



**BUENA HIGH SCHOOL
MID-CYCLE PROGRESS REPORT**

**5670 Telegraph Road
Ventura, CA 93003**

Ventura Unified School District

**Visitation Date:
March 11, 2014**

**Accrediting Commission for Schools
Western Association of Schools and Colleges**

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I: Introduction and Basic Student/Community Profile Data

School Description

Situated in the heart of the city of Ventura is Buena High School, a comprehensive high school serving a diverse student body of **1,996** students in grades 9-12. Buena is one of two comprehensive high schools in the Ventura Unified School District, an organization that prides itself on “safe, healthy, and high-performing schools.” VUSD serves roughly **17,300** students, with its 19 elementary schools, four middle schools, two comprehensive high schools, and one magnet high school; additionally, the district also serves students through two alternative high schools, pre-kindergarten classes, and an adult education program.

When Buena High School opened its doors in 1961, the Ventura community was a very different environment: agriculture dominated much of the landscape, the ethnic demographics skewed largely Caucasian, and only 29,114 people lived in the city. Since then, however, the city has grown substantially in size and diversity: much of the local agricultural land has been turned into residential housing, the multicultural populace has flourished (most notably the Hispanic/Latino population, which now comprises 31.8% of Ventura’s residents), and the city has more than tripled in size – with over 106,000 citizens now residing in Ventura (according to the 2010 census). Appropriately, Buena High School reflects these changing demographics with a larger enrollment and more diverse student body; in fact, the number of Hispanic/Latino students on campus in 2013 surpasses the number of Caucasian students for the first time in the school’s five-decade history.

As a comprehensive high school, Buena offers a wide variety of programs and opportunities for its diverse student body. In addition to the usual extracurricular activities, such as athletics and band, the school has flourishing Drama, Fine Art, and ROP programs (to name only a few); likewise, the curricular offerings range from basic English Language Development classes for recent immigrants to Advanced Placement courses for high-achieving students. These diverse educational opportunities make Buena High School a rewarding environment for all members of the school community. As a result of the exemplary work performed by staff and students at the school, Buena received the California Distinguished Schools Award earlier this year – a recognition that the school had not received in more than a decade. Although Buena High School is now under new leadership (with a new principal and two new assistant principals since the last WASC visitation), the school will continue to provide an excellent education for its diverse student body in the years to come.

Schoolwide Student Goals

After going a number of years without revising its Vision Statement, Mission Statement, and Expected Schoolwide Learning Outcomes, the Buena High School administration took the initiative in January 2009 to rewrite these vital pieces of the school’s guiding principles. To revise these documents, the school assembled teachers, administrators, parents, students, and community members; together, these constituents composed rough drafts of each statement and presented them to the school’s faculty in the spring of 2009. After consideration and review, the school officially adopted these documents in April 2009.

Buena High School

BHS Vision Statement

The Buena High School community empowers all students to achieve their full potential in a safe and academically-engaging environment. We inspire our students to be responsible and productive citizens in an evolving global society.

BHS Mission Statement

The Buena High School community will realize its vision through its commitment to:

- Motivate learning through a challenging and engaging curriculum
- Stimulate intellectual curiosity and life-long learning
- Foster responsibility and personal growth
- Guide all students to successfully pursue their career paths
- Inspire creativity and artistic expression
- Establish a climate of respect for the unique qualities and diverse backgrounds of all students



BHS Expected Student Learning Outcomes

Our students will be:

- B**eneficial to the community
- U**nderstanding and respectful of diversity
- L**ife-long learners
- L**eaders in their fields
- D**ecision-makers who display integrity
- O**ccupation and technology-oriented
- G**uided by critical thinking
- S**killed communicators

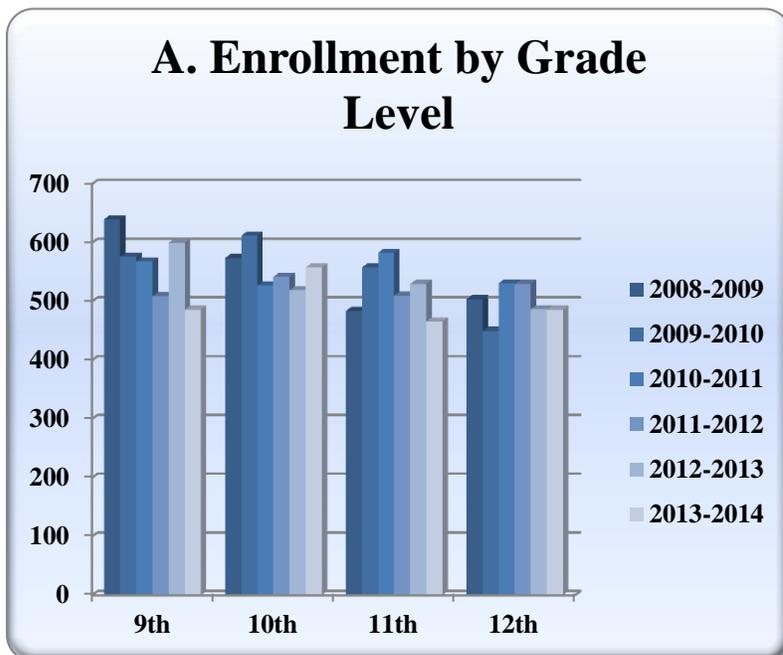
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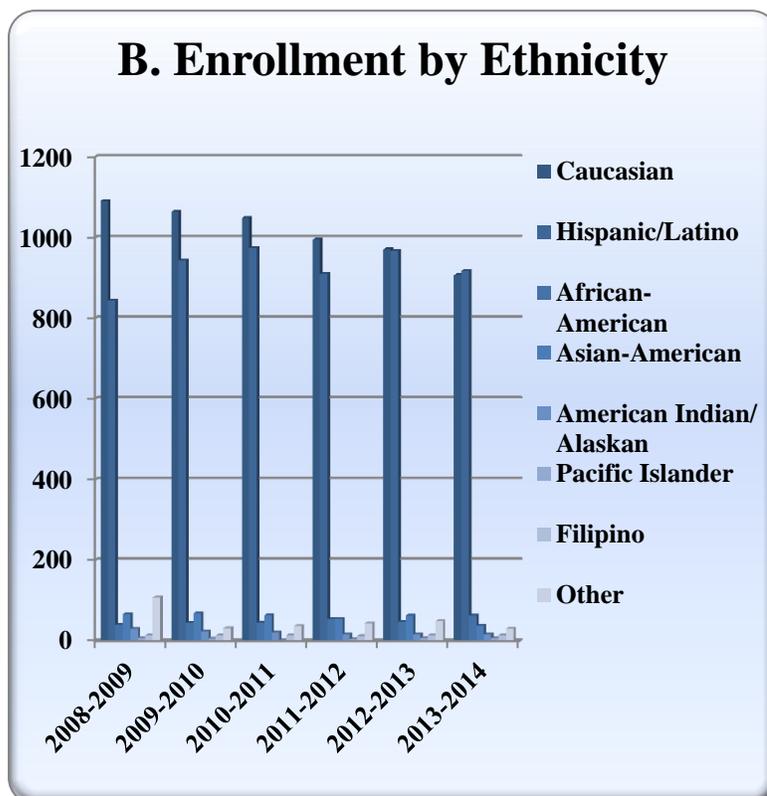
Student Demographics

Over the past six years, Buena High School has had a slightly fluctuating enrollment, although the school has consistently had roughly 2,000 or more students every year. Enrollment peaked during the 2005-2006 school year, with more than 2,300 students on campus, but has since stabilized close to 2,000 students for the current school year. This enrollment is similar to the district's other comprehensive high school (Ventura), but more than twice the size of the district's magnet high school (Foothill). For almost all school years (with the notable exception of 2013-

2014), the freshman class size tends to be substantially larger than the other grade levels; however, attrition tends to affect most graduating classes, with grade level enrollment dwindling each successive year at Buena High School.

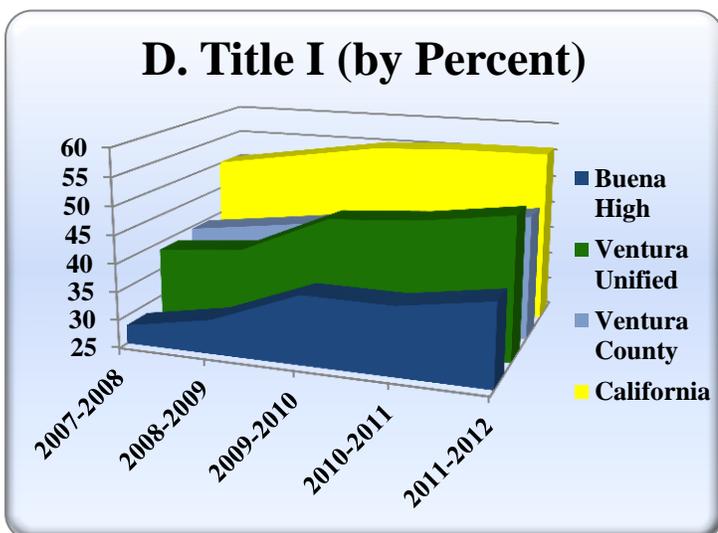
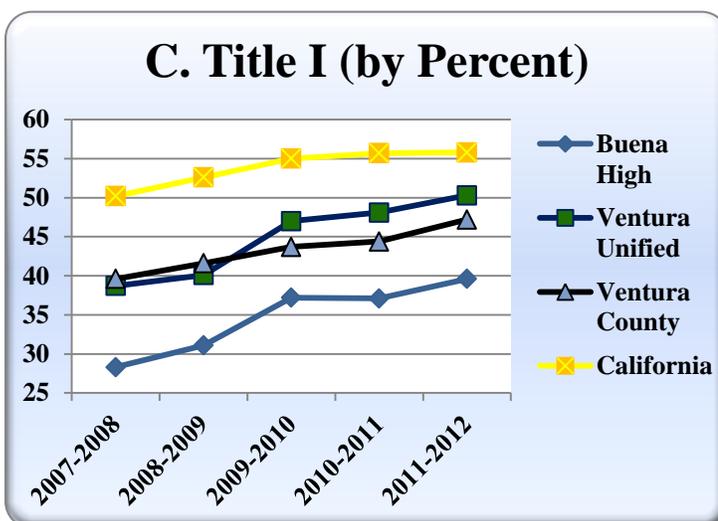


The enrollment trends by ethnicity reflect the current trends in the city of Ventura. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Latino population in Ventura County comprises 41.2% of the overall population; this is comparable to Buena's Latino population, which is 46.0% of the overall student enrollment for the current school year. In the past six years, the Latino population has grown steadily from 38.3% of the overall population to 46.0%, and this increase in the percentage of Latino students at Buena High also reflects the changing demographics of the state's current ethnic composition.



Buena High School’s Title I population hovered close to 30% of the overall student population for many years, which was markedly lower than the district, county, and state Title I statistics; however, the last three years have seen a significant jump to 39.6% of the student population, a phenomenon that reflects the upward trend in Ventura Unified School District and Ventura County.

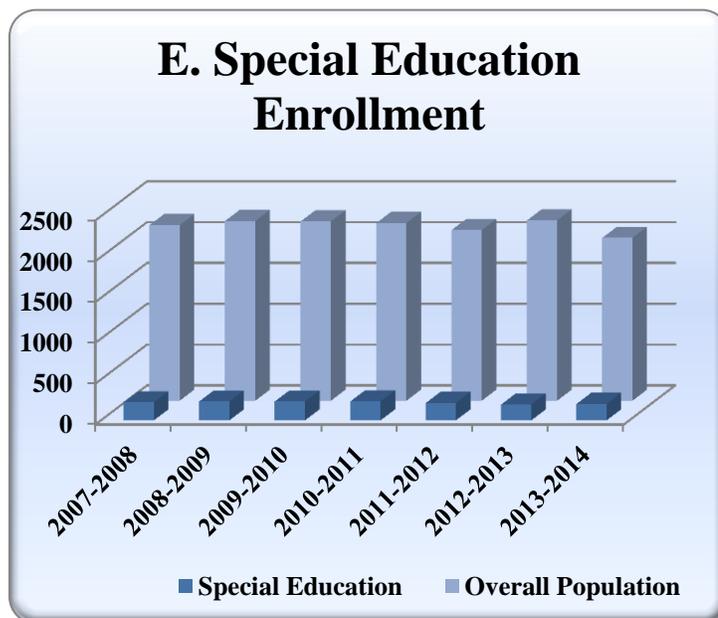
Despite remaining well below the district, county, and state proportions, Buena High School has consistently followed the statewide trend: as more students in California are becoming eligible for Title I assistance, Buena High School’s Title I student population has also increased steadily over the last few years, reaching an all-time peak of 39.6% in the 2011-2012 school year. It should also be noted that VUSD surpassed the county’s Title I rate in 2009-2010, and has remained above the county average since that school year.



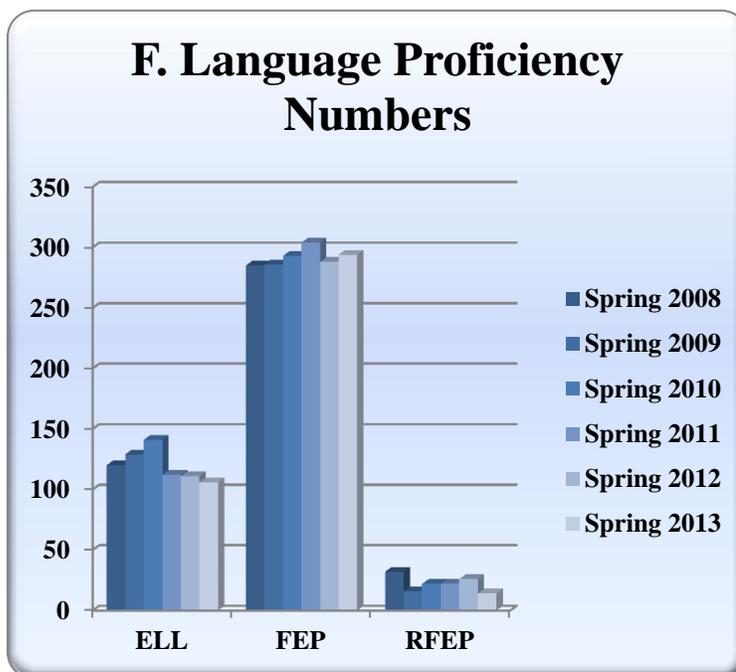
Source: *Ed-Data*. Education Data Partnership. Web. < <http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us> >.

PLEASE NOTE: The CDE has not yet released the Title I data for the 2012-2013 school year. Because this data is not yet available, it has not been included in the Buena High School Focus on Learning report.

