

**Saint Mary's College High School**  
**WASC Midterm Report**  
**February 2007**

**SCHOOL COMMUNITY PROFILE**

During this 2006-2007 school year, Saint Mary's College High School celebrates its 144th year of Catholic Lasallian education, as well as its 80th year in Berkeley at Peralta Park. These last three years have been a time of change for Saint Mary's. New personnel assumed four top administrative positions in 2005, including the office of the Principal. The curriculum has been adjusted to meet changing student needs; courses in all academic areas have been added. A school-wide technology initiative has been undertaken to better equip teachers and students to meet the demands of a twenty-first century education. The student support program has been significantly restructured to better meet the academic and personal needs of our students. Throughout this change, the school has remained stable. For the last six years Saint Mary's enrollment has been at maximum capacity, and the school continues to serve its mission by providing an excellent Catholic education to a wide range of students, including students from economically disadvantaged and marginalized families. Saint Mary's continues to seek new, better ways to meet the Catholic and Lasallian mission entrusted to it. The challenge to provide an excellent Christian and human education, within a diverse community that includes the poor, inspires this effort.

***Saint Mary's Lasallian Educational Outcomes (LEOs)***

A Saint Mary's graduate...

- ❖ understands what it means to be a mature Catholic in today's society.
- ❖ is familiar with the personal, communal, and spiritual means available for continuing to become a well-integrated person.
- ❖ has an appropriate academic foundation for college-level courses and for life-long learning and possesses the skills to pursue such ends.
- ❖ is actively engaged as the primary agent of his/her learning.
- ❖ understands diversity and seeks to build community amid diversity.
- ❖ honors the presence of God in self and others.
- ❖ puts faith to work through service, especially to the poor and oppressed.

***Student Demographics***

Saint Mary's is located on the border of Alameda and Contra Costa counties, in the East Bay, a part of the Oakland Metropolitan area. The student body of 629 (as of February 2007) is drawn primarily from Alameda and Contra Costa counties, mainly from the communities of Berkeley, Oakland, and Richmond, though students come from 30 different cities and 57 different zip codes, including San Francisco and Solano counties. Despite a significant drop in the number of potential applicants to the freshman class (there are 150 fewer eighth-grade students in Diocesan elementary schools in 2006-2007), 396 students applied to Saint Mary's to fill the class of 2011's approximately 160 seats. This number represents a two-percent reduction from the Class of 2010 applicants. For the fall of 2006, Saint Mary's received 405 applications for 155 seats in the freshman class. Students admitted to Saint Mary's in recent years appear better prepared academically for our college prep program. The average test score for the applicant pool from the HSPT (High School Placement Test) for the Class of 2010, administered to applicants in January

2006 (the most recent available data), is in the low 70<sup>th</sup> percentile. Three years ago, the average ranged in the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile. The twenty-point increase clearly indicates that, to the extent that the HSPT measures academic performance, the school's applicants are more adept academically than in past years. While we are blessed with a sufficient number of applicants annually, Saint Mary's remains committed to its mission to serve the poor, notably through the Five Percent Program. (A minimum of five percent of the student body must be from families whose household income falls within 185% of the federal poverty line). The admissions office continues to seek out economically disadvantaged students in our feeder schools and meets with the principals about those students who are receiving full financial aid at those schools.

Student attrition has fluctuated mildly in recent years, but remains low. 5.3% left the school in 2003-04, 7.4% students elected to leave the school in 2004-2005, and 3.8% left before graduation in 2005-06.

The East Bay's population is highly diverse, and Saint Mary's College High School reflects that diversity. We are committed to building and sustaining a community of people from different backgrounds; to fostering an environment where students are encouraged to become adult leaders comfortable with the social, economic, and ethnic variety that is our twenty-first century world; and to create a strong community from that rich diversity.

### ***Religious Diversity***

A Catholic school rooted in the Lasallian heritage—53% of the student body identifies itself as Catholic--students of many faith traditions comprise our school, including 'Other Christian' (18%), Baptist (7%), Jewish (3%), Episcopalian (2%), Lutheran (1%), Eastern & Middle Eastern Religions (1%), Those who claim no affiliation comprise 13% of the student body.

### ***Ethnic Diversity***

A quality evident to any visitor to the campus is the racial and ethnic diversity of our student body. No one ethnic group forms a majority of the student body. The student body's racial groupings break down as follows: Asian/Pacific Islander=10%, African-American=26%, European-American = 38%, Hispanic/Latino = 11% and Multiracial students = 14%.

### ***Gender Balance***

Coeducational since 1994, the school strives for, as per Board of Trustees policy, a balance between male and female students. Currently, 51% of the current student body is male, and 49% is female.

