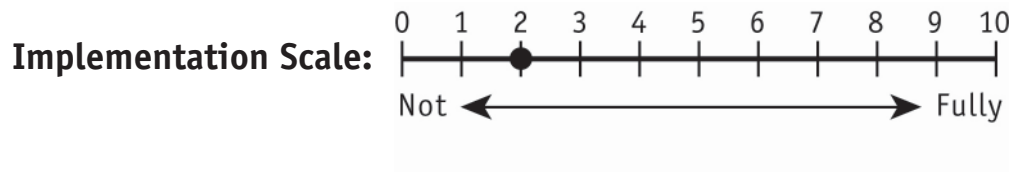
Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Develop an instructional plan and approve supporting materials for all levels K-12. This should include special populations and those students in optional programs. Middle and high school leadership should engage in conversations about the instructional needs of their populations and design a plan that uses the state standards and student test data to determine student mastery and progress.
2. Site administrators and teachers need professional development in how to use the materials that support the state standards. An ongoing training program needs to be implemented immediately. Outside consultants could be used to help engage the instructional staff in this effort. Publishers' training programs should be utilized where possible. The professional development plan should concentrate on the district's highest priorities in the areas of reading, language arts and mathematics. Other academic areas should be included, but priorities on teacher time and district resources should be honestly addressed.

3. The use of test data is inadequate at the present time. Implement an accountability plan that includes expectations, user-friendly data and training to properly disaggregate student data so that the classroom teacher can modify the instructional program to aid students in mastering core material.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 2



3.5 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

The district and school staffs promote and communicate high expectations for the learning and behavior of all students.

Sources and Documentation

1. 2004-2005 school plans
2. School sites
3. Principals and school staff members
4. District staff members
5. Board policies and administrative regulations
6. Community and board members
7. Test data

Findings

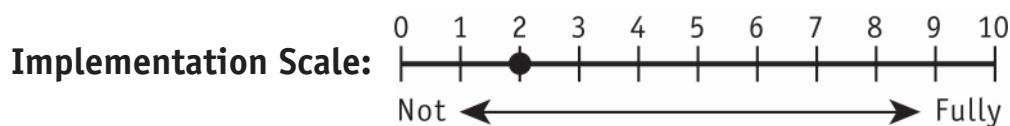
1. There is no clear direction from the district office as to what is expected of students.
2. The board policies and administrative regulations are inadequate to provide the framework for communicating high expectations to the staff and students.
3. There is a lack of clear organizational structure and policy to promote and communicate high expectations for learning. This has created a lack of coherence in systems, operations, and actions.
4. Gains on the API and AYP may be unsustainable, and student achievement results on the California Standards Test are low in comparison to similar districts.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan:

1. The board policies are not adequate to provide direction for instructional and curriculum management. The revised/new policies must reflect current state and federal requirements as well as provide a blueprint for what the district expects of all staff.
2. Changes in policies, expectations, assessment and evaluation should be clearly communicated verbally and in writing to the staff.
3. Policy statements should reflect short- and long-range planning in order to build trust and confidence among the staff and community.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 2



3.6 Instructional Strategies

Legal Standard

The district and school sites actively encourage parental involvement in their children's education (examples of programs EC 51100-51143).

Sources and Documentation

1. Board policies
2. 2004-2005 school plans
3. School sites
4. Principals and school staff members
5. District administration
6. Board policies and administrative regulations
7. Title I funds

Findings

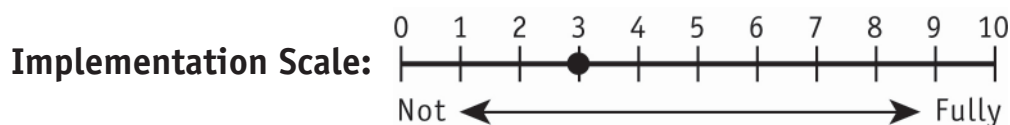
1. Parent involvement at most school sites is driven more by compliance issues than any other purpose, including participation in setting the direction and priorities.
2. Parents are involved in schools in very traditional ways, and participation of some ethnic groups is low.
3. Site staff members are respectful of parents but do not creatively involve them in problem solving or planning.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Establish a district committee of parents that can provide input to the superintendent/State Administrator and staff about the adequacy of the schools and the needs of students. The talents of community members and the parent group need to be captured to provide additional resources for students. Parents need to share in the accountability plan of the district. They need information and training.
2. Consider parents and community part of the educational team. Hold meetings to develop trust and communication. The financial condition of the district should be an ongoing topic.
3. Integrate the values of the parents and community into the system. Communication and training can help develop and expand the human potential available in the Vallejo schools.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



3.7 Instructional Strategies

Legal Standard

Each school has a school site council or leadership team, comprised of teachers, parents, principal and students, that is actively engaged in school planning (EC 52010-52039).

Sources and Documentation

1. School plans for 2004-05
2. Board policies and administrative regulations
3. Principal and staff interviews
4. District staff interviews
5. School visits and observations

Findings

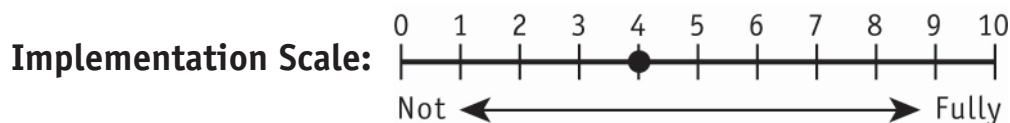
1. The school plans are in compliance with state guidelines and board policies and include a vision or mission statement and goals. District vision and goals or direction are missing.
2. Appropriate signatures are on the sign-off/approval sheet.
3. The school plans reflect compliance more than efforts to meet the individual needs of the school/students/staff. The high school plans and the WASC plan are not coordinated.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The school plans need to reflect a focus on what the school can accomplish, encouraging individuals to make a difference at the school. The tasks of the school operations should be apportioned so more individuals can participate.
2. The school leadership has ensured that the school plans are in compliance and all components addressed. Further develop these plans so that they are a “ready reference” used to guide the schools.
3. The school plans need to address in an understandable manner the short- and long-range needs of the staff and students. The talents and abilities of the parent group need to be energized to accomplish the types of instruction that go beyond the reach of any one group or organization. Improve the high school planning process so that full accreditation for the schools is possible.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 4



3.8 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

Principals make formal and informal classroom visits. Based on these visits, principals provide constructive feedback and assistance to teachers.

Sources and Documentation

1. Contract between Vallejo City Unified School District and Vallejo Education Association dated July 1, 2002 – June 30, 2005
2. Board policies and administrative regulations
3. Union leaders, principals, teachers and a board member
4. Evaluation forms

Findings

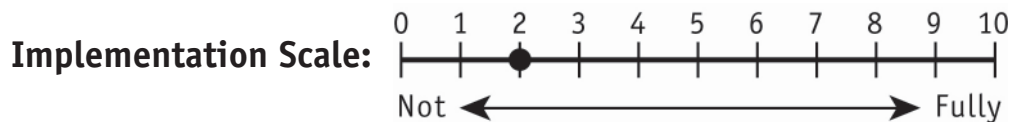
1. The evaluation process is not implemented throughout the district.
2. The evaluation process is not monitored uniformly by the district.
3. The evaluation process is not used to improve instruction.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The State Administrator needs to assign accountability for monitoring the evaluation program for the district, and should monitor the progress.
2. The leadership of the district should programmatically and financially support the evaluation program.
3. Principals should receive support and training in implementing the evaluation program.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 2



3.9 Instructional Strategies

Legal Standard

Class time is protected for student learning (EC 32212).

Sources and Documentation

1. State Department of Education regulations
2. Board policies/administrative regulations
3. School bell schedules
4. Principal interviews and observations of classrooms
5. Teacher contract

Findings

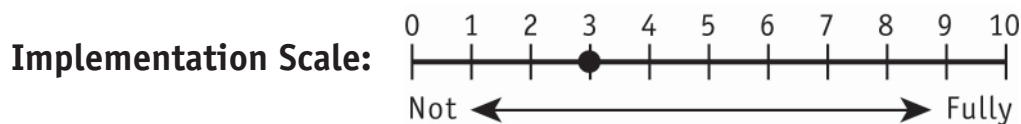
1. Bell schedules comply with board policy and administrative regulations.
2. Before and after school programs coordinate with the instructional program of the school.
3. The teachers' contract with the district limits the changes that can be made in the school day.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The superintendent/State Administrator should monitor the bell schedules closely to be sure the schools in the district are in compliance with state regulations and board policies.
2. Before and after school programs should be consistent among the schools and the community should be made aware of these programs as well as summer learning experiences.
3. The teacher contract and district goals should be compatible in their attempt to serve the students' needs. Currently, the contract is very restrictive and the goals of the district are not clear and concise. The superintendent/State Administrator and leadership group must lead an effort to gain additional time and services for students.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



3.10 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

Clearly defined discipline practices have been established and communicated among the students, staff, board, and community.

Sources and Documentation

1. School plans for 2004-2005
2. Welfare and Attendance Department
3. Board member
4. County office staff

Findings

1. The School Attendance Review Board (SARB) program was in operation in 2003-04 and is in transition at this time.
2. There is no data system in place that can accurately report attendance and suspension by individual student and by school.
3. There is a general lack of training about how to work with diverse student populations. Some principals and schools have had training on culturally responsive teaching.
4. There are no counselors at the middle school level to help teachers with student/parent needs.
5. Last year there was due process training for the principals.
6. There is no one at the central office monitoring suspensions and dropouts because of a lack of staffing and data system.

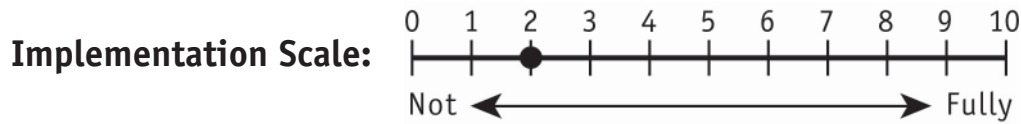
Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The district should monitor the transition of the SARB program. This action would signal that the police, legal and other community members are welcome and have a meaningful role in the attendance and education of the city's youth.
2. The State Administrator has brought the Aeries system that, together with individual student identifiers, will provide more accurate and effective student data. Monthly monitoring should be established for attendance and suspension that is disaggregated by age, gender, and ethnicity. There are some data that indicate that the lowest achieving students are losing the most instructional minutes.
3. The staff needs to be trained to work with diverse student populations.
4. Counselors for middle schools need to be reconsidered. Teachers need support in order to concentrate on the instructional needs of all students.

5. The new data system will require an action plan in order for staff to learn to generate regular reports so that early intervention can take place with parents, counselors and teachers. There should be at least one staff member who is responsible to see that this happens.
6. Develop a monitoring system and provide options for students not able to master the present courses at the secondary schools. The present electives need to be more tightly focused on the skills students need and intervention workers should be aware of the new offerings and focus.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 2



3.11 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

School class size and teacher assignments support effective student learning.