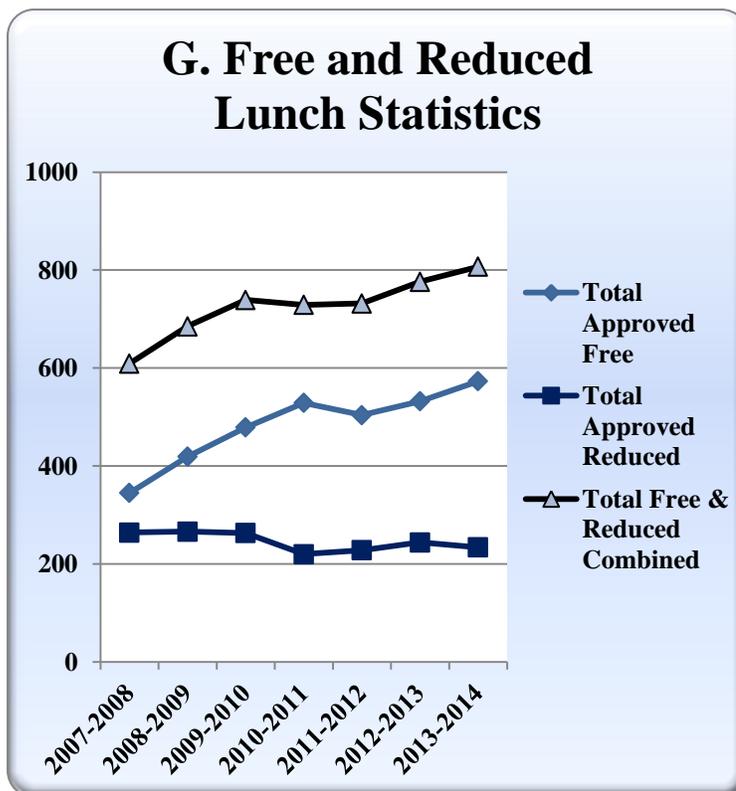
The number of students enrolled in special education services at Buena High School has steadily grown over the last few years, but has consistently remained at a number slightly higher than 200 students (with the exception of 2012-2013, when the numbers dipped slightly below 200). This enrollment usually reflects about 10% of the overall school population at Buena and includes students who are primarily mainstreamed, as well as those whose schedules are designed around special education services.



Although Buena High School’s number of English Language Learners has slowly been shrinking over the last four years, the numbers of Fluent English Proficient and Redesignated Fluent English Proficient students have stayed relatively consistent (with minor fluctuations from year to year). FEP students at Buena comprise 14.7% of the current student population, while ELL and RFEP students comprise a much lower portion of the student body. These three groups combined, however, make up 20.7% of the overall student population for the current school year.



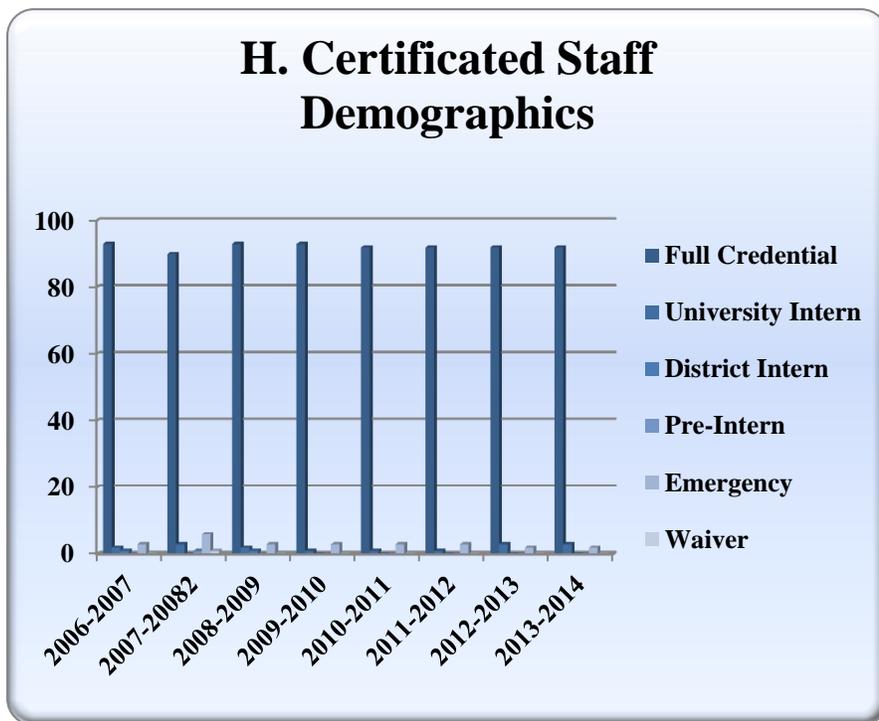
The number of Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (SED) students has fluctuated in the past seven years, but has grown to roughly 40% of the overall school population. Students are identified as SED by participation in the Free/Reduced Lunch program, and there is a direct correlation between socioeconomic status of students and parental education (whether or not parents have received a high school diploma, etc.). It should be noted that the number of SED students constitutes one of the subgroups for the Academic Performance Index (API) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) assessments, under the guidelines of the California Department of Education.



PLEASE NOTE: Free and reduced lunch data for Buena High School has been taken from the VUSD Food and Nutrition Services Department, as this data is not available through the CDE.

Certificated and Classified Staff Demographics

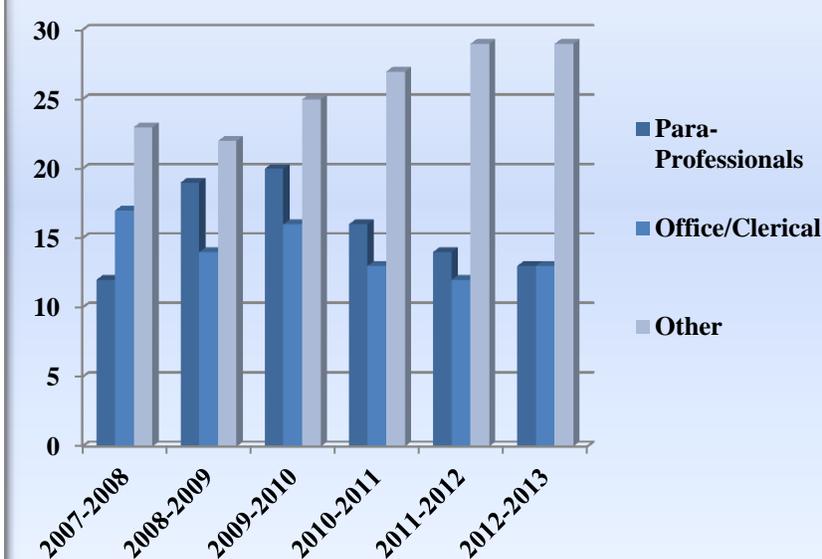
With very few exceptions, the majority of Buena High School’s teachers possess full teaching credentials. Only a handful of teachers have not yet attained their full teaching credential, and all are in the process of completing the necessary requirements. With minimal fluctuation over the last few years, this has consistently been the case for Buena’s certificated staff members.



The vast majority of teachers at Buena High School are identified as “Caucasian,” and the next-largest group with which teachers identify is the “Hispanic/Latino” designation; however, this number is drastically lower than the number of Caucasian teachers. This proportion of staff demographics does not match the higher number of the school’s Hispanic/Latino student population, which has risen significantly over the last decade.

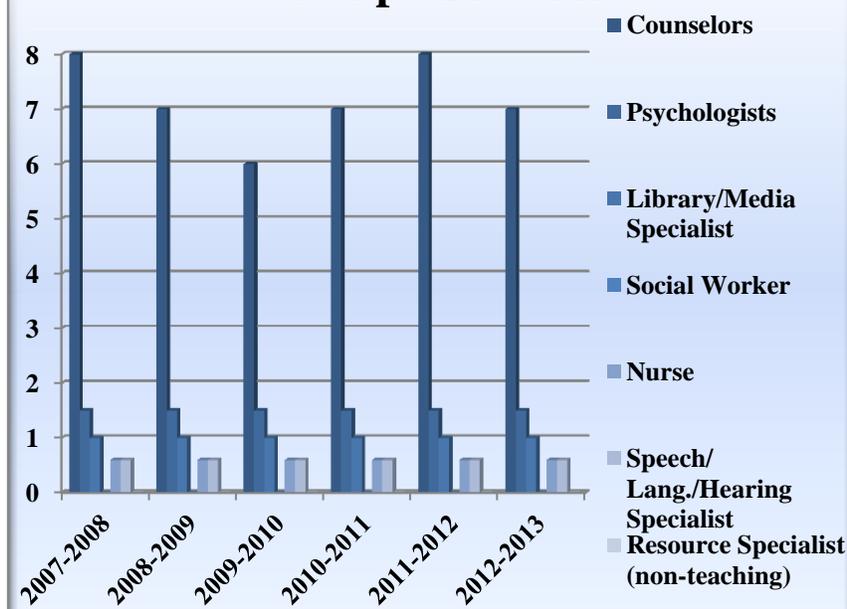


J. Classified Staff Demographics



In the past six years, there has been a shift in the number of classified staff members, specifically within the designation of classified job descriptions. In the 2009-2010 school year (the time of the last WASC visitation), Buena employed 20 para-professionals, 16 office/clerical staff members, and 25 “other” positions. Since then, the numbers of para-professionals and office/clerical staff have dropped to 13 each; during that time, however, the number of “other” positions has increased to 29.

K. Pupil Services

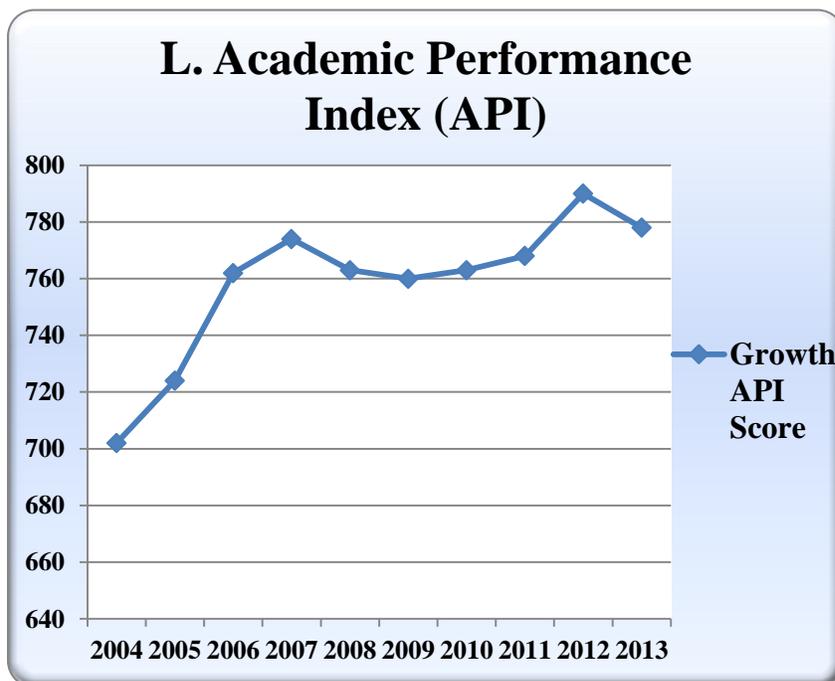


While the number of office and clerical staff has fluctuated significantly over the last six years, the number of Pupil Services employees has remained relatively stable. The only change year to year has been the number of counselors: unfortunately, statewide budget cuts have resulted in the elimination of one full-time counseling position at Buena High School. The other positions in pupil services, however, have remained the same over the last few years.

Source: Additional information taken from California Department of Education, Educational Demographics Office.

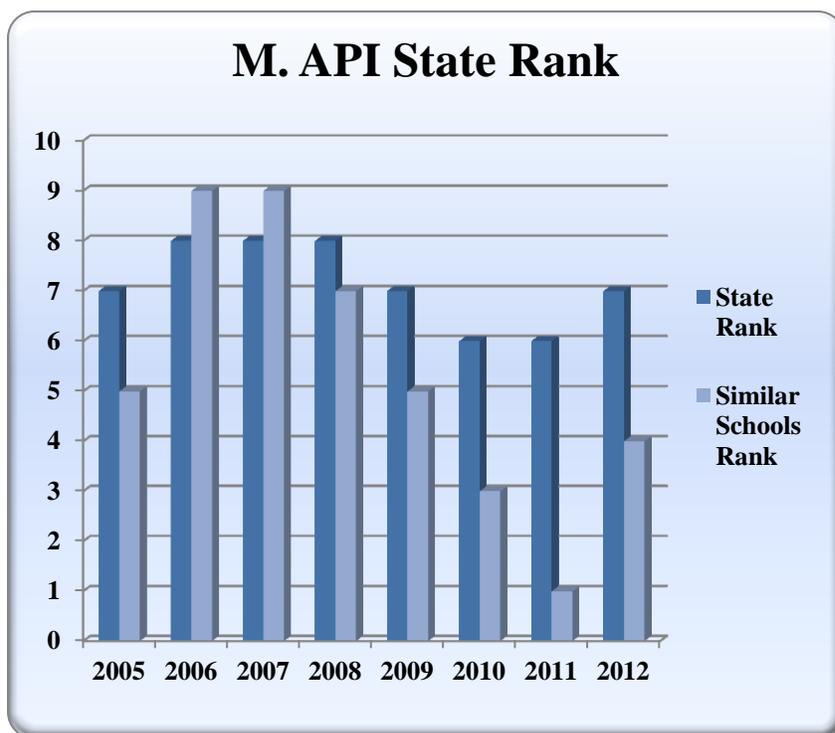
Student Achievement Data

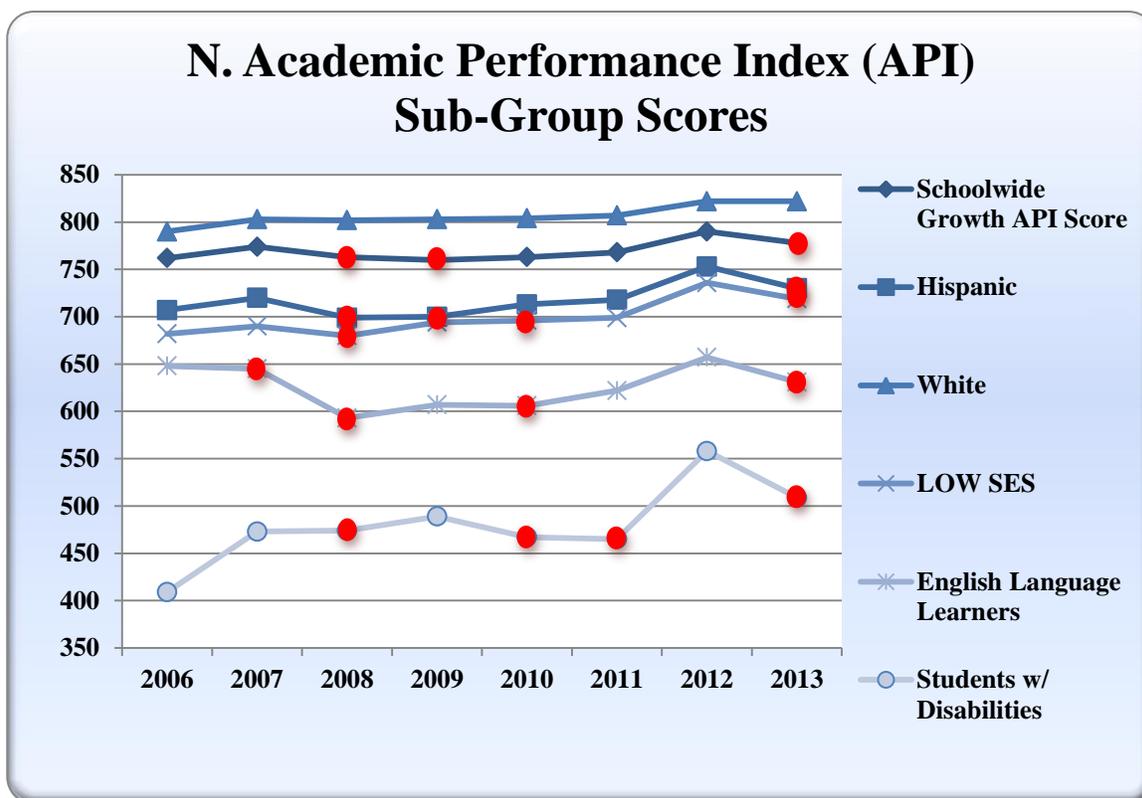
Buena High School has had fluctuating API scores for the last ten years, with an overall upward trend. Initially, Buena’s scores were consistently rising, from a base score of 702 in 2003-2004 to a significantly higher score of 774 in the 2006-2007 school year. Unfortunately, the scores dipped in the two years following, falling to 760 in 2009; however, 2010-2012 saw an upswing in API scores, with a peak of 790 in 2012. Buena did experience a dip in 2013, though, with the school’s most recent API score dropping to 778.



