



# THE FACULTY CORNER

FROM THE ANACAPA SCHOOL . . .

As you all know, the 2011-2012 school year has been extra busy for the Anacapa faculty and staff. We have all been engaged in writing a thorough evaluation of our program, called a Self-Study, for review by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). In order to maintain our accreditation, we are required to do this periodically.

When the report was complete, we mailed three copies of it to our WASC Visiting Committee. This Committee was made up of three educators who volunteered their time to review our report and make a three-day visit to the school to see the school in action. We were very fortunate that the Committee all understood what the school is doing and were professional, friendly, and very easy to work with. We are very grateful to them for the many hours they each gave us throughout this process and particularly during the three-day visit. The members of the Visiting Committee were Ms. Anna-Lisa George, Chairperson, English Instructor, Mater Dei High School; Dr. Elizabeth Ashforth, Science Instructor, Marlborough School; and Dr. Peter Mikulecky, Head of School, Fusion Academy - Mission Viejo.

During their visit, the Committee observed classes, conducted interviews with teachers and staff, talked with students and other members of the Anacapa community, reviewed examples of student work, and met with the Board of Trustees. At the conclusion of their visit, the Committee wrote two reports on their observations derived from both our report and their visit. One report was for the school and also was sent to the WASC Commission. The second report was for the WASC Commission only.

Before leaving school, the Committee met with the whole school and made a presentation in which they explained the process and told us about all the commendable aspects of the Anacapa program. They also made suggestions of areas for growth. They were received warmly by the students, and they left with a very good impression of the Anacapa community and the work we do.

Following the Visiting Committee's departure, we sent our final report to WASC. We expect to hear from the WASC Commission sometime this summer about the length of our re-accreditation term. (The longest term a school can get is a six-year term.) We will share the news when we hear from the Commission.

We are including the list of commendations, called Areas to Celebrate, the school received from the Visiting Committee report (please see reverse side).

~~ Peggy Lauer

**WASC Visiting Committee Report: April 2012**  
**Areas to Celebrate**

**Areas to Celebrate: School-Wide Strengths**

- The school has a strong sense of mission and commitment to achieve a culture and curriculum guided by the School-Wide Learner Outcomes (SLOs).
- The Board of Trustees, School Leadership, Faculty, Students, and Parents display an exemplary degree of cohesion and shared purpose.
- The school's program promotes critical thinking and experiential learning.
- The dedication and expertise of the Board of Trustees help to support and preserve the school's mission in a changing environment.
- The Leadership and Faculty are passionate and dedicated to bringing life to the school's ambitious goals.
- The students support one another in their academic and personal challenges, graduating with maturity, self-awareness, and an impressive record of college acceptances.

**Areas to Celebrate: Organization for Student Learning**

- The Headmaster is open to suggestions and enthusiastic about improving the program and the school's facilities.
- The improvement process is straightforward and requires little or no red tape.
- Teachers' and students' voices are heard as part of the improvement process.
- Parents share their ideas with teachers and/or the school leadership.
- Both the school's mission statement and SLOs help guide deliberations of proposed changes under consideration.
- The school's small size and the intentional culture of openness provide students with a supportive, intimate environment in which to learn and grow.
- The school's downtown location provides a convenient platform from which to access an abundance of local resources.

**Areas to Celebrate: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment**

- The college preparatory curriculum is relevant and often challenging.
- There are many opportunities to broaden curriculum experience beyond the classroom.
- Interdisciplinary connections are encouraged and often built into classes.
- Questioning skills are developed, especially through Breakfast Clubs and Synthesis Units.
- Communication among stakeholders is most often regular, frequent, and effective.
- Discussing student progress is integral to faculty conversations as well as faculty meetings.
- Student "buy in" for Anacapa's curriculum and SLOs is high.
- There are a variety of "safety nets" for students built into the program.
- All students pursue a college education, though a few occasionally choose to take a "gap year" between high school and college.