Sources and Documentation

1. Principals and teachers
2. Union leadership
3. Classrooms
4. District staff and leadership
5. Board member

Findings

1. Kindergarten class size is much larger in some cases than the contract allows.
2. Class size in general is much larger than last year. Classes were still being balanced at the time of the visit and review.
3. Many teachers still needed to be hired at the time of the visit and review, and classes were to be reconstituted depending on student enrollment.
4. Many qualified teachers have taken positions in other districts because Vallejo Unified did not know what the student enrollment was or number of teachers needed.
5. Counselors at the middle school have been displaced, placing extra work on the teaching staff.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The State Administrator must develop an integrated management plan for staffing schools, determine enrollment and predict the budgetary effect.
2. Budgets must be protected in order that losses in pupil/teacher ratios can be recaptured.
3. The district leadership needs to develop a communication plan so that the community as well as staff understands the financial problems of the district.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



3.12 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

Teachers use a variety of instructional strategies and resources that address their students' diverse needs and modify and adjust their instructional plans appropriately.

Sources and Documentation

1. Professional development plan
2. Schools and classrooms
3. Instructional assistants at the school
4. Local school training programs
5. Minimum day professional development activities
6. External consultant programs
7. Materials training agendas

Findings

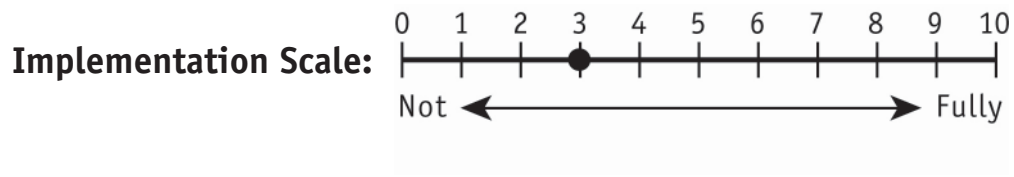
1. The teachers at most schools have not had focused training with the materials being used beyond publisher introductions. The Academic Program Survey indicates that they have not, for the most part, had AB 466 training.
2. Teachers are doing what they know how to do best from past experience.
3. There was little visibility of state standards or expectations for students posted in the classrooms.
4. Teachers and principals expressed a great interest in more curriculum direction from the district. Teachers lack time and expertise in analyzing the student data provided by the state and district and using the diagnostic assessments for differentiation and re-teaching. They are not using curriculum-embedded assessments.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The curriculum direction from the district office is not well organized or supported and leaves school sites to develop procedures.
2. Lessons should be well supported and tied to the standards. Good lesson development requires time and expert assistance. Minimally, it would help if all teachers were trained to use specially designed academic instruction in English (SDAIE). The culturally responsive instructional training that some schools have received should be expanded to all teachers, with follow-up.
3. The teacher support program staff should be refocused to offer teachers additional strategies to engage all students with the standards and use the state-adopted materials and regular assessments to ensure that all students are making regular progress.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



3.13 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

All teachers are provided with professional development on special needs, language acquisition, timely interventions for under-performers and culturally responsive teaching.

Sources and Documentation

1. Director of Categorical Programs
2. Coordinator of Programs for English Learners
3. Principals, teachers, and district instructional staff
4. Master Plan for Instruction of English Learners (no date)
5. School plans
6. Notices and agenda of staff development opportunities

Findings

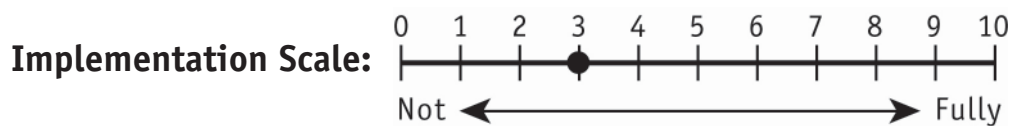
1. Training sessions of “Teaching to Meet Diverse Needs: Dynamic Differentiated Instruction” was offered for K-5 in September 2003 and for 6-12 teachers in November 2003. Follow-up sessions were offered to the teachers at elementary and secondary sites. “Supporting English Language Learners: Contextualizing Language, Activating Prior Knowledge and Scaffolding” sessions were offered in May and June. Eleven “Teachers New to ELL Support Sessions” were offered Monday after school to interested teachers. “Brain-Based Teaching: Learning is NOT a Spectator Sport!” sessions were available in September, October, or November 2003. Additionally, “Data Works Direct Instruction Training for English Learners” was offered in February 2004 and CLAD Summer Intensive Training Classes were offered in June 2004. Administrators were offered EL training in March 2004.
2. This array of training sessions was designed to help teachers reach the diverse population, but the system of delivery is impaired. There is no formal calendar for staff development. Principals say that participation in professional development is voluntary. There is only the incentive of professional development credits, which some teachers do not need. According to the teachers’ union, many sessions were poorly attended, even though interviews show that teachers and principals express a desire for more training.
3. Very little staff development deals with narrowing the gaps between different groups of students. Interventions include after school and before school programs at some of the schools. Most elementary school teachers have the CLAD or equivalent certificates. At the middle school level, the number of teachers with CLAD is almost as high. At the high school level, fewer than half the teachers have CLAD or equivalent certificates.
4. Seven “Teachers New to ELL Support Sessions” are planned for Mondays after school to interested teachers. “Data Works Direct Instruction Training for English Learners” has been planned for October 2004 to January 2005. “Brain-Based Teaching: Learning is NOT a Spectator Sport!” sessions will be available in September, October or November 2004. SB 395 ELD/SDAIE training was offered in August 2004 and will be offered again from September through December 2004.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Develop and calendar a plan for staff development for the 2004-2005 school year. For the long term, identify essential professional development to be offered for all certificated staff. Work with the teacher association to make it happen. Other staff development topics can remain voluntary.
2. The next steps for staff development in the district should include: (a) opportunities focused on the secondary level teachers; (b) opportunities to bridge the achievement gap between different groups of students; and (c) a focus on increasing the number of secondary level teachers who have CLAD or equivalent training.
3. Make an immediate effort to maximize attendance at sessions already scheduled for the year.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



3.14 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

The identification and placement of English Language Learners into appropriate courses is conducted in a timely and effective manner.

Sources and Documentation

1. Director of Categorical Programs
2. Coordinator of Programs for English Learners
3. Principals, teachers, and district instructional staff
4. Master Plan for Instruction of English Learners (no date)
5. School plans

Findings

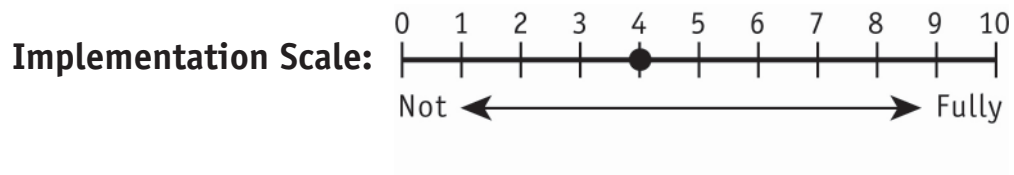
1. The district registration form contains the Home Language Survey, as required by EC52164. Where at least one response other than English is given on the Home Language Survey, the school site notifies the Programs for English Learners Office. This notification is to be completed within one week of enrollment.
2. The California English Language Development Test (CELDT) is administered individually to each student who has a primary language other than English, as required by EC52164.1. This testing is to take place within 30 days of enrollment. The district programs for English learners reports the results of the assessment to the school site. The district has forms to notify parents of their students' results on the CELDT. Letters also inform parents of their students' placement within the available options. Opportunities and procedures to request changes or waivers of the proposed placement are provided and explained.
3. The student is designated limited English proficient or fully English proficient within 30 days of enrollment.
4. Four master plans for instruction of English learners were provided by different Vallejo personnel. The differences between the plans were minor, but confusing.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The district and schools are making a significant effort to survey and assess English Language Learners. The following areas require improvement: (a) a system needs to be devised that will have CELDT results provided in a more timely manner to ensure that students are placed in the proper classes more quickly; (b) plans to update and revise the Master Plan for Instruction of English Learners have been made. At that time, the plan needs to go before the Governing Board for approval. The date of the approval needs to be added to the Master Plan. (c) The structured interview form contained in the Master Plan for Instruction of English Learners is not appropriate for secondary level students.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 4



3.15 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

Curriculum and instruction for English Language Learners prepares these students to transition to regular class settings and achieve at a high level in all subjects.

Sources and Documentation

1. Director of Categorical Programs
2. Coordinator of Programs for English Learners
3. Principals, teachers, and district instructional staff
4. School plans
5. Consolidated Application, 2002-2003, 2003-2004
6. Master Plan for Instruction of English Learners, no date
7. Local Educational Agency Plan (LEA Plan) 2003-2004, approved July 9-11, 2003

Findings

1. EL students are a concern, especially the newcomers and those students who arrive in 4th and 5th grade with little or no primary language education. These students are not on grade level and there is pressure to teach the grade level standards to newcomers in the Structured English Immersion (SEI) class. Some EL students are in clustered classes, which may be mixed grade level or mixed English-language proficiency. Although the school plans indicate that high school English language learners at the beginning and intermediate levels will have two periods of English daily, some students do not.
2. EL staffing has several noncompliance issues. At the high school level, beginning and early intermediate students have only one class period of English instruction. Also, at the high school level, beginning and early intermediate students are placed in SDAIE content classes. The Master Plan for English Language Learners states that only intermediate level and higher students will be in SDAIE classes. While the school plans indicate that only high school English language learners at intermediate or above levels will be in SDAIE classes, beginning and early intermediate students are enrolled in those classes. At the high school level, fewer than half the teachers have CLAD or equivalent certificates. Bilingual instructional assistants are available only part-time, and may work only a few days a week. Teachers without proper certification are not provided bilingual instructional assistants to work in their classes daily until they have earned the proper certification, as required.
3. Articulation between the elementary schools, middle schools and high school is not sufficient to meet the needs of EL students.
4. Some positive aspects of the district's EL program include: most elementary school teachers have the CLAD or equivalent certificates and the number for middle school teachers is almost as high. The district and County Office of Education provide numerous staff development opportunities for teachers in strategies for English learners. The district provides standards-based textbooks and materials for the elementary and middle school students. The LEA Plan describes steps to monitor English Language Learner transition to regular class settings and achievement at high levels in all subjects. Elementary and

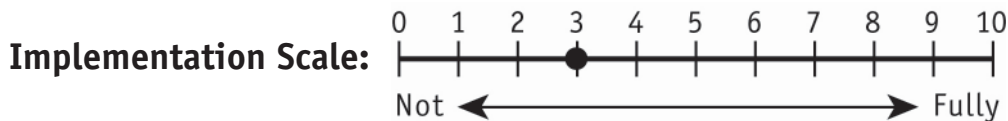
middle schools have established standards-based instruction in EL programs. The high schools are working to develop standards-based instruction and assessment; and kindergarten and first grade students are placed in language rich classrooms that may mix English-only students with English Language Learners. The teachers of these classes have CLAD certificates.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Explore ways to assist the older English Language Learners who enroll in schools. Extra assistance is needed to accelerate academic learning and English acquisition. Ensure that the two-period commitment in the school plans is met.
2. The Coordinated Compliance Review of 2001-02 states, “The documentation indicates that not all students who have a designated need for ELD and/or SDAIE instruction at elementary, middle, and high school have been placed with teaching staff that hold required authorization.” EL staffing requires ongoing and expert supervision.
3. Improve articulation between the elementary, middle, and high school levels so that a more seamless program is established.
4. The district has creative and effective programs for kindergarten and elementary English Language Learners. Varied and complete staff development programs are available. However, the district should encourage more teacher participation.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



3.16 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

Programs for English Language Learners comply with state and federal regulations and meet the quality criteria set forth by the California Department of Education.

