

SELF-STUDY VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

**WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES
CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

FOR

FAME PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

(HIGH SCHOOL COMPONENT)

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Fame Public Charter School District

April 3-5, 2006

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Chapter I: Student/Community Profile

FAME Public Charter School began as the Bay Area School for Independent Study (BASIS) and was first organized in 2001 under the authorization of the Sunol Glen Unified School District. That year, BASIS applied for not-for-profit public benefit status and began serving students in grades K-12 in the 2002-2003 school year. As of October, 2002, BASIS had 425 students enrolled. By the 2004-05 school year, 645 students were enrolled in grades K-12.

BASIS offered two enrollment options. One allowed students to receive daily instruction through classes taught at the Oakland Resource Center. The other allowed students to work through their high school education via a home study program. The BASIS approach relied on parents, who were expected to be partners in the educational process and to work closely with teachers and other support staff to ensure that students made appropriate academic and social progress. Having outgrown their space in Oakland by the end of the 2004 school year, the school began looking for a new location for their resource center and moved to San Leandro in May, 2005. Community and staff developed and renovated the San Leandro site.

BASIS parent demand and expanded opportunities to serve potentially underserved students led to the development of FAME. The FAME charter was petitioned through Alameda County and it is that county's first countywide charter. It was granted on May 10, 2005. The BASIS charter was officially closed for financial audit purposes on June 30, 2005.

FAME is an acronym for "Families of Alameda for Multi-Cultural/Multi-Lingual Education." The school is a unique hybrid site-based – independent study program. FAME has three programs: a K-8 site-based school in Fremont (the intent is to expand that program to 9th and possibly 10th graders for the 2006-2007 school year); a K-8 site-based program with a 9-12 classroom based independent study program in San Leandro; and a K-12 non-classroom based component know as BASIS @ FAME. The WASC petition for candidacy is for the high school components of FAME only.

FAME is a member of the APLUS+ Personalized Learning network of schools that provides support and networking for personalized learning schools. Independent study is the school's main program, being an outgrowth of BASIS and the key source of referrals to the site based programs which were established with the intent of serving those who sought an independent study type of education alternative but due to special needs or language constraints could better be served in a classroom environment.

BASIS @ FAME

BASIS @ FAME is the non-classroom component of FAME. This program allows students to work independently in their own homes using a variety of curricula suitable for each student's learning needs as well as other community resources. Dublin serves as the resource center for this component of the program. Two tracks to graduation are

offered: General Education and College Preparatory.

FAME San Leandro

The 9-12 program at San Leandro is a hybrid independent study site-based program. The students choosing to attend this program are required to attend classes daily. A variety of courses are offered covering the core content areas of language arts, math, social studies, science and foreign language. Students also receive ELD support and have access to some elective courses. Students are required to complete any courses not offered at the center as an independent study class. These students receive a semester individualized learning plan that is coordinated through the homeroom teacher and the school counselor. They receive direct instruction in lieu of discretionary funds and the curriculum is selected and provided by the school. A computer lab has been established on the campus and money has been budgeted for field trips. Students in this program also have access to community college courses and individualized tutoring via a daily guided study hall and CAHSEE prep tutoring.

BASIS began primarily as an option for parents who wanted to homeschool their children and were willing and able to serve as the primary educational facilitator. It now serves a significant number of at-risk students as defined by students entering with failing grades, behind in credits, or having dropped out of their prior program. These students come to the school looking for an educational alternative that allows for a more personalized one-to-one approach. These students typically have less parent support which is requiring the school to expand its service model.

FAME's independent study program is chartered to serve the students of Alameda County and the six contiguous counties that surround it: Contra Costa, Stanislaus, San Francisco, San Mateo, San Joaquin and Santa Clara. FAME @ BASIS 2005-06 enrollment varies by region. Virtually all of San Leandro's enrollment is from Alameda County.

FAME San Leandro: EL instruction is provided through English immersion. EL students receive special one-on-one attention during the day for a minimum of 45-minutes. In general, the classroom systems are based on an "inclusion" philosophy. However, teachers may determine, depending on the home languages of EL students, whether a literacy coach is needed to support immersion or, in instances where there are extreme comprehension deficits, where bilingual immersion is needed.

BASIS @ FAME: BASIS has not historically had a defined EL program. CELDT testing is done and student language needs are addressed via curriculum selection.

Enrollment Numbers:

BASIS @ FAME

YEAR	9 th Grade	10 th Grade	11 th Grade	12 th Grade	Total BASIS	% of Combined Enrollment
2005/06 As of Oct 1, 05	34	35	25	25	119	67%
2004/05 As of March 05	44	33	28	26	131	70%
2003/04 As of March 04	32	19	26	10	87	72%
2002/03 As of March 03	19	27	11	15	72	77%

FAME San Leandro

YEAR	9 th Grade	10 th Grade	11 th Grade	12 th Grade	Total San Leandro	% of Combined Enrollment
2005/06 As of Oct 1, 05	20	15	11	12	58	33%
2004/05 As of March 05	25	11	14	7	57	30%
2003/04 As of March 04	15	11	6	2	34	28%
2002/03 As of March 03	9	7	2	3	21	23%

San Leandro's enrollment is affected by physical space. 2004/05 and 2005/06 reflect maximum capacity for the high school program.

COMBINED HIGH SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

YEAR	9 th Grade	10 th Grade	11 th Grade	12 th Grade	Total
2005/06 As of Oct 1, 05	54	50	36	37	177
2004/05 As of March 05	69	44	42	33*	188
2003/04 As of March 04	47	30	32	12*	121
2002/03 As of March 03	28	34	13	18*	93

***These totals do not reflect students who graduated mid-year nor enrollments after October 1, 2005.**

(Updated Information: As of February 2006, combined high school enrollment was 200 students.)

HOME LANGUAGES (Combined BASIS @ FAME/FAME San Leandro)
HOME LANGUAGES FOR 2004-05

Rank/Language	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total	% of Total
1.Arabic	7	4	2	3	16	50%
2.Spanish	6	4	3	0	13	40%
3.All other non-English	1	0	1	0	2	6%
4.Hindi	0	0	1	0	1	2%
5.Russian	1	0	0	0	1	2%
EL Totals	15	8	7	3	32	
% of Totals	46%	25%	21%	8%		100%

% of students of total 2004-05 enrollment indicating a language other than English is spoken in the home was 16.7% (based on an enrollment of 191).

Home Languages for 2005-06
BASIS @ FAME

Language	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total	% of Total
Arabic	0	4	3	1	8	6%
Spanish	0	1	3	2	6	5%
English	38	29	16	20	103	82%
Farsi	0	1	1	0	2	2%
Hindi	0	0	0	1	1	NA
Other	2	3	1	0	6	5%
Total Grade Enrollment	40	37	24	24	126	126
% Reporting Language other than English	.5%	24%	33%	17%	18%	

Preliminary CELDT scores for 2005-06 indicate that as of October 30 there were 2 EL students and 1 FEP student enrolled in BASIS @ FAME.

FAME San Leandro

Language	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total	% of Total
Arabic	8	5	7	8	28	48%
Spanish	0	0	0	0	0	0
English	2	5	3	4	14	24%
Farsi	1	2	2	0	5	9%
Hindi	0	2	0	2	4	7%
Other	3	3	0	1	7	12%
Total Grade Enrollment	14	17	12	15	58	
% Reporting Language Other than English	86%	71%	75%	73%	76%	

Student Achievement Data:

Preliminary CELDT scores for 2005-06 indicate that as of October 30 there were 9 EL students and 10 FEP students enrolled at San Leandro

FAME special education services are integrated into the mainstream general education program for all students. Special services personnel work collaboratively with the general education classroom, independent study teacher, or parent-educator to meet the educational requirements of children with exceptional needs for full inclusion placement. As of January 15, 2006, the total 2005-06 high school SE enrollment was three students.

At the end of the 2004-05 school year, a survey was sent to every family that was enrolled in the school's program. Sixty-five responses, representing 33% of the student enrollment at that time, were returned: 76% of the students in the survey live with two parents, 50% of those surveyed have 5-8 people in the household, 40% of those surveyed have 0-4 people in the household, 44% of those surveyed have total family income of \$40,000 dollars per year or less, 53% of the single parent households had a total yearly income of less than \$20,000, nearly 50% of those surveyed who have 5-8 people in the household have a total family income of \$40,000 or less.

