



# Session 1 Report – Student Vision

**Name of school: Dorsey High School**

**Date of session 1: 9/27/2012**

**Name of Organization: Building Skills Partnership (BSP)**

**Name of individual reporting in behalf of the organization: Juan Carlos Venegas**

**Date this report is completed and submitted: 10/01/2012**

The facilitator set the theme for the focus groups by asking them: “What do I want my child to know and be prepared to do when he/she leaves the school to ensure success at the next level and beyond?”

After the participants went into their discussion with their focus groups, one of the main themes that developed was the parents, students, and community members want to see better prepared students who have the skills necessary to succeed at the next level whether it’s at a 2 or 4-year college/university, trade program, in the military or in the work force. They also expressed that they want to see their students be productive contributors of their communities. The following written responses express their vision of what skills Dorsey students need to have or acquire in order to be successful after they graduate from Dorsey:

1. I want my child to have better test taking skills.
2. I want my child to be prepared to take and pass the test necessary to get a good paying job.
3. I want my son to have good study skills, know how to manage their time, have the desire to learn and stay motivated
4. I want students to have great scores on their SAT’s, high math scores, and to be responsible.
5. I want my kid to be a better listener
6. I want my child to be more outgoing.
7. Students need to have exceptional mathematical knowledge/skills.
8. Students need to be able to ask deep thought provoking questions.
9. Dorsey students need to develop critical thinking skills.
10. Dorsey graduates should be prepared to take and pass a civil service exam.
11. Dorsey students and graduates should be prepared to fill out job and college applications.
12. I want to be more patient.
13. I want to have better judgment.
14. I want to better understand
15. I want to know my surroundings.
16. I would like for Dorsey to maintain a positive environment.
17. I want my kids to develop interpersonal skills and be open minded.
18. I want my son to learn how to be fiscally responsible and to develop time-management skills.
19. I want my son to develop effective communication skills.

Another issue that came up during the focus groups was the lack of college ready students coming out of Dorsey and going to institutions of higher education and students that also contribute back to their communities. Several written comments referred to this overall vision of the skills that they need to develop in order to succeed at an institution of higher education and to be able to also contribute in their communities for the students at Dorsey:



1. My vision is that they graduate and have a goal set in mind of what he wants to study in the University.
2. I want my daughter to graduate as a doctor.
3. I want my student to become confident in their academic abilities.
4. Students at Dorsey should be able to do high quality and creative writing assignments.
5. I want my child to have the desire to give back to their community.
6. I want my child to attend a college of their choice.
7. I dream about being a veterinarian.
8. I want to exceed my expectations.
9. I want to graduate from college.
10. I want for my daughter to be able to help others no matter what their ethnic or racial background is.
11. I want my son to develop the capacity to help his community.

The participants included in their student vision that they would like to see their sons/daughters develop the following skills: **“that they become responsible”, “understanding, and respectful with their peers in their classroom”**. Other pieces of feedback validated this group vision:

1. I want my son to graduate from high School. And earn how to be responsible, compassionate, and respect others.
2. Solve literature exercise and reach a higher education.
3. That she becomes more organized and appreciates time to the maximum.
4. Grammar and typing.
5. I want my children to come out respectful, knowledgeable, successful, and good citizens.
6. I would like my child to be more ambitious.
7. I want to develop a ‘go get them’ attitude.

The overall vision for Dorsey High School students is they develop an atmosphere that creates the environment that creates higher educational achievement and that it prepares the students for college or university, as well as prepares students to succeed in other career and educational paths. The vision was rounded by developing well rounded students who are respectful, motivated, critical thinkers, and positive members of society who give back to their communities.



# Session 1 Report – School Vision

**NAME OF SCHOOL:** Dorsey High School

**DATE OF SESSION 1:** 9/27/12

**NAME OF ORGANIZATION PREPARING REPORT:** Building Skills Partnership (BSP)

**NAME OF INDIVIDUAL REPORTING IN BEHALF OF THE ORGANIZATION:** Juan Carlos Venegas

**DATE THIS REPORT IS COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED:** 10/01/12

During the breakout groups, the parents, students, and community members that participated in the activity shared what their vision of the school is through written comments, discussion, and annotated written data.