Sources and Documentation

1. Director of Categorical Programs
2. Coordinator of Programs for English Learners
3. Principals, teachers, and district instructional staff
4. School plans
5. Consolidated Application, 2002-2003, 2003-2004
6. Master Plan for Instruction of English Learners (no date)
7. Local Educational Agency Plan (LEA Plan) 2003-2004, approved July 9-11, 2003

Findings

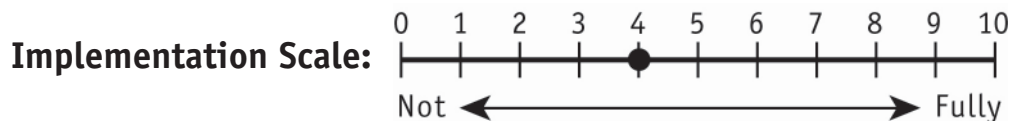
1. Most of the district's EL programs comply with state and federal regulations, including the Home Language Survey, as required by EC 52164. Where at least one response other than English is given on the Home Language Survey, the school site notifies the Programs for English Learners Office. Secondly, the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) is administered individually to each student who has a primary language other than English, as required by EC 52164.1.c. The district has forms with which it notifies parents of their students' results on the CELDT. Letters also inform parents of their students' placement within the available options. Opportunities and procedures to request changes or waivers of the proposed placement are provided and explained.
2. CELDT testing is to take place within 30 days of enrollment. School personnel say this wait can cause hardships. The student is designated limited English proficient or fully English proficient within 30 days of enrollment. The student's primary language comprehension and speaking skills are to be assessed by means of the LAS Spanish or structured interview within 90 days of enrollment. The structured interview is appropriate for elementary students. There is no such form for secondary students. The parents or guardian is notified in writing of the results of the assessment in English and the primary language within 90 days of enrollment.
3. Most elementary school teachers have the CLAD or equivalent certificates. At the middle school level, the number of teachers with CLADs is almost as high. At the high school level, less than half the teachers have CLAD or equivalent certification. The district and county provide research-based professional development that supports teachers of English learners. Teachers without proper certification do not have bilingual instructional assistants daily to work in their classes until they have earned the proper certification.
4. EL funds are not divided based on school's proportional number of EL students.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The superintendent/State Administrator needs to direct the staff to review the four existing master plans and develop only one that is circulated to all staff. It should be adopted by the board and dated.
2. The district has forms to report CELDT scores and program placement to parents. These forms need to be updated to reflect the most recent state-adopted changes in reclassification requirements. Incoming students can wait 30 days before their scores are reported to the school, according to the district's Master Plans. A system needs to be devised to prevent the need to change programs for students 30 days after enrollment. Secondly, a structured interview form for primary language assessment needs to be developed that is appropriate for secondary students. The district is commended for its form for elementary students.
3. Staffing and scheduling of students with certified staff is a priority. Any teacher without proper certification needs to have a bilingual instructional assistant daily to work in classes designated for English learners until the teacher has earned the proper certification. Increased numbers of elementary and middle school teachers in the district have obtained proper authorization to teach English learners, but more high school teachers should be encouraged to complete the training.
4. Review the allocation of EL funds for effectiveness.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 4



3.17 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

The identification and placement of special education students into appropriate courses is conducted in a timely and effective manner.

Sources and Documentation

1. Vallejo Governing Board Policy 6164.4(a)
2. Special Education Local Plan and budget
3. Interviews with district and school staff, including principals, psychologists, and program specialists
4. Classroom observations

Findings

1. The district policy is in compliance with federal and state laws. School visits indicated that special education classes are available for eligible students as needed.
2. The Community Advisory Committee does not have a record of meetings.
3. The special education budget encroaches on the general fund budget. Encroachment was \$5,578,011 for 2004-05.
4. The special education program and requirements are not easy to locate or interpret.

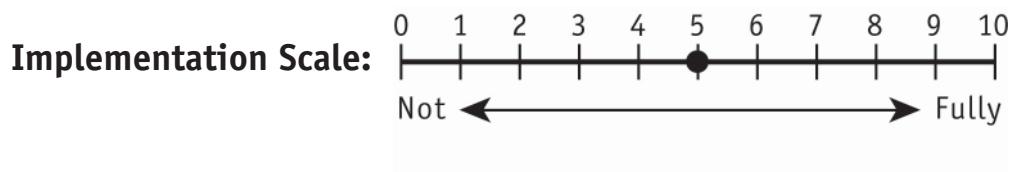
Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. More special education classes in middle schools and high schools need to have adequate standards-based curriculum materials in their classrooms.
2. The Community Advisory Committee should keep a record of meeting activities.
3. Given the district's financial picture, special education expenditures should be reviewed for potential savings. One area to review is non-public agency/non-public school tuitions and costs, which are currently \$5,739,157.
4. The district should develop a procedural manual that is comprehensive and user friendly. The manual should include, but is not limited to the following sections:
 - Parent rights
 - Continuum of services
 - Least-restrictive environment
 - Annual IEP requirement time lines
 - Initial referral for assessment
 - Grade 8 transition of IEPs
 - Extended school year

- Staff development
- Community Advisory Committee for Special Education Oversight
- Belief statement
- Student Study Teams
- IEP procedures, pupil placement summary and annual goals and objectives
- Non-public schools
- Special education parent handbook

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 5



3.18 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

Individual education plans are reviewed and updated on time.

Sources and Documentation

1. Vallejo Governing Board Policy 6164.4(a)
2. Special Education Local Plan
3. Interviews with school and district special education staff
4. Observation of special education classrooms
5. A sample of individual education plans (IEPs)

Findings

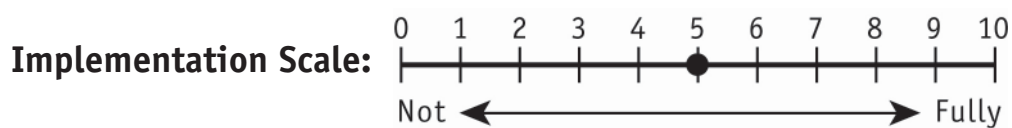
1. The district policy is in compliance with federal and state laws.
2. Within the district, IEPs are primarily written based on the results from assessments and do not reflect standards-based curriculum expectations and teaching practices. Psychologist reports are missing from some of the files reviewed.
3. Professional development is not mandatory for staff.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Use the IEP process to ascertain that students receive standards-based instruction to the highest degree possible. Plan and fund a professional development program, particularly one focused on standards. Under No Child Left Behind, most special education students are taking the STAR assessments. They should have standards-based materials and trained teachers.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 5



3.19 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

Curriculum and instruction for special education students is rigorous and appropriate to meet special education students' learning needs.

Sources and Documentation

1. Vallejo Governing Board Administrative Regulation 6159(g)
2. Special Education Local Plan
3. Schools and classrooms
4. Policies
5. Local special education plan

Findings

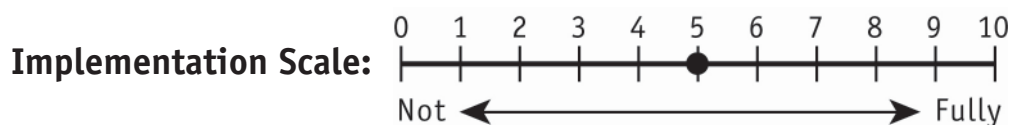
1. The district policy was in compliance with federal and state laws. However, the district does not have the core curriculum policy needed for accurate assessment of this standard.
2. Classes at the middle and high school level were less likely to have standards-based curriculum.
3. Some teachers have difficulty in modifying curriculum to meet the needs of special education students. Special education students may be more impacted by lessons where inadequate planning for differentiation has occurred.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Develop a core curriculum policy so that student IEPs and special education programs can be responsive and related to the core curriculum.
2. Provide time and training in developing standards-based lessons that are modified as needed for students. Ensure that special education students, whose IEPs so indicate, have access to core curriculum and early assistance that will help them meet proficiency levels, perform well on the California Standards Test, pass the CAHSEE and meet the algebra requirement.
3. All teachers need training and assistance in strategies for modifying and differentiating the curriculum for special education students. Ascertain that staff members understand that most special education students are taking the STAR tests, which are standards-based, and contributing to the school assessment profile.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 5



3.20 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

Programs for special education students meet the least restrictive environment provision of the law and the quality criteria and goals set forth by the California Department of Education.

Sources and Documentation

1. Vallejo Governing Board Administrative Regulation 6159(i)
2. Special Education Local Plan
3. Classroom observations
4. Interviews with district and school site special education staff
5. Interviews with principals
6. Class schedules

Findings

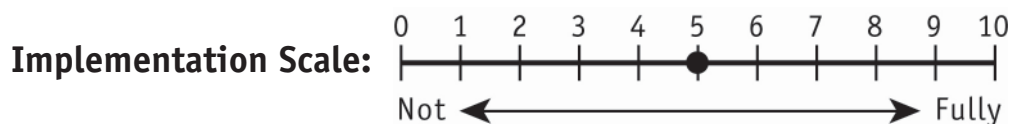
1. The district policy complies with federal and state laws.
2. Evidence of students being mainstreamed into general education classes was observed in the schools.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Continue to build and nurture relationships with general education teachers to encourage and support them in working with students who have special needs.
2. Provide general education teachers with support and training in the management of students with special needs.
3. Encourage and support training for all teachers in the modification of standards-based curriculum in language and math, at all levels.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 5



3.21 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

The criteria for Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) identification are documented and understood by school site staff.