PLEASE NOTE: The 2010 score was initially reported as 765, but was later adjusted by the California Department of Education to a score of 763; additionally, the 2009 score was initially reported as 761, but was later adjusted by the California Department of Education to a score of 760.

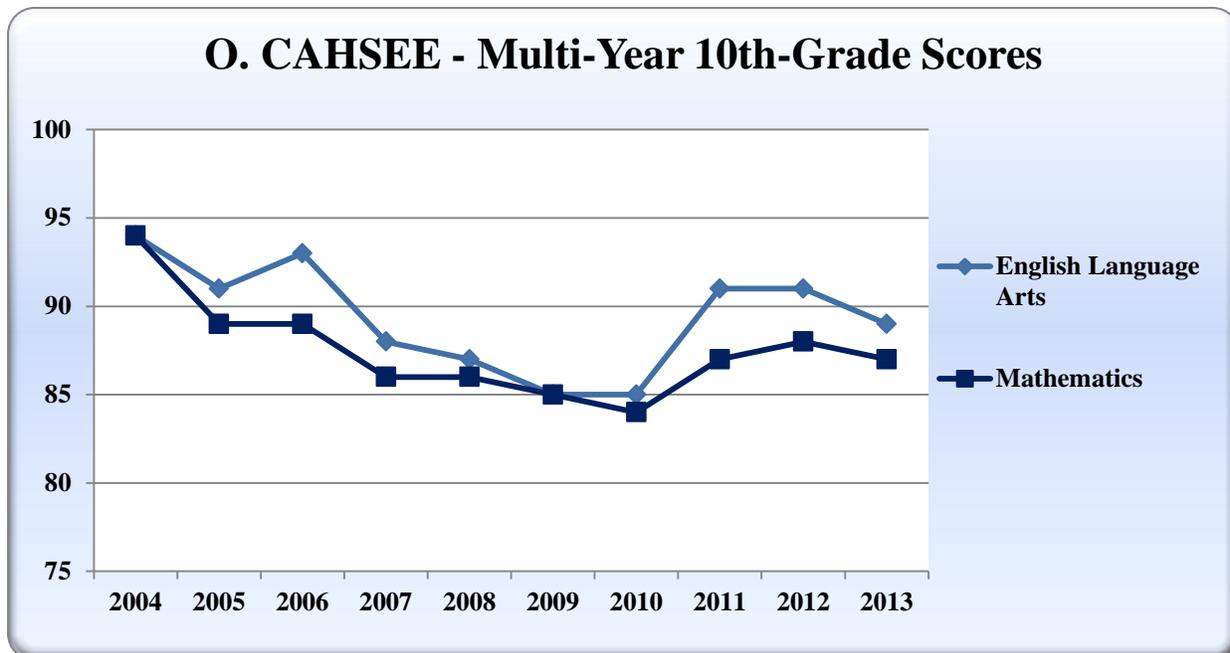
Just as Buena’s API score has fluctuated over the last few years, the school’s API state rank and similar schools rank have fluctuated somewhat dramatically. The 2004-2005 school year saw Buena scoring a “7-5” rank, but the scores quickly jumped to an “8-9” rank for two years; in subsequent years, however, the school has maintained a “6” or “7” state rank, with the similar schools rank vacillating from a high of “7” to a low of “1.” With the exception of the 2006 and 2007 scores, Buena has consistently scored higher in the state rank than in the similar schools rank.



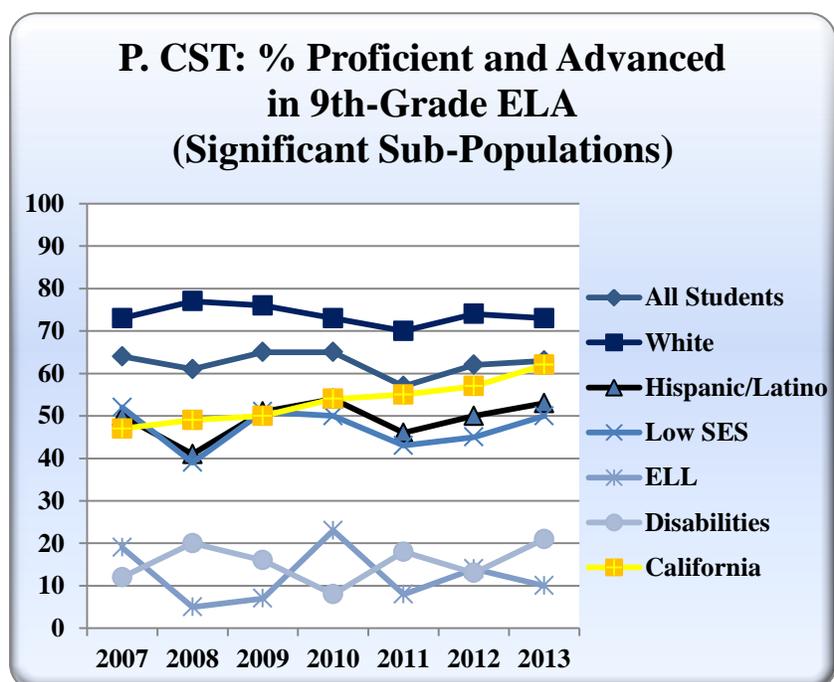


While Buena High School has, for the most part, been consistent in meeting the schoolwide growth API target, the school has only been able to meet all of its subgroup targets twice in the last eight years: in 2006 and 2012. While the school saw a continuous upward trend from 2008 to 2012, the scores for all significant subgroups dipped in 2013 (though not as low as the 2011 scores); in fact, Buena failed to meet all subgroup growth targets for 2013, with the exception of the sub-group for “White” students. English Language Learners are the subgroup most frequently unable to meet the API growth target; additionally, Hispanic students, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and students with disabilities also have struggled to meet the school’s subgroup target goals over the last five years.

PLEASE NOTE: Scores marked with a red circle (●) did not meet the growth target for that testing year. The schoolwide growth API is only marked for years in which the schoolwide score did not meet the growth target (not including subgroup scores).

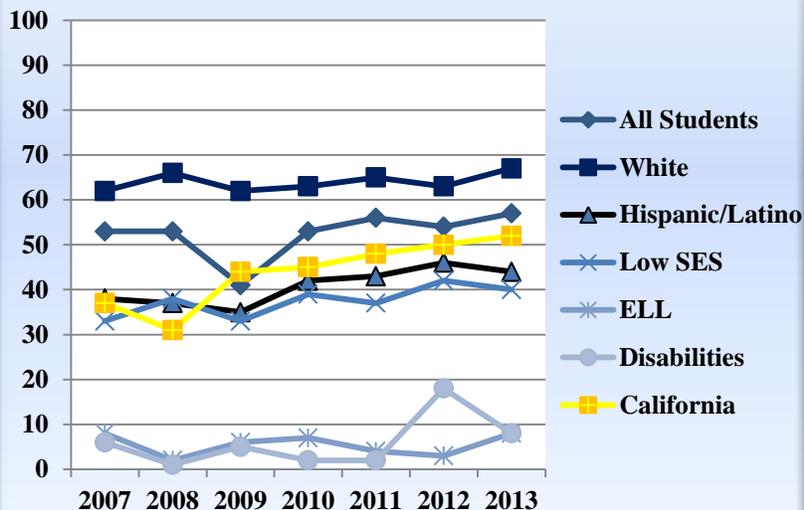


From 2004, when the California High School Exit Exam was first administered, to 2010, the tenth-grade CAHSEE scores at Buena High School were on a dramatic downward trend. For the first year of CAHSEE administration, Buena had a 94% pass rate on both the English Language Arts and Mathematics portions of the exam; in the six years following, that number dropped by roughly 10% for both portions of the exam. However, scores have risen steadily since 2010 – although not to the levels of 2004 and 2006. With the exception of 2004 and 2009, more students have passed the English Language Arts portion than the Mathematics portion.



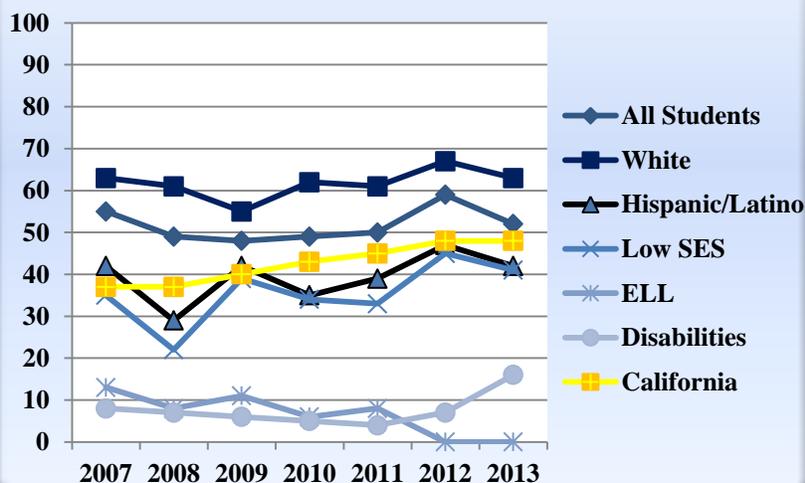
For the past seven years, Buena High School’s overall ninth-grade population has consistently scored above the state average on the English Language Arts test. Although scores dropped each year for most subgroups from 2009 to 2011, the last two years have seen an increase in scores for all subgroups (with the exception of ELL students). In ninth grade, Caucasian students tend to score at least 10% higher than other all other subgroups; EL students and students with disabilities tend to score much lower.

Q. CST: % Proficient and Advanced in 10th-Grade ELA (Significant Sub-Populations)



As with ninth-grade test scores, Buena High School’s overall student population for tenth grade has consistently scored higher than the state average on the English Language Arts test (with the exception of 2009). While the scores of most subgroups fell during 2009, scores for EL students and students with disabilities rose that year. The scores of all subgroups (with the exception of students with disabilities) have risen steadily from 2009 to 2013, with the overall student score recovering from its dip below the California state average five years ago.

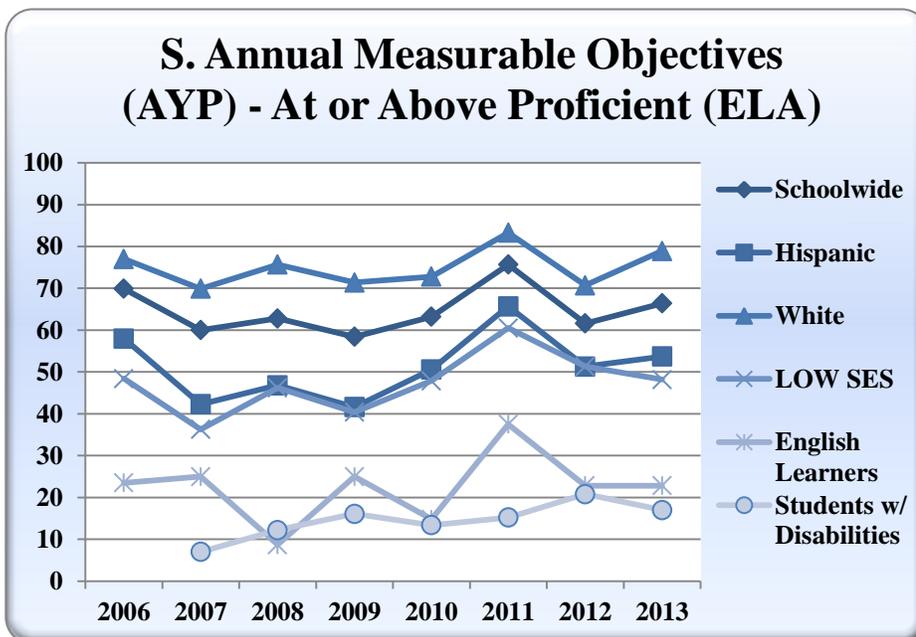
R. CST: % Proficient and Advanced in 11th-Grade ELA (Significant Sub-Populations)



Although scores for eleventh-grade students taking the CST English Language Arts portion are consistently lower than ninth-grade and tenth-grade scores, the overall student scores have remained above the California state average for the last seven years. The scores for Low SES students and Hispanic/ Latino students have fluctuated dramatically, rising above and falling below the state average in alternating years.