Graduation rates have historically been hard for the school to track as students move in and out of the program from year to year. Currently, there is no differentiation between students who have been in the program for four years or who have transferred in. Many also have the option of transferring out again before their senior year to graduate with their local schools. Others transfer in as 12th graders. There is more matriculation from the K-8 program thus affording the opportunity to begin tracking students graduating from within FAME by program. Additionally, FAME San Leandro has a fairly consistent population.

The school has not formally kept post-enrollment data. However, as part of the graduation ceremony students are requested to identify their post graduation plans. Last year's graduating class indicated the following: Attend Four Year College: 3; Attend Community College and Transfer to Four Year University: 14; Attend Community College for A.A.: 2; Vocational or Specialized: 6; Enter the workforce: 1; Undecided: 1; No Information: 10.

Each year, some students take the SAT. At this point, the school does not have reliable methods for gathering the results. From the numbers indicated above, most students are preparing for community college or vocational training. Therefore, the number of students completing the college preparatory track is low which in turn corresponds to a low number of students taking the SAT.

FAME uses the "community as the classroom." Students earn credit by performing community service, learning employment skills by combining employment within an academic structure, taking classes at a community college or by entering local ROP programs. Additionally, the school contracts with a number of Educational Support Providers (ESPs) that work with students providing tutoring in areas such as; music, drama and art classes, online college preparatory classes, and writing instruction. Also

offered are several field trips throughout the year which afford BASIS @ FAME students a chance to interact with other independent study students. FAME San Leandro recently began a Leadership class in which students take on a variety of tasks such as school cleanup, fundraising, and planning for their graduation celebration

Federal Accountability: Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

In 2005 BASIS made the AYP requirement meeting 22 of its 22 AYP Criteria.
 In 2004 BASIS did not meet the AYP requirement, meeting 5 out of the 11 criteria.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE INDEX (API)

Year	Base	Target	Score	Growth
2003	N/A	N/A	689	N/A
2004	689	695	677	-12
2005	666	673	713	47

This data reflects the entire K-12 school population. 213 students are included in the 2003 API, 328 are students are included in the 2004 API, and 352 students are included in the 2005 API.

California High School Exit Exam Data
FAME San Leandro 2004 and 2005

Year	Mathematics			English-Language Arts		
	#Tested	#Passed	%Passed	#Tested	#Passed	%Passed
2004	11	3	27%	11	4	36%
2005	33	13	39%	28	13	46%

2004 included test data for 10th grade students only.
 2005 includes test data for 10th and 11th grade students from all administrations.
 The student population was consistent over the course of both years

California High School Exit Exam BASIS 2004 and 2005

Year	Mathematics			English-Language Arts		
	#Tested	#Passed	%Passed	#Tested	#Passed	%Passed
2004	17	13	76%	17	15	88%
2005	37	17	45%	34	20	58%

2004 included test data for 10th grade students only.
 2005 includes test data for 10th and 11th grade students from all administrations.

During this same administration, 12 students were EL or FEP. 8 of these students did not pass the exam putting the non-pass rate for EL student at 66% compared with 47% for all students tested during this administration. *School's Note: due to inconsistent reporting strategies, the EL numbers have a margin of error. We are working to ensure that EL data being collected for this year is more accurate.*

California High School Exit Exam Language Fluency Pass Rates for 2005

Language	Mathematics			English-Language Arts		
	# Tested	#Passed	%Passed	#Tested	#Passed	%Passed
English Only	31	20	65%	29	21	72%
Redesignated Fluent English Prof. (RFEP)	19	6	32%	17	7	41%
English Learners (EL)	20	4	20%	16	5	31%
Total	70	30	43%	62	33	53%

School's Note: due to inconsistent reporting strategies, the EL numbers have a margin of error. We are working to ensure that EL data being collected for this year is more accurate.

2005-2006 School Year

Results from the November 2005 CAHSEE administration for 11th and 12th grade students:

CAHSEE Math Fame San Leandro: 11 students assessed, 2 passed.

CAHSEE Math Basis @ Fame: 11 students assessed, 3 passed.

CAHSEE ELA San Leandro: 7 students assessed, 1 passed.

CAHSEE ELA BASIS @ FAME: 10 Students assessed, 6 passed.

STAR Data

FAME San Leandro English-Language Arts 2005

48 Students Tested

Grade	Far Below Basic	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced	% Prof or Above
9 th Grade	2	8	11	3	--	13%
10 th Grade	1	3	3	3	--	30%
11 th Grade	3	5	5	1	--	7%
Total	6	16	18	7	--	15%
% of Total	13%	34%	38%	15%		

BASIS @ FAME English-Language Arts 2005

78 Students Tested

Grade	Far Below Basic	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced	% Prof or Above
9 th Grade		7	4	10	9	63%
10 th Grade	7	7	5	5	4	32%
11 th Grade	4	6	3	5	2	35%
Total	11	20	12	20	15	45%
% of Total	14%	26%	15%	26%	19%	

English Language Learners 2005

	Total Tested	Advanced		Proficient		Basic		Below Basic		Far Below Basic	
English Only or FEE	99	14	14%	25	25%	23	23%	27	28%	9	10%
English Learner	19	1	5%	2	10%	4	21%	7	38%	5	26%
Unknown Fluency	9	0	0	0	0	4	45%	2	22%	3	33%
Total	127	15		27		31		36		17	

40% of English Only or FEE students were Proficient or above.

16% of English Learner students were Proficient or above.

0% of the Unknown Fluency students were Proficient or above.

Of the 19 English Learner Students, 7 were enrolled at BASIS, 12 were enrolled at San Leandro.

2005 Statewide, an average of 5% of EL students were Proficient or above.

School Note: due to reporting inconsistencies the above information has an unknown margin of error.

General Math 2005

34 Students Tested

Site	Far Below Basic	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced	Total Tested	% Prof or Above
San Leandro	1	4	9	6	2	22	36%
BASIS	2	7	0	3	0	12	25%
Total	3	11	9	9	2		
% of Total	9%	32%	26%	26%	7%		

Statewide: 22% of students scored Proficient or above.

78% of the students tested scored Basic or below.

64% of the San Leandro students scored Basic or below.

75% of the BASIS students scored Basic or below.

Algebra 1 2005

40 Students Tested

Site	Far Below Basic	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced	Total Tested
San Leandro	1	8	5	1	0	15
BASIS	3	12	9	1	0	25
Total	4	20	14	2	0	
% of Total	10%	50%	35%	5%	0	

5% of the students tested scored at Proficient or above.

Statewide: 19% of students scored Proficient or above.

95% of the students tested scored at Basic or below, 60% Below Basic or below.

93% of the San Leandro students scored Basic or below, 66% Below Basic or below.

95% of the BASIS students scored Basic or below, 60% scored Below Basic or below.

Algebra 2 2005: 10 students tested: 2 students scored Basic, 5 students scored Below Basic, 3 students scored Far Below Basic.

Earth Science 2005:

San Leandro: 24 students tested: 16 tested Below Basic or below, 6 tested Basic, 1 tested Proficient.
BASIS: 22 students tested: 17 tested Below Basic or below; 9 tested Below Basic; 1 tested Proficient.

Biology 2005: 25 students tested: 25 scored Basic or below

World History 2005: 38 students tested: 33 tested Basic or below.

US History 2005: 34 Students Tested: 29 tested Basic or below.

STAR Historical Comparisons

CST Overall Achievement

English Language Arts

Grade	2003 55 Students Tested	2004 94 Students Tested	2005 127 Students Tested
9	38%	39%	42%
10	25%	37%	32%
11	14%	25%	24%

Scores indicate % of student scoring Proficient or above

General Math

Grade	2003 2 students Tested	2004 19 Students Tested	2005 34 Students Tested
All Students	*	16%	32%

Scores indicate % of student scoring Proficient or above

*Data was not available

Algebra 1

Grade	2003 34 students Tested	2004 35 Students Tested	2005 40 Students Tested
All Students	3%	11%	5%

Scores indicate % of student scoring Proficient or above

*Data was not available

The percentage of Alameda County students scoring at Proficient or above is 15%.

