



## SESSION 2 REPORT – SCHOOL PLAN PRIORITIES

**NAME OF SCHOOL:** BANNING HIGH SCHOOL

**DATE OF SESSION 2:** 10/9/12

**NAME OF ORGANIZATION REPORTING:** FAMILIES IN SCHOOLS

**NAME OF INDIVIDUAL REPORTING IN BEHALF OF THE ORGANIZATION:** NADIA M. HERNANDEZ

**DATE THIS REPORT IS COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED:** 10/18/12

### **I. Student Performance: Where is the School Now?**

During the small group activity, parents, community members, and students provided feedback on the LAUSD School Report Card (SRC). Four sections of the School Report Card were discussed by the participants, these include: 1) *Progress*, 2) *Readiness*, 3) *Learning Environment*, and 4) *Student Groups*. The main topics of discussions included the A-G requirements, ACT and SAT scores, Math and English classes, AP scores, teacher performance, students performance, and student suspension.

#### **Progress**

In the *Progress* section, the participants discussed the standards in English language arts and math and school graduation. The participants discussed the significance of the school performance data for Banning High School. The participants stated that they would like to see more classes offered so that students can graduate and provide better instructors to improve the proficiency scores in the math and English classes. The participants also looked at the CAHSEE exit exam and the passing rate for 10<sup>th</sup> graders.

- The following includes the written feedback provided by the participants:
  - “The progress is gradually improving, but we need to improve more.”
  - “The students are not progressing because the school is divided.”
  - “Improve school data.”
  - “Teachers need to have dedication to their profession.”
  - “More motivation from personnel.”
  - “More parent and community involvement needs to be work in unity.”

#### **Readiness**

In the *Readiness* section, the participants focused their discussion on the A-G requirements, AP courses, and the ACT/SAT scores. The participants expressed their concern over the low percentage of students scoring on the SAT/ACT and AP scores. According to the participants, more focus needs to be placed on improving the instruction and courses offered for students to graduate.

- The following includes the written feedback provided by the participants:
  - “Failing on improving adequate instruction/support for students.”
  - “Need to focus on the classes the students need to graduate.”
  - “Improve on tests the students need to take to go to college.”
  - “We need to push them study and get a high grade.”



### **Learning Environment**

In the *Learning Environment* section, the parents discussed the lack of parent participation and need to improve on this area. According to the participants, teachers need to be more motivated and efficient in the classroom. The participants also discussed that teachers at Banning need to be there for at least 3 years, need to be fully accredited, and demonstrate subject area competency to be highly qualified. In addition, the participants commented that student suspensions are making students fall behind in their courses

- The following include the written feedback provided by the participants:
  - “Need to move toward learning goals.”
  - “Teachers need to have dedication in their profession.”
  - “More motivation from school staff.”
  - “More parent and community involvement needs to be united work.”
  - “The parents are not being involved in the education of our children.”
  - “When students are suspended, they get behind in their studies.”

### **Student groups**

In the *Student Groups* section, the participants discussed the three major student groups and their performance rates in English Language Arts (ELA) and math. The participants focused on the percentages of the Latino student group at Banning.

- The following includes the written feedback provided by the participants:
  - “The school was down 6% in English but then we were up 4% in Math.”
  - “In English we need more effort but in Math we rocked it.”
  - “We are not even at the 50% mark. We are concerned that that parents need to send their children elsewhere to receive a better education.”
  - “Need to reduce class size so that learning is improved and provide more focus to students. Classes are extremely large; students need more one-on-one time with the teachers.”
  - “The students are not trying their best on the tests.”
  - One parent shared that she/he felt that the teachers were not committed. This person also shared that taking out teachers and putting in substitutes is a waste of time.