Sources and Documentation

1. Director of Special Projects
2. Coordinator of the GATE Program
3. Principals, teachers, and district instructional staff
4. Consolidated Application, 2002-2003, 2003-2004
5. School plans
6. Local Educational Agency Plan (LEA Plan) 2003-2004, approved July 9-11, 2003

Findings

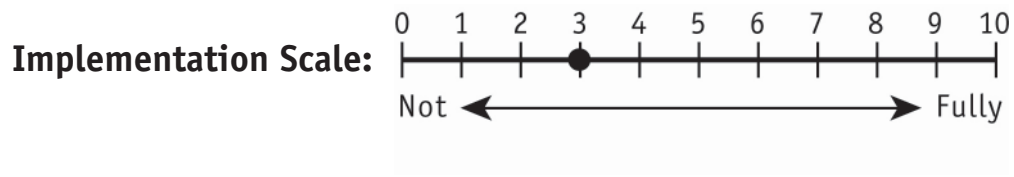
1. Students are identified through a combination of measures: state mandated tests, teacher recommendation, the TIP scale, and a district measure that looks at talent, leadership, cooperation, and independence.
2. Part of a principals' meeting during the spring is used to review qualifications for GATE identification. This information included completing the TIP form.
3. Staff development programs are voluntary because substitutes are difficult to find.
4. Principals and teachers expressed concern over removing the best students from mainstream classes. Principals and teachers felt that this form of tracking, removing GATE students from the regular students' classes, hurt the non-GATE students the most.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Continue using the current combination of measures to identify GATE students.
2. The district should continue in-service training for principals on the methods of identifying GATE students. Teachers need the same information about gifted student identification and placement that was shared with the principals.
3. Consider the role of the GATE program in the overall academic picture of the district and work to promote it accordingly. All elementary schools should feel positive about the program even if their school is not one of the three elementary schools serving GATE students. The academic programs in all the schools should become more rigorous for all students. This would allow more students to have a choice of staying in their home school and participating in a challenging academic program.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



3.22 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

Students are regularly assessed or reassessed for GATE participation.

Sources and Documentation

1. Director of Special Projects
2. Coordinator of the GATE Program
3. School plans
4. Principals, teachers, and district instructional staff

Findings

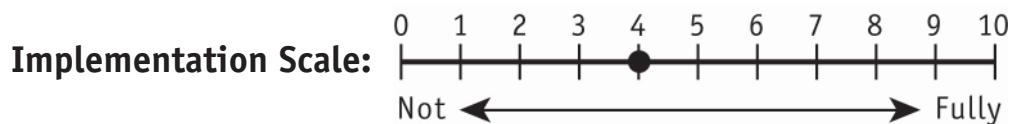
1. All middle and high schools have GATE programs. Three elementary schools have GATE programs.
2. Staff development programs and GATE teachers' meetings are voluntary because substitutes are difficult to find.
3. GATE students are identified in the fourth or sixth grades, usually at the end of third grade after the state mandated tests.
4. GATE students are identified through a combination of measures: state mandated tests, teacher recommendation, the TIP scale, and a district measure that looks at talent, leadership, cooperation, and independence.
5. According to the Coordinator of GATE, there is no formal reassessment of GATE students. If a student is doing poorly, a parent, teacher, and student conference is arranged. Exiting the GATE program is always a group decision.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. More formalized assessment of students for GATE participation needs to be developed for middle and high school students.
2. Reassessment procedures need to be established.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 4



3.23 Instructional Strategies

Legal Standard

All incoming kindergarten students are admitted following board-approved policies and administrative regulations (EC 48000-48002, 48010, 48011).

Sources and Documentation

1. Board policies and administrative regulations
2. Kindergarten forms and letters
3. School and classroom visits
4. Interviews with principals and staff

Findings

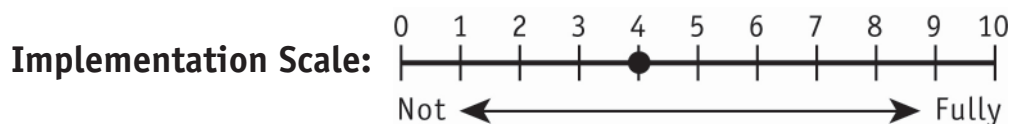
1. The number of students in classrooms should be equitable.
2. Enrollment procedures follow administrative regulations.
3. Classroom supplies and materials are adequate.
4. Local staffs are responsible for informing the local community about kindergarten.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The number of students in classrooms should be equitable.
2. The district needs to be more aggressive in informing the constituency about the kindergarten program. For example, the Web sites and community gathering places, including churches, can assist with kindergarten information. Information and materials should be available in Spanish minimally, and sources for other language assistance should be available.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 4



3.24 Instructional Strategies

Legal Standard

The district provides access and encourages student enrollment in UC and CSU required courses (a-g requirement).

Sources and Documentation

1. Board policies and administrative regulations
2. Interviews with high school counselors
3. Interview with board member
4. Student body handbook
5. High school campus visit
6. Interview with student

Findings

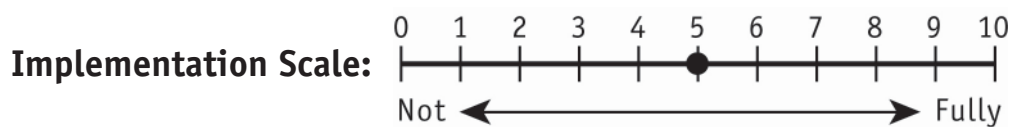
1. Each school has a catalog for students with information about district and college requirements.
2. Counselors develop a four-year personal learning program for 9th grade students and parents.
3. College days are regularly held for students with college personnel.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan:

1. Support and maintain the present college information program.
2. Where possible, the high schools should share and coordinate programs that plan for college enrollment.
3. A greater percent of the student body should be enrolling in college or post secondary schools. More and earlier information should be available in the community to overcome barriers of poverty, ethnicity or language facing many of the district's students. A university partnership should be sought.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 5



3.25 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

Students are prepared for and may access advanced placement or other rigorous courses in core subject areas at all comprehensive high schools.

Sources and Documentation

1. Principals
2. Counselor
3. High school course catalog
4. Course enrollments
5. Board member
6. State Administrator

Findings

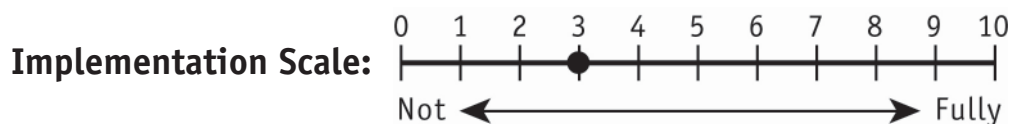
1. Many high school students are completing graduation requirements with electives.
2. Students need to be informed as to the value of academically rigorous classes. Additionally, many students in the state are finding that advanced placement courses can reduce the amount of time spent in college.
3. The state standards in the core academic areas, particularly graduation requirements, need to be implemented at the high school level.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The district and high school leadership need to institute a career education component for high school students.
2. The State Superintendent of Schools is advocating that all students take the university required courses, so it is likely that schools will be expected to implement more rigorous coursework for all students.
3. The district is working with the high school leadership to develop a plan for improving the rigor and accountability for high school programs.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



3.26 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

High school guidance counselors are knowledgeable about individual student academic needs and work to create challenging and meaningful course schedules.

Sources and Documentation

1. Community leader
2. Board member
3. High school principal
4. High school counselor

Findings

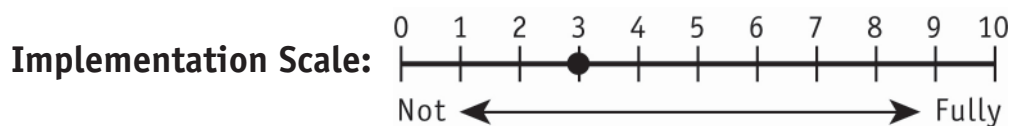
1. High school counselors are available to students at all grade levels. Middle school counselors were cut for the current fiscal year.
2. High school counselors are knowledgeable about the academic requirement and the needs of students.
3. High school counselors do not have input into the course of study or the schedule of courses available to students.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. High school counselors should be part of the leadership team that determines the content and number of class offerings needed by students.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



3.27 Instructional Strategies

Professional Standard

High school students have access to career and college guidance counseling prior to the 12th grade.

Sources and Documentation

1. High school principal
2. High school counselor
3. Board member

Findings:

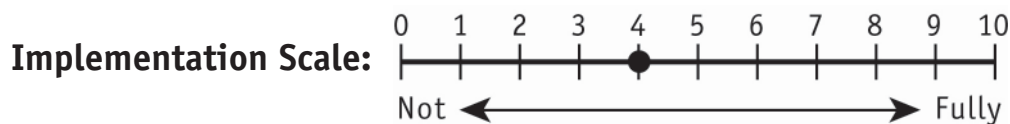
1. Students have access to career and college information through the 10th grade counseling program.
2. There is little monitoring of the guidance program to determine that goals are being met. There is a perception that counseling services are “squeaky wheel” services.
3. There is a feeling that many high school students are left “hanging” with regard to their academic needs and career choices.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan:

1. An assessment/evaluation needs to be made of the high school guidance program to determine if goals are being reached.
2. There should be a periodic survey of students to determine the helpfulness of the counseling services for career and college decisions.
3. The guidance and counseling department should be an integral part of correcting deficiencies contained in the WASC Accreditation Report with regard to Vallejo High School.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 4



3.28 Instructional Strategies

Legal Standard

The district has plans for the provision of extended day programs at its respective school sites (EC 17264).

Sources and Documentation

1. Board policies and administrative regulations
2. State Administrator
3. Director of Special Projects
4. Principals
5. Teachers
6. School plans

Findings

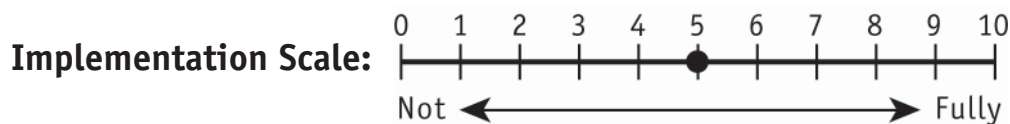
1. Before and after school programs are available to staff and students.
2. The extended day programs are closely integrated with student academic interventions.
3. Activities during minimum day are also used to enrich the student instructional program.
4. The before- and after-school academic programs are much more available at the elementary than at the middle and high school levels.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Monitor the use and evaluate the effectiveness of the extended day programs for maximum benefit to students.
2. Monitor the access and availability to before- and after-school programs for all students, especially at the middle and high school levels.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 5



3.29 Instructional Strategies

Legal Standard

The general instructional program adheres to all requirements put forth in EC 51000-52950.