California English Language Development Test (CELDT) 2004-05

Proficiency Levels	Arabic	Spanish	Other
Number Tested (#)	21	19	6
Advanced %	14%	16%	17%
Early Advanced %	43%	47%	50%
Intermediate %	29%	32%	17%
Early Intermediate%	0	5%	17%
Beginning %	14%	0	0

Comments on Significant Findings of the Profile:

FAME has undergone significant changes in the past year. Its staff has worked collaboratively to better serve a variety of student, parent and family needs. These

changes include the addition of facilities such as the Dublin resource center for BASIS @ FAME students, teachers and parents and the FAME San Leandro site where students meet with teachers on a daily basis. Personnel changes have been made to support student personal and academic growth as well as curriculum and instruction. A testing coordinator has been added. Some additional duties of that position also include coordination and dissemination of information about field trips for the BASIS @ FAME students. To assist special needs students and to assist with students who at times have specific needs, a full-time psychologist position has been added. During two recent times of need for grief counseling for the students at FAME San Leandro, the psychologist was available to them. A new accounts payable position has been added to assist in the business office and a website-based student store has been expanded where independent study teachers may order curriculum and materials to meet the individual student learning plans of their families and students. This same site provides additional information for BASIS @ FAME teachers, parents and students, and allows them to check account balances.

Chapter II: Progress Report

Comments on the School's major changes and follow-up process

A number of significant changes have occurred at FAME since the initial WASC visit and the school's preliminary candidacy:

- A new charter agreement has been put into place with the Alameda County Board of Education replacing the school's initial charter authorization under the Sunol Glen Unified School District.
- There was a change in leadership at the San Leandro site in February. The principal of the San Leandro site-based program has been replaced and that position is currently filled on an interim basis.
- The focus of the programs being offered by the school has now been expanded to address the students who need day-to-day on site instruction in core areas.
- While the school's administrative offices have remained in Newark, growth and an expanded program necessitated access to additional facilities. The school outgrew its resource center in Oakland and in its place are a resource center for independent study students and parents in Dublin and the hybrid site-based program in San Leandro.
- There are plans to add a site-based high school program to the new K-8 site in Fremont for the 2006-2007 school year.

The responsibility to follow-up on critical areas identified during the initial visit when preliminary candidacy was granted was shared across the staff but included limited student and parent participation. Evidence of the follow-up was included in the self-study, in the dialogue with focus groups, parents, students and other key stakeholders, in local newspaper articles and in observations of classroom activities. Other evidence was found in survey results but lacking from the website and other information sources.

The four areas identified in the school action plan and the progress accomplished in each of those critical areas for follow up are indicated as follows:

1. That the school explore ways to increase direct support to parents and to thus actualize an expectation that parents become strong partners in instructional delivery.

The Dublin Resource Center opened in September, 2005. Educational materials not currently in use by students are housed in this resource library and are available for checkout by teachers and parents. There are several rooms available for meetings among students, parents and teachers. These facilities are also used for staff meetings, SST and IEP meetings, workshops and special events, to administer final exams and school and state-mandated tests. Parents have access to the school library materials and to program

administrators who have offices at the Dublin Resource Center. Efforts have been made to establish an e-mail list to enable the school to inform families of school activities, testing schedules and other events.

There have been some parent education workshops for home-based families including an open house that was held at the beginning of the school year so that parents and students could become familiar with staff and materials available in the Dublin Resource Center. In March, the purchasing officer left the district and has since been replaced with a person from within the organization. An accounts payable position has been added. The purchasing officer job description includes responsibilities for overseeing the independent study accounts.

Since, the program in Fremont has a very active PTO, that group has invited parents from the San Leandro program to attend their meetings. San Leandro parents have made initial efforts to organize their own PTO.

2. That issues of funding equity, particularly with the Resource Center in Oakland be resolved.

Students within the school receive equitable funding. Home-based students have access to a discretionary fund through their BASIS @ FAME teacher for curriculum, materials, supplies and classes. Parents and teachers in the BASIS @ FAME program can access a school website student store to view curriculum materials and approved vendors and to review current balances in their accounts. San Leandro students receive daily direct instruction in a classroom setting, where curriculum and materials are provided for their education.

3. That the school staff explore the value of diversity and that specific efforts be made to expand cultural diversity with the student population in the Oakland Resource Center.

As of May, 2005 the Oakland Resource Center closed. Most Oakland Resource Center students enrolled at the new San Leandro campus. That campus includes students from ethnic backgrounds such as African –American, North African, Middle Eastern, Caucasian, and Hispanic. When the Oakland Resource Center first opened, many of the students came directly from the local geographical area which was predominantly African-American. Since that time the center has drawn students from a wider geographical area, however, a major ethnic Hispanic group from the local community is under represented on the campus of FAME San Leandro.

4. That the school complete a comprehensive school accountability report card for distribution to parents and the broader community.

BASIS completed a comprehensive school accountability report card for year two of the school's existence. BASIS did not do a year three SARC because of the transition to a

new sponsoring agency (Alameda County Office of Education) and a new charter (FAME Public Charter School). Under the new charter, the school changed significantly, rendering a school accountability report card inaccurate since the charter number for the previous school was dissolved.

Chapter III: Self-Study Process

FAME Public Charter School Expected Schoolwide Learning Results

Self-directed learners who:

- Create and use an educational plan to set personal and academic goals based individual strengths, interests, and learning styles.
- Use self-evaluation, adult, and peer feedback to assess and improve progress towards goals.
- Exhibit effective study and work habits that include, but are not limited to, regular attendance, time management skills, and on-time assignments.
- Demonstrate self respect by developing a strong work ethic towards personal and academic goals and an understanding of the value of learning for self improvement.
- Discover, develop, and pursue individual passions.

Community members who:

- Understand the democratic process and role of citizenship.
- Demonstrate knowledge of human diversity and an understanding for the breadth of individual difference.
- Exhibit respect and tolerance in daily interactions, both verbal and nonverbal, towards peers, adults, and the community at large.
- Demonstrate social learning by engaging in cooperative activities such as teamwork, task sharing, and collaborative projects.
- Exhibit social, moral, and behavioral maturity by taking responsibility for their decisions and actions.

Complex thinkers and problem solvers who:

- Analyze and apply new information to everyday situations.
- Develop critical and meaningful questions and search for answers.
- Use technology to conduct research, develop reports, and presentations.
- Connect ideas across the curriculum to accomplish meaningful tasks.

Academic achievers who:

- Demonstrate high expectations for their scholarly and personal accomplishment.
- Meet or exceed the learning objectives of the California State subject area content standards.

Effective Communicators who:

- Write and speak with confidence and clarity to a diverse audience.
- Communicate needs in a responsible and respectful manner.
- Listen and read attentively and actively to understand the messages of others.

During the fall of the 2005-2006 school year, teachers and administrators discussed, voted and agreed upon the following critical academic needs.

1. Raise reading and writing competencies as measured by the STAR, CAHSEE, and school-wide assessments by more closely aligning curriculum and instruction to the California Content Standards and in particular emphasize the development of writing across the curriculum with a goal of all students passing the CAHSEE writing essay with a score of 3 or better.
2. Raise math competency as measured by STAR, CAHSEE, and school-wide assessments by more closely aligning curriculum and instruction to the California content standards with the goal of all students scoring in the Proficient range or higher on the STAR.
3. Improve ELL students' basic reading, writing, and math abilities as indicated by their scores on the CELDT, STAR, CAHSEE, and other school-wide assessments.

Comments on the School's Self-Study Process With Respect to the Expected Outcomes of the Self-Study

1. The involvement and collaboration of stakeholders in the self-study:

Teachers and administrators were actively involved in the process to address and analyze needs and to develop an action plan to support those identified student needs. Staff and administration reviewed student work samples, held roundtable discussions, and discussed student and community profile data to formalize expected student outcomes and achievement. Other data input was obtained from parent surveys. A plan is needed to facilitate ongoing data analysis that regularly includes parents and students in addition to staff and administration.

2. The clarification of the school's purpose and expected schoolwide learning results:

Expected schoolwide learning results were developed in a collaborative manner. The expected schoolwide learning results were written so that they aligned with state standards and could be measured through means including standardized test scores and comparison to course descriptions. The expected schoolwide learning results chosen reflect identified critical needs. A monthly review of student work portfolios, parent facilitator and IST observations, FAME adopted norm and criterion referenced tests, student demonstrations and student grades are all used as measures of the expected schoolwide learning results and achievement of academic standards. The

development of rubrics across the curriculum will provide an additional measurement tool.

3. The assessment of the actual student program and its impact on student learning with respect to the criteria:

Student learning records identify standards targeted and met during a semester long learning period. While emphasis is placed on meeting the state content objectives and state goals for test achievement, this is done within the overall framework of the individual student's plan and needs. This allows for individual student differences and provides for flexibility in pace through curriculum and curriculum used. There is a need for a student data system that will allow the school to disaggregate data and produce transcripts in a more timely manner.