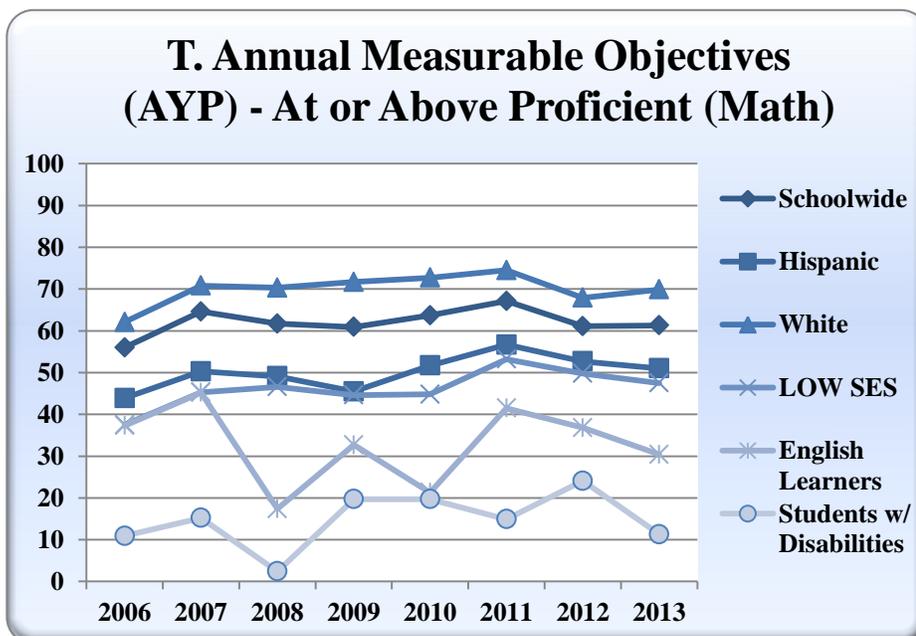
Although there is some fluctuation between testing years, students in ninth grade continually score better than students in tenth and eleventh grades on the English Language Arts test – regardless of ethnicity, socioeconomic level, or language fluency. Caucasian students score higher on the CST English Language Arts tests than other sub-populations, though students of low socioeconomic status and Hispanic students tend to score in the same range from year to year. Students with disabilities and English Language Learners continue to score substantially lower than their peers on the English Language Arts tests.

As with the rest of Buena High School's test scores, white students tend to outperform their peers in AYP scores, while all other significant subgroups tend to score below the schoolwide average. Every year, English Language Learners and students with disabilities score significantly lower than all other subgroups on campus.



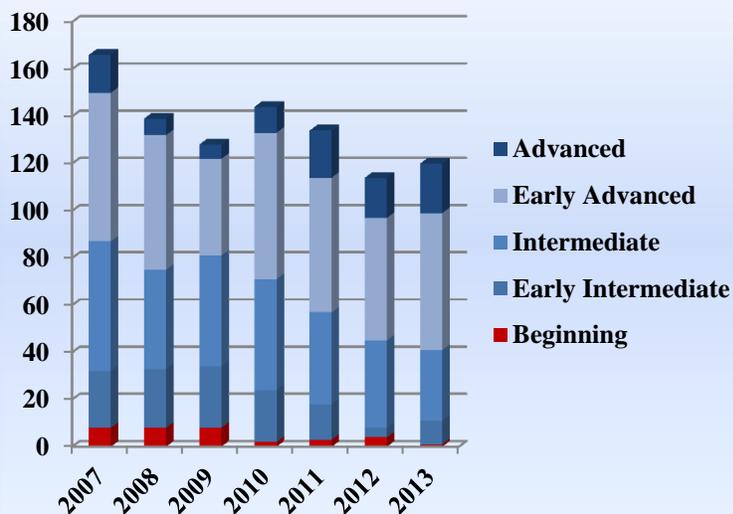
PLEASE NOTE: Because the 2005-2006 participation rate for students with disabilities was so low (only 7%), the California Department of Education did not report a score for that subgroup in 2006.

While the same patterns apply in English Language Arts and Math, more students with disabilities have reached proficiency in Math than ELA over the last few years (with the exception of the 2008 and 2013 results). Similarly, more English Language Learners reached proficiency in Math than in English Language Arts.



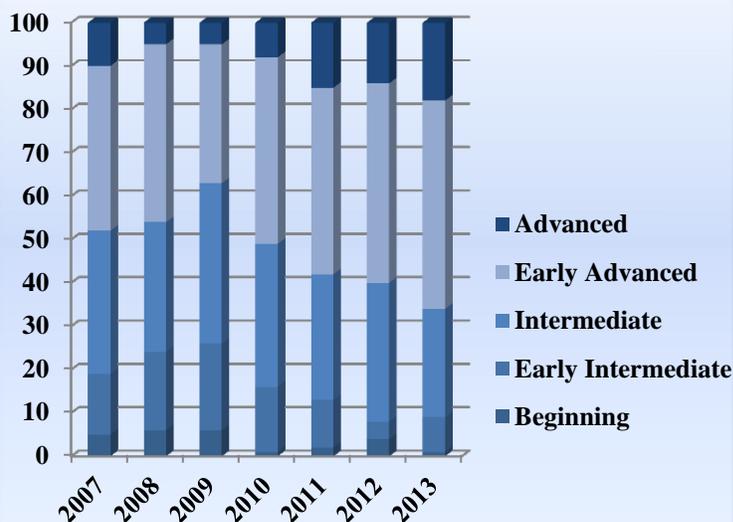
PLEASE NOTE: The CDE's AYP official report for the 2011-2012 school year contains errors in enrollment numbers for Buena High School. The above chart has been corrected to more accurately represent the number of students enrolled during that school year.

U. CELDT Results (#)



With the exception of 2009-2010, there has been a decrease in the number of English Learners at Buena High School each year. Table U (to the left) includes all students who participated in the annual CELDT assessments from 2007 to 2013 at BHS; during this time, the number of students testing at the Beginning level has decreased to a bare minimum (with only one student in the entire school scoring Beginning in 2013), while the number of students scoring Advanced has tripled since 2008, from only 7 students at that level to 21.

V. CELDT Results (%)

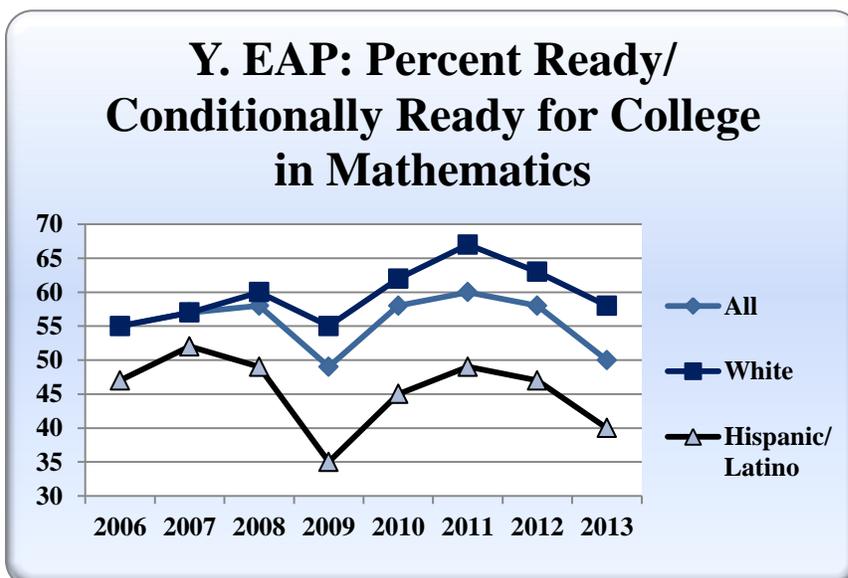
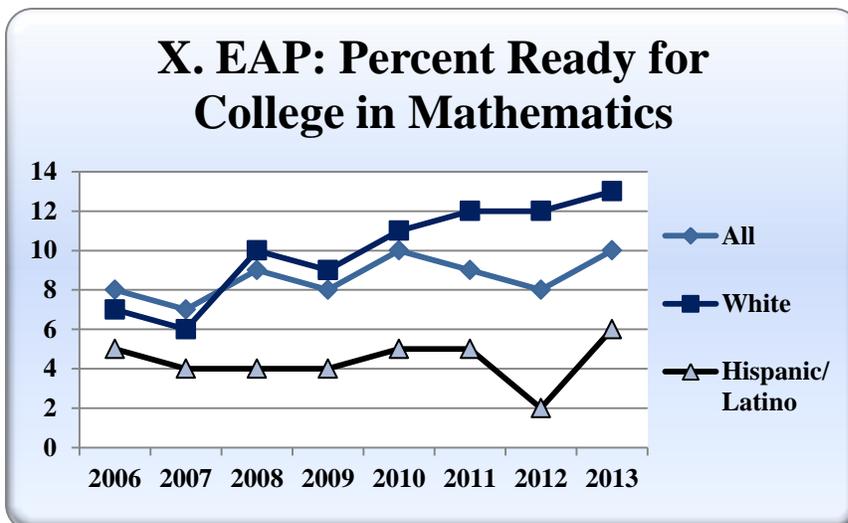
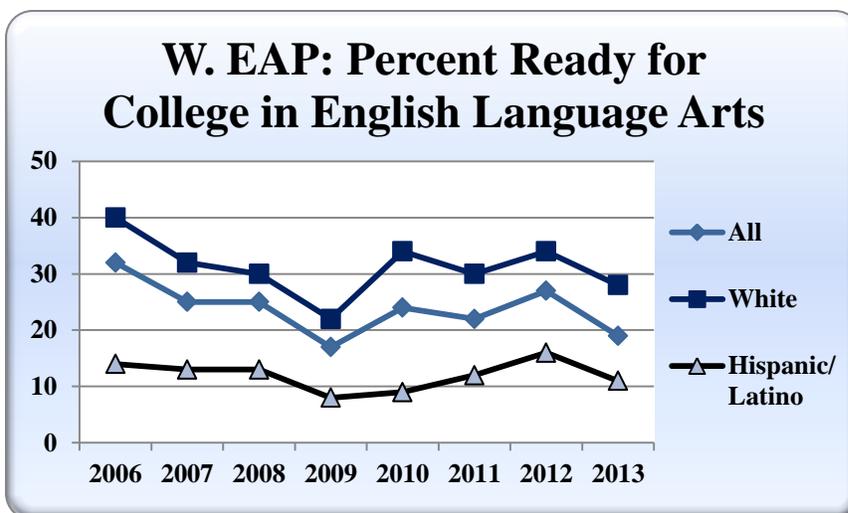


Buena High School has made significant gains in student performance on the CELDT test. In 2007, the percent of students in the lowest two levels of proficiency for BHS was 19%, while 48% scored Advanced or Early Advanced. In 2013, however, only 9% of students scored in the two lowest proficiency levels, while 66% scored in the two highest levels. Though Buena still serves students across the entire spectrum of English Language Development, students at Buena have made noteworthy advancements during their time in the Ventura Unified School District.

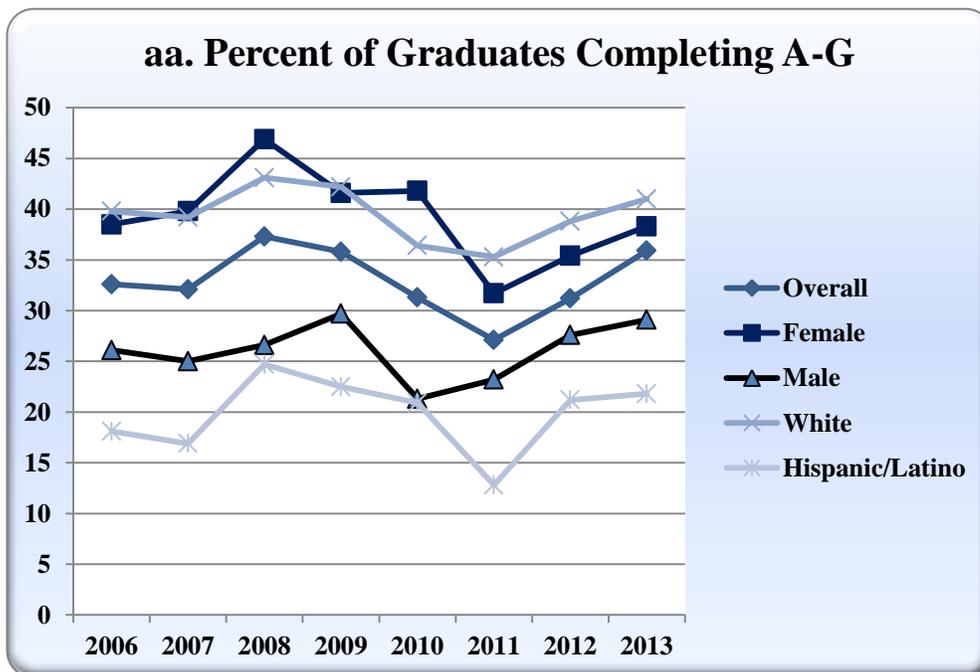
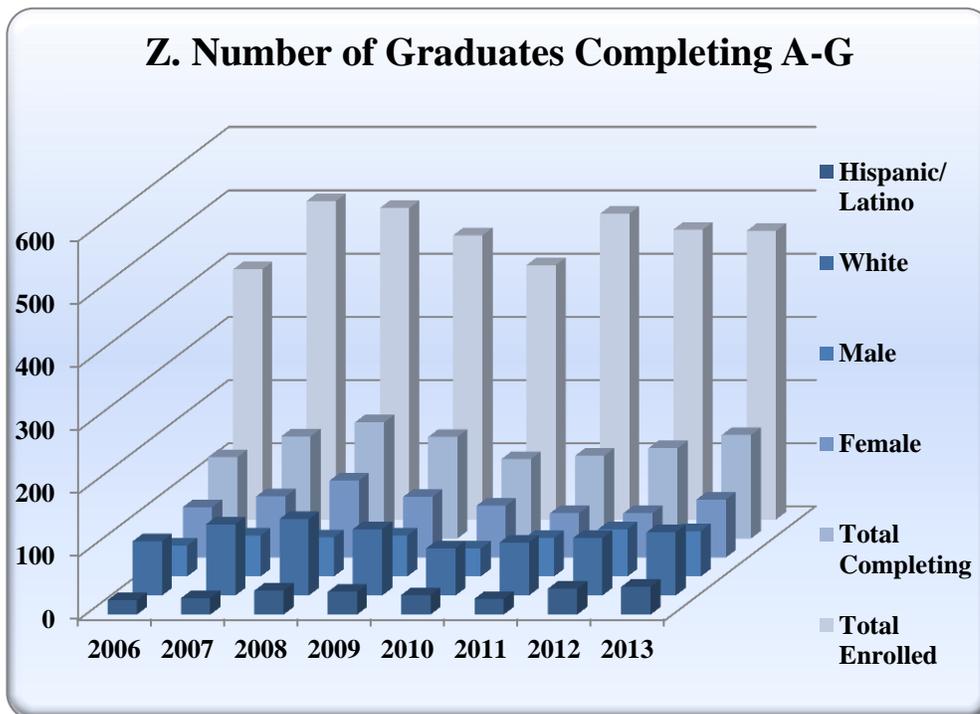
The California State University’s Early Assessment Program has provided a unique opportunity for students to prove their college readiness while still in high school. Though the scores for Buena High School do indicate that a number of students have attained the requisite skills for college by their junior year, the percent of students deemed “ready for college” in English Language Arts reached a low in 2009 and dropped again in 2013.

The percent of students who have tested “ready for college” in mathematics is significantly lower than in English, although the average scores for the overall school population have fluctuated (with a slight increase) since 2006. In both test areas, however, Hispanic/Latino students continually score lower than their peers, with the largest gap appearing on the English Language Arts portion of the exam.