### ***Economic Diversity***

Since 1999 Saint Mary's has emphasized its historic Lasallian mission to educate economically disadvantaged students by committing to ensure that at least five percent of the student body would come from families who otherwise could not afford a Catholic school education. Using a benchmark income of about 185% of the federal poverty line, the school, in partnership with outside foundations like the Making Waves Foundation, provides support for 6.8% of the student body that fall under this standard for economic need. In general, about 33% of student body applies for financial aid, and about 28% receive it. For those students whose family incomes are within the 185% of the federal poverty line, the median grant is \$8,910 and the median total parent income: \$14,946. For all other students receiving financial aid (21% of student body), the school's median grant is \$2,400, the average grant is \$3,413, the median total parent income of those students' families is \$49,182. The range of grants awarded is from \$700 to \$6,700.

## ***Student Achievement Data***

### ***Grade Point Averages***

Saint Mary's grade-point averages indicate that its students are achieving academically. The mean G.P.A. for the Fall 2006 semester was 3.25 for freshmen, 3.15 for sophomores, 3.07 for juniors, and 3.24 for seniors. 57% of the student body earned Honor Roll status for the Fall 2006 semester, while 2% were on Academic Probation or Ineligibility for earning a G.P.A. of below 2.0. The following table details recent GPA trends by grade level:

**Grade-Point Averages by Grade Level, 2001-2006**

	<b>Mean GPA 2000-01</b>	<b>Mean GPA 2001-02</b>	<b>Mean GPA 2002-03</b>	<b>Mean GPA 2003-04</b>	<b>Mean GPA 2004-05</b>	<b>Mean GPA 2005-06</b>	<b>Mean GPA Fall 2006</b>
<b>Grade 9</b>	3.29	3.44	3.25	3.20	3.27	3.23	3.25
<b>Grade 10</b>	3.28	3.29	3.26	3.32	3.31	3.25	3.15
<b>Grade 11</b>	3.18	3.28	3.28	3.20	3.18	3.21	3.07
<b>Grade 12</b>	3.33	3.11	3.24	3.20	3.16	3.30	3.24
<b>Mean GPA 9-12</b>	<b>3.26</b>	<b>3.28</b>	<b>3.26</b>	<b>3.23</b>	<b>3.23</b>	<b>3.24</b>	<b>3.18</b>

Source: School Registrar

Anecdotal faculty concerns about the diminishing skills and knowledge of Saint Mary's students is not borne out by the GPA data trend over the past six years. Nevertheless, concern about students' skill levels has contributed to the adoption of Saint Mary's Action Plan to identify specific learning outcomes for each grade level and course. It has also initiated discussions regarding the grading purposes and practices of Saint Mary's teachers with an eye toward better aligning the faculty's grading practices with current research in grading so that Saint Mary's grade-reporting system more accurately communicates levels of student learning.

### ***Educational Access, Educational Excellence for All Students***

Saint Mary's is committed to building a strong, diverse community whose members learn from one another and from their differences. At Saint Mary's, as at other schools, such a practice can divide our student community by ethnicity and socio-economic class. Informed by our mission and LEOs, Saint Mary's works purposefully to offset the 'academic tracking' effects that accelerated Math and Foreign Language classes can have on how students are scheduled. Heterogeneous classes of students, especially in grades nine and ten, benefit the whole community of learners, creating a healthy dynamic in which students routinely interact with a variety of their peers and minimizing the formation of cliques. The American Association of Colleges and Universities has acknowledged "the importance of engagement across difference as an essential dimension of preparing the next generation for effective participation in a pluralistic world."

### Grade-Point Averages by Broad Ethnic Groups

Disaggregating school GPA data by broad ethnic groups reveals that, while disparities among ethnic groups exist at Saint Mary's and roughly follow national trends, the levels of achievement indicate all ethnic groups are performing well academically. Further research into ethnic groups' academic performance is warranted in order to address factors that may affect various ethnicities' academic performance.

#### Grade-Point Averages by Ethnic Group, Fall 2005-Fall 2006

Fall 2005	HISP/LAT		EURO-AMER		AFR-AMER		FILIPINO		OTHER		E. ASIAN		
	GPA	#	GPA	#	GPA	#	GPA	#	GPA	#	GPA	#	
9th	3.18	16	3.38	82	2.91	42	3.35	9	3.29	24	3.65	6	
10th	3.22	16	3.43	66	2.96	41	3.24	11	3.23	16	3.26	8	
11th	3.01	19	3.35	53	3.07	38	3.21	10	3.20	28	3.53	4	
12th	3.35	18	3.46	44	3.16	30	3.18	5	3.29	29	3.07	5	
		69		245		151		35		97		23	620

Spring 2006	HISP/LAT		EURO-AMER		AFR-AMER		FILIPINO		OTHER		E. ASIAN		
	GPA	#	GPA	#	GPA	#	GPA	#	GPA	#	GPA	#	
9th	3.16	16	3.33	82	2.84	42	3.39	9	3.28	24	3.76	6	
10th	3.10	16	3.42	66	2.89	41	3.52	10	3.22	16	3.22	8	
11th	3.04	19	3.33	52	3.09	38	3.33	10	3.21	28	3.62	4	
12th	3.27	18	3.39	44	3.14	30	3.21	5	3.33	29	2.85	5	
		69		244		151		34		97		23	618