4. The development of a schoolwide action plan that integrates subject area/program and support plans to address identified growth needs:

5. The development and implementation of an accountability system for monitoring the accomplishment of the action plan:

The leadership team created an action plan following analysis of the key identified areas of strength and relative weaknesses. They identified four major growth areas:

1. Student Achievement: Students will demonstrate improved achievement in the areas of reading, writing, and math. Achievement will be measured first at the individual level and secondly at the schoolwide level in alignment with an emphasis on Personalized Learning Plans. A variety of assessments will be used to measure student progress.
2. Teacher and Student Support Services: Improve services to teachers, students, and parents in order to ensure that adequate supports are in place that enable the implementation of the school's mission and vision in service to each individual student's personalized learning plan.
3. Communication: Improve communication among administration, staff, students, parents and community in order to better serve the needs of students and families and ensure stakeholders are informed of all relevant information pertaining to the school.
4. Stakeholder Involvement: Improve stakeholder involvement in school processes to ensure that all groups have adequate access and participation in the planning and development process.

The leadership team will monitor the accomplishment of the plan.

Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program

CATEGORY A. ORGANIZATION FOR STUDENT LEARNING

A-1: School Purpose Criterion:

To what extent has the school established a clear statement of purpose that reflects the beliefs and philosophy of the institution?

To what extent is the purpose defined further by adopted expected schoolwide learning results that form the basis of the educational program for every student?

FAME's goals state:

- All students will demonstrate grade-level proficiency in reading and writing.
- All students will demonstrate mastery of designated outcome goals in the areas of English Literature, History, Math, Science, and in Art or a Foreign Language.
- All students will demonstrate mastery of skills related to college preparation and success in continued education, or career objectives or other post high school plans.
- All students will demonstrate the development of a social conscience.

According to the FAME staff, the FAME independent study program is founded on the understanding that students learn in different ways and at different paces. By providing an educational option that is tailored to a child's individual strengths and weaknesses, FAME staff contend that they are able to reach children that may not succeed in a traditional classroom. They believe that a key part of the success of their program is the involvement of the parent. Parents, in concert with their independent study teacher (IST), can capitalize on the individual learning styles, interests and goals of students to develop the best educational program possible for each child.

FAME staff have been challenged in getting parents across seven counties involved in the WASC process, developing their Expected schoolwide learning results and in the program in general. When parents were asked to respond to the following statement: "I am aware that I have opportunity to participate in school decision making," the average BASIS @ FAME parent score was 3.1; teachers rated this at 3.9. FAME San Leandro responses were slightly higher at 3.4. When asked to respond to the statement: "I would be interested in participating in school decision making," the average parent score was 2.7 for BASIS @ FAME parents and 3.4 for FAME San Leandro parents.

The findings indicate that parents seem to be aware that FAME has established mission and philosophy statements and expected schoolwide learning results. However, FAME's attempts to promote stakeholder participation in school processes have not been successful, nor have their attempts to set up communication systems that adequately inform stakeholders of school events and opportunities for involvement. For example, this issue was highlighted as FAME staff attempted to assemble volunteers and collect information for their self-study. The focus group found that one of the main obstacles to

more stakeholder involvement is that FAME staff lack adequate means of communicating with the school community. The website has not been fully developed nor has the school fully implemented student/parent e-mail lists. While each year FAME published at least one newsletter, this has fallen short of demand and the school's intent. Currently, BASIS @ FAME students' teachers serve as the primary conduit for information. FAME San Leandro parents are often contacted in the parking lot and teachers may call parents to report student progress. The school is also challenged in that many parents have limited English skills and some families do not have a computer or internet access. A plan for improving communication among school stakeholders that includes a variety of methods of delivery needs to be developed and implemented.

A-2: Governance Criterion:

To what extent does the governing authority adopt policies which are consistent with the school purpose and support the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results for the school?

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

To what extent does the governing authority monitor results?

The FAME charter clearly outlines the duties of the board of directors. The school is governed pursuant to its corporate bylaws and the school operates autonomously from the county with the exception of supervisory oversight as required by law and agreed upon contracted services. The board of directors has ultimate responsibility for the operation and activities of the school. In addition, "the Board has a responsibility to solicit input from, and opinions of, the parents of the school students regarding issues of significance and to weight the input and opinions carefully before taking action. The primary method for executing their responsibility is the adoption of policies that offer guidance and interpretation of the charter and procedures to assist the staff in facilitating the implementation of such policies." (FAME Charter, pg. 48).

The board has historically met approximately 4-6 times per year. The current charter requires monthly meetings and the board has complied. Meeting dates, times, locations, and agendas are posted at each site 72 hours in advance of each meeting in accordance with bylaws. It was noted that even though an annual meeting schedule is developed, it has not been posted and the meeting dates frequently change. Due to their busy personal schedules, board members schedule meetings session-to-session. All staff members are sent an e-mail notifying them of the board meetings. Whether the notifications are routinely forwarded to the FAME families is unknown. The meetings have not been systematically posted to the FAME website. Meeting minutes are not circulated or posted after the meetings although they are available upon request.

The FAME charter indicates, "The Board of Directors will carry out a program evaluation plan on an on-going basis." It was unclear to the focus groups as to what level

the board has implemented an evaluation process to monitor student performance, academic progress, and the fiscal health of the school. Nor did it appear that a process has been established for evaluation of the governing board or policy set by the board. Additionally, the focus group was unaware of any recruitment or selection processes for board members although the bylaws indicate that the board of directors will select new members when vacancies occur. While the charter and the bylaws provide for public access to information regarding public funds, involvement in the budgeting process by school stakeholders has been limited to attendance at board meetings where budgets are discussed.

A-3: School Leadership Criterion:

To what extent does the school leadership make decisions to facilitate actions that focus the energies of the school on student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results?

To what extent does the school leadership empower the staff?

To what extent does the school leadership encourage commitment, participation and shared accountability for student learning?

Historically, the majority of decisions pertaining to policies, procedures and organizational structure designed to focus school activities on student achievement have been made by the school administrative team. This team includes the school director, the FAME San Leandro site principal, the BASIS @ FAME administrators, and the Fremont site principal. The administrative team meets regularly to communicate information related to the operation of the school, make decisions, and allocate resources in order to support the teaching staff. They also attend various workshops and conferences in order to keep abreast of the most current regulation and methodologies informing charter schools and independent study programs. They attend most board meetings and report on various projects, either proposed or in progress, affecting student academic achievement. The school and its administrators are also members of the APlus organization which provides support and networking for Personalized Learning schools, the California Charter School Association, the Charter School Development Center, and Charter Voice.

As the school has grown, administrators have become more autonomous and have taken more responsibility for the components they manage. Leadership varies in management style from leader to leader. In some components, the principal/administrator functions as a leader and facilitator, promoting the culture and vision of the school and encouraging staff involvement. In other components, the principal/administrator functions as a manager, conveying school policy and goals to staff members with information coming from a top down structure. The focus groups found that, over all, evidence supports an increased focus on team building through staff development, collaboration and support.

BASIS @ FAME administrators meet monthly with the teaching staff for training and development. The agenda is created by the administrators and may include new

information as well as recent changes to policy and procedure, important dates, training on new systems, presentations by outside speakers, WASC activities, and a networking period. This year they have set aside time for case studies and discussions on best practices. The FAME San Leandro principal meets with the high school staff separately on a weekly basis to discuss programs and learning issues. Weekly in-service meetings are held with the entire San Leandro K-12 staff to discuss broader issues of learning. In addition, they have monthly K-12 staff meetings to discuss nuts-and-bolts types of issues.

Overall, it appears there is adequate access to administrators and the survey results and focus groups indicate that leaders are promoting and supporting the school's mission. The focus group also found that changes in policy and procedures were often a reflection of feedback from the staff. Though manuals are developed, there are still some revisions that need to occur, particularly in the area of course descriptions and curriculum recommendations. Based on focus group discussions and interviews, avenues to include staff in the decision-making process must be explored so that there is a shared sense of accountability for student learning

A-4: Staff Criterion:

To what extent are the school leadership and staff qualified for their assigned responsibilities?

To what extent are the school leadership and staff committed to the school's purpose?

To what extent does the school leadership and staff engage in ongoing professional development that promotes student learning?