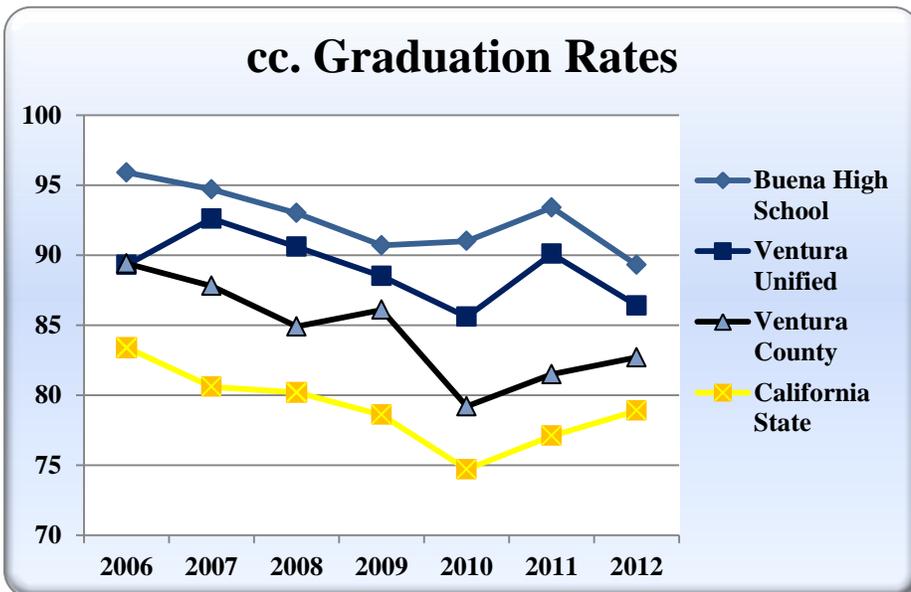
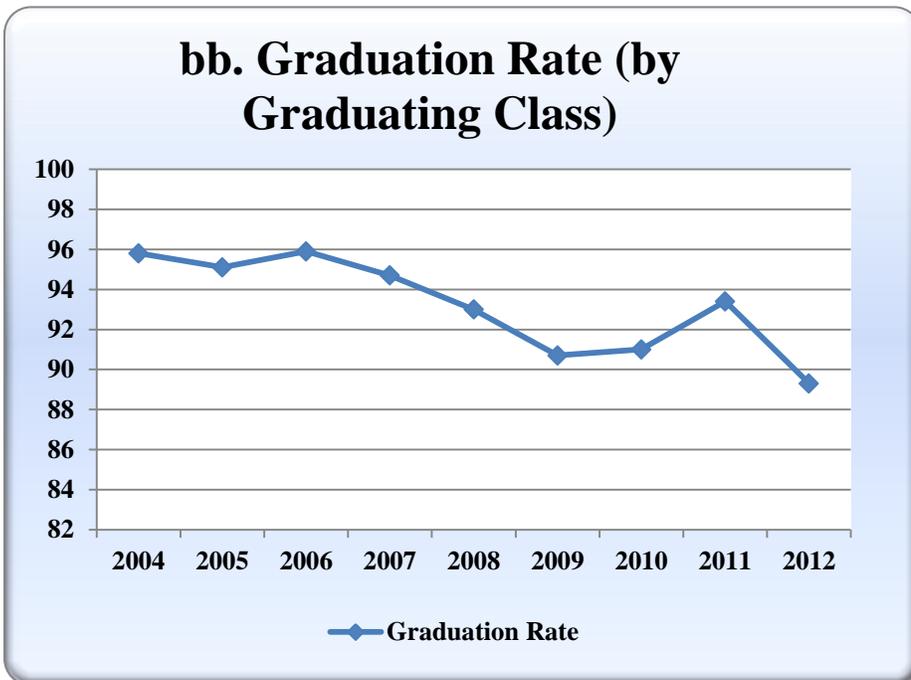
While the scores of students scoring “ready for college” in mathematics is notably low, a much higher number of students have scored “conditionally ready for college” in mathematics, indicating that Buena High School students are approaching the standard for college readiness. These scores reached a peak in 2011 but have decreased in the last two years.



For the last eight years, roughly 1/3 of each graduating class from Buena High School has met the UC/CSU A-G requirements. Of those graduating classes, the highest proportions of students meeting the A-G requirements have been the female and Caucasian subgroups, while the lowest numbers of students completing the A-G requirements have been from the male and Hispanic/Latino subgroups. Of those two subgroups, Hispanic/Latino students have the least number of students successfully completing A-G: a little more than 1/5 of the Hispanic/Latino students graduating in 2013 completed the requirements for A-G designation.

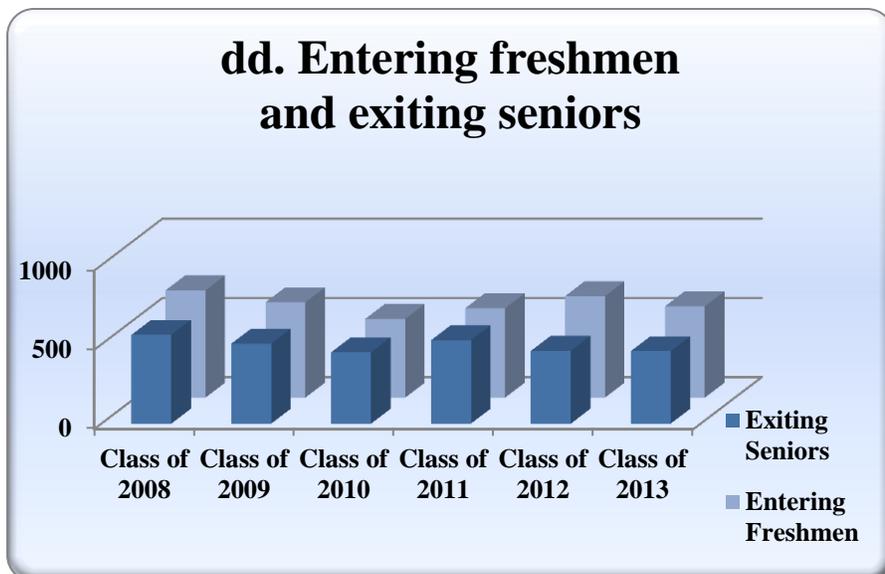


As mentioned in the WASC 2011 self-study report, Buena High School's graduation rate has been slowly declining over the last decade. While this is a disturbing trend at the school, it also reflects the trends occurring at the county and state level. However, despite mirroring the state's decreasing graduation statistics, the class of 2012 (the most recent data available from the California Department of Education) had a graduation rate of 89.3%, which is higher than district, county, and state graduation rates; in fact, this is more than 10% higher than the statewide graduation rate. So although Buena is not immune to the state's decreasing graduation numbers, the school has been able to maintain a better rate than other schools in California.



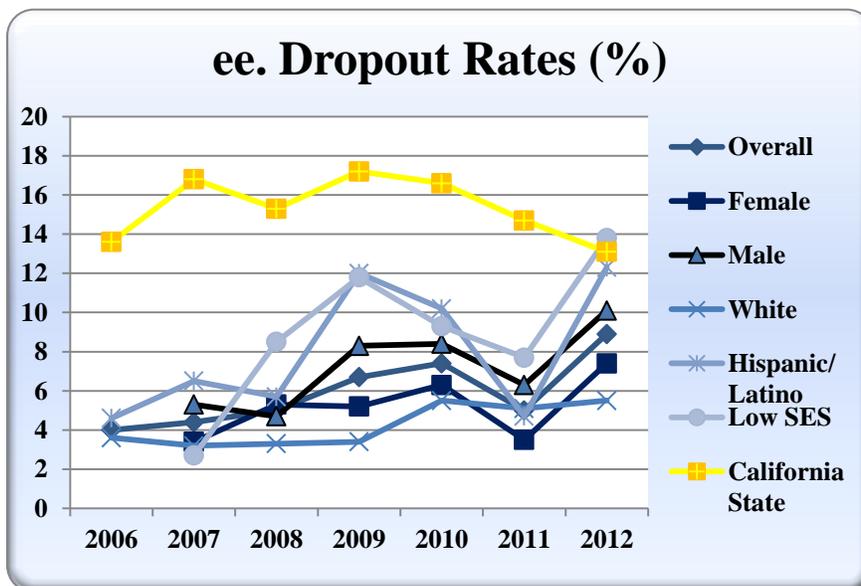
PLEASE NOTE: The CDE has not yet released the graduation rate data for the 2012-2013 school year. Because this data is not yet available, it has not been included in the Buena High School Focus on Learning report.

A sizable number of students leave Buena High School between their freshman and senior years, with the percentage of students fluctuating wildly within the last six years. The class of 2008, for instance, retained only 82.7% of its freshman enrollment; this is in sharp contrast to the class of 2010, which retained 90.5% of its enrollment.



Unfortunately, the last few graduating classes have seen a sharp decrease: for the class of 2013, only 79.3% of its freshmen remained at Buena High School through their senior year.

Until 2012, the dropout rate at Buena High School remained significantly below state averages for all subgroups; however, the dropout rate for Hispanic/Latino and Low SES students has increased exponentially since 2007, including a jump in 2012 that catapulted the subgroup above California state averages. To combat student dropout rates, the Ventura Unified School District has supported a



number of alternative education programs for students who are not experiencing success in mainstream high school classes. Programs are available through Adult and Continuing Education; Pacific High School, a continuation high school; El Camino, an independent-study alternative high school; and Cyber High, an online credit-recovery program to meet the needs of students who may not realize success within the traditional school setting.

PLEASE NOTE: The CDE DataQuest website does not list disaggregated gender or SES data for 2005-2006. The graduation rate formula is based on the NCES definition. All data is taken from the CDE DataQuest website, which uses October CBEDS enrollment for its data.

Overall summary from Analysis of Profile Data

For many years, Buena High School has enjoyed success inside and outside the classroom. Our school has traditionally scored well on standardized tests and has cultivated a number of flourishing extracurricular programs, including sports, art, and music. In the past decade, our school has seen a great amount of competition from our fellow high schools in the Ventura Unified School District, but Buena has carved itself a niche in the community as a comprehensive high school that offers a wide variety of opportunities for students to succeed and grow. With such an assortment of offerings at Buena High School, we look forward to the continued development of our academic and extracurricular activities, and we will continue to strive for excellence across campus.

Like most schools in the state of California, Buena has encountered changes in a variety of areas over the last few years. Although the recent economic crisis has offered many new challenges for our school, we are adjusting to the budget shortfalls without compromising our goals for academic excellence. Since our last WASC visitation in 2011, the school's overall enrollment has decreased by 9.4%, which has necessitated a slight reduction in the number of staff members. Additionally, during these last few years, the school has seen a dramatic increase in the number of Latino students; this changing student demographic has forced us to reevaluate our school's course offerings, as well as the instructional methods of our teachers. These changes have been challenging for the school, but we have confidence that we are serving our students effectively.

As with any comprehensive school site, Buena student performance data shows some impressive areas of growth, as well as weaknesses that need to be systematically addressed. For the most part, Buena has continued an upward trend in student performance in the last few years (most notably the API score growth in the last decade), but the school does face some daunting challenges (such as the school's declining graduation rate and the achievement gap between Caucasian students and all other significant subgroups). While these trends mirror the overall state averages in most areas, Buena needs to find additional interventions to improve its programs and to better serve all students on campus.

II: Significant School Changes and Developments

Although Buena High School has, for the most part, maintained the structure presented at the last WASC visitation, the school has continually worked to improve its educational programs. The five key areas in which BHS has had notable changes are its “Distinguished School” status, BARK program, staffing, curriculum, and student support. With developments and improvements in these key areas, the staff at Buena has worked diligently to refine its practices, in conjunction with the goals outlined in the school’s WASC self-study document.

Distinguished Schools Award

In March of 2013, Buena High School had its first Distinguished School Award visitation in more than a decade; after the visitation, Buena was awarded the “California Distinguished School” designation for the first time since 1999. This award validated Buena’s efforts to improve student achievement and foster a positive learning environment; additionally, this award created a sense of unification throughout the campus – for students, as well as staff members. Furthermore, this award confirmed that the school’s BARK program has, indeed, been a valuable tool in assisting all students on campus.

Buena’s Advisory for Relationships and Knowledge (BARK)

The most prominent of Buena’s developments is Buena’s Advisory for Relationships and Knowledge (BARK) program: BARK initially began as an effort to provide targeted intervention for underperforming students but has evolved into a multi-tiered program that provides learning opportunities for all students on campus. Since the WASC visitation in 2011, the BARK program has adapted to meet the needs of students and staff members: the program was revised from its four-tier incarnation (with Intervention, Advisory, Study Hall, and Enrichment as placement options for students) into a three-tier version (removing the Advisory option). The administration initiated this change after receiving feedback from the Advisory teachers, many of whom felt that the Advisory classes ended up being no different than Study Hall classes. Subsequently, students who previously would have taken the Advisory class were redistributed into Study Hall and Intervention classes, based on student needs.

Due to this change in the BARK structure, the Study Hall segment of BARK has progressed into a multifaceted environment that allows teachers to spend additional instructional time with students who need extra help in specific subject areas. Whereas students were previously assigned randomly to Study Hall classes, teachers can now select some of their students for extra support opportunities. Although it is not feasible to schedule entire classes of Study Hall students with their own teachers, placing select students who need intervention with their teachers allows more one-on-one guidance for struggling students. The staff has also expanded the flexibility of the BARK infrastructure to better meet the needs of students: by allowing more student movement between classrooms, BARK helps facilitate peer tutoring and creates opportunities for students to meet with teachers, take make-up tests, and receive feedback on assignments. All in all, these changes to BARK have impacted the school by providing more individualized opportunities for student learning and developing teacher-student relationships.

Although BARK has become one of the signature practices of Buena High School, it has not

been without its critics: in fact, during the 2012-2013 school year, staff members discussed the possibility of discontinuing the program. As a result of these discussions, the Buena staff held a vote in October 2013 to determine the future of BARK, but when the votes were tallied, 70% of staff members voted to continue the program. While a majority of staff members voted to save BARK, the program will continue to be further refined in order to meet the needs of the changing student population at Buena High School. Even with these critics, the BARK program has impressed schools outside the Ventura Unified School District: representatives from several other schools have visited Buena High School to learn more about BARK, so that they might create their own BARK-modeled programs at other school sites. This recognition from others has reinforced our belief in the benefits and rewards of the BARK program at Buena High.