Fall 2006	HISP/LAT		EURO-AMER		AFR-AMER		FILIPINO		OTHER		E. ASIAN		
	GPA	#	GPA	#	GPA	#	GPA	#	GPA	#	GPA	#	
9th	3.3	19	3.47	50	2.94	45	3.29	8	3.30	21	3.37	7	
10th	3.06	17	3.30	74	2.76	40	3.34	9	3.20	23	3.64	6	
11th	2.82	17	3.26	62	2.88	42	3.19	11	3.05	19	3.01	8	
12th	3.13	18	3.34	54	3.12	38	3.27	10	3.24	27	3.46	4	
		71		240		165		38		90		25	629

Source: School Registrar

### Standardized Tests

Virtually all Saint Mary's students take a variety of standardized tests in the course of their four years, including the PSAT, the SAT, and the ACT. Beginning in October 2006, freshmen began taking the PLAN test, a precursor to the ACT. The average SAT score for Saint Mary's in 2005-06 was 549 for Critical Reading, 547 for Math and 550 for Writing Skills. and for the ACT the average score was 57. Far fewer students, 57 of 131 students, took the ACT as did those who took the SAT. These scores represent a slight improvement over 2004-05 and higher scores than state and national averages. Nearly all students at Saint Mary's take the SAT because, among other things, it is a basic requirement for four-year colleges and universities. Ninety-nine percent of Saint Mary's graduates of the Class of 2006 have enrolled in college, with ninety-five percent attending four-year colleges and universities.

## SAT & ACT Test Averages by Ethnicity and Gender for 2005- 2006

	Total		White		Black		Asian		Hispanic		Native American		Filipino		Other	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	M	F	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
<b>SAT Total</b> 2400	<b>1616</b>	<b>1671</b>	1821	1819	1465	1510	1533	1708	1692	1606	1600	-	1367	1440	1708	1692
Critical Reading	<b>532</b>	<b>563</b>	597	614	468	510	500	578	570	543	520	-	480	480	578	570
Math	<b>553</b>	<b>541</b>	612	588	514	482	575	568	548	521	570	-	450	505	568	548
Writing	<b>531</b>	<b>566</b>	612	617	483	519	458	562	574	542	510	-	437	455	562	574
Tests:	<b>58</b>	<b>68</b>	17	24	10	20	4	6	5	10	1	-	3	2	6	5
	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>ACT Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	23	25	22	19	-	-	23	21	-	-	15	20		
English	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	24	26	23	19	-	-	22	21	-	-	14	20		
Math	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	23	24	24	20	-	-	23	22	-	-	16	20		
Reading	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	24	27	20	21	-	-	25	20	-	-	12	17		
Science	<b>22</b>	<b>21</b>	24	24	22	18	-	-	20	20	-	-	16	23		
Tests:	<b>20</b>	<b>37</b>	7	15	3	11	-	-	3	3	-	-	1	2		

Source: Naviance

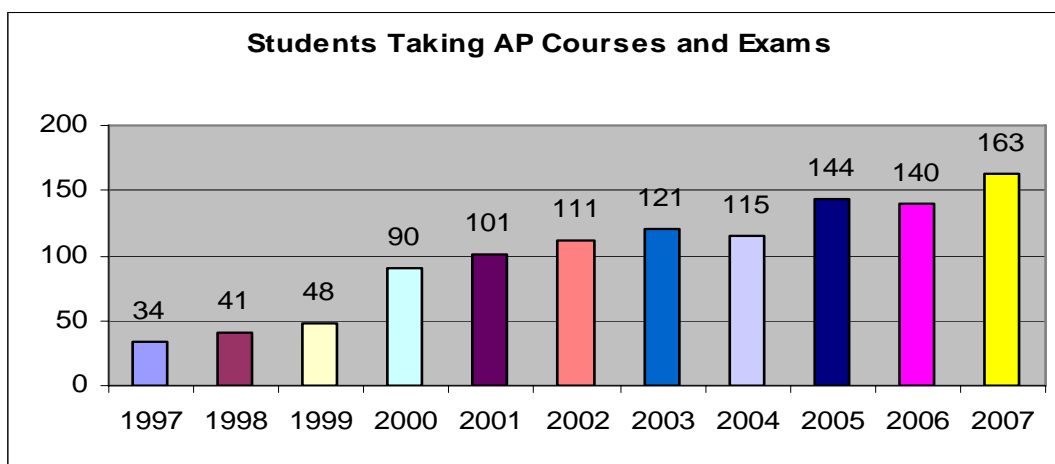
### *Advanced Placement Program*

While Saint Mary's believes that heterogeneous classes are educationally appropriate and consistent with the school's mission for its students in the ninth and tenth grades, it also recognizes the need to offer its eleventh- and twelfth-grade students the most challenging courses available appropriate to our curriculum. Two Advanced Placement courses were added to the curriculum in 2006-07. (All nine AP courses offered at Saint Mary's are eleventh- and twelfth-grade courses.)