## **Student Issues**

One of the themes that stood out the most from this activity revolved around the topics such as student safety; student motivation/ambition; a school that highlights success and awards students, parents, and staff members who are achieving. In addition to this, the breakout groups want parent, student, and community relations with school administration and staff to improve. Many felt disrespected and felt that certain ethnic/racial groups received preferential treatment. Directly related to this issue, the breakout groups shared that Dorsey should work on creating an environment and be a place that is respectful and open to students from different cultures. Additionally, the participants want accountability from everyone involved whether it's the students, parents, staff and community members. The breakout groups discussed the type of school they envision and want their children and fellow schoolmates attending moving forward. The following written comments tell us the types of issues they envision Dorsey taking care of on their campus in order for there to be a respectful and healthy environment on their campus:

1. I want students to feel safe.
2. As students, we should be able to communicate with teachers.
3. I want for Dorsey to not belittle other cultures.
4. I want my school to uplift students.
5. I want my school to motivate students to be high achievers
6. I want for students to not belittle other cultures, but to learn from them.
7. I would like for Dorsey to provide a welcoming environment.
8. I want the administration to be visible and demonstrate leadership.
9. I would like for teachers and administrators that are ineffective to be released.
10. I want teachers that are competent, trained, and who are role models.
11. I want there to be courteous, respectful, and attentive office workers.
12. I want to see parents who participate rewarded.
13. I would like Dorsey to set up a Student, Parent, Employee, Teacher and Administrator of the month award program.
14. I want everyone to work on changing the NEGATIVE view of the school that the community and public have about Dorsey.
15. I want for our African American kids to get the same resources as the EL kids.
16. I would like my child to attend a school that takes bullying and other types of discrimination serious.
17. I want my school to be drug, gang, and bully free.
18. I would like for more parents to be involved.
19. I want for Dorsey staff to be more respectful to men and others when parents visit the office and not hold side conversations and make us wait until they are done.



20. I would like Dorsey to be inclusive of my culture and honor important historical figures/people.
21. I want the principle to be more visible.
22. I want the office staff and administration to be nicer and not give priority to people based on skin color.
23. I want this school to look at the Black boys who are lowest performing and give some extra attention to them.
24. I would like for there to be less fights on school grounds and for Dorsey staff/administration to be more attentive to troubled students.
  
25. I would like for Dorsey to pay attention Parent's wishes about what they want and need from their school.
26. I want to see more ambitious students who want to be professional and to pursue higher degrees such as Masters and Doctoral degrees.
27. We need to have more teachers, staff and administrators that motivate students to change their communities.

### **Facilities**

Another theme that resulted from the breakout groups was the need for up to date and modern facilities, good teachers that are prepared and who are experts in their field, better curriculum, more activities in science classes, effective counselors, linkages to surrounding colleges and universities, students who are prepared to succeed at the next level whether it's at a 2 or 4-year college/university, they also emphasized the need to have more children graduate with the skills needed to succeed in the workforce and to have more programs for student success and extracurricular activities, as well as fairly and adequately funded sports programs, and have a clean campus with more community engagement. These issues were brought up in writing in the focus groups and the following is what the participants expressed:

1. I want a beautiful campus. Kids need to be surrounded by beauty.
2. I want for Dorsey to have a linkage to community colleges to hold classes on campus.
3. I want my daughter to have more AP Teachers/classes.
4. I would like for Dorsey to have more college days/fairs, trips, career days and exposed to professionals.
5. I would like for the students to have lots of training on culturally-responsive Pedagogy for teachers.
6. I would like for our students to have access to college workshops and field trips.
7. I would like for students who are failing to attend mandatory tutoring sessions.
8. I would like for the student-athletes to have their own counselor who is knowledgeable of NCAA requirements and timelines. I would also like for our student-athletes to have adequate coaches.
9. I want to make summer reading programs mandatory. 2-4 books over the summer and want our students to be better prepared to write papers and essays.
10. I would like for there to be a program that educates the students on the importance of higher education and graduating prepared.
11. I would like for Dorsey to have effective counselors.
12. I want my school to work with me on getting into college and graduating high school.
13. I want my child and students to leave the school with skills that they can walk right into a job, especially, homeless and foster children.
14. I want our culinary arts to work for our students.
15. I want my child to be prepared for the CST, ACT and SAT.