Due to the nature of the independent study charter school environment, the school's practice has been to hire multiple-subject credentialed teachers. BASIS @ FAME has historically attracted teachers with these credentials due to the diverse subject areas they need to address and the wide range of ages and grades they serve. While a broad range of knowledge is beneficial at the K-8 level, many of their staff report being challenged by the demands of carrying a high school student load. The depth of knowledge required and the range of subjects covered is quite expansive at the 9-12th grade level. High school course descriptions, curriculums, and community programs have been identified to support teachers in facilitating their students' academic experience. However, BASIS @ FAME has identified a need to expand these resources and to bring more single-subject teachers on board as curriculum specialists. In addition to maintaining a student load, these teachers could serve as subject area mentors, develop curriculum and facilitate teacher training.

Focus team members found some breakdown in ongoing staff development and training. Currently, new employees receive a one-to-one or small group intensive training which covers policies and procedures, student work record documentation, utilizing the school store, assessment of students, selection of curriculum, and general protocol for supporting

families. While school administrators are available to answer questions, there is no system of day-to-day formalized support in place for new teachers such as coaching, observations, shadowing, or peer mentoring, nor has a short-term evaluation process for new hires been established.

The FAME charter indicates that 10 days of professional development will be provided to staff per year. While the groundwork has been laid in the charter, one piece that is missing is a long-term staff development plan. Current perception is that their training does not adequately address teachers' needs nor are they effectively using teachers as resources in their own training.

Based on survey findings, it appears that leaders and staff are committed to the mission and purpose; and they have developed or are developing comprehensive internal processes that support their goals.

A-5: School Environment Criterion:

To what extent does the school have a safe, healthy, nurturing environment that reflects the school's purpose?

To what extent is the school environment characterized by a respect for differences, trust, caring, professionalism, support, and high expectations for each student?

While the larger population is served by BASIS @ FAME, the main high school facility is FAME San Leandro. This location accommodates a maximum of 240 K-12 students and is currently at capacity. As of this year, the K-8 program operates as a traditional site-based program. The 9-12th grades operate under independent study guidelines but the site provides for a traditional classroom structure. This site is located on a church property in San Leandro. School offices and the high school English and social studies classes are housed in a shared multipurpose building, which includes a kitchen and gymnasium. All other classrooms are contained in new portables used solely by FAME.

The FAME San Leandro location provides for a structured environment for students whose parents have chosen the classroom instruction option. Staff, board members, parents, and students collaborated to implement needed improvements. The location was thoroughly cleaned and painted, a new parking lot was created, landscaping was incorporated and necessary security and safety upgrades were made. All classrooms have white boards, bulletin boards, bookshelves and adjacent restrooms. FAME San Leandro also installed a 25-unit computer lab. During the site visitation, the computer lab space was used for one-to-one English Language Development. Student use of the computers in the lab was not observed.

In general, the students had a favorable opinion of the school environment. Students feel welcomed by staff and supported in their learning. In particular, students appreciate the high degree of diversity and tolerance exhibited at the school. Students from around the world get along well and "merge like a family." Study hall time offers students

opportunities to support one another academically and personally. Additionally, all responses to the FAME San Leandro surveys reported that safety was the number one reason why they chose to send their students to FAME San Leandro. The student focus group confirmed a universal feeling of safety and community.

While students appreciate the new school location and see school-wide improvement efforts being made, there are still some areas of concern. The campus is closed in the sense that students are not allowed to leave during the school day. When students do not bring food for lunch there are no available alternatives provided by the school. The leadership class has started a school store to try to address this issue. One area of concern expressed by parents and students is the limited availability of college and career counseling for the FAME San Leandro students. In addition to limited guidance functions, students also have limited access to elective coursework that can limit their post secondary opportunities.

The second resource for FAME students is the Dublin Resource Center and Library. The library was opened in the fall of 2005 and was formally launched by an open house on September 15, 2005. This location houses the BASIS @ FAME curriculum library and the independent study administrative and support staff offices. BASIS @ FAME holds staff, IEP, SST, and some parent/teacher meetings at this location. FAME also conducts testing and hosts special events from this site. Additionally, the administrative offices in Newark have designated areas for teachers and parents to hold regular meetings and some special events.

In an attempt to foster a supportive environment for their families, BASIS @ FAME hosts several functions and events throughout the year with the goal of bringing their home-study families together to make connections with one another. Examples include field trips, parent/student workshops, back-to-school events, open houses and student presentation days. At FAME San Leandro, homeroom/mentor teacher relationships are being established to ensure students have support and teacher mentoring. FAME San Leandro has also incorporated a leadership class, which provides students with the opportunity to have a positive impact on the school environment by identifying areas of need and seeking solutions. One concern cited by students and parents at FAME San Leandro is the lack of field trip opportunities available.

A-6: Reporting Student Progress Criterion:

To what extent does the school leadership and staff regularly assess student progress toward accomplishing the school's expected schoolwide learning results?

To what extent does the school leadership and staff report student progress to the rest of the school community?

BASIS @ FAME employs a variety of processes designed to measure student progress and the overall effectiveness of their program. Student progress in the home-study program is monitored by both the parent facilitator and the assigned independent study

teacher. Teachers meet at least every 20 days with each student and parent to review and collect assignments. Monthly learning records document student progress towards the California content standards and a portfolio is developed over the course of the year. In addition, students take the CAHSEE, STAR, and other relevant state tests. Students are also given the opportunity to take the PSAT each fall. The FAME San Leandro program essentially implements the same methods; however, the students are formally assessed more regularly since they attend classes daily. The teachers utilize and submit the same student work record documentation as the home-study program teachers. Staff currently does not provide mid-term progress reports. Grade reports are issued at the end of each semester.

Another improvement noted is the addition of a designated testing coordinator. FAME now has one person handling the entire FAME testing program rather than having it parceled out amongst several staff. Typically, STAR results are received in August. Copies of the results are given to the teachers during the August staff meetings and reviewed as a group. Teachers will then review them with their families. Though they stress the importance of meeting the California content standards and the standards are a part of their learning records, staff still find that many students fall short of this achievement level. Parental choice in curriculum is an integral part of the BASIS @ FAME program and essential to providing a personalized learning plan for each student. However, when a student scores in the basic or below range on the STAR, staff may limit parental choice in curriculum options. Teachers develop a remediation plan for the student that will designate specific materials and resources to address the identified academic challenges. In addition, whenever a student does not pass one or more sections of the CAHSEE, a remedial plan is developed identifying areas of concern and indicating what measures will be taken to address these issues. A strategy cited frequently includes tutoring purchased with a student's curriculum fund. The FAME San Leandro program operates differently in that students receive direct instruction in lieu of multiple curriculum options. All curriculum used at FAME San Leandro is aligned with California content standards.

The expected schoolwide learning results reflect the intent of the charter and provide additional language regarding what FAME wants their students to know upon graduation. This is their first year of identifying student progress in these terms. FAME is still working to inform families of these expectations and soliciting their feedback. FAME has begun transitioning their documentation to reflect language, which includes the expected schoolwide learning results, however much work needs to be done in this area. In addition, there is the need to develop measurable outcomes of success that match expected schoolwide learning results and identify ways to document progress.

One of the greatest identified needs is a test-data management system. Without a data management system, staff is limited in the amount of available disaggregated information they can distribute. Currently the only school-wide data available for distribution to the school community is what is posted to the CDE website and they have no formal method for tracking graduation rates or post-graduation plans. Staff wants to be able to generate their own reports for internal use that will enable them to disaggregate data by content

strand, student subgroup, grade level, classroom and individual student. FAME also needs to ensure that they have adequately trained their staff on how to interpret standardized test data and to engage in critical analysis of the data in order to determine how the school can best address any negative data trends both at the individual level and at the programmatic level thereby promoting collaboration among staff to expand knowledge of curriculum resources to help students meet expected schoolwide learning results. Better methods of data collection will also enable FAME to develop and allocate resources based on critical student academic needs. In addition, with the planned expansion of the FAME website, the school would be in a better position to post student achievement data to the school community.

A-7: School Improvement Process Criterion:

To what extent does the school leadership facilitate school improvement which is driven by plans of action that will enhance quality learning for all students?

To what extent does the school leadership have school community support and involvement?

To what extent does the school leadership effectively guide the work of the school?

To what extent does the school leadership provide for accountability through monitoring of the schoolwide action plan?

At this point in time, FAME does not have a formal published school improvement plan. They do have collaboration among leadership and staff for the general improvement of their school. There are several projects in process that are designed to improve various documentation and reporting procedures which will in turn allow staff to serve families more efficiently. This would include the WASC Action Plan. Most of that plan will be relevant for the entire FAME K-12 program. However, a comprehensive plan needs to be developed that is both broad in scope, i.e., one that identifies goals for the entire FAME charter school, and, narrow enough to provide specific goals for each of the three individual FAME programs. In addition to outlining steps for program improvement, allocation of resources, and how improvement would be monitored, staff needs to identify opportunities for partnerships through community, business, and financial resources.