In 2006 the Curriculum Committee adopted a Statement of Purpose for Advanced Placement, which clearly expresses the role of Advanced Placement in serving Saint Mary's students. The Statement of Purpose also serves as a philosophical statement that encourages *all* students, especially students of historically disadvantaged groups, with teacher and counselor guidance, to accept the challenge of Advanced Placement courses when they are able and willing. All students enrolled in an AP course must take the AP test. Two new AP courses, AP Biology and AP U.S. Government & Politics, were added to the curriculum for 2006-2007. (One additional AP course, English Language & Composition, is being added to the curriculum for 2007-08.) By identifying the essential knowledge and skills students must acquire to succeed academically and teaching those skills progressively across all four grades, Saint Mary's is working deliberately to more effectively prepare all students to accept the challenge of the most rigorous portions of our curriculum and thereby increase access to Advance Placement courses to more students—of all backgrounds--than ever before.

In 2003-04 111 students enrolled in at least one Advanced Placement course, and 69.6% of Saint Mary's scores were a 3 or higher on the AP exams. 2004-05 144 students took at least one AP course, and of those 52.2% of the AP tests were scored with a 3 or higher. 140 took part in 2005-06, and of those 70.0% of the tests were scored with a 3 or higher on the AP exams. In 2006-07, 163 out of 310 juniors and seniors are enrolled in one or more of the nine AP courses offered at

Saint Mary's. In 2005-06, 53% of students who could take an AP course were enrolled in at least one AP course. Thus, more Saint Mary's students—and a greater percentage of eligible students—are taking on the challenge of Advanced Placement courses than ever before.



#### Advanced Placement Offerings per School Year

- 1997-1999-- Spanish Language, Calculus AB, U.S. History, French Language
- 2000--Spanish Language, Calculus AB, U.S. History, French Language, English Literature
- 2001--Spanish Language, Calculus AB, U.S. History, French Language, English Literature
- 2002--Spanish Language, Calculus AB, U.S. History, French Language, English Literature, Studio Art
- 2003-2006--Spanish Language, Calculus AB, U.S. History, French Language, English Literature, Studio Art, Physics B
- 2007- Spanish Language, Calculus AB, U.S. History, French Language, English Literature, Studio Art, Physics B, U. S. Government, Biology

#### ***Faculty and Staff Demographics***

The faculty and leadership of Saint Mary's are comprised of 20 women and 27 men, 16% representing minority groups, 70% of whom are Catholic. This number includes two Brothers; the rest are laymen and lay-women. Every faculty member engages in some activity beyond classroom teaching, such as coaching, moderating a club/organization or serving as a facilitator for one of our support programs. The faculty and school leadership understand that the role of a Lasallian educator is not to just be a teacher; rather, it requires the administration, faculty and staff to be truly present and involved in students' lives. 36% of the faculty are Saint Mary's College High School alumni or have been educated in a Lasallian institution.

The faculty and administrators are academically qualified with varying backgrounds and years of experience. There are forty-seven members of the faculty and administration. Eight faculty members hold only a bachelor's degree. Twenty-six members of the faculty and administration hold either a teaching credential or a master's degree in education. Another nine hold master's degrees in other subject areas. One faculty member possesses a doctorate. Additionally, two teachers are earning their teaching credentials, another is earning a Master's in Education, and one is a doctoral candidate in Educational Administration. Hiring practices have recently increased the emphasis on hiring formally trained teachers. Professional development is

recognized as an integral part of ongoing teacher formation, and for that reason professional growth is rewarded on our salary scale. In addition, work time for professional growth and collaboration has increased in recent years. The faculty and school leadership have worked an average of 8 years at Saint Mary's and 14.5 years in education. Ten educators have from 0 to 3 years of experience, five have 4 to 7 years of experience, fifteen have 8 to 15 years of experience, seven have 16 to 24 years of experience, and eleven have 25 or more years of experience.

### ***Significant Changes Since the Previous WASC***

The year following the WASC Visiting Committee Report in March 2004, the administration of Saint Mary's experienced significant personnel changes. The Principal, Kathleen Ryan McGuire, took a leave of absence in the Fall of 2004 to care for her newborn son. The Vice Principal for Student Life, Bill Boselli, resigned in December 2004 to embark on a career as an attorney. The Vice Principal for Academics, Limarys Caraballo, left her position in March 2005 after giving birth to her first child. The Director of Finance, Ward Fansler, resigned in August 2004 and was replaced in January 2005 by Mr. Joseph Adams. Herman Shum, who had joined the Saint Mary's faculty in August 2004, replaced Mr. Boselli in January. In April 2005 a new principal, Peter Imperial, was named to replace Ms. McGuire beginning in July 2005, and Cathy Molinelli was appointed in July 2005 to assume the position of Vice Principal for Academics. The absence of key administrators during 2004-2005 resulted in sporadic progress made in addressing the WASC Self-Study's Action Plan or the Visiting Committee Report. The new administration assumed leadership of Saint Mary's in the Fall of 2005 and established priorities and approaches to serve the school's mission. While cognizant of the need to address the Action Plan items and Visiting Committee's recommendations, the new administration by necessity was occupied in the first months with understanding the school's culture. Nevertheless, despite these interruptions, Saint Mary's has acted purposefully to address each of the four items in the WASC Action Plan and the Visiting Committee's recommendations.