## **II. School Plan Priorities Brainstorm**

During this activity, the participants were asked to brainstorm on the changes that must take place at the school site in order to build a high performing community of learning. Parents, community members, and students shared their ideas on the priorities they believe will improve the performance of the students and the school. The main themes that were identified by the participants in the overall discussion include:

1. Motivation in classrooms/ Motivación en el salón
2. More time on instruction/ Más tiempo en instrucción
3. Transparent Communication/ Comunicación transparente



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4. Less students in classrooms/ Menos alumnos en la clase
5. More development for teachers/ Más preparación para maestros

In addition, the participants also identified other priorities during their small group discussion and written comments. The main themes identified focus on five topics: 1) academic improvements; 2) student development; 3) teacher development; 4) improving communication; and 5) school security.

#### **Academic Improvements**

According to the participants, some of the priorities for improving Banning include better instruction for students, more opportunities offered to students in terms of resources available (tutoring, after school programs, etc), improving attendance, and providing academic courses that will prepare students for college and the work force.

- The following are written feedback provided by the participants on this theme:
  - “Tutoring centers in the community”
  - “Quality programs: summer school/night school and extra curriculum activities”
  - Less number of students in class and longer school days
  - “Set the bar high, do not lower credits for students to graduate”
  - “All classes should be college ready; have classes needed to graduate made available.”
  - Have students see counselors a number of times per year
  - “Up the requirements on college”
  - Create more opportunities and better learning environments
  - More control and management on school attendance; be more strict with attendance and classes.
  - “Focus more budget on books, counselors, and teachers; Budget for our students not administration bonuses”

#### **Student Development**

The participants provided written feedback on setting priorities for student development. In this theme, the participants identified that more motivation needs to be provided for students to learn, provide other teaching methods, improve student attendance, provide strict discipline, and provide a rewards system for high qualifying students.

- The following are written feedback provided by the participants on this theme:
  - Impose strict rules for students and parents to avoid suspension.
  - Less students in classrooms
  - “Provide culture and ethnic classes; promote diversity”
  - “Address the tardiness problem because students arrive late to school. Make students responsible to come to school on time.”
  - Tutoring be accessible to student
  - Student working in groups and read out loud.
  - “Maybe have ‘peer counselors’ at Banning where the kids who are doing well in Math or Science can volunteer to tutor the kids who need help in an after-school program.”
  - “No texting in class and enforced by the teachers.”
  - Motivate students to do well. If they are not getting good grades, they cannot participate in sports.
  - Give rewards to students who do well; give extra credit.



### **Teacher/School Staff Development**

In this theme, the participants identified as a priority the development of teachers and school staff to become better qualified. The participants stated that they would like to see more training offered to teachers and counselors at Banning so that they can better address the needs of the students.

- The following are written feedback provided by the participants on this theme:
  - “More development for teachers”
  - “For counselors to be more motivational and attentive to students continuously and at the same time work with parents.”
  - Improve access to better counselors and provide better counselors.
  - “Have qualified teachers at the school; provide intense training for teachers”
  - More teacher support to improve school performance
  - “More teachers with degrees; hire permanent qualified, committed teachers.”

### **Better Communication**

The parents identified communication as a priority. The parents stated that they would like to see more transparent communication between parents, community members, teachers, and students. Also, the participants stated that the parents also need to be more accountable and supportive in the learning process at home by getting more involved and interested in their children’s education.

- The following are written feedback provided by the participants on this theme:
  - “Get the parents more involved.”
  - “Parents, teachers, and students need to be more united in the education of the students. Respect towards one another (teacher to student and student to teacher).”
  - “Having parents check homework, grades, the discipline, school attendance, and internet use of their children.”
  - “Education/ training offered to the parents.”

### **Security**

Security was identified by the participants as another priority they want to see improvements on. The participants stated that they want to see more security offered on campus, control school bullying, and improve the school appearance.