Areas of strength for Organization for Student Learning Category (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students:

- Leaders are well informed about laws and governance of charter schools.
- Regular staff meetings.
- Procedures for identifying students requiring remediation have been developed and are beginning to be implemented.
- Mission, Vision, and Philosophy statements are clearly defined.
- A personalized semester learning plan process that addresses individual student needs and offers a great deal of personal flexibility.

- Multiple high-quality curriculum and resource options.
- Centers are newly refurbished, safe, clean, and accommodate student load.

Key issues for Organization for Student Learning (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students:

- A need to increase communication options for sharing information among school, staff and families.
- A focus on collaboration between school leaders and teaching staff in developing school procedures and professional development activities.
- A lack of procedures to effectively communicate and implement long-term goals for achieving student success, i.e., expected schoolwide learning results.
- A lack of an integrated student and test-data management system.
- Insufficient ongoing guidance services for parents and students in BASIS @ FAME and FAME San Leandro.
- A need to expand long-term guidance and planning services to complement the semester personalized learning plan for all FAME students.

Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

Meeting with Focus Group
 Meetings with Teachers
 Classroom Observations
 Independent Study Session Observations
 Examination of Test Data
 Examination of Exhibits
 Meeting with Parents
 Meeting with Students
 Meetings with Leadership Team
 FAME Website

CATEGORY B. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

B-1: What Students Learn Criterion:

To what extent does the school provide a challenging, coherent and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school’s purpose and results in student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results through successful completion of any course of study offered?

FAME Public Charter School was founded to give students, parents, and communities home-based and independent study options for greater challenge, a variety of delivery methods, or for support if a student has fallen behind in credits, lacks basic mastery skills, and/or is at risk of dropping out of high school.

At FAME most students report that they are being provided with a quality education with high expectations. All high school students follow a semester personalized learning plan

that reflects courses required for that term. The FAME San Leandro program offers a limited number of courses which require all students to be involved in standards-based learning using curricula designed to foster mastery. Basic educational level curriculum is designed to bring up to grade level standards those students who enter with large gaps in their learning and who may not be capable of working at grade level standards, requiring supplemental materials. Other students may choose between a general education or a college preparatory course sequence with an a-g course list approved by the University of California. Some BASIS @ FAME students complete project-based learning that emphasizes depth over breadth, crosses multiple grade levels or uses textbooks that are not California editions. Students may attend community college courses, complete online distance learning high school and college level courses or local vendor courses. FAME San Leandro students primarily receive core content, aligned to California content standards, through California and national textbook editions. If college bound, FAME San Leandro students must fulfill their lab science and a-g electives at the local community college.

New classes and systems to help diverse groups of students succeed are being implemented, however, FAME San Leandro students need greater access to curriculum and technology that offer alternative or differentiated instruction. Students learning English are provided with appropriate curriculum, and small group or individualized instruction at FAME San Leandro. Many students enter the school from districts that are in California Department of Education program improvement status with limited English skills and few are able to pass the CAHSEE math test. A Student Success Team process identifies struggling students and provides for the development of an intervention plan appropriate to identified needs. Special education provides for services and support for students with IEPs. Gifted and Talented students are able to take flexible coursework that meets their academic ability.

FAME has opened the Dublin Resource Center, making curriculum more readily available. Expected schoolwide learning results and guidelines regarding the concepts that each student needs to master have been developed. Graduation requirements have been defined but the guidance counselor and teaching staff need additional resources to better serve and consistently assess the students and keep track of their progress. FAME San Leandro students and staff report limited opportunities for post-secondary planning beyond the initial personalized learning plan.

B-2: How Students Learn Criterion:

To what extent does the professional staff use research-based knowledge about teaching and learning?

To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students at a high level of learning consistent with the school's purpose and expected schoolwide learning results?

The personalized learning plan for each BASIS @ FAME student incorporates a variety of learning experiences that foster and support student progress towards the expected schoolwide learning results and the plan addresses individual needs for learning. Under

their parents' supervision and the monthly guidance of an independent study teacher, students must develop and exhibit effective study habits in a home-study setting.

At FAME San Leandro, students and teachers have begun to work together to implement the expected schoolwide learning results. Additional teacher support is offered these students as many are entering the program because their current educational placement is not working for them. Many may not have families with the ability to guide and supervise their students' learning experiences.

Currently the FAME leadership is taking a multi-pronged approach to enrollment. Testing is being used at the time of enrollment to determine student support services required by individual students. This is an effort to reduce the student turnover rate and improve upon instructional delivery so that all students achieve the skills necessary to complete a standards-based high school program which prepares them for their post-high school plans. As noted, however, ongoing guidance counseling services have not been institutionalized.

B-3: How Assessment Is Used Criterion:

To what extent is teacher and student use of assessment frequent and integrated into the teaching/learning process?

To what extent are the assessment results the basis for measurement of each student's progress toward the expected schoolwide learning results?

To what extent are the assessment results the basis for regular evaluation and improvement of curriculum and instruction?

To what extent are the assessment results the basis for the allocation of resources?

Student learning is documented and guided via work records which include grade level standards, a high school placement test at time of enrollment, state-mandated tests like the STAR and CAHSEE and reviews of student work portfolios. In the BASIS @ FAME program, meetings among teacher, parent and student comprise a major aspect of assessing student progress toward course objectives, state standards and expected schoolwide learning results. At FAME San Leandro, teachers are able to collaborate in developing an on-going "total picture" assessment of their students. However, formalized interim or benchmark assessments and standards-based rubrics were not observed. Any analysis or disaggregation for either program is currently a manual process. Staff has identified a need to acquire an electronic process to provide usable information to all stakeholders.

Areas of Strength for Curriculum and Instruction Category (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students:

- Differentiated curriculum program with resources for learning in the community.

- Personalized learning plans for each student based on academic needs and goals.
- Resources available for diverse student needs, including the resource library, UCCP online coursework, and current standards-aligned textbooks.
- Systems to support SPED, ELL, and Gifted students.
- Multiple paths to graduation based on post high school plans and flexibility to move between pathways based on individual student strengths and needs.
- Rigorous curriculum options with choices in method of delivery and methods of assessment of student learning including community college coursework.
- Standardized assignments and objectives for many college preparatory course descriptions.
- Regular student/teacher contact ensures that students are actively engaged in learning.
- Provide standards and objectives-based learning opportunities.

Key Issues for Curriculum and Instruction (if any) tht need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students:

- Develop a long-term plan for addressing instruction of ELL, low English language arts and math students; identify needs and allocate resources based on comprehensive student assessments with emphasis on reading, writing, and math instruction.
- Identify common rubrics and assignments across the high school program for greater consistency between instructional programs.
- Develop or purchase software to provide adequate reporting systems for transcripts, grades, attendance, parent/student contacts, learning records and for disaggregating, reporting, and distributing assessment results.
- Formalize guidance services for FAME San Leandro students, including post secondary planning and information regarding elective opportunities via independent study or other sources.
- There is a need to institutionalize and to effectively communicate school expected schoolwide learning results.

Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

Meeting with Focus Group
 Meetings with Teachers
 Classroom Observations
 Independent Study Session Observations
 Examination of Test Data
 Examination of Exhibits
 Meeting with Parents
 Meeting with Students
 Meetings with Leadership Team
 FAME Website

CATEGORY C: SUPPORT FOR PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

C-1: Student Connectedness Criterion

To what extent are students connected to a system of support services, activities and opportunities at the school and within the community that meet the challenges of the curricular/co-curricular program in order to achieve the expected schoolwide learning results?

At the beginning of each semester, FAME teachers work with their students and parents to develop flexible individualized learning plans, which are lists of courses and curriculum choices to meet each student's academic needs for that semester. Students are encouraged to utilize their interests, talents and abilities to maximize their learning potential and to enrich their school experience with an emphasis on completing core requirements before branching out into electives and personalized coursework. High school students may move in and out of the general education track and the college preparatory track during the year as indicated by their current level of progress. They may also receive modified remedial curriculum in a "basic" track and special education assessment and services. FAME offers two curricular programs: a traditional home-based independent study, BASIS @ FAME, with a resource center in Dublin, and a site-based independent study program with daily direct instruction at FAME San Leandro, which is at capacity and has no openings for this school year.