16. We need more help preparing, looking for and applying for scholarships.
17. I would like for our students to have on campus access to anger management and character building classes.
18. I would like for there to be more computers that work in all classes.
19. I would like for better sports equipment for other sports and not just for the football team.
20. We need teachers who care for us and who support the students.
21. I would like for more technology in class rooms
22. I want to have adequate and updated lab classes where we can perform more experiments and where we can dissect more things in biology class and other science classes.
23. I would like my child to be able to use clean restrooms and learn in up-to-date classrooms with adequate technology.
24. I would like to have new and better music instruments.
25. I want my child's counselor to be certified and be effective to their needs and educational goals.
26. I would like for there to be more access to community service opportunities and for the school to engage, partner, and include more community organizations and businesses in their surrounding neighborhood.
27. I would like to see more extracurricular activities supported like debate and speech, a senior class wall that gets decorated every year, and community service in their surrounding neighborhood.
28. I would like to see the school remodeled a little bit.

The focus groups during the School vision exercise and the data collected embodies the concerns that the parents, students, and community members that participated have and that they feel should be addressed and focused on in the school plan. The themes and areas focus revolved around creating more Parent and Community Engagement, more accountability by everyone at Dorsey, an environment for students that is safe, engaging, and one that focuses on their current preparation and future success as well upgrading the school's infrastructure and curriculum.



# Session 1 Report – Dialogues with Planning Teams

**NAME OF SCHOOL:** Dorsey High School

**DATE OF SESSION**

**1:9/27/12**

**NAME OF ORGANIZATION COMPLETING REPORT:** Building Skills Partnership (BSP)

**NAME OF INDIVIDUAL REPORTING IN BEHALF OF THE ORGANIZATION:** **JUAN CARLOS VENEGAS**

**DATE THIS REPORT IS COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED: 10/01/12**

There was only one Planning Team for this school. The planning team shared their vision for students and school and subsequently engaged the participants in a dialogue session to answer questions and solicit feedback. This is the same planning team that did not get their plan approved by the Superintendent last PSC.

In this dialogue, the session was dominated by the concern that the trade/vocational programs at the school would not adequately prepare students to compete with other students for scholarships. Another concern that came up during the dialogue was that the Administration, specifically, the principle did not make his self-visible enough to parents. Additionally, there was also a concern that there was a certain groups of parents were not being taken into serious consideration do to a language and cultural differences. For example, one of the parents expressed that: **“How is a child in the culinary program going to compete for scholarships at culinary schools if they aren’t allowed to actually cook anything until the 12<sup>th</sup> grade?”**

The concerns of some of the parents with the vocational programs are and will continue to be too slow. That they won’t prepare for scholarships, higher education and careers coming out of Dorsey. There was a deep concern over the clarity of the career pathway programs at Dorsey and what their goal is and how they are developing students.

Other concerns by the participants with the planning team and their plan concerned the following themes:

1. Test preparation
  - a. What kind of support groups will be available?
  - b. How much of an emphasis will be put on this issue under the new plan?
2. Professional Development and AP Course availability, enrollment, and diversity.
3. Collaboration with local Colleges and Universities?
  - a. E.g.: AP Boost Program
4. Parent participation
  - a. Need for more parent participation and involvement in these meetings and in the writing of the new plan.
  - b. Classes for and extra help for all students.
5. There was also a concern about students following school conduct and avoiding unnecessary issue on school grounds based on what kids are wearing and electronic devices.
  - a. Dress code/Uniforms
  - b. Earphones
  - c. Tardiness



The Planning Team representative addressed the participants concerns over visibility by expressing the tight and busy schedule of the principle and the lack of participation by parents in meetings. She also tried to outline to the concerned parents the goal and set up of Dorsey’s career pathway programs, but was not able to satisfy the concerns of the concerned participants. She just explained time after time how it is set up, but did not invite any suggestions or encourage participation or ideas on how to better or to restructure them according to their concerns and needs.

Another issue addressed in length during this dialogue was the issue with engaging non-English speaking parents and engaging more parents in these meetings in general. There were a total of about 35 parents, students, and community members at this meeting. The outreach groups that are doing the groundwork in getting people to show up to the meeting expressed their concern and asked for the help of the participants to assist them with inviting more parents to the next meeting. Additionally, the concern with engaging no-English speakers in the planning process was expressed by one of the leaders of the Parent Outreach groups and conceded that this is a real issue that needs to be improved and addressed in an appropriate manner and does not need to continue to be an issue.