- The following are written feedback provided by the participants on this theme:
  - More on-campus security; more safety around school zones
  - More volunteers for more security on campus and more police available.
  - “Control the clothing and appearance of students (like tattoos, piercing, etc.)”
  - “More security outside of the classrooms, bathrooms, and school campus. There is a lack of insecurity (fights, drugs, sex) and no one is doing anything.”
  - “Bullying: the abuse of some students to other students.”
  - “Provide emotional and psychological support for the student at least once a month.”
  - “No open campus”
  - “Improve the school appearance”
  - Provide supervision in the school entrance to monitor school attendance.



## SESSION 2 REPORT – DIALOGUES WITH PLANNING TEAMS

### DIALOGUE ONE – DIALOGUE BETWEEN FIRST PLANNING TEAM AND PARTICIPANTS

#### **Banning High School**

The first planning team presented their school plan and engaged the participants in a dialogue on the school plan priorities to turnaround student performance. The school plan priorities identified by the planning team include: 1) 100% graduation rate; 2) Proficiency for all; and 3) 100% attendance.

This school plan will address the low graduation rates, EL reclassification, offer two periods of English, incorporate a 2x8 schedule which will add two classes per semester, credit recovery, enrichment classes (theater, music, arts), restructure small learning communities to become stronger, offer advisory period, improve proficiency/standardized test score and the CAHSEE exit exam, and help students become college and career ready.

Below are questions asked by the participants during the dialogue:

1. *How about tutoring?*

A: Intervention is imbedded throughout the plan. The 2x8 bell schedule classes will alternate each day, 1-4 or 5-8 periods. Tutoring will be offered after school and during the day. The 2x8 schedule will allow students recovery of credits because it will allow for more classes.

2. *How will our students receive quality instruction if you start transitioning to more online courses?*

A: On-line instruction (APEX) will be available but will not be the primary approach. Physical one-on-one engagement with students will be the primary focus.

3. *What is going to happen with the academies?*

A: The 2x8 bell schedule will allow for the implementation of more elective courses. More elective courses will be offered like career ready, hands on experience, and real world experience classes. Programs like AVID will be reinstated. Small learning communities will continue.

4. *How much longer will classes be with a 2x8 bell schedule?*

A: The classes will be 30 minutes longer (90 minute classes). This will allow more time for tutoring, small group sessions, and more student engagement with teachers.

5. *If seniors receive a 'D' in the past years, would the 2x8 plan allow them to retake that class?*

A: Yes, the 2x8 bell schedule will allow for extra classes. This will help students to take and pass their classes with a C or better to meet the A-G requirements.

6. *How do you plan to still have the sports if you are going every other day when usually you have it every day?*



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A: Athletics will remain in the last class of the day depending on the tournament day. This plan will accommodate for sport and summer programs.

7. *7. What about advisory period?*

A: Advisory will be offered 1 day a week.

8. *8. What will happen to Band and Drill?*

A: Band and drill be offered to students in the same way it is now.

9. *9. What time will school start and end?*

A: School will start at 7:45am and end at 2:52pm.

10. *Will we get AVID back?*

A: Yes, this school plan is committed to bring back the AVID program. We are looking toward making the former AVID coordinator part of the team.

11. *What kind of help will be offered to students with personal and educational problems?*

A: Mr. Mendoza indicated that support services are available, including a COST team that is made-up of counselors, social workers and other professionals that teachers can refer students to. Instruction will also cover different learning styles using strategies like SDAIE.

The following are additional written questions/comments provided by the participants:

1. "What about different learning styles? How will this new plan help or affect the visual learners, the independent learners, etc.?"
2. "With the new bell system, will students have more access to counselors?"
3. "Does everyone need to fill out the choice application now?"
4. "The students that need to pass some of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade classes, where and when will they be able to retake these classes?"
5. "My daughter need to recover credits, will she be able to do this?"
6. "Are the mandatory elective going to change?"
7. "Will the advisory period be in the 2 extra classes? So there is only one?"



## DIALOGUE TWO – DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE SECOND PLANNING TEAM AND PARTICIPANTS

### **Banning Academy of Creative and Innovative Sciences (BACIS)\***

\*Three planning teams were consolidated to create one planning team since the first workshop.