Sources and Documentation

1. State regulations and guidelines
2. Board policies and administrative regulations
3. Director of Special Projects
4. Selected district staff
5. School visits and interviews
6. VHS course catalog 2004-2005
7. School improvement plans

Findings

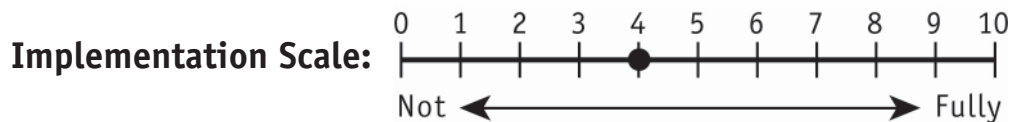
1. The documentation was not easily located.
2. Attempts are made to follow district policy.
3. The schools implement state standards and other approved programs with little direction or support from the district.
4. Principal and teacher training is needed on the use of the state instructional materials.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The district leadership team needs to adopt the state standards and develop a master plan for the implementation of the standards, materials, staff training, and use of assessment data, and the development of instructional strategies.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 4



4.1 Assessment and Accountability

Professional Standard

The district has developed content and learning standards for all subject areas and grades that are understood and followed by school site staff.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board policies
2. Interviews with district administration, principals, and teachers
3. Classroom observations
4. School and class observations
5. Report cards
6. Textbook adoptions
7. Planning and pacing guides

Findings

1. The district has adopted the state content standards for reading, mathematics, science, and history/social science. There is no documentation for board-adopted standards for the other content areas, though there are course descriptions.
2. There is no district-developed guide to the standards. A guide developed by the Santa Clara County Office of Education with grade-level benchmarks and assessments is in evidence, but it is unclear how available or useful it is to teachers. Bound copies of the standards downloaded from the state Web site are available. Several principals indicate that their schools have developed handbooks for standards, but these tend to be schools with more discretionary funds.
3. The degree to which the standards are understood and followed varies from school to school and especially varies from elementary to middle to high school. The Academic Program Survey shows that areas considered by the state (the nine components) to be fundamental to effective standards-based teaching are not implemented or are only partially implemented, with some outstanding exceptions. The comments on the surveys indicate that, in several cases, terminology that has become current in the state is unfamiliar to many respondents.
4. The district has developed standards-based report cards, which many principals and teachers find helpful for quick and focused reference on standards. Recently, one of the nine components, state-adopted textbooks for reading and math, was implemented for K-8, though in the second week of school, teachers guides' and other materials were still arriving or yet to arrive.

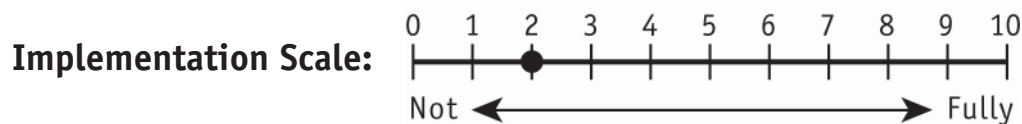
Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Develop content standards for all subject areas, and base other descriptions, such as secondary course descriptions and outlines, on these. Since there is not state adoption for high school textbooks and materials, quality textbooks are especially dependent on a good local process that is standards-based, as required by the state.

2. Publish a guide to the standards that has the district's name on it. Using California documents and those from other districts is fine, but putting the district and even the local school name on standards documents/guides in use is a statement of commitment. Teachers should have, minimally, a grade-level guide that they can carry around and write in, as well as access to the full grade-level continuum for reference.
3. Develop a plan for full implementation of the state standards in reading/English language arts, mathematics, science, and history/social science that will ensure that all staff members understand and can teach the standards. A second phase should include other subject areas, such as the visual and performing arts and modern languages. There is a great deal of good-intentioned activity going on in the district around the implementation of standards. For this reason, many of the pieces of a standards-based program are in play, but they need to be put together into a whole that guarantees that all teachers have good information and that all students will have a quality result.
4. The standards implementation work going on in the schools is remarkable in light of the lack of consistent district direction and focus. However, the student achievement profile for the district's schools on the California Standards Test (CST) is considerably lower than that of many comparable schools in the state, and a gap between the highest and lowest performers persists. All of the state tests, including the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE), assess how students are doing on the standards. Therefore, it behooves the district to place intensive focus on helping students to meet them.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 2



4.2 Assessment and Accountability

Professional Standard

Student achievement is measured and assessed through a variety of measurement tools (e.g., standardized tests, portfolios, projects, oral reports).

Sources and Documentation

1. Board Policy 6162.51 (a)
2. Principal and teacher interviews
3. Observations in schools and classrooms
4. Assessment calendar
5. STAR assessments: CST, CAPA, CAHSEE, CELDT, CAT 6
6. College Boards assessments: SAT I, Advanced Placement
7. Writing and other available performance-based assessments
8. Academic Program Survey, 2004

Findings

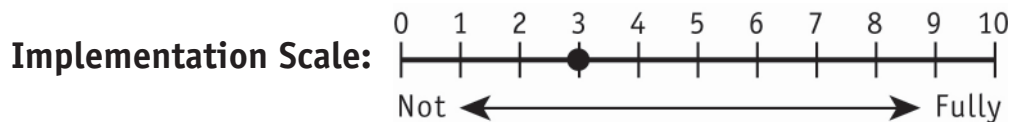
1. The preponderance of student assessments in the district and schools are those required by the state. These are also the most consistently administered across the district. District and school staffs are very successful in assessing a high percentage of students and, for the most part, meeting the NCLB participation requirement.
2. It was early in the year to observe other teacher assessments, but interviews and school plans indicate that writing, projects, and oral presentations are in use. Board Policy 6162.51 (a) indicates that students should be assessed in a variety of ways.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. See Standard 4.3.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



4.3 Assessment and Accountability

Professional Standard

The assessment tools are clear measures of what is being taught and provide information for the administration and staff to improve learning opportunities for all students.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board Policy 6162.5 (a)
2. Assessment calendar
3. Principal and teacher interviews
4. Observations in schools and classrooms
5. STAR assessments: CST, CAPA, CAHSEE, CELDT, CAT 6
6. College Boards assessments: SAT I, Advanced Placement
7. Writing and other available performance-based assessments
8. Academic Program Survey, 2004

Findings

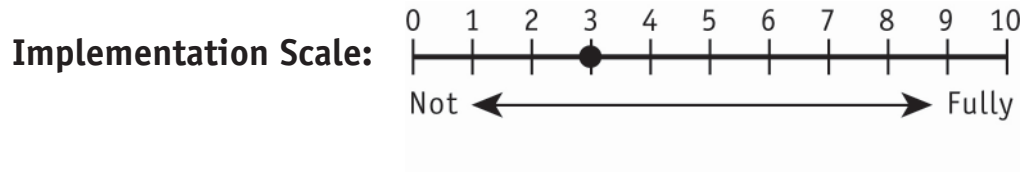
1. The STAR assessments are clear measures of the state standards, even more so as the state program has come to be anchored by the California Standards Test. However, as indicated in Standard 4.1, the implementation of the standards across district schools is uneven, and district support and funding for implementation has been inconsistent. For this reason, what is being taught and what is measured in the state assessments may not be completely aligned, though the potential is there.
2. Schools and teachers do not have the curriculum-embedded tests and the student monitoring system that is one of the nine essential components of the state program and that would provide more timely data. However, they are administering other diagnostics, such as RESULTS and DRA, routinely under district direction. Logs are maintained. The district has mandated regular assessments for feedback purposes in the elementary schools, according to principals and teachers. Some teachers are concerned about the amount of time given to mandated assessments, and while they are looking at the information, some are uncertain about what the next step is to be.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Full alignment of standards and state assessments coupled with computer access to student assessment data will make the feedback from state assessments more useful for classroom and school decisions. Individual student identifiers will allow teachers to look back at a student's performance over time.
2. The district should investigate the use of more clearly aligned curriculum-embedded assessments. These may include the assessments available through the publisher of the adopted program. Adequate training or coaching should be provided to clarify the purpose of the assessments and how the information is to be used to adjust and/or differentiate instruction.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



4.4 Assessment and Accountability

Professional Standard

Teachers and principals are provided with assessment data in a timely and accessible format and with training in order to analyze, evaluate, and solve issues of student performance.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board Policy 6162.5 (a)
2. Principal and teacher interviews
3. Observations in schools and classrooms
4. Assessment calendar
5. STAR assessments: CST, CAPA, CAHSEE, CELDT, CAT 6
6. College Boards assessments: SAT I, Advanced Placement
7. Writing and other available performance-based assessments
8. Academic Program Survey, 2004

Findings

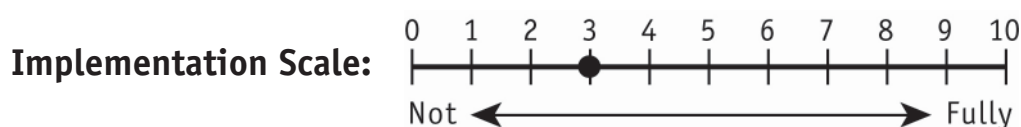
1. Many teachers feel that the assessment data from the state are not received in a timely and accessible format. They lament the amount of time that goes into assessment during the year only to get it back at the beginning of the next year.
2. The format of the state data is not very user-friendly. Many principals use the graphs on the Just for the Kids Web site, which offer a quick visual of the percentage of students in each of the proficiency levels, with a comparison with the average of the top ten comparable schools. Currently, the data on this site are not disaggregated.
3. There has been much training on using and understanding data, the most recently mentioned one being Data Works. However, like many of the components of standards implementation in the district, it has been somewhat piecemeal. Schools that have II/USP funds or, in some cases, Title I funds have had more training and more time to work together or be coached. Secondly, the student data system software has changed several times in recent years and there is not a readily available method to integrate data sets for comparison and analyses (for example, attendance and achievement). Finally, not all schools have individual student identifiers, so the capacity to make year-to-year comparisons on the same student, or for a teacher to see his or her value added to the student's growth profile is limited.
4. Principals and teachers praise the district's Director of Assessment for trying to make the data more accessible and providing cuts of the data that attempt to answer their questions. The State Administrator is working to improve the quality, timeliness, and accessibility of student achievement data with the implementation of Aeries and Data Wise software.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The release of the assessment information from the state is not in the district's control, though the State Board is working with the assessment contractor to improve the turn-around time on the Teacher and Student Report. However, the district can put together information, including better visuals, so that school faculties can delve into the data more quickly once it is received. Teacher collaborative time is too valuable to spend wading through poorly presented data.
2. Provide disaggregated data, which are extremely important for the kind of probing analyses that can lead to improvement. Underachievement can be related to ethnicity, poverty, lack of English, bad attendance, or any combination of these, but how it is addressed is dependent on sorting out these variables and choosing the right intervention. Scattered approaches to improvement have limited effectiveness.
3. Determine the baseline knowledge and skills that each principal and teacher should have in order to work effectively with student achievement data and provide the necessary training to teachers and principals.
4. Revise the district assessment policy [6162.51 (a)] so that it reflects the revised assessment in the district and is current with changes in state assessment programs.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



4.5 Assessment and Accountability

Professional Standard

The board has adopted and the district is implementing a K-8 policy that outlines clearly for teachers, students and parents the benchmarks to be used for intervention, promotion, and retention of struggling learners.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board Policy 5123 Promotion, Acceleration, and Retention
2. District report cards
3. School plans
4. School intervention teams
5. Interviews with principals
6. District and school Web sites

Findings

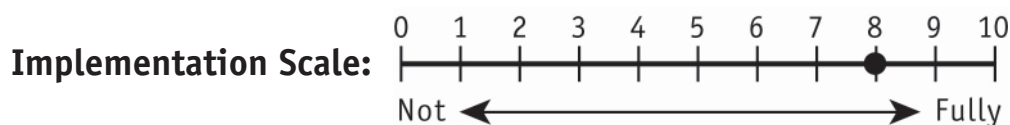
1. The district policy (5123) was adopted in March 2000. It promotes early identification of students at risk of retention, sets out basic criteria for promotion, and guidelines for acceleration. Promotion criteria include: a grade of D or mark of 2 or better or a level of Basic on the California Standards Test in English language arts and mathematics. In lieu of meeting these, the student can complete a prescribed individual intervention plan. The policy provides for an appeal to the superintendent or designee who will offer tutorial, after school, summer, or student study team options.
2. There were no forms or sample letters available for review.
3. The policy provides that an English learner must attend U.S. schools for three years before retention becomes an option and that special education decisions will be made through the IEP process.
4. Elementary report cards have a notification box also for teachers to check if a student is at risk. Schools have Student Intervention Teams that problem solve with students who are recommended.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The policy should probably be communicated to parents in the Parent Notifications Required by Law and on the district Web site.