FAME has a part time guidance counselor to track high school student progress towards graduation and a new testing and field trip coordinator to process paperwork and disseminate information. They have also begun to pilot Reportwriter, a web-based student record keeping system, and have created English and history course descriptions with sample assignments and alignment to the state standards that some teachers are using to guide students. A Student Study Team program is now in place to identify and support students who are falling behind before they become at-risk.

Teachers at FAME San Leandro have both informal and formal methods for addressing student progress. Students report that teachers use face-to-face conferences, phone calls and e-mail to communicate both praise and concern to parents. Evidence in the student files shows that teachers also issue formal reports of missing assignments and keep phone logs of follow up in a three-step process to address student progress. Students have access to adequate textbooks and challenging contemporary multi-cultural novels, such as *Bless Me, Ultima* and *The Kite Runner*. Student writing samples in both English and biology included many teacher comments about grammar and formatting errors, such as missing titles. No rubrics were included with any of the writing samples and it was unclear how letter grades were assigned to some of the work, or in what way the students were evaluated according to grade-specific state standards. For example, a twelfth grade English test included many items on such basic grammar as common versus proper nouns, and pronouns and antecedents. These seventh-grade standards were being assessed for a twelfth-grader considered high-achieving by the FAME San Leandro staff.

Students in both FAME programs have access to optional or mandatory tutoring when they are not progressing in a core subject. Staff report that additional tutors have been

added to the BASIS @ FAME vendor list this year, including a former independent study single-subject math teacher who is now available for math tutoring. When necessary, students are referred to the school psychologist and special education services. English Learners have direct daily instruction at FAME San Leandro as a supplement to support content areas in which they are mainstreamed.

Students, parents and teachers are positive about the interactions and level of support for students at FAME. Students and parents agreed that the school has flexible programs to meet student needs, especially through BASIS @ FAME. They have positive responses to the new facilities this year, including the resource library in Dublin. Access to curriculum in this facility has released more education funds for tutoring and other individualized student needs.

While parents and students who have been involved with the BASIS @ FAME field trips have reacted positively to them, students at FAME San Leandro have not had scheduled field trips during the past year or more and would like for their field trip ideas to be considered. Some BASIS @ FAME families would like more group activities provided for their teens, but teachers report that others are unlikely to use them because they use BASIS @ FAME for academic purposes only and are satisfied with pre-existing or new social connections with other groups.

Recent changes in administration have opened opportunities for the FAME San Leandro students to have more influence through a leadership class for juniors and seniors and a student council. These students have initiated fundraising to benefit the K-12 program and have provided for lunch alternatives by running a student store. They also make field trip and graduation ceremony plans. During interviews, students voiced a desire for FAME San Leandro to offer college preparatory science labs and electives, especially art and computer applications. Ninth and tenth grade students expressed limited access to the new 25-station computer lab. BASIS @ FAME parents and staff also reported a need for additional small group classes for students. The parents and students interviewed who already participate in these weekly classes commended them as important sources of support for areas that are difficult for parents to teach at home individually.

FAME San Leandro students express enthusiasm about guided study hall. Ninth and tenth grade students reported that their school day is two hours longer than at their previous schools, but their homework load at home is lighter because of help received from their teachers at school. Students commended FAME San Leandro for the personalized attention received from staff and other students. They feel physically safe at the school and emotionally supported by their peers and teachers if they or their classmates have personal needs. FAME San Leandro students have been offered grief counseling twice this year, at the death of a teacher's spouse and at the termination of their principal. Students expressed their input to the school psychologist and voiced their confidence that those messages were conveyed to FAME leadership. Young women in the eleventh and twelfth grade leadership group characterized themselves as role models for the younger girls. Many of the students choose to work as teacher assistants one period per day in the K-8 program. Some male students mentioned gangs, peer pressure and distractions at

their previous local schools. An eleventh grader at the school for three months said, “The first day I felt shy, but the second day we were all brothers.” Other young men agreed that no one is left out of peer activities such as lunchtime basketball games. Although they missed having a sports field or a real gym with a wooden floor, one young man reminded his peers that they should be thankful for the many improvements of the San Leandro site compared to their previous Oakland site.

All FAME students who have fulfilled basic core subjects have the opportunity to earn credit for work experience, community service and career explorations. For example, a BASIS @ FAME eleventh grader is raising a guide dog, volunteering monthly in a food pantry, and maintaining a course load including college-level English, psychology and technical coursework in radiology. Parents and students both reported that FAME teachers encourage students to seek out community college classes for up to six credits per semester. Students take electives not offered in the program, advanced courses and summer classes. Approximately a quarter of FAME students have taken a course at the community college.

According to parents, students and staff, better communication is needed to give information about available programs and methods for satisfying electives and community-based or junior college courses. Currently students have access to guidance counseling by appointment only or through their independent study teachers or classroom teachers. FAME leadership has responded by budgeting for an additional guidance counselor to serve all FAME high school students for 2006-2007. Students and parents report that the website is out-of-date, but that individual e-mail messages and the recently-instituted group e-mail list is a good source of communication for many families. Others receive phone calls from school personnel or direct personal contact in their native language. In the case of FAME San Leandro families, there are active parents in the newly-established PTO and articulate student leaders who help support other families with language barriers.

Students, parents and staff frequently referred to the need to expand services provided by the guidance department, especially with respect to college and career planning information which is currently provided mainly by individual independent study or classroom teachers or by knowledgeable parents. Many of the FAME San Leandro students had vague ideas about what was required for enrollment in various types of colleges or appropriate courses of study for various careers. In addition, calendars distributed at the beginning of the school year were insufficient as reminders for the entire year. For example, a number of students participated in PSAT testing in October but FAME San Leandro students reported that the 15 graduating seniors missed the March 1 FAFSA college financial aid deadline this year. Only one FAME San Leandro student had already been accepted at a four-year public university, although most expressed an interest in higher education. Few students were able to articulate clear plans other than “hoping” to be accepted at a college or nonspecific plans to attend a community college.

C-2 Community/Parent Involvement Criterion:

To what extent does the school leadership employ a wide range of strategies to ensure that parental and community involvement is integral to the school's established support system for students?

The leadership team keeps abreast of recent research in individualized education and reviews and evaluates the school in an effort to ensure continuous program improvements that promote a cohesive support system. Students and parents interviewed reported that all ethnic groups are treated equally and that the school functions as one community. Due to the flexibility of the individualized learning plan, students in both FAME programs are able to take advantage of many community programs and use them to support their educational plans with the support of textbook purchases for the community college courses.

Although all students and parents sign a master agreement each semester which outlines the student's goals and details the responsibilities of the parent and student to accomplish the educational plan, there are some students enrolling at FAME San Leandro whose parents will not or cannot provide the support system outlined in the master agreement. The school is identifying the reasons for the lack of support and actively working to find solutions. The school now has the benefit of oversight by the Alameda County Office of Education with support beyond the levels possible in the previous charter; however, ACOE personnel did not participate in any WASC activities and have chosen not to send a representative to fill a board position at FAME board meetings.

Areas of Strength for Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth

Category (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students:

- Nurturing interpersonal relationships among members of the FAME community.
- Opportunities for input from student, parent, teacher and community.
- Flexible and varied non-traditional instructional resources.
- Availability of tutoring and community-based learning resources.

Key Issues for Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth Category (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students:

- A need to increase web-based and print resources for clear communication with all stakeholders.
- Greater collaboration between school leaders and all teaching staff in developing shared school procedures and instructional practices.
- A lack of standardized communication and implementation of goals for achieving student success.
- Inadequate scheduled college and career guidance counseling for parents and students.
- Greater student and parent awareness of expected schoolwide learning results.

Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

Meeting with Focus Group
Meetings with Teachers
Classroom Observations
Informal Student Interviews
Independent Study Session Observations
Examination of Test Data
Examination of Exhibits
Meetings with Parents
Meeting with Students
Meetings with Leadership Team
FAME Website

CATEGORY D. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

D-1. Resources Criterion:

To what extent are the resources available to the school sufficient to sustain the school program and effectively used to carry out the school's purpose and student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results?

FAME's decisions about resource allocations are made primarily by the School Director based on the current year's budget that is developed by the School Director and Accounting Manager with input from the school leadership team and other stakeholders and approved by the Board of Directors. With FAME's rapid growth in numbers, programs and organizational complexity, the organizational structure of the school must be clarified to ensure effective and unambiguous decision-making processes.