The planning team presented their school plan and engaged the participants in a dialogue on the school plan priorities to turnaround student performance. The school planning team includes: 1) Graduation rate; 2) Assessments; 3) Advisory; and 4) Culture of high expectation.

The planning team is proposing a small school concept where there is a more intimate learning environment. It will be a small school of 1,200 students within the Banning High School campus. Advisory will be used every day. Students will be able to create an online portfolio. There is no decision made yet on a bell schedule. A goal of the school plan is to provide Microsoft certification and two academies, Information Technology and Engineering Manufacturing, along with a Magnet Center. The school plan will help student acquire the 20<sup>th</sup> century skills to become employable, become lifelong learners, and develop a number of aptitudes.

Below are questions asked by the participants during the dialogue:

1. *How does doing an online portfolio help with interviews? Wouldn't doing a real life practice interview help better?*

A: The academic portfolio will help students in two parts: 1) It will help by coaching students on how to physically do an interview and 2) it will show them proper social skills. The idea of the portfolio is not a job portfolio but to create an academic portfolio which will maintain a record of what the student has learned over time. The students will set their own goals, students will learn how to be self-sufficient, learn management skills, and relate these to career goals.

2. *The school/classes are already small and the students aren't doing well. Why do you want to keep that going?*

A: Class sizes increased because Banning lost QEIA funds. The number of students per classroom is set by the district and the school does not have control over the class sizes. The school functions better if it is a small school. It allows for better management and more intimate group learning.

3. *What about tutoring?*

A: This plan will provide the flexibility and time for more learning and time for tutoring.

4. *Why do the students have to mentor other students? Why not the teachers?*

A: We want to encourage students to be more helpful, learn how to be responsible, and be able to mentor other students. The school used to have B-Crew which was a supervised advisory period that linked freshmen with seniors (shared responsibility). Also, advisory will be available for students. Students will have the same adult advisor for 4 years. The advisory will be constant and advisors will only meet 7 new students each year as some graduate out.



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5. *How will extra-curricular activities/clubs like ROTC, Band/Drill, Sports be affected?*  
A: There are schools in the district that share a campus and have only one athletic team or extracurricular activity. We still need to work this out. We have been focused on the instructional part of the school plan.
6. *How exactly will that help all the students to have good grades and graduate?*  
A: The school plan creates small schools that will offer more personalization. Studies show that personalized instruction works; teachers get to know students and more personal attention is provided. Studies show that when students receive more personal attention, they are more likely to graduate.
7. *When are the meetings so that parents can attend and give input or suggestions?*  
A: The planning team meets on Wednesday in room S6 (robotics shop) from 3-6pm.
8. *Will each 11<sup>th</sup> grader be able to mentor students or just some 11<sup>th</sup> grader?*  
A: Students will learn and develop tools to mentor other students. Right now there is no interaction between grade levels. This will build a program of mentoring.
9. *What will be the ratio for a magnet school versus a regular school?*  
A: The magnet will be opened in 2014. It will begin with 230-240 students and will grow in the following years.

The following are additional written questions/comments provided by the participants:

1. "Do the students have to wear uniforms?"
2. "How about cultural education? How will you consider making these relevant to not only issues in the past but in the present?"
3. "Before your groups joined, you all presented other plans. Do you still want to enforce or pass those plans?"
4. "Instead of making separate schools, why don't you just enforce SLC's more?"
5. "How will robotics support my child in graduating and making up credits?"
6. "What curriculum will you use for advisory?"
7. "Where are the other kids going to if you are proposing a smaller school?"
8. "Instead of breaking up the school why not put smaller classes with committed teachers?"
9. "What qualifications/credentials do you have to organize a separate school? How will you provide for our kids and ensure their academics, physical, and mental health is taken care of?"
10. "If so much of your planning depends on the big school? Then why separate?"