Standard Implemented: Fully - Substantially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 8



4.6 Assessment and Accountability

Professional Standard

A process to identify struggling 9-12 students and intervene with additional support necessary to pass the high school exit examination is well developed and communicated to teachers, students, and parents.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board Policy 6162.7 High School Exit Exam
2. Board Policy 6146.1 High School Graduation Requirements
3. Board Policy 6164.2 Guidance and Counseling
4. Dropout data
5. CAHSEE student support materials
6. Interviews with principals and teachers, district assessment director, guidance counselor
7. Parent Notifications Required by Law document
8. District and school Web sites

Findings

1. For the 2004 year, with all 10th graders taking the CAHSEE examination, the overall district pass rate for mathematics was 72% as compared to 79% in the county and 75% in the state. The district pass rate for English language arts is 76% as compared to 81% in the county and 75% in the state. These pass rates showed similar gaps identified in other assessments between African Americans (58% math, 64% ELA) and Hispanics (64% math, 64% ELA), and Filipinos (87% math, 92% ELA) and whites (82% math and 86% ELA). Few of the items on this test exceed the eighth grade level.
2. Parents are notified of the test requirement and dates in the Parent Notifications Required by Law, and schools send additional reminders.
3. The district assessment director coordinates the administration of the test for the schools. State-developed handbooks are provided to students.
4. Students who need additional assistance may be placed in a parallel math or reading tutorial class to accompany their regular classes, or may be provided before or after school tutorials.

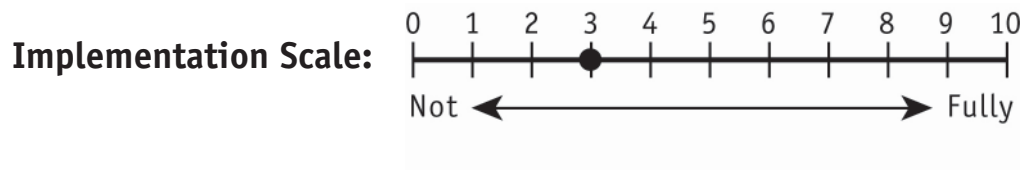
Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Earlier interventions (middle school) should be considered for lower performing students, particularly in the summer prior to entering high school.
2. Use the district and school Web sites not only to publish dates of CAHSEE administrations, but also to publish samples (legally approved) of test questions so that students and parents can begin to think earlier about the importance of schoolwork in getting prepared.
3. It was not clear that there is a consistent use of the student handbooks, although some teachers use them as sources of “sponge activities” as class is getting under way.

- In 2006, when some students do not graduate because of the assessment, it will be very important for the district and its schools to be able to demonstrate where the skills were taught and how students observed to be at risk were provided assistance and how parents were notified. This is not clearly delineated in the policy, which also still shows the 2004 date for implementation of the requirement.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



4.7 Assessment and Accountability

Legal Standard

The district informs parents of the test scores of their children and provides a general explanation of these scores (EC 60720, 60722).

Sources and Documentation

1. Board Policy 6162.51 (a)
2. Testing Calendar
3. Interviews with district and school administration
4. Sample score reports
5. Accompanying letter from the district and/or school
6. Parent Notifications Required by Law
7. District and school Web sites

Findings

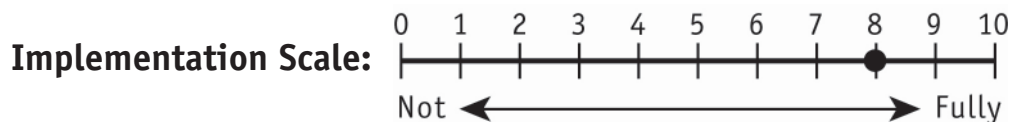
1. Schools usually send a letter to parents advising them that the STAR reports are coming, and the district sends the reports with a letter of explanation. Teachers may include assessment information in the fall conferences.
2. The notice in the Parent Notifications Required by Law is general and does not let parents know that interpreters can be made available.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Use the school and district Web sites and press releases to local newspapers that the test reports will be arriving, what they mean, and how parents can assist students in attaining greater proficiency.
2. Provide access to interpreters.

Standard Implemented: Fully - Substantially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 8



4.8 Assessment and Accountability

Professional Standard

The district has a process to notify high school students and their parents regarding high school proficiency examination requirements and scores.

Sources and Documentation

1. Postings of testing dates, location, costs, and methods of registration
2. Testing Calendar
3. Interview with guidance counselor(s)
4. Student Handbook/Agendas
5. District and school Web sites

Findings

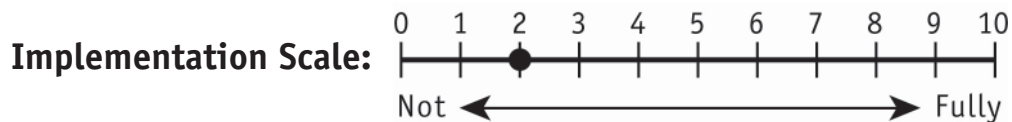
1. Flyers providing information on the California High School Proficiency Test (CHSP) are available in the Guidance office, if one asks. The flyers require that a student seek out a testing center and registration form online.
2. There is no process to notify parents about this test.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The district's Web sites and bulletin boards, as well as principals' newsletters or testing calendars should contain information about this assessment opportunity, including the costs.
2. The requirements for this test remain in statute even though there was some attempt to remove it from the state's assessment lexicon. The district should formalize a process of notification for students and parents.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 2



4.9 Assessment and Accountability

Professional Standard

Principals and teachers in underperforming schools and/or in schools under mandated improvement programs are provided special training and support by the district; improvement plans are monitored.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board policies 0520 (a) Intervention for Underperforming Schools; 0520.2 (a) Title I Program Improvement Schools
2. School plans
3. Program Improvement schools; II/USP schools

Findings

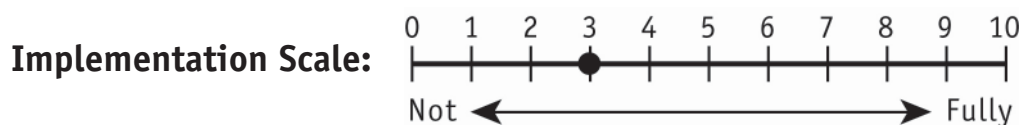
1. The district policy (0520.2) requires that Program Improvement schools receive technical assistance from the district, the state department, a higher education organization, or a private agency that has experience working with schools on (1) analysis of data; (2) professional development on the use of scientific methodologies; and (3) analysis and revision of the school budget. The policy for II/USP schools relates more to the hiring and monitoring of the external evaluator. Both policies require a report to the board.
2. The underperforming schools receive more training and support by virtue of having more funds that can be used for this purpose. All schools in the district participated in the Academic Program Survey that is the state preliminary survey to the SAIT process for sanctioned schools, so the information is available for district assistance. The district has just adopted standards-based English language arts and math materials, which are now in the K-8 schools.
3. The person in the position overseeing special projects recently retired and a new person is on the job. Additionally, the new associate superintendent for the division and two additional positions for elementary and high school have just started with the district and are aware of the needs of these schools.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The district policy, survey information, and district expertise are now available to provide the necessary assistance to this group of underperforming schools. Expert support and coaching for these schools should be a priority and should start immediately.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



4.10 Assessment and Accountability

Professional Standard

The board and district understand the elements of state and federal accountability programs and communicate the availability of options and special services to parents and students.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board policies 0520 (a) Intervention for Underperforming Schools; 0520.2 (a) Title I Program Improvement Schools
2. Agendas; workshop materials
3. Interviews with board and district administration
4. Consolidated Program plans
5. School plans

Findings

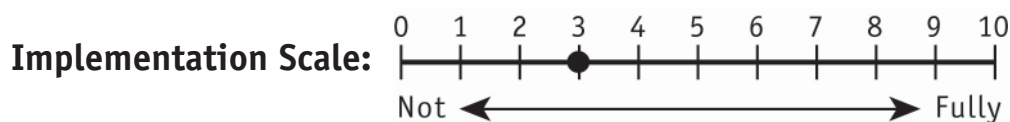
1. The board and district administration have had briefings on the issues of No Child Left Behind. Policy 0520.2 (a) states that at the end of the first full year of Program Improvement, the parents shall have the following options: transfer, supplemental services, or technical assistance. This policy is current though another Title I policy, 6171, has not been updated for NCLB. The Title II policy (6174) was updated in 2003.
2. Eleven schools are Title I funded schools for the current year; six were identified as Title I Improvement Schools for 2003-04 by the state: Cooper, Federal Terrace, Highland, Mare Island Technology Academy Charter, Patterson, and Steffen Manor. One school, Cooper, has been identified for state sanction. Four schools are still in the II/USP process: Farragut, Hogan High, Solano Middle, and Widenmann.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The board should implement its policy, including asking for a report from the superintendent/State Administrator.
2. The district has a significant number of schools in academic trouble. With each succeeding year, the AYP target will grow, yet many of the district's schools are already not meeting the current growth target. As the district recovers from fiscal crisis, it is imperative that it also develops long-term plans to move its schools out of an achievement crisis.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



5.1 Professional Development

Professional Standard

Staff development demonstrates a clear understanding of purpose, written goals, and appropriate evaluations.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board Policy 4131.6 Professional Development
2. School plans
3. Local Education Agency Plan, 2003-2004
4. Interviews with district administration, principals, teachers
5. BTSA program description

Findings

1. Board Policy 4131.6 directs the superintendent to prepare a professional development plan for board approval with goals and a three-year timeline that is diverse, provides coaching, and sets aside time for professional development.
2. At the time of review in September, there was not a staff development plan or calendar for the district. However, school plans do contain staff development activities. These activities often show that planners recognize the value of collaboration and coaching in professional growth. A few opening of school agendas were collected and revealed the efforts of the principals to keep these days interactive and collaborative. One role of the district Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) committee is to review and approve the agendas for “buy-back” days.
3. Professional development for certificated staff is highly valued by principals, teachers and teacher leaders, but it is often talked of as a thing of the past. A voluntary Best Practices series by grade level is available after school, without stipends. An array of professional development programs were offered last year that appear to have been voluntary and poorly attended. Funds and changes in state requirements and the teacher contract are considered impediments to an ongoing, high quality professional development program.