### ***Ongoing Improvement***

The following narrative describes in detail the Saint Mary's implementation of the school-wide action plan. Annual progress reports were not completed in 2004-05 or 2005-06 because of the turnover the school leadership experienced. The school's progress toward each WASC Action Plan item has been communicated to the faculty and staff regularly since August 2005. Moreover, the Action plan items have remained central to the school's professional development exercises. Upon its completion in February 2007, this WASC Midterm Report was distributed to the President, the Board of Trustees, and to the faculty and staff. It is also posted on the school's website for the school community to read.

Copies of the revised school-wide action plan are found at the end of this report, along with other relevant documents. These revised action-plan items are consistent with the spirit of the original action plan items, and in fact serve to more effectively achieve those goals.

## **Progress Made in Addressing Saint Mary's 2004 WASC Action Plan Items**

### Action Plan Item #1: Create & implement curricular outcome standards for each grade level.

In January 2005 the Saint Mary's faculty began to identify standards for each grade level through a day-long brainstorming session. Led by the prior Vice Principal for Academics, each department identified general learning outcomes for each grade. These outcomes were shared with the entire faculty, who identified by vote what they considered the most important of these outcomes. In August 2005 Saint Mary's adopted Grant Wiggins' and Jay McTighe's *Understanding by Design* (1998, 2005) as the core reference text for faculty professional development, lesson planning, and unit design of courses. Every teacher and counselor was provided with a copy of the book. The "backward design" approach presented by Wiggins and McTighe emphasizes outcome-based unit design and lesson planning, which fit seamlessly into the school's commitment to identifying and refining the content knowledge and performance standards students should learn in their four years at Saint Mary's. During the 2005-2006 school year the faculty engaged in a common reading of the Introduction and first six chapters of *Understanding by Design*. Two-and-a-half full days were dedicated toward discussing and applying the foundational concepts of this approach as well as several faculty and department meetings. It remains the common reference text for unit and lesson design at Saint Mary's.

While the backward design approach serves to effectively guide individual teachers as they design their courses, the wider goal of assessing the entire school curriculum began when the school started mapping its curriculum in late May 2006 using web-based software. In this process, teachers have been recording in diary format the content and skills they taught their students, as well as the methods of assessment they employ on a month-to-month basis. Every teacher can view every other teacher's maps online and in real time, and the transparency provides the entire faculty with access to view, share, and periodically discuss the extent to which the school's courses are aligned. Curriculum mapping takes inventory of the content knowledge and skills the school teaches its students as well as the methods of assessment it employs to assess levels of student achievement. Teachers are now able to identify gaps and redundancies in the overall curriculum as well as opportunities for interdisciplinary links, and the entire curriculum will be assessable when all maps are complete at the end of the 2006-2007 school year. This process began in March 2006 with a full-day training by a consultant from Collaborative Learning, Inc. This in-service drew the natural connections between the "micro" and the "macro" of curriculum design: that is, the Backward Design approach to outcome-based lesson planning for individual courses and the identification of where those learning outcomes are introduced, reinforced, and developed horizontally and vertically through the entire curriculum.

Each teacher developed a draft map of one of their courses during professional development days in the week after Spring 2006 Final Exams. In 2006-2007 teachers have been provided about an hour per month—Wednesday mornings from 7:45 to 8:40 a.m. are dedicated to faculty meetings and professional collaboration, and teachers have the option of using that time as they saw fit, as long as maps were up-to-date on designated dates—to create maps. In January 2007 the faculty held its first formal read-through in department to review each other's maps. Subsequent read-through of the curriculum maps will identify where the brainstormed grade-level standards identified by the faculty in January 2005 are taught throughout the curriculum.

Work on closing curricular gaps, eliminating curricular redundancies, and designing outcome-based lessons that link integrally to the rest of the academic curriculum will be an ongoing part of Saint Mary's professional development. In January 2007, this initiative was framed in all-day in-service that focused on what Saint Mary's students should know and be able to do to thrive as citizen participants in the global community. Spurred by the changes making the global community smaller and "flatter," the faculty discussed what schools must do to prepare their students for the intellectual, social, and professional challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The next step in identifying Saint Mary's standards is March 20, 2007, when Jay McTighe, co-author of *Understanding by Design*, will come to Saint Mary's to refine the faculty's ongoing work in establishing curricular priorities, extend the backward design approach to authentic assessment of student performance, and use the data compiled in building diary-based curriculum maps to compare what is being taught with what the faculty believes ought to be taught.