Staffing

In the last two years, Buena High School has seen a somewhat dramatic set of changes within its staffing, including shifts in administration, certificated personnel, and classified support staff. The most noteworthy changes in staffing have been the exits of Dr. Jesus Vaca, who had served as principal for a little more than four years, and Danielle Cortes, who held the position of assistant principal of curriculum and instruction for three years. As a result of Dr. Vaca's departure, in November of 2013, Assistant Principal Mike Irving became the school's interim principal for the remainder of the 2013-2014 school year; subsequently, Peter Aguirre (a retired VUSD administrator) was brought on board to fill Mike's previous assistant principal position. After Ms. Cortes left Buena High School for a position as principal at a local elementary school, Bobbi Powers was selected to fill the position of assistant principal of curriculum and instruction. In addition to these administrative changes, Buena High School has seen the departure of more than a dozen teachers in the last two years, resulting in the hiring of new staff members in various departments; likewise, a number of support staff positions have changed, including the roles of office manager and ASB bookkeeper. Although the sheer number of changes may seem challenging, the new influx of fresh perspectives has infused the school with a new energy and vitality.

Curriculum

Three of the largest curriculum changes at Buena High School since the last WASC visitation have involved attempts at better serving underperforming students on campus, specifically the reintegration of students from an onsite intervention school, the restructuring of the ELD program, and the reconfiguration of Algebra 1 courses. All three of these structural changes have had significant effects on instructional methods and student achievement, and while the transition has not been flawless, it has provided students with targeted instruction to better meet their diverse needs.

The disintegration of the **Buena Vista** program, a targeted-intervention "school within a school," has brought a number of at-risk students back into the Buena population – and has brought the challenges of re-acclimating these students into a traditional, comprehensive school setting. Though reintroducing Buena Vista students into the general population has been a challenging transition, the Buena Vista students have been fully transitioned into mainstream courses at Buena High School.

When Buena High School restructured its **English Language Development (ELD)** program in the 2008-2009 school year, it provided a strategic framework to best meet the needs of EL students on campus. Since then, the English Department has refined the ELD program, offering multiple levels of sheltered instruction for EL students, including College Prep SDAIE clusters and block-period courses for ELD 1-3. To further support students leaving the ELD two-period block courses, students have been combined into sheltered College Prep SDAIE English classes, with grades 9-10 joined together and grades 11-12 joined together; these groupings reflect the Common Core English standards, which are clustered into a 9-10 and 11-12 structure. This sheltered environment has provided EL students with further targeted instruction in English, and has helped these students transition more seamlessly into regular College Prep English classes. Because of the low number of English Learners with basic language skills, the English Language Development 1-3 courses have also been grouped together in one classroom for a double-block period. However, as the counselors, teachers, and administrators identify more students at the ELD 4 level, the enrollment for ELD 1-4 should increase enough to create multiple classes for these beginning EL students.

In addition to these paradigm shifts, Buena High School has also revised its structure for teaching **Algebra 1**. For years, Buena's staff followed the district model of dividing Algebra 1 into a two-year course for struggling math students; unfortunately, the resulting courses (titled "Algebra 1A" and "Algebra 1B"), did not sufficiently meet the needs of these underperforming students. To rectify this issue, Ventura Unified School District directed the high schools to revise their course offerings and move more students into Algebra 1 with an additional period of intervention/support; consequently, the staff at Buena adopted this model and started phasing in a new structure for the Algebra 1 program. The first step in implementing this new structure was to eliminate the Algebra 1A course offering at Buena; as a result, all algebra students were enrolled in either Algebra 1B or in an Algebra 1 class coupled with a math-intervention course. This intervention class, which is provided to those who needed additional help to succeed in the algebra course, frontloads the material they will see in their algebra class later in the day; so far, this program has seen positive results.

Although this restructuring of the Algebra 1 course has only recently been implemented, Buena will further redesign its math courses in the next few years. As the school transitions toward the implementation of **Common Core**, the Buena Math Department will move to an integrated approach by phasing in **Math 1, Math 2, and Math 3 courses**. Starting with the 2014-2015 school year, Math 1 will become the school's beginning math class; accordingly, the 2013-2014 school year will be the last year that Algebra 1B and Algebra 1 courses will be offered at Buena. While these algebra classes will no longer be offered in subsequent years, the Math Department plans on using the math-intervention frontloading model to accompany the Math 1 classes; this will provide more direct assistance for the struggling students who will need the extra help in Math 1. Although it will be some time before Buena High School sees the impact of this shift, we believe it will ultimately provide a more effective pathway for all students to engage with the mathematics curriculum.

Obviously, the most dramatic shift in the field of education nationwide has been the adoption of **Common Core** standards that infuse more critical thinking and expository reading/writing skills into all subject areas. This move has taken precedence over some of the goals that were set three years ago during our WASC accreditation visit. For instance, professional development time,

both in departments and all-staff faculty meetings, has been devoted to preparing and training teachers for the Common Core Standards, with a special focus on the English and math curricula. Accordingly, this shift has affected Buena's practices in the areas of professional development, common assessments, benchmarks, and day-to-day practices. Of course, while the learning curve for Common Core is steep, the infusion of Common Core standards is expected to foster greater student achievement and move our students toward college and career readiness.

Student Support

Although the traditional focus of comprehensive high schools is on curriculum and instruction, schools must also provide support for the socio-emotional well-being of all students on campus. To address this issue, Buena's previous principal, Dr. Vaca, made a distinct effort to bring a **Student Assistance Program (SAP)** counselor to Buena: consequently, the administration allocated a 50% position to a SAP counselor who would solely work with students in need. Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, this SAP counselor, Joyce Cooper, has served as a SAP counselor in charge of student support groups, one-on-one counseling, and distribution of information to the staff. Since Mrs. Cooper joined the staff, the number of students involved in support groups has doubled in size; additionally, more students have been provided with personalized assistance to help guide them through their unique life challenges.

In keeping with this movement to improve student support, assistant principal Gayle Carey assembled an **anti-bullying committee** at the end of the 2012-2013 school year to address the issue of school bullying at Buena High School. After receiving formalized training, the staff members on the anti-bullying committee have counseled students individually, established protocols for preemptively addressing potential bullying, and created a set of guidelines to follow up with students for the entire duration of their time at Buena. Similarly, the **Gay-Straight Alliance** has helped raise awareness about issues relating to gender equality and sexual orientation on campus; some of the organization's efforts include weekly meetings for students, an "Ally of the Month" recognition for staff members who promote respect on campus, a "Harvey Milk Day" celebration to underscore the importance of strength and validity of all human beings, and an annual "Day of Silence" to combat bullying and to provide a "voice" for students affected by intolerance and prejudice. To complement these anti-bullying efforts, the administration has brought in outside agencies to give presentations to students on campus: the **Ventura Police Department** conducts an annual "3-Screen Multimedia Assembly," which addresses bullying; and the **Arc Program of Ventura** has presented the "Project R Assembly," which aims to eliminate the use of the derogatory "R" word. All of these efforts have created sensitivity to bullying of all types on campus and have helped provide students with a broader perspective on the nature of bullying.

Following recent nationwide incidents of school violence, the Ventura Unified School District has made a concerted effort to educate employees on the best practices of keeping students safe in the event that a dangerous situation should occur on campus. In response to a recent lockdown drill, in which it was discovered that many of Buena's classroom doors could only be locked from the outside, VUSD Superintendent Dr. Trudy Arriaga directed that the locks be changed to allow inside locking access. Since then, the vast majority of locks on campus have been changed, with the remaining locks to be fixed in the weeks ahead. Most recently, all VUSD staff received a three-hour safety training on Jan. 27, 2014, which included threat assessment,

prevention of violence in schools, and lockdown procedures. Hopefully, Buena will never have to deal with the tragedy of school violence that has afflicted other institutions; however, these trainings will help prepare us for these kinds of events, should they occur on our campus.

III: Follow-up and Progress Report Development Process

Prior to the 2011 WASC visitation, the Buena High School administration took the dominant role in crafting the school's WASC self-study document; however, the 2010-2011 school year saw a more egalitarian approach that incorporated all members of the school staff in creating the WASC document. This was a new methodology for Buena's staff, and it did require a paradigm shift in the governing of the school; generally, though, the preparation for the WASC visitation was successful. Unfortunately, the model set to prepare for the school's 2011 WASC visitation was not maintained in the years following. We attribute this to the change in administration and certificated staff, and we understand that we will need to reinstate this model of regular meetings for committees/subcommittees in order to better guide Buena in the years to come.

On a more positive note: since the 2011 WASC visitation, the Buena administration has made a concerted effort to combine the various school plans and documents into one cohesive "living document" for school governance. In the spring of 2011, Dr. Vaca and assistant principal Danielle Cortes revised the Single Plan for Student Achievement to mirror the goals and vision of the school's WASC self-study document; each subsequent year, the Single Plan has been updated to reflect needed changes for the school. The administration presents this updated Single Plan annually to the School Site Council and VUSD board; however, while the document has been posted on Buena's website, the updated Single Plan hasn't been officially presented to the staff and parents. We recognize that this is an area that needs improvement in order for our community to be better informed about the changes and progress made at Buena High School.

Once again, we recognize that the WASC document needs to reach further than the administration simply updating the school's Single Site Plan: this document really needs to be a collaborative effort with the staff members and the members of the Buena community. While individual goals and aspects of the Single Plan are addressed in faculty, steering, and department meetings, the administration needs to regularly bring the WASC goals to steering committee meetings and incorporate the input of WASC subcommittees on a quarterly basis. As administrative staffing stabilizes, the administration will ensure formal quarterly reviews of the WASC document (beginning with the second semester of the 2013-2014 school year).

For the 2014 midterm visitation document, the administrative team prepared the rough draft, which was then distributed to the steering committee and departments for feedback. After the departments had the opportunity to provide updates for revision, the administration made the necessary changes to the self-study document. Following the finalization of the document, the administration presented the WASC midterm self-study to the district's governing board.

IV: Progress on the Critical Areas for Follow-up within the Action Plan

In the three years since Buena's WASC visitation, the school has continued to implement a wide variety of programs to meet the needs of all students on campus. All of these programs have been designed to align with our WASC goals, which serve as the guiding principles of Buena High School. Because our three goals (**Academic Literacy, Numeracy, and Underperforming Students**) are broad-reaching and open-ended objectives, they require the development and improvement of a wide variety of school programs. Although not all of our programs have fully reached their potential, we have made significant gains in each of these three areas.

Goal 1: Academic Literacy

Task One: Continue to identify students (including incoming 9s) who are scoring less than basic on ELA CSTs, look at multiple measures, and place them in intervention courses such as English and Strategic Reading (ESR) or BARK ELA intervention where appropriate.

Buena High School has continued its practice of identifying underperforming students and placing them into appropriate English Language Arts intervention courses (ESR, ELD, etc.), but intervention courses have only been provided in limited capacity for other subject areas. The multiple measures that are used for assessing student needs are the computer-based Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) adaptive reading test, California Standards Test exam scores, student writing samples, and teacher input from middle and high school sites. Students who are identified as having ELA skill deficits are then placed into appropriate intervention classes, which include ESR, ELD, and SDAIE courses, as well as BARK intervention classes; currently, Buena High School runs four classes, with 109 students enrolled in these courses. Ultimately, the primary goal of these intervention courses is to better prepare students to become "skilled communicators," one of Buena's key Expected Student Learning Outcomes. Because the California Standards Test will soon be replaced by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium program, this shift in testing implementation will create a need for Buena's staff to adapt its practices to align with the SBAC testing; until Buena's staff receives scores from the SBAC, teacher recommendations, grades, SRI scores, and benchmarks will be utilized as the primary forms of student placement.

Task Two: Continue to identify students who do not pass the ELA CAHSEE and place them in appropriate support classes such as ELA CAHSEE Intervention and BARK ELA Intervention.

To identify academically at-risk students and assign them to appropriate English classes, the administration utilizes a variety of assessment measures (including each student's CAHSEE results) to help determine whether a student should be placed in ELD, SDAIE, ESR, or special education classes. In these specialized courses, students receive targeted intervention that addresses gaps and deficits in their reading and writing abilities.

In prior years, Buena utilized semester-long CAHSEE support intervention classes for students who needed extra help in passing the state's exit exam. It was determined, however, that this

model for providing intervention was not successful in meeting the needs of these students; as a result, the administration dissolved the CAHSEE support class and placed the students identified as needing extra support to pass the CAHSEE into the aforementioned ELD, ESR, SDAIE, and special education classes. Buena's staff also works proactively to identify 10th-grade students who are in danger of not passing the CAHSEE, with one of the primary tools being the administration of a CAHSEE practice test prior to the students taking the actual exam in March. Those identified as at risk of not passing the CAHSEE are invited to participate in a Saturday academy to further prepare them for the exit exam; in the Saturday academy, Buena teachers use previously-released CAHSEE test questions to review with students and provide them with test-taking strategies.

With these interventions in place, Buena has seen an increase in its CAHSEE pass rate over the last three years. In 2010, 85% of Buena students passed the English portion of the exam, and the same percentage of students passed the math section; in 2013, however, 89% of students passed the English portion and 87% passed the math section. Even more dramatically, the pass rates for English Learners at Buena jumped from 34% passing English in 2010 to 55% in 2013; likewise, the rate of EL students passing the math section rose from 41% in 2010 to 58% in 2013. Similarly, but less dramatically, the scores for socioeconomically disadvantaged students also saw an increase: the English pass rate for this subgroup rose from 75% in 2010 to 81% in 2013, and the math pass rate increased from 73% in 2010 to 77% in 2013.

Task Three: Increase collaboration time through more strategic use of late-start Fridays and establishment of additional collaboration team structures (e.g. grade level, ELL Team, AVID team, Data Team, etc.).

Although the amount of time for onsite collaboration is limited, Buena has worked diligently to effectively utilize this time for staff collaboration. The late-start Fridays serve as a key component, providing staff members with roughly three hours of collaboration time monthly, spread out over three Fridays (with the fourth Friday reserved for an all-staff faculty meeting). To help improve the communication between staff and administration, the department chairs provide meeting agendas to administrators for the three meetings, a practice that has been in place since the 2012-2013 school year.

To supplement this vital Friday collaboration time, the staff has continued to utilize the structure of the BARK program and schedule for additional collaboration. Although more limited in scope, BARK collaboration time has been built into each school day, Monday through Thursday, with a structure and organization that provides opportunities for all departments on campus to collaborate. Additionally, since the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year, counselors have volunteered to sub even more in BARK classes, which, in turn, allows more focused collaborative efforts from requesting teachers (for grade-level projects, ELL teams, etc.).

Furthermore, the Ventura Unified School District has provided stipends to Buena's English teachers to meet after school for the purpose of further collaborating to create new performance-based benchmarks. Although the implementation of Common Core served as the catalyst for this collaboration, VUSD's efforts complement Buena's current WASC goals. Until Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium benchmarks are created, the common assessments produced by Buena's English teachers will be used for the foreseeable future.

Task Four: Increase use of standards-aligned common assessments (such as benchmark exams and subject-specific rubrics) to inform and adjust instructional practices and ensure that daily reading and writing assignments consistently align to CA Content Standards.