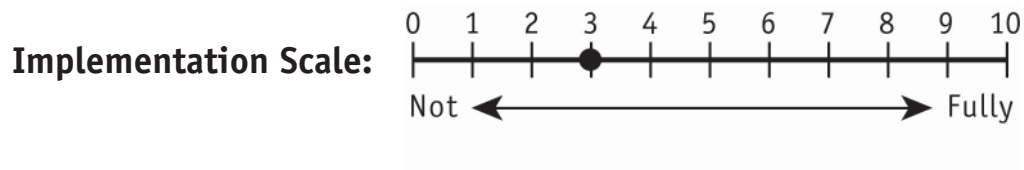
Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The district policy should be implemented. A plan for the effective and purposeful use of professional development training that is available is important, probably more so in times of reduced funds. Loss of professional development and collaboration opportunities may lead to a loss of morale, a lapse in staff knowledge and skills, or a loss of highly qualified teachers to other districts.
2. A calendar of events will maximize what is available, including the possibility that teachers can visit other school activities at the cost of a substitute. Additionally, an effort should be made to maximize the county’s professional development resources, and the collaborations with local colleges and universities.

3. A professional development plan and calendar should underline the district's commitment and better coordinate available funds. Before contract negotiations begin, administrators and teacher leaders should discuss in what way the contract is supportive and/or non-supportive of teacher participation in professional development and school improvement activities.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



5.2 Professional Development

Professional Standard

Staff development provides the staff (e.g., principals, teachers, and instructional aides) with the knowledge and the skills to improve instruction and the curriculum.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board Policy 4131.6 Professional Development
2. School plans, including the Academic Program Survey
3. Local Education Agency Plan, 2003-2004
4. Interviews with district administration, principals, teachers
5. BTSA program description

Findings

1. Most principals and teachers are spending almost all available staff development time on improving their knowledge and ability to teach to the standards. These include efforts to make better use of the data (calibration with DataWorks); to manage diverse classrooms more effectively (Singleton, Wong); and to articulate and collaborate with peers. Nonetheless, everyone feels the frustration of “sketchy” staff development and would like more resources, consistency, and focus.
2. Teachers and principals, with a few exceptions, have not received the AB 466 and AB 75 training in reading and mathematics. Several teachers reported needing literacy training.
3. Some school staffs say they are making headway on learning to use the assessments, but most feel that there is too much class time consumed by assessments. They indicate that they receive too little information too late to be immediately helpful. Some teachers described the frustration of having to use precious paper allocations at the school to download the assessment information.

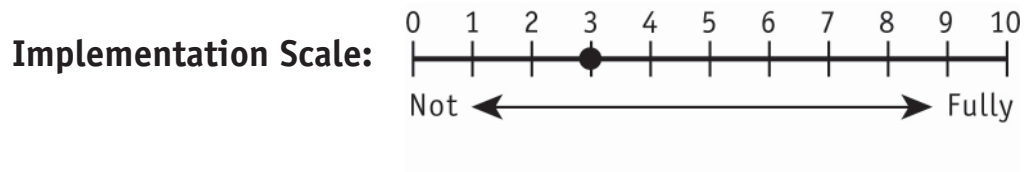
Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The staff development plan (see Standard 5.1) should focus professional development on the basics of implementing standards based on the nine components in the Academic Program Survey and begin systematically building the knowledge and skill sets of teachers. Professional development related to the uniqueness of students who live in Vallejo should be integrated with the elements of the state program. Some teachers report feeling disheartened about their ability to teach all of their students. Dedication and motivation are essential and admirable traits in teachers, but they also need more focused knowledge and skills to teach students who are several years behind in literacy development.
2. Teachers are giving class time and personal effort to the state assessments and not getting data returned in an accessible format. Teachers should be provided the state assessment information in color graphics that present the learning picture clearly. The teacher reports for individual students should not be an onerous downloading task.

- Unless they have RESULTS or are using some nonaligned assessments like DRA, teachers are not receiving any diagnostic information to allow them to differentiate instruction effectively or make improvements in instruction. The district should provide for curriculum-embedded assessment at six- to eight-week intervals.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



5.3 Professional Development

Professional Standard

The California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) developed by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing are present and supported.

Sources and Documentation

1. Interviews with principals, teachers and teacher leaders
2. Article 11, Teacher Contract; Appendix A
3. BTSA program description
4. Evaluation forms

Findings

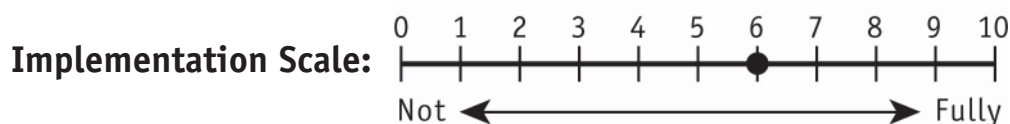
1. The evaluation processes in the teacher contract are based on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. The teachers' association, VEA, introduced the standards to the staff through workshops.
2. The district Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program is based on the teacher standards. The support providers observe and coach teachers using tools from the New Teacher Center Formative Assessment System based on the CSTP.
3. There is no written policy or staff development plan that supports the standards, although there has been a staff development plan in the past. The Best Practices professional development provided by grade level uses the teaching standards.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Encourage all programs and persons involved with the professional development of teachers to review the teacher standards and determine in what manner and how effectively their efforts contribute to the overall professional growth of teachers. The district's professional development policy and written plan should use the standards as a point of reference. The standards, adopted in 1998, should be well established at this point.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 6



5.4 Professional Development

Professional Standard

Teachers are provided time and encouraged to meet with other teachers.

Sources and Documentation

1. Interviews with principals and teachers
2. School plans
3. School schedules
4. Academic Program Survey

Findings

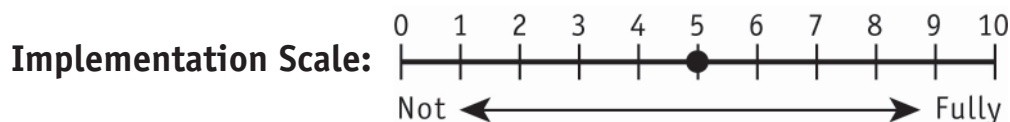
1. Collaborative time is highly valued by elementary principals and teachers in the district. Many believe that grade level collaborative sessions are where the most helpful work on standards implementation occurs. This is true to a lesser degree in the secondary program.
2. The elementary and middle schools rated their implementation of the collaboration component of the Academic Program Survey as Partial to Substantial. There are minimum days on Mondays for elementary schools so that teachers can meet. However, most principals indicate that collaborative time and staff development is dependent upon categorical funds, which are not equally available to all schools. Thus, principals in schools with less funding report fewer staff development and collaboration opportunities for their staffs.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Teacher effectiveness and satisfaction, positive school cultures, and student achievement are among the outcomes of instruction-based conversations and collaboration among teachers. Achieving these can be challenging during fiscal crises. The district should work to maintain the collaboration time that is currently available and to increase opportunities for collaboration when feasible.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 5



5.5 Professional Development

Professional Standard

Collaboration exists among higher education, district, professional associations, and the community in providing professional development. The district has formed partnerships with state colleges and universities to provide appropriate courses accessible to all teachers.

Sources and Documentation

1. Interviews with district administration, principals and teachers
2. Staff development plan and calendar
3. Posted staff bulletins
4. Observations
5. Solano County Office

Findings

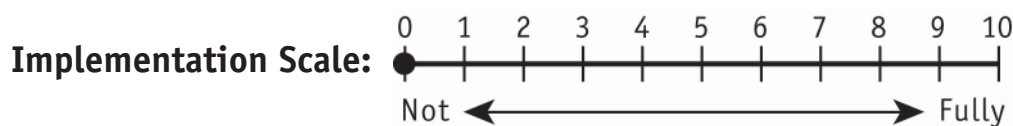
1. There do not appear to be any formal collaborative arrangements between the district and local universities, professional associations, or the community on behalf of teachers. However, there are some outstanding collaboration efforts on behalf of students, such as a collaboration with Planned Parenthood to provide a clinic on the Vallejo High campus. Some principals are able to get community groups or businesses to sponsor an activity on the campus, particularly for parents and students.
2. Schools in the district do have arrangements with the Literature Project for the use of the RESULTS program and for some literacy training and coaching. Some science teachers are involved on an ongoing basis with the Lawrence Hall of Science at Berkeley, and several principals mentioned their involvement in the California School Leadership Academy. The Solano County Office offers trainings that some staff are able to participate in, including CELDT and BCLAD training.

Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. It will be more difficult and more necessary to build collaborations that will allow the immediate community and the wider area to support the district's essential functions during the fiscal recovery. One of those functions is providing highly qualified teachers and ongoing professional growth.
2. As recommended in Standard 5.1, there should be a district professional development plan. With a formally adopted plan, collaborations can be sought with purpose. Additionally, a plan will advance the goals of the district on behalf of students.

Standard Implemented: Not Implemented

November 1, 2004 Rating: 0



5.6 Professional Development

Professional Standard

Administrative support and coaching are provided to all teachers, and new teachers and principals are provided with training and support opportunities.

Sources and Documentation

1. Interviews with district administration, principals, and teachers
2. Academic Program Survey
3. BTSA program description
4. School plans

Findings

1. New teachers are provided with training and support through the Beginning Teacher Support and Assistance (BTSA) program. District teachers are trained as support providers. Principals and teachers interviewed praised this program for the quality of support and coaching.
2. Where funding is available, schools have literacy coaches. School principals, particularly at the elementary level, also provide feedback, support, and some coaching in the classroom. Some schools have contracted for coaches, such as with Sonoma State, and others use released staff with additional expertise.
3. It is less clear that principals, either new or veteran, have formal coaching and support. Principals mentioned that much of their support structure is provided by their colleagues, and principals who have been in the district for a while know who to call for various types of support.

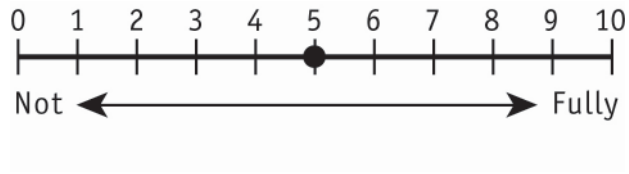
Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. Build on the success of the BTSA program, which is based on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession, to improve the implementation of the teacher evaluation process and make better use of the PAR program. These programs should be a continuum. Provide professional development for principals that will increase their capacity to use the mandatory evaluation process as an opportunity for coaching and feedback to teachers.
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of coaches: Are they being used to help teachers learn new skills, model lessons, bring in research and data? Are the coaches for teachers or are they for students?
3. Seek out university or agency partnerships that will pair new principals with a mentor from another district. Retirees can serve this purpose as well.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 5

Implementation Scale:



5.7 Professional Development

Professional Standard

Evaluations provide constructive feedback for improving job performance. Professional development is provided to support employees with less than satisfactory evaluations.