While this centralized approach to faculty development has progressed, Saint Mary's teachers have also been supported in exploring professional growth in areas of individual interest. Since August 2005, teachers have attended ASCD's Regional Conference (October 2005 in San Francisco), Research for Better Teaching multi-day seminars at St. Ignatius and Bishop O'Dowd High Schools, and Advanced Placement Summer Conferences. This February, one faculty member attended the National Association of Secondary School Principals Annual Convention in Las Vegas, and three teachers will attend the ASCD Annual Conference in Anaheim in March.

Action Plan Item #2: *Conduct a comprehensive review of [the] Community Block program.*

Since 1996 Saint Mary's has held a weekly meeting of students called Community Block in which students, in groups of about twenty, discussed a variety of school matters. The program was designed to provide time for each grade level to convene for events specific to each grade level and to address grade-level topics of interest. By the time of the 2004 WASC visit, the effectiveness of C-Block as a component of the Student Support Service program had come under scrutiny by the administration and faculty. Each grade-level's C-Block curriculum had been the responsibility of each Class Dean, whose heavy workload as teachers and deans made collaboration a challenge. In addition, the ability of all teachers to effectively facilitate the program—including their ability to lead effective classroom discussions—was questioned. In the Fall of 2004 surveys of faculty and students were administered in order to identify the program's strengths and weaknesses. The change of administration that year and the next stalled the work of the C-Block review. In the winter of 2006 the results of the C-Block surveys were examined, and a number of adjustments in the program were implemented.

In the Fall of 2006 Community Block was centralized under the direction of the administration in order to more fully coordinate the program. As a result, in addition to the routine but important topics—PSAT and PLAN preparation, college application processes—a number of C-Block periods have been dedicated to identifying and discussing issues of concern to students. Common lesson plans were developed with clearly articulated learning outcomes. Classroom discussions were designed to engage students in discussions requiring evaluative thinking and identifying personal values. One central goal of C-Block in 2006-2007 has been to increase student input regarding decisions affecting the school community, prompting students to explore and identify their values, and encouraging students to engage in dialogue with the faculty and administration.

The value of C-Block as a powerful vehicle to hone students' engagement, critical thinking, and moral development remains evident to the administration and faculty. It is also evident that ongoing training of faculty C-block leaders in leading open-ended discussions is necessary for the program to meet its potential. Beyond training, restructuring the way C-Blocks are staffed is worthy of ongoing examination.

Action Plan Item #3: *Revise current faculty performance appraisal instrument to include the expectations that the faculty handbook defines. Research, develop, & implement an evaluation tool for staff.*

Beginning in the Fall of 2005 the Administration announced that it would adhere to the existing written procedures for teacher evaluations. This was a change from previous administrative practices, as faculty reported being neither observed nor evaluated in a number of years. The existing Criteria for Teacher Performance was disseminated to all faculty members to remind them of the criteria by which their professional work was being evaluated. All but two teachers were observed formally and provided with a written observation report. (The school's New Teacher Mentoring program includes a full program of classroom observations of first- and second-year teachers, designed to be primarily formative. This program includes videotaping new teachers so they can view and critique their own performance.) Post-observation meetings were held with each teacher. Thus, every teacher had at least one opportunity to discuss with an administrator his or her work performance. As part of the evaluation process teachers' grade books and lesson plan books were reviewed by administrators, and these pieces of evidence of professional practice were included in the written (narrative) summative evaluation that every teacher received in the 2005-06 school year. In December 2006 the practice of having students complete a semi-annual survey evaluating their teachers' performances was renewed. Over the course of seven days students in each of the school's 166 class sections completed a Lykert-scale survey, the prompts of which were derived directly from the existing Criteria for Teacher Performance. These surveys were reviewed and discussed by the school's administration, the surveys themselves given to the teachers for their perusal, and in January and February 2007 one-on-one conversations between each teacher and an administrator were held with the purpose of discussing identified areas of strength and areas of growth that may emerge from these surveys.

In the Fall of 2005 a Teacher Evaluation Task Force was formed to assess the existing Criteria for Teacher Performance and to explore adopting a new Criteria, which addresses contemporary research on teaching as well as the current realities of teaching. Comprised of administrators, the director of the New Teacher Mentoring program, and two teachers who are participants in Research for Better Teaching programs, this task force has used as a reference source Charlotte Danielson and Thomas McGreal's 2002 book, *Teacher Evaluation for Enhanced Professional Performance*. In addition, it has studied the work of the Teacher Evaluation subcommittee appointed by the Archdiocese of San Francisco to update the evaluation procedures used in four schools of the Archdiocese. This committee is presently working to produce a revised Criteria for Teacher Performance as well as establish the procedures to be adopted in the evaluation of the Saint Mary's faculty.