For the last two years, Ventura Unified School District has provided required benchmarks for English, math, science, and social science content areas. Though benchmark exams have not been provided for every single course within these departments, these standardized common assessments align with the California Content Standards, and they have been used to provide feedback to inform instructional practices. In addition, the scores have been posted for students and parents to view on each student's profile through the Zangle/Q program. CAHSEE pretest results are used to identify struggling students who might not have developed the requisite skills to pass the state's exit exam; likewise, the math benchmark scores help to provide information for placement into math classes. As previously mentioned, VUSD has provided time for teachers to create common assessments/benchmarks aligned with the Common Core standards; ultimately, these benchmarks will be used to inform teachers of student progress toward meeting the content standards.

While common assessments have been utilized in past years, they have not been thoroughly integrated in a widespread fashion at Buena High School. The 2011 WASC self-study described the use of an 11th-grade collaborative research paper, the Historical Investigation Report (HIR), that was assigned jointly by the English and Social Science departments; in the three years since then, the English department has continued with this research paper, but it is no longer assigned in conjunction with the Social Science Department. While social science teachers no longer participate in the implementation of the English Department's 11th-grade research project, the Social Science Department has developed its own grade-level common writing assessments for the 10th- and 11th-grade levels; the 10th-grade project, which is being piloted this year, will be a cross-curricular assignment that has an academic emphasis for both English and history. In addition to the HIR, the English department has been working on research projects that will eventually be used as common assessments in all four of the grade levels at Buena High School; in fact, the English department will be implementing a new 9th-grade I-Search common assessment this spring that will be utilized in every freshman English class. Likewise, the Math and Spanish departments continue to work on creating common assessments for units of instruction in each course level. These assessments provide the information necessary for teachers to inform and adjust their instructional practices.

Task Five: Provide professional development for all teachers in order to expand their repertoire of teaching strategies for expository reading and writing curriculum.

Due to budget cuts and furlough days, the professional development calendar for the last two years has been extremely limited in scope. However, all-staff faculty meetings during this time have included the sharing of best practices in the form of mini-lessons presented by department chairs and the assistant principal of curriculum and instruction. Presentations during the 2011-2012 school year focused more on teaching strategies, such as AVID and Marzano, but the majority of the all-staff presentations during the 2012-2013 school year focused on the shift toward Common Core.

The current school year continues the focus on Common Core, with additional professional

development on Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum and the introduction of the Next Generation Science Standards. As part of Buena's movement toward implementation of Common Core, department representatives have met with the district's Common Core committee for training in specialized content areas; following these trainings, the department representatives bring information back to the school and provide professional development within their departments. For the ERWC professional development, representatives from the California State University system conducted training sessions and provided resources (including teaching strategies) for Buena's English teachers to further incorporate Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum into our site's English courses.

Goal 2: Numeracy

Task One: Phase out Algebra 1A/1B sequence through implementation of strategic math intervention support classes (coupled with Algebra 1 for students scoring less than Basic on Math CSTs).

The Math Department at Buena High School has made significant progress in the completion of Task One: the Algebra 1A class has been successfully phased out, the class numbers of Algebra 1B have decreased over the last three years, and Algebra 1B will no longer be offered at Buena as of next year. Furthermore, because Ventura Unified School District, in conjunction with the Buena High School staff, has decided to move toward an "integrated math" model for its curriculum, no algebra classes will be offered at all next year at Buena. In place of algebra, an integrated "Math 1" course will be offered, with a curricular revision that will help to achieve the goals of Common Core. As with the current Algebra 1 intervention model, students in need of extra help will be placed in math-intervention classes and will receive frontloaded instruction of material that will be taught in the Math 1 class.

Task Two: Continue with various math intervention settings including:

- a) BARK math intervention classes for all levels of math**
- b) Math Topics support course for students who have not passed the CAHSEE math.**

The BARK program continues to offer math intervention in several settings, ranging from course offerings to peer tutoring support. Most importantly, teachers offer students the opportunity to gain further instruction in specified math classes during BARK: Math teachers formally offer Algebra 2, Trigonometry/Pre-Calculus, and Calculus BARK classes to provide support for struggling students. Additionally, several other individual teachers offer informal support for pockets of their own students during the designated BARK time (based on student and/or teacher requests). The BARK program also provides another method of support in the form of a peer tutoring service, entitled the "A-Team," that provides free individual help for students in all levels of math (among other subjects). The A-Team offers peer tutoring at BARK and lunchtime, and the population of students taking advantage of this service has grown significantly in the last three years.

As previously mentioned, the Math Department continues to offer math-intervention classes for students who are struggling in algebra and need the extra support. Teachers use these math intervention courses to frontload material and provide additional time each day for students to

learn challenging concepts that will be covered in the algebra classes. This additional classroom time offers vital learning opportunities, including teacher-led direct instruction, which can help address the skillset deficits of math students at Buena High School.

Much like the CAHSEE English-preparation course, the Math Topics CAHSEE-preparation course shifted from a semester-long course offered during the regular school day to a Saturday academy offered prior to the administration of the state exit exam. Because students in the Math Topics course were placed involuntarily, many students viewed this course as punitive; as a result, the Math Topics course did not meet the level of success that teachers and administration desired. In sharp contrast, the Saturday CAHSEE academy has met much more success: these Saturday academy classes are entirely voluntary, but they serve roughly the same number of students as the Math Topics course. The CAHSEE academy, modeled after Buena's math-intervention courses, frontloads material for students who have been identified as "at-risk" of not passing the CAHSEE and provides test-taking strategies to help them succeed on the state exit exam.

Task Three: Explore the idea of using flexible grouping to differentiate math instruction within the same period by exchanging students between teachers for skill-specific intervention and enrichment based on the results of common assessments.

Buena High School has not yet implemented flexible grouping for differentiated math instruction, primarily because of the difficulty of creating a master schedule that groups together common courses during the same periods. However, teachers have utilized the results of common assessments to identify students who would benefit from extra help and have steered these students toward site-based support, including BARK help and/or math-intervention courses; additionally, teachers offer individual support for their own students by re-teaching concepts and units that have been identified as weaknesses through these common assessments. The introduction of Common Core and the limitations of the master schedule have hindered significant progress in this area; however, the staff and administration do understand how beneficial it might be to further pursue flexible grouping as an added support structure for struggling students.

Task Four: Continue offering targeted 8th-grade students access to the district's Algebra Readiness Academy in order to provide a solid foundation for high-school Algebra.

Since the last WASC visitation, Buena High School has continued to offer the summer Algebra Readiness Academy for students with math deficits. The incoming 9th-grade students participating in the Algebra Readiness Academy each year have been identified through their middle school math CST scores and are invited to participate in this two-week course, which further supports success in Buena's algebra courses. Although this program is district-based in origin, several of Buena's math instructors teach this academy every year, providing early intervention to the students who will soon be attending Buena as full-time 9th-graders. Because the district is moving toward an integrated math approach, however, the future of this program is uncertain: Buena might continue to offer summer intervention in the form of a "Math 1 Readiness Academy," but the details have not yet been finalized.

Task Five: Continue focus on formative assessment through the utilization of tests in SchoolCity (including CAHSEE math pretests) to monitor progress and drive standards-aligned instruction.

Although Buena's 2011 WASC document specifically identified SchoolCity as the data collection/analysis program utilized by the school, Ventura Unified School District discontinued its contract with SchoolCity and started using the program Illuminate in its place. Regardless of the data-collection platform, however, math teachers continue to use the student performance data generated from tests (including district benchmarks, classroom tests, and CAHSEE pretests) to monitor student progress and align their instruction to the California state and Common Core standards. Using these data-collection programs in the last few years has led Buena to accurately identify students in danger of not passing the CAHSEE; after Buena has identified them, these students have been invited to participate in the Saturday CAHSEE academy. Students who have participated in the Saturday CAHSEE academy have said that they better understand the test and feel more confident when they take the exit exam in March – partially because of the skills and knowledge provided by the Saturday CAHSEE academy.

This year, VUSD Math Teacher Specialist Natalie Albrizzio and Buena Assistant Principal Bobbi Powers restructured the district's CAHSEE math pretest to mirror the key standards from the CAHSEE blueprint. This improved version of the math pretest more accurately represents the exam's math section; additionally, the new pretest will serve as an even more effective assessment tool for identifying students who are at risk of not passing the math portion.

Goal 3: Underperforming Students

Task One: Continue schoolwide implementation of researched-based instructional strategies (AVID, Marzano, Hollingsworth, etc.) with a special emphasis on SDAIE strategies for English Language Learners.

During the first year following Buena's 2011 WASC visitation, teachers utilized faculty meetings and collaboration time to share best practices involving researched-based teaching strategies; subsequently, many teachers on campus began implementing the various instructional strategies shared by their colleagues. However, with the impending implementation to Common Core Standards, faculty meetings have shifted focus from specific researched-based instructional strategies to preparing for the application of Common Core (which, obviously, embeds a wide variety of teaching strategies within its student-centered content standards).

As a direct result of this WASC goal, specialized courses, such as AVID and ELD/SDAIE/ESR, have used specific instructional strategies as a key component in classroom instruction; some of these strategies, such as the use of Cornell Notes, continue to be used by many staff members in various departments. Additionally, several teachers have received training in Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI) with a focus on SDAIE and EL strategies; these teachers have then had the opportunity to share best practices within their departments. For further support, one of Buena's English teachers, Kelly Everett, serves as the site's EL/SDAIE liaison; in this role, Ms. Everett attends professional development training, which she then uses to observe other teachers of SDAIE and ELD classes, with the intent of providing feedback and support for English Language Learners at Buena.

Task Two: Establish progress monitoring procedures, schoolwide response to intervention, and instruction protocols for both academics and behavior. Continue and expand standards-aligned common assessments to monitor student performance and placement. Increase number of teachers posting assignment and grades for Parent Connect program.

The key components of academic progress monitoring include the school's eight official progress reports, including quarter and semester grades, which all teachers are required to post throughout the school year. These reports, along with CST scores, generate parent and student awareness of student performance; additionally, the progress reports help instigate needed academic Response to Intervention from counselors, teachers, and administration. With the information provided by progress reports, students will be placed into BARK intervention, Cyber High, and Adult Education classes as needed; furthermore, these reports help to determine placement of Buena's English Learner population into ELD and SDAIE classes, as well as ESR and math-intervention courses.

To address student behavior, Buena High School has utilized established monitoring procedures and Response to Intervention programs, including Positive Behavior Support Plans (PBSPs) integrated with a five-step behavior protocol for students with behavioral challenges. The assistant principals in charge of discipline, along with counselors, teachers, and parents, work together to establish behavioral goals that will help each student with a PBSP to become successful at Buena. These goals, which are monitored by all parties involved, have established a formalized "Alternate Means of Correction" system that has helped replace many of the suspensions that were previously assigned at Buena; as a result, the school has seen a dramatic decrease in the amount of suspensions, from 266 in the 2010-2011 school year down to 191 in 2012-13. The implementation of this Alternate Means of Correction has allowed disciplined students to stay in school, providing them with more opportunities to succeed academically.

Buena continues to use standards-aligned assessments, such as benchmarks and CSTs, to monitor student performance and placement. With the introduction of Common Core, VUSD and its teachers continue to create Common Core-aligned assessments that will be used to monitor student performance and placement. Buena's teachers recognize that these standards-aligned assessments serve as a valuable instrument for proper student monitoring and course placement; for this reason, teacher use of common assessment will continue to grow in the coming years – as we adjust and modify curriculum and assessment for Common Core.

As the WASC visiting committee noted in 2011, the Zangle Student/Parent Connect program provides a valuable, 24-hour resource for Buena's families to monitor student progress and grades on a daily basis. Though the "Q" platform superseded Zangle as the program used by Buena's staff, the integration of the new platform has been relatively seamless for the Buena community. To increase the number of teachers posting assignments and grades to Zangle/Q, the district has offered multiple training seminars, including all-day visits from the district's technology department to provide individualized help to teachers at Buena; additionally, the district provides one-on-one training on how to use the Q reporting system to all new Buena teachers. Accordingly, the number of teachers using Q for parent and student access has grown from 80% in 2011 to 88% in 2014. Although the school has not yet reached its goal of 100% teacher participation, the staff generally views Q as a valuable academic tool and a vital means of communication for teachers, students, and parents.

Task Three: Continue to support SAP counseling and SAP core team programs in order to foster personal responsibility.

As stated previously, Buena's last principal, Dr. Vaca, made a distinct effort to bring a dedicated Student Assistance Program counselor to Buena. To achieve this, he allocated a 50% position for a SAP counselor to exclusively focus on student support and the emotional needs of students; the end result of Dr. Vaca's effort is that Joyce Cooper joined Buena's staff as SAP counselor in the 2013-2014 school year. Since coming to Buena, Mrs. Cooper has doubled the size of support groups offered at the school and has conducted one-on-one counseling with students to offer personalized support.

To complement the work of the SAP counselor, Buena's administration formed an anti-bullying committee to further educate students and staff about the importance of deterring bullying of all types. This committee (comprised of Assistant Principal Gayle Carey, counselor David Vallejo, and teacher Tina Perez) has sponsored various educational assemblies, such as the Ventura Police Department's multimedia assemblies and Ventura Arc's "Project R" assemblies; additionally, the committee monitors and follows up with individuals identified as either victims or perpetrators of bullying. The work of the anti-bullying committee and the SAP counselor, in addition to the efforts of individual staff members, helps to foster personal responsibility for students and staff at Buena.

Task Four: Continue support and expansion of BARK enrichment and UC A-G approved electives in order to help all students prepare for college and career paths.

BARK's enrichment classes have expanded from 15 course offerings at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year to 23 current offerings in 2013-2014. Currently, 673 of Buena's students have enrolled in BARK enrichment classes, which translates to roughly 34% of the student population; others eligible to participate in enrichment classes choose to enroll in Study Hall for BARK instead. Some notable examples of enrichment courses that provide unique education opportunities include Dianne Fergus's "College Application" class, which helps guide students through completing college applications and applying for scholarships; Tina Perez's "BARK 4 U" class, which brings in guest speakers from the Ventura community and helps guide students to choose a better life path; and Shannon Pelmeur's California Scholastic Federation (CSF) class, which provides community-service opportunities for high-achieving students. Other BARK opportunities include the hybrid intervention/enrichment chemistry and physics classes, in which students of varying ability levels help each other learn the subject matter. Although BARK has not been unanimously supported by Buena's staff, many staff members now view BARK as a unique opportunity for teachers to explore their interests and passions while simultaneously providing opportunities for students to receive creative outlets during the school day.

Like BARK's enrichment offerings, Buena's University of California A-G elective classes have increased substantially within the last few years. Since the last WASC visitation, the school has added digital photography, jazz band, and stagecraft courses to the list of A-G electives; additionally, several of Buena's teachers, including visual communications teacher Amanda Graves and AVID teacher Dianne Fergus, are currently working to receive A-G approval for their elective classes. In total, Buena now offers 23 A-G approved courses for students, all of which provide unique elective choices for students on a wide variety of college and career paths.