Sources and Documentation

1. Board Policy BP 4115
2. California Standards for the Teaching Process
3. Interviews with principals, teachers, and teacher leaders
4. Article 11 - Procedures for Evaluation of Unit Members, Teacher Contract
5. Evaluation processes and forms
6. PAR process
7. 2003-2004 Certificated Evaluation Timeline

Findings

1. Evaluation of teachers is a two-process system, identified as Process A and Process B. Process A is for teachers on temporary contracts, provisional employees, first and second year credentialed teachers, and permanent teachers who receive an unsatisfactory rating (overall) during the prior year. Process B is for tenured, credential teachers and is conducted bi-annually. The first process is more traditional with objectives and observations; the second process is based on one selected objective formulated to improve on a self-selected California Teaching Standard. The teacher conducts a self-evaluation with a mutually acceptable evaluation technique. There are forms for each process.
2. Both processes are based on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession, which are included in Appendix A of the teacher contract. Principals indicated that the forms are new this year.
3. There is a Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program for teachers who receive an overall rating of unsatisfactory. The use of this program has been next to nil until last year, when some unsatisfactory ratings were given.
4. Principals write an evaluation plan for their own appraisals and receive feedback from a district-level supervisor. During the previous year, some principals did not have completed evaluations.
5. It was reported that some principals never turn in employee evaluations.

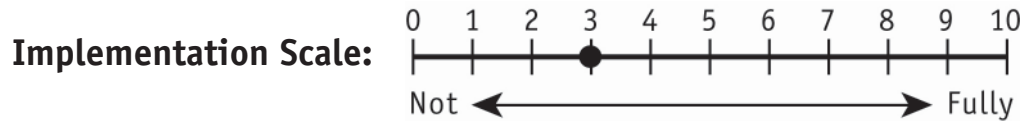
Recommendations and Improvement Plan

1. The written components describing the evaluation of certificated staff in the district is clear and complete and is based on the California professional standards. However, there is a feeling in the district that evaluation does not have the supervision and support of the Human Resources division in that nothing happens if evaluations are not completed. This is also true for the under-utilized PAR program. All administrators should be held accountable for completing employee evaluations.

2. Print the evaluation timelines and calendar, and provide reminders. District administrators should provide a model of effective and timely evaluations. Develop a plan of action for monitoring and, if needed, sanctioning of those who routinely do not complete evaluations in a timely manner. Ascertain that principals and co-administrators have adequate training to provide useful feedback to teachers and to complete the paperwork in a timely fashion.

Standard Implemented: Partially

November 1, 2004 Rating: 3



Standard to be addressed		Nov. 2004 Rating	May 2005 Focus
1.1	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - PLANNING PROCESSES A common vision of what all students should know and be able to do exists and is put into practice.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - PLANNING PROCESSES The administrative structure of the district promotes student achievement.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - PLANNING PROCESSES The district has long-term goals and performance standards to support and improve student achievement.	0	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.4	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - PLANNING PROCESSES The district directs its resources fairly and consistently to accomplish its objectives.	5	
1.5	LEGAL STANDARD - PLANNING PROCESSES Categorical and compensatory program funds supplement and do not supplant services and materials to be provided by the district.	4	
1.6	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - PLANNING PROCESSES The district's planning process focuses on supporting increased student performance.	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.1	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - CURRICULUM The district, through its adopted policies, provides a clear operational framework for management of the curriculum.	0	
2.2	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - CURRICULUM Policies regarding curriculum and instruction are reviewed and approved by the Governing Board.	3	
2.3	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - CURRICULUM The district has clear and valid objectives for students, including the core curriculum content.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.4	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - CURRICULUM A process is in place to maintain alignment among standards, practices and assessments.	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.5	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - CURRICULUM The Governing Board has adopted and the district is implementing the California state standards and assessments.	4	
2.6	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - CURRICULUM Sufficient instructional materials are available for students to learn.	8	

The identified subset of standards appears in bold print. These standards, indicated by , will be targeted for in-depth review for the May 2005 report.

Standard to be addressed		Nov. 2004 Rating	May 2005 Focus
2.7	LEGAL STANDARD - CURRICULUM In subject areas for which the state has adopted standards, sufficient instructional materials are available to students that are aligned with the state standards.	6	
2.8	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - CURRICULUM Students in K-8 have access to standards-based materials; students in 9-12 have access to standards-based materials through an adopted process outlined in board policy and regulation.	6	
2.9	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - CURRICULUM Teachers in K-8 are provided with professional development in reading and mathematics by a state-approved provider; teachers in 9-12 are provided with defined professional development in implementing content standards.	0	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.10	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - CURRICULUM The district has adopted a plan for integrating technology into curriculum and instruction at all grade levels.	5	
2.11	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - CURRICULUM The district optimizes state and federal funding to install technology in its schools.	6	
2.12	LEGAL STANDARD - CURRICULUM HIV prevention instruction occurs at least once in junior high or middle school and once in high school and is consistent with the CDE's Health Framework (EC 51201.5).	8	
3.1	LEGAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES The district provides equal access to educational opportunities to all students regardless of race, gender, socioeconomic standing, and other factors (EC 51007).	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.2	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES Challenging learning goals and instructional plans and programs for all students are evident.	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.3	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES Every elementary school has embraced the most recent California School Recognition Program Standards.	0	
3.4	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES Students are engaged in learning, and they are able to demonstrate and apply their knowledge and skills.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.5	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES The district and school staffs promote and communicate high expectations for the learning and behavior of all students.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>

The identified subset of standards appears in bold print. These standards, indicated by , will be targeted for in-depth review for the May 2005 report.

Standard to be addressed		Nov. 2004 Rating	May 2005 Focus
3.6	LEGAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES The district and school sites actively encourage parental involvement in their children's education (examples of programs EC 51100-51143).	3	
3.7	LEGAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES Each school has a school site council or leadership team, comprised of teachers, parents, principal and students, that is actively engaged in school planning (EC 52010-52039).	4	
3.8	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES Principals make formal and informal classroom visits. Based on these visits, principals provide constructive feedback and assistance to teachers.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.9	LEGAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES Class time is protected for student learning (EC 32212).	3	
3.10	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES Clearly defined discipline practices have been established and communicated among the students, staff, board, and community.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.11	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES School class size and teacher assignments support effective student learning.	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.12	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES Teachers use a variety of instructional strategies and resources that address their students' diverse needs and modify and adjust their instructional plans appropriately.	3	
3.13	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES All teachers are provided with professional development on special needs, language acquisition, timely interventions for underperformers and culturally responsive teaching.	3	
3.14	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES The identification and placement of English-language learners into appropriate courses is conducted in a timely and effective manner.	4	
3.15	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES Curriculum and instruction for English-language learners prepares these students to transition to regular class settings and achieve at a high level in all subject areas.	3	<input type="checkbox"/>

The identified subset of standards appears in bold print. These standards, indicated by , will be targeted for in-depth review for the May 2005 report.

Standard to be addressed		Nov. 2004 Rating	May 2005 Focus
3.16	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES Programs for English-language learners comply with state and federal regulations and meet the quality criteria set forth by the California Department of Education.	4	
3.17	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES The identification and placement of special education students into appropriate courses is conducted in a timely and effective manner.	5	
3.18	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES Individual education plans are reviewed and updated on time.	5	
3.19	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES Curriculum and instruction for special education students is rigorous and appropriate to meet special education students' learning needs.	5	
3.20	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES Programs for special education students meet the least restrictive environment provision of the law and the quality criteria and goals set forth by the California Department of Education.	5	
3.21	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES The criteria for GATE identification is documented and understood by school site staff.	3	
3.22	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES Students are regularly assessed or reassessed for GATE participation.	4	
3.23	LEGAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES All incoming kindergarten students are admitted following board-approved policies and administrative regulations (EC 48000-48002, 48010, 48011).	4	
3.24	LEGAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES The district provides access and encourages student enrollment in UC and CSU required courses (A-G requirement).	5	
3.25	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES Students are prepared for, and may access, advanced placement or other rigorous courses in core subject areas at all comprehensive high schools.	3	
3.26	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES High school guidance counselors are knowledgeable about individual student academic needs and work to create challenging and meaningful course schedules.	3	

The identified subset of standards appears in bold print. These standards, indicated by **□**, will be targeted for in-depth review for the May 2005 report.

Standard to be addressed		Nov. 2004 Rating	May 2005 Focus
3.27	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES High school students have access to career and college guidance counseling prior to the 12th grade.	4	
3.28	LEGAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES The district has plans for the provision of extended day programs at its respective school sites (EC 17264).	5	
3.29	LEGAL STANDARD - INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES The general instructional program adheres to all requirements put forth in EC 51000-52950.	4	
4.1	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY The district has developed content and learning standards for all subject areas and grades that are understood and followed by school site staff.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.2	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY Student achievement is measured and assessed through a variety of measurement tools (e.g., standardized tests, portfolios, projects, oral reports).	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.3	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY The assessment tools are clear measures of what is being taught and provide information for the administration and staff to improve learning opportunities for all students.	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.4	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY Teachers and principals are provided with assessment data in a timely and accessible format, and training in order for them to analyze, evaluate and solve issues of student performance.	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.5	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY The board has adopted and the district is implementing a K-8 policy that outlines clearly for teachers, students and parents the benchmarks to be used for intervention, promotion and retention of struggling learners.	8	

The identified subset of standards appears in bold print. These standards, indicated by , will be targeted for in-depth review for the May 2005 report.

Standard to be addressed		Nov. 2004 Rating	May 2005 Focus
4.6	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY A process to identify struggling 9-12 students and intervene with additional support necessary to pass the high school exit examination is well-developed and communicated to teachers, students and parents.	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.7	LEGAL STANDARD - ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY The district informs parents of the test scores of their children and provides a general explanation of these scores (EC 60720, 60722).	8	
4.8	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY The district has a process to notify high school students and their parents regarding high school proficiency examination requirements and scores.	2	
4.9	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY Principals and teachers in underperforming schools and/or in schools under mandated improvement programs are provided special training and support by the district; improvement plans are monitored.	3	
4.10	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY The board and district understand the elements of state and federal accountability programs and communicate the availability of options and special services to parents and students.	3	
5.1	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT Staff development demonstrates a clear understanding of purpose, written goals, and appropriate evaluations.	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.2	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT Staff development provides the staff (e.g., principals, teachers, and instructional aides) with the knowledge and the skills to improve instruction and the curriculum.	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.3	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT The standards developed by the California Standards for the Teaching Professions are present and supported.	6	
5.4	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT Teachers are provided time and encouraged to meet with other teachers.	5	

The identified subset of standards appears in bold print. These standards, indicated by , will be targeted for in-depth review for the May 2005 report.

Standard to be addressed		Nov. 2004 Rating	May 2005 Focus
5.5	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT Collaboration exists among higher education, district, professional associations, and the community in providing professional development. The district has formed partnerships with state colleges and universities to provide appropriate courses accessible to all teachers.	0	
5.6	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT Administrative support and coaching are provided to all teachers, and new teachers and principals are provided with training and support opportunities.	5	
5.7	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT Evaluations provide constructive feedback for improving job performance. Professional development is provided to support employees with less than satisfactory evaluations.	3	<input type="checkbox"/>

The identified subset of standards appears in bold print. These standards, indicated by , will be targeted for in-depth review for the May 2005 report.