During the Fall of 2006 a Performance Criteria was adopted for the school's library media specialist, as were procedures for evaluation. A Criterion for the school's guidance counselors was being researched in the Fall of 2006 and is scheduled to be formally adopted during the

Spring 2007 semester. Finally, evaluation procedures for non-exempt staff will be researched beginning in Spring 2007 and adopted soon thereafter.

*Action Plan Item #4: Develop & maintain a multi-year institutional plan that integrates [a variety of existing] plans.*

Saint Mary's is embarked on a number of initiatives to guide the growth and improvement of the school. In January 2007 the school administration directed the Principal's Advisory Committee to develop an Institutional Plan to guide Saint Mary's for the next five years. An outline of Saint Mary's Institutional Plan's components was created in December 2006 to focus and expedite the process. Scheduled to be completed by June 2007, the Institutional Plan encompasses and links the school's work in curriculum, instruction, assessment, grading, technology, professional development, school environment, school mission, athletics, and student activities. In addition, Institution Planning will continue to guide financial planning and budgeting as well as further development of the campus master plan.

The work of a number of task forces and subcommittees are being folded into the larger Institutional Plan. These include the aforementioned Teacher Evaluation Committee. It is the intention that this committee, once its work is complete, will reconstitute itself into a Faculty Development Committee, a permanent body charged with guiding the ongoing professional development of the Saint Mary's faculty. The Technology Committee, a body that has convened sporadically in recent years, will develop a Technology Plan for the school. The Faculty Association Task Force, created in the Fall of 2006 to create a framework through which dialogue among the faculty, staff, and administration can be enhanced, is working to formalize these structures. A Bell Schedule Task Force was assembled in Fall 2006 to explore alternative master schedules that might better serve the educational needs of students and enhance teachers' professional practice.

Since the 2004 WASC Self-Study and committee visit, work has continued on Saint Mary's facilities master plan, an integral part of an institutional plan for the school. The planning process continues to be a collaborative effort by the school's major constituencies under the direction of the school architect and a Master Planning Committee.

Since 2003, Saint Mary's has been undergoing a rigorous process with the City of Albany about the school's master plan, which includes the critical renovation of the track and field complex as a priority. The process, which has included numerous professionally-facilitated community meetings designed to help resolve issues raised by a small group of school neighbors, has been beneficial to neighbor relations overall, but has kept Saint Mary's from moving forward with facilities projects at the desired pace.

The school formally submitted the campus Master Plan and "Panther Park" track and field renovation plans to Albany in September 2006. An environmental impact review process was begun in December 2006. An enrollment increase has been removed from the current plans. It is Saint Mary's hope that the city will approve the Panther Park plans within a few months, and will then move forward towards approval of the broader campus master plan. The fundraising campaign for Panther Park has seen the largest number of participants in any capital campaign at the school in decades. The current campus Master Plan follows the last stage of development of the original plan of the 1970's, and is an expression of the needs to be accommodated as Saint

Mary's College High School seeks to fulfill its educational mission over the next five, ten, or fifteen years. The successful outcome of the field and campus plans is largely dependent on securing sufficient revenue sources.

Action Plan Item #5: Enhance the alternate education program that addresses adolescent issues & academic planning.

Significant restructuring has occurred in order for Saint Mary's to more effectively address the needs of students— social, personal, and academic. The major change was replacing the Class Dean model of Student Support with a full Counseling Department. Previously, the school provided one college counselor, one guidance counselor (the Director of Student Support Services) and four teachers (the class deans), who had been provided one teaching period off to address the student body's academic needs. The Class Deans were each in charge of monitoring the academic progress of students of one grade level and directing each grade level's Community Block agenda. It became increasingly evident in recent years that students' personal and social issues could not be satisfactorily addressed by the Class Dean model. In the Fall of 2005 a new counselor, one with twenty-eight years of experience as counselor in Catholic high schools, assumed the position of Director of Student Support Services. In the Fall of 2006 the Class Dean model was discontinued. In its place, two trained and credentialed guidance counselors were hired to join the existing counselor. Thus, three trained guidance counselors are fully devoted to counseling students. Weekly meetings are held on Tuesdays with all four counselors, the Vice Principal for Academics and the Vice Principal for Student Affairs in order to effectively address pressing issues and identify students who may be at risk. Each student is seen at least twice individually by his or her counselor.

Saint Mary's has continued to guide students through the college discernment and application process by providing a full-time college counselor. Juniors and seniors meet individually and in small groups with the college counselor to discuss and research their postsecondary plans. Community Block sessions are regularly dedicated to the college application process for juniors and seniors. In addition, students meet in small groups with their guidance counselors to discuss academic and college planning.