Resources needed for student mastery of core curriculum are allocated first. Additional materials such as audio-visual equipment, support technology, manipulative, and laboratory materials are allocated as the budget allows. Recent expenditures on standards-aligned textbooks and 25 up-to-date PC's for FAME San Leandro have consumed much of this budget and limited the amount available for classroom technology. Although a new computer lab is available at FAME San Leandro, the school does not provide any audio-visual equipment, laboratory hardware, or computer hardware to the BASIS @ FAME students or to the independent study teachers. BASIS @ FAME high school students have individualized discretionary materials funds of \$700 per semester and sometimes experience a delay in the start of their studies due to materials not being delivered. As additional business office positions have been added this year and FAME has adopted direct shipment of materials directly from the publishers to the teachers' home offices, materials have reached students more quickly. At FAME San Leandro, standardized materials are selected by a committee of administrators and teachers. Feedback from teachers indicated a lack of some supplemental resources and limited use of facilities and equipment, such as the computer lab, at FAME San Leandro due to space restrictions.

FAME contracts with Educational Support Providers (ESPs) for tutoring and a variety of classes and academic support services. Teaching staff is hired “At Will” on an as-needed basis through word of mouth and advertising in print media and on the internet. FAME has allocated over \$60,000 per year towards staff development with up to \$500 stipends per year toward mandatory expenses such as the RICA reading instruction requirement, college courses and staff development courses sponsored by the ACOE. This year, seven staff members are working toward their master’s degrees in educational leadership through Fielding Graduate Institute. FAME provides in-kind support by offering access to development materials and use of the Newark administrative offices one weekend per month for all northern California participants in the program. The Alameda County Office of Education handles Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) for state BTSA requirements and provides human resource services. Nevertheless, additional long-term staff development planning and training is needed for veteran independent study teachers with unique and complex new job descriptions.

FAME receives technical assistance from various well-established providers with specific expertise in charter school issues, such as the Charter School Development Center, the California Charter School Association, Ed Tech, and A Plus Personalized Learning, and has been granted two highly competitive implementation grants by the California Department of Education.

D-2: Resource Planning Criterion:

To what extent do the governing authority and the school execute responsible resource planning for the future?

The school has a five-year and three-year budget plan guided by SB740 regulations. Currently FAME is redeveloping its three-year plan to reflect actual enrollment data. The long range plan is regularly reviewed by the school director and the accounting manager. Up to this point, the long-range plan has not been linked to expected schoolwide learning results nor developed based on a systematic, data driven analysis of critical academic needs. This year, decisions are being made based on information from test score data and expenditures. The investment this year in expanded facilities including a computer lab, reflect this. According to survey data, neither teachers nor parents are convinced that decisions about resource allocation are directly related to the school’s purpose and expected schoolwide learning results, or are adequate to ensure students are achieving academic success.

In order to better serve students and implement systems of assessment based on needs, FAME has implemented several changes over the past year that have used financial reserves accumulated in prior years and this has created a financial strain on the school. However, at this time there are adequate reserve funds to ensure the financial stability of the school and the school has established lines of credit, which are currently paid off, to maintain an even cash flow.

Compensation in accordance with district salary scales has been adequate to retain administrative and support staff but the teacher turnover rate in the BASIS @ FAME

program indicates that there may be inadequate compensation for the independent study teachers who carry a higher student-to-teacher ratio than teachers in comparable schools. In addition, there is indication that administrative support staffing is inadequate to meet the needs of the school's programs. This is evidenced by the ongoing processing issues with the online school store, inability to develop transcripts or process student records in a timely manner, and the general sense from staff that they are over-burdened. With the increase in enrollment, more administrative staff members have been added this year. A contract has been finalized with a website developer. New staff members, such as the testing and field trip coordinator, are working on other avenues of communication that have never been fully developed or maintained because of inadequate personnel.

FAME school leaders have regular contact and are involved in informing the public and appropriate governmental authorities about financial needs. The charter authorizing entity has a seat on the board although ACOE has chosen not to send a representative to the meetings which are open to the public.

Personnel consistently follow the written policies on the scope and responsibilities related to an independent financial audit and processes for monitoring payroll. The authorizing agency and other government entities have been satisfied with all audit documentation. The focus group reported that they were researching an internal process for how payroll changes are initiated, monitored and changed relative to established practices in comparable charter environments.

Areas of Strength for Resource Management and Development Category (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students:

- Sound and ethical accounting practices.
- Adequate facilities and educational materials to meet the purpose of the school.
- Processes in place for contracting services and technical expertise.
- Support for individual staff training, growth and development.

Key Issues for Resource Management and Development Category (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students:

- Increase the involvement of stakeholders in the planning process.
- Begin to develop long range plan based on data driven results and on critical academic needs and identified program improvement areas.
- Review student/teacher ratios, high school vs. elementary student rosters, and compensation to ensure adequate and fair compensation is being given.
- Develop marketing strategies that support the implementation of the program.
- Review staffing levels to ensure they are adequate to meet the needs of the school's programs.
- Develop an internal process for initiating and monitoring salary changes.
- Develop a process for prioritizing educational equipment expenditures at each site based on identified student needs.

Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

- Organizational Chart
- Meeting with Focus Group
- Meetings with Teachers
- Classroom and Site Visits
- Examination of Exhibits
- Communication from School Board Member
- Meetings with Leadership Team

Synthesis of schoolwide areas of strengths and schoolwide critical areas for follow-up: The school, including leadership and staff, parents and students, worked with the visiting team answering questions and providing additional requested documentation to assist the team in verifying the self-study completed by the school. The school did a commendable job in completing this self-study as a part of the process of seeking accreditation.

Schoolwide Areas of Strength:

1. The high degree of dedication, strong interpersonal relationships, and collegial support exhibited by all faculty, staff and administrators.
2. A personalized semester learning plan process that addresses individual student needs and offers a great deal of personal flexibility.
3. Multiple high quality curriculum and resource options.
4. Centers are newly refurbished, safe, clean, and accommodate student load.
5. Resources available for diverse student needs, including the Resource Library, UCCP online coursework, and current standards-aligned textbooks.

Critical Areas for Follow-Up:

1. Increase communication options for sharing information among school, staff and families.
2. Focus on collaboration between school leaders and teaching staff in developing school procedures and professional development activities.
3. Establish procedures to effectively communicate and implement long-term goals for achieving student success, i.e., expected schoolwide learning results.
4. Ongoing guidance services for parents and students for BASIS @ FAME and FAME San Leandro.
5. Develop a long-term plan for addressing instruction of ELL, low English language arts and math students; identify needs and allocate resources based on comprehensive student assessments with emphasis on reading, writing and math instruction.
6. Identify common rubrics and assignments across the high school program for greater consistency among instructional programs.
7. Develop or purchase software to provide adequate reporting systems for transcripts, grades, attendance, parent/student contacts, learning records

and for disaggregating, reporting, and distributing assessment results for instructional use and long range planning based on student achievement data.

8. Formalize guidance services for FAME San Leandro students, including post secondary planning and information regarding elective opportunities via independent study or other sources.
9. Institutionalize and effectively communicate school expected schoolwide learning results

Chapter V: Ongoing School Improvement

Summary of the Schoolwide Action Plan:

FAME's action plan was developed following recommendations from the self-study focus groups. The plan is centered around four growth areas. Those areas and the rationale for each are:

1. **Student Achievement.** Rationale: Self-study findings indicate a need to improve student achievement in reading, math, especially Algebra 1, for all student groups, in particular English Language Learners and at-risk student populations.
2. **Teacher and Student Support Services.** Rationale: Self-study finding found evidence that support systems were inadequate to provide a well-rounded, fully accessible academic program for all students.
3. **Communication.** Rationale: Effective communication is a critical component of a sound educational program. Self-study findings suggest a break-down in the dissemination of critical information that would support both teachers and families in implementing student academic plans and in fostering participation in school events and activities.
4. **Stakeholder Involvement.** Rationale: An involved community is the cornerstone of an effective, proactive, and long-term viable educational program. Self-study findings suggest that stakeholder involvement in the program in terms of representation on the board, organized opportunities to participate in the school planning process, and actively engage in the programs and resources provided is lacking.

Comments on School Improvement Issues:

The visiting committee validates the school's action plan as the means to promote change that will advance efforts for the achievement of expected schoolwide learning results for all students at FAME. The plan employs the analysis of student test data to improve instruction, drive curriculum and shape staff development. In addition, the action plan outlines various means and processes for communicating activities, courses of study and curriculum information to the various stakeholders.

Responsibility for monitoring and follow-up of the action plan belongs mainly to the school's leadership team.