Although this is a substantial number of course offerings, the staff will continue exploring options for moving the site's non-A-G elective classes toward applying for A-G status.

Task Five: Continue to develop and support curriculum that promotes service learning and real-world applications.

While the focus on Common Core curriculum pertains primarily to core subject areas, Buena continues to offer courses with real-world applications, most notably ROP and CTE classes. All of these career-oriented classes promote service learning and real-world applications by incorporating authentic learning experiences and hands-on opportunities: these varied course offerings, ranging from medical careers to woodshop, provide career paths for a large section of the student population – including students whose interests and career goals do not include attending a four-year university immediately after graduation. Similarly, the special education counterpart to ROP classes, the Transition Partnership Program (TPP), gives special education students the opportunity to work in either a hospital, hospitality, or retail setting: for two periods a day, these special-needs students perform real-world job tasks and develop skillsets that will assist them in attaining jobs once they have graduated from high school. In a more limited capacity, local community programs like ASPIRE and Segue create bridges between the school and community by providing educational opportunities and guest speakers for a select number of Buena's classes. Currently, the 12th-grade English teachers are exploring the possibility of utilizing the ASPIRE model for a senior benchmark assignment; if implemented, this common assessment will provide real-world application for all 12th-grade English classes.

An additional way for English teachers to bridge the gap between traditional academic English classrooms and real-world learning is through Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum (ERWC) classes. These ERWC classes provide an alternative to the English literature that is normally taught during the senior year: instead of reading and analyzing fiction, students engage with expository non-fiction materials with a wide variety of controversial and engaging topics. The focus on non-fiction material helps to promote the reading and writing skills that will be necessary for students to succeed in a workplace environment after graduation; additionally, it mirrors the forthcoming Common Core curriculum (which focuses on real-world tasks), as well as connecting to the "Occupation- and technology-oriented goal" of our site's Expected Student Learning Outcomes. It should be noted that, since the last WASC visitation, the 12th-grade ERWC enrollment has ballooned from one period to three periods (serving roughly 24% of the senior class), illustrating the desire of students to take classes that emphasize real-world learning experiences. In addition to these 12th-grade classes, the English teachers utilize ERWC units in all grade levels for a mandatory third-quarter benchmark each year, thus exposing all students to the Expository Reading and Writing Curriculum.

In the Math Department, teachers employ the "Introductory and Expert Task" method, promoting the inclusion of real-world connections and the implementation of Common Core Standards in mathematics. The construction and presentation of these tasks helps foster problem-solving abilities and perseverance through a variety of pathways: by using abstract and quantitative reasoning, constructing viable arguments, critiquing the reasoning of others, modeling with mathematics, using appropriate tools strategically, attending to precision, and looking for/making use of structure. This method incorporates real-world tasks into each chapter in an attempt to build the skills and proficiency of all math students, while simultaneously cultivating critical-

thinking skills that extend beyond the confines of the math classroom.

Task Six: Continue support of schoolwide Renaissance program to recognize academic achievement and improvement and foster a school culture that honors learning.

The Renaissance Program at Buena High School gives staff and students the opportunity to celebrate academic success on campus in a variety of fashions. Specifically, the goals of the Renaissance Program are to recognize student achievement and encourage students to strive for greater academic accomplishments. The Renaissance Program celebrates students when they are able to maintain a 3.0 (or higher) un-weighted GPA and/or raise their GPA by 0.50 from the previous quarter.

Because the current incarnation of Renaissance has only been on campus since 2009, the program is still evolving. Currently, Renaissance celebrates student success in the following ways:

- By providing rewards and recognition in school-wide rallies
- By giving students free Renaissance t-shirts if their first semester grades make them eligible for Renaissance
- By handing out rewards and notes of encouragement to students
- By giving scholar-athletes awards for students who maintain their grades while participating in athletics
- By recognizing students who have perfect attendance and/or no tardy marks
- By giving “kindness” and “good character” awards to students who exhibit positive behavior on campus
- By recognizing staff members through a rotating “Staff Member of the Week” award, treats, and other small tokens of appreciation

To further encourage the growth of the Renaissance program, two periods of an FTE have been allocated to our Renaissance teacher, Annie McGavren: one of these periods is designated as a preparation/planning period and the other is for a Renaissance class that fosters leadership skills within students on campus. Though the Renaissance Program continues to evolve and change, it undoubtedly makes an impact on school climate and culture at Buena High.

Task Seven: Continue development of efforts to prevent/reduce alcohol and substance abuse on campus.

Since the last WASC visitation, Buena has seen a dramatic reduction in the number of controlled substance suspensions. In the 2010-2011 school year, 99 students were suspended for using and/or possessing controlled substances on campus. That number has dropped by 45%, down to 54 suspensions in the 2012-2013 school year. Although it is impossible to eradicate all student alcohol and substance abuse on campus, Buena has taken measures to prevent and reduce the use of illicit drugs on campus, and the suspension data validates the school’s efforts to address this issue.

The most noteworthy deterrent to substance abuse on campus is the presence of our School Resource Officer (SRO), Jamey MacLellan. Officer MacLellan, who splits his time between

Buena High School and Balboa Middle School, provides a strong presence on campus that serves as a deterrent to a wide variety of unwanted behavior. In addition to his day-to-day work at Buena, Officer MacLellan also facilitates the presentation of the multimedia assemblies on campus. These presentations, sponsored by the Ventura Police Department, include segments that address at-risk behaviors, including alcohol and substance abuse. Additionally, Officer MacLellan helps facilitate the presence of random K-9 searches on campus; though a licensed outside agency performs these K-9 searches, Officer MacLellan writes citations, as needed, when illicit substances are found on campus.

Furthermore, Assistant Principal Carey has continued to develop programs on campus that complement the work Officer MacLellan. Specifically, Ms. Carey has created a systematic procedure to help reduce the use of controlled substances on campus: this procedure includes quarterly check-ins with all students who have been suspended (for any reason), one-on-one conversations with students regarding drug/alcohol use, and referrals to the SAP counselor (and outside resources, if necessary) to provide students with the help that they need to improve their lives. Additionally, the students who are caught with alcohol or other controlled substances on campus are given a “deal” as part of their suspension: if the students agree to take part in substance abuse counseling, the administration will reduce the number of suspension days so that students can return to their education. As previously mentioned, Ms. Carey continues to check in with these students regularly after they have been suspended, in order to establish personal relationships with potential repeat offenders on campus and prevent further academic violations.

Teachers and local businesses have also played crucial roles in deterring alcohol use on campus. Teachers contribute by identifying students in their classrooms whom they suspect are under the influence of intoxicants; when these teachers contact administration immediately, it frequently leads to the administrators confiscating any alcohol or controlled substances before the student has had the opportunity to distribute the intoxicants to other students. Likewise, the partnership with local convenience stores, CVS and Vons, has been a big deterrent for drug and alcohol abuse on campus: these stores contact Buena’s SRO if they suspect that a Buena student has stolen alcohol. After being contacted, Officer MacLellan then reviews the store’s video surveillance footage to identify whether the culprit is a Buena student; if so, the administration can confiscate the substance from the student before he/she is able to use it or distribute it to others.

As previously mentioned, the addition of a 50% SAP counselor has also contributed to the decline of drug and alcohol consumption on campus. Ms. Cooper, in cooperation with a representative from Al-Anon/Alateen, addresses this population through a student support group dedicated solely to counseling students about drug and alcohol abuse. Ms. Cooper’s efforts, in conjunction with the other proactive prevention programs on campus, have played a role in the reduction of alcohol and substance abuse on campus. With her assistance and the diligent efforts of the Buena community, the administration will continue its work to further decrease the occurrence of alcohol and substance abuse incidents on Buena’s campus.

Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-up

- 1. Teachers need further practice analyzing common assessment data and the role that common assessments play in the student learning process. The staff needs more professional development training to understand the use and capabilities of the data management system.**

The Buena staff recognizes that employing common assessments and utilizing common-assessment data is an area in which the school can continue its growth and development. As the school transitions into the implementation of Common Core, the opportunities for analyzing common assessment data will undoubtedly increase. The Buena administration will continue to encourage departments to work together to create common assessments, in addition to the district benchmarks that have been incorporated into many subject areas; once these common assessments and benchmarks have been implemented, staff members will be able to analyze and use the resulting data to guide classroom instruction. At the time of the last WASC visitation (in 2011), Ventura Unified School District was using the SchoolCity data-collection program to record and maintain data for student assessment; in the years since then, the Illuminate platform has superseded SchoolCity as VUSD's assessment-data program. With the change to Illuminate, district personnel from VUSD have provided training opportunities for staff members, including mandatory training for all new teachers. Buena also has site-based "teacher technology specialists" who provide supplementary help as needed, in addition to the peer training on campus between expert users of the system and those staff members needing further assistance.

- 2. Every department/teacher needs to be involved in benchmark administration and analysis to guide re-teaching and interventions.**

Currently, the English, History, Math, and Science departments all administer benchmark assessments (though not in every course); however, how these results are used varies by department. With the introduction of Common Core, though, benchmarks have begun shifting toward performance-based assessments that provide more authentic feedback for classroom teachers. As of the 2013-2014 school year, the Social Science and English departments are working together with the district's curriculum specialists to create and administer common benchmarks; the data from these common benchmarks will not only provide information for re-teaching, but will help students and teachers adjust to the new Common Core-based Smarter Balanced Assessments. The Science and Math Departments continue to administer their current CST-modeled benchmarks for the purpose of student performance data collection and analysis, since these exams have not yet been updated to reflect Common Core or Next Generation Science Standards.

- 3. School City is a valuable data-collection tool. Parent involvement exists, but it needs to be improved. Attendance at school parent meetings is limited. Buena High School needs to develop more strategies to increase and strengthen parent support and involvement, especially from underrepresented groups.**

Parent involvement at Buena High School has improved over the past three years with the

school's increase in opportunities for parent/community programs, and the school's counselors have played a large role in this improvement. One of the most notable improvements has been the counseling staff's role in increasing distribution of Buena's monthly newsletter – from 1,800 parents/families to approximately 3,500 parents each month. This regular form of communication helps to inform parents about upcoming school activities, grade/mark reporting, California Healthy Kids, testing dates, athletic events, and student support programs (among other items).

During the current school year, one of Buena's counselors, Monica Fierro, conducted a meeting for the Spanish-speaking families of freshmen students in which she provided information on graduation requirements, as well as information on how to access Q Parent Connect; this meeting was well-attended, and the counselors plan on making it an annual event. Similarly, the counselors also provided Q Parent Connect trainings at Buena's ELAC meetings, in order to increase the knowledge and use of Parent Connect for our English Learner population.

Since 2011, another one of Buena's counselors, Natasha Hillis, has provided fall and spring semester College Nights for the school's students and parents. During these evening programs, Ms. Hillis distributes valuable information regarding college admittance and entrance requirements; because the attendance of these nights has increased dramatically in the last few years, the event has been moved into Buena's large auditorium in order to provide ample seating for those in attendance. Furthermore, the counselors and administration hope to increase parent participation even more by adding opportunities such as NCAA information programs, in conjunction with College Night,. Additionally, counselors have been planning a "financial aid night," in which a financial-aid specialist from Ventura College will offer a hands-on workshop in the Career Center. With this evening event, parents and students will actually fill out their applications online with one-on-one assistance from the Buena counseling staff.

In October, the BHS Foreign Language Department hosted its first annual *Día de los Muertos* community celebration. This schoolwide event, held on campus on Oct. 30, 2013, allowed students and community members to participate in a hands-on cultural learning experience. In the weeks leading up to the event, students learned about the cultural influences of *Día de los Muertos* and produced authentic projects for the celebration: they created altars, presented songs and poems, cooked traditional meals, and wrote research papers (to name only a few examples). The involvement for this event stretched beyond the Foreign Language Department, with Buena's Social Studies, English, Math, Art, Drama, Music, and Science departments all participating in the celebration with subject-specific altars and displays. Additionally, the school was able to bring in outside members of the Ventura community to contribute: a group of kindergartners from Will Rogers and a group of middle school students from the De Anza Arts and Technology Academy performed folkloric dances at the event, the PTSA helped out behind the scenes, and several community organizations (not affiliated with the school) created altars and booths. Ultimately, more than 500 hundred community members attended the event, and this evening showcased the hard work of Buena's students and staff – who were able to share their knowledge and talent with the community on this unique night.

With this wide range of outreach programs, Buena High School continues to develop and strengthen its parent support and involvement. Though the school is not yet excelling in this area, the significant gains made in the last few years signal a positive shift in the area of school-

community relations. In the years to come, the administration and staff at Buena will improve upon the current programs and develop additional ones in order to best meet the needs of parents and students.

4. There is a continuing need for all teachers to receive training on strategies that will make a rigorous, relevant and coherent curriculum more accessible to students of all capabilities.

Although Buena teachers currently strive to make their classroom curriculum rigorous, relevant, and coherent for all students, the school's staff members can also benefit from additional training. With the emergence of the Common Core curriculum, the need for professional development increases, as rigorous, relevant, and coherent curriculum has been embedded within Common Core. To help with this transition, Ventura Unified School District recently provided all math and English teachers with all-day Common Core training seminars; additionally, VUSD has provided department-specific professional development, with department representatives utilizing this training to later share during department meetings. The administration at Buena High School also disseminated information about Common Core onsite: during faculty meetings for the 2012-2013 school year, Assistant Principal Bobbi Powers gave presentations to the Buena staff about the Common Core shifts and how teachers can begin implementing Common Core strategies in their existing classroom instruction.

Another key professional development resource was provided by representatives from the CSU system, who held ERWC training for members of the English department: this ERWC professional development increases the knowledge of teaching strategies and resources to incorporate rigorous, relevant, and coherent curriculum in Buena's English classes. Similarly, several social studies teachers have recently attended professional development for their Advanced Placement courses; this, in turn, provides them with the resources and insight they need to increase the rigor and relevancy of curriculum for our high-achieving students.

V: Schoolwide Action Plan

The WASC schoolwide action plan that was written for the 2011 WASC self-study report has become the guiding document for Buena High School. As previously described, the Single Plan for Student Achievement was rewritten in spring of 2011 to mirror the WASC schoolwide action plan, and the document has been refined annually since then. With this document in place as the school's guide, all of the WASC action plan goals have been consistently implemented at Buena High School since the 2011 self-study visitation; additionally, Buena will continue to follow these goals for school improvement, even with the anticipation of changes that will occur with the full implementation of Common Core standards. Because Common Core has become the major focal point for the school in the last few years, the next revisions of the Single Plan and WASC action plan will reflect the move toward Common Core curriculum in all facets of the school's curriculum. Moreover, with the quarterly WASC review process beginning at the end of this year's first semester, we anticipate further refinement of the schoolwide action plan in the years to come.

VI: Appendix

Please refer to the appendix for a copy of Buena High School's current action plan (the Single Plan for Student Achievement), as well as copies of the schoolwide action plan for all years since the last full self-study.