In the last two years Saint Mary's has taken steps to more effectively address the academic needs of students with learning differences. While the school has not formally implemented a Resource Specialist Program, it has made refinements in its existing programs to better identify and serve students who struggle academically. After-school Academic Resource Centers (ARCs) were created in August 2006. Open Mondays through Thursdays after school for students in need of additional academic support, the ARCs are staffed by at least one faculty member each day, and peer tutors from the California Scholarship Federation are available to assist students. Teachers are encouraged to assign students who are exhibiting specific knowledge or skills deficiencies to the ARC and to communicate via email with ARC coordinators and parents so that timely feedback is provided about student academic struggles. In specific cases in 2006-07 several students with documented learning disabilities or who have proven unable to succeed in foreign language have been pulled out of those classes. They then meet with their counselor during their free period to receive academic assistance and additional study time. This has been part of a measured attempt to find ways for at-risk students to succeed at Saint Mary's. These students' experiences will inform the creation of future support programs.

The school's Summer STEP program, designed to support eighth-grade students provisionally admitted to Saint Mary's, had its focus shifted to a diagnostic approach. So, rather than focus on bolstering students' core skill deficiencies in sixteen summer-morning class meetings, the emphasis shifted to identifying students' strengths and weaknesses and communicating these findings to the students' counselors and teachers. The goals are for teachers to be provided with richer academic information about these students and for students to be better equipped to manage the academic demands of freshman year. Two STEP teachers and a counselor attended the Schools Attuned Program developed by Dr. Mel Levine of the University of North Carolina to provide them with a neuro-developmental approach to understanding learning differences. Students' strengths and areas of growth were identified via teacher observations, classroom assessments, and students' self-assessments.

The key to this diagnostic approach toward academic support is regular communication among teachers, parents, and counselors. Saint Mary's is presently working to improve both the frequency and quality of feedback by teachers to parents and students so that parents can work more closely in partnership with the school in improving their children's academic performance. One major step in this regard has been the school's employment of the power of the worldwide web to enhance home-school communication. The school's new website includes teacher's web pages on which teachers can post lessons, assignments, and other course information. Presently, twenty percent of the faculty has such a web presence. More importantly, in December 2006 Saint Mary's acquired PowerSchool, a web-based school information system that allows parents and students to access in real-time students' grades and attendance records. PowerSchool is scheduled to become the operational information system in August 2007 and the parent and student access portals are scheduled to be opened in early 2008.

Under the Vice Principal for Student Life (the Dean), the school has emphasized building students' personal discipline and responsibility. The school has worked to communicate proactively with parents and intervene early to reduce chronic student truancy and excessive absences. The Dean's office has also initiated the use of a disciplinary review board to assist the administration with decisions pertaining to major student behavioral violations in order to give those students and the parents an opportunity to speak with school officials.

In order to preserve struggling students' connection to adults they respect and trust, the school's academic disqualification rules were revised in the Fall of 2006. Rather than automatically ban a student from participating in school activities, those students are required to seek out academic assistance in Academic Resource Centers or from their teachers. Monitored by their counselors, these students may be allowed to participate in clubs, athletic-team practices, or rehearsals if they attend to their academic responsibilities.

In order to more closely align the work of the Student Council with the Catholic and Lasallian mission of Saint Mary's, in the Fall of 2006 the structure of the Associated Student Body was reorganized. Based on a student leadership structure developed through the Lasallian District of San Francisco, the new model, called the Lasallian Student Leaders (LSL), was implemented. Instead of the traditional Student Body office structure (President, Vice President, etc.) three students were elected to lead the student body in the areas of Community, Faith, and Service, respectively. It is the goal of this new leadership structure to better coordinate and make evident the Lasallian commitment to these aspects of our lives. As an extension of that, for example, the office of Campus Ministry has strengthened its efforts in addressing students' spiritual and social needs. It doubled the number retreats it offered students in 2006-2007 by introducing overnight

retreat opportunities for sophomores and increasing the number of overnight retreats offered to juniors and seniors.

Finally, a common lament of students, parents, and teachers that the current seven-period bell schedule requires students to manage too many courses simultaneously--thereby imposing an unnecessarily heavy amount of stress on students--has led to the formation of a Bell Schedule Task Force to explore alternative master schedules that might better serve the educational needs of students, reduce unhealthy levels of student stress, and provide teachers with more time to work collaboratively with colleagues and to develop more effective lessons and assessments.

The school's work in addressing the items in the 2004 Action Plan is simultaneously addressing the 2004 Visiting Committee's Recommendations. A primary goal of the school administration beginning in August 2005 was the establishment of clear understanding among the faculty and staff that emphasized adherence to professional standards for educators. The commitment to following the teacher evaluation process is one clear indication of this emphasis. Proper, attentive supervision of faculty—and of students by the faculty—consistent with professional standards, state education codes, and Lasallian principles, has been emphasized as well. An Institutional Planning exercise consistent with the Visiting Committee's first recommendation was begun in the Fall of 2006 with the goal of producing a living, unified, coherent document to guide the school's progress. By necessity, this Institutional Planning exercise will establish the school's priorities so that those initiatives that most directly serve student learning and growth take priority.