



SESSION 2 REPORT – SCHOOL PLAN PRIORITIES

NAME OF SCHOOL: WOODCREST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

DATE OF SESSION 2: 10/25/12

NAME OF ORGANIZATIONREPORTING: Building Skills Partnership

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

DATE THIS REPORT IS COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED: 10/25/12

INTERPRETING DATA AS A STEP TO BUILD HIGH PERFORMING COMMUNITIES OF LEARNING

During the opening of the session Principal Jackson addressed the parents. She informed them of the latest data progress that the school had achieved which included the School API score going up 46 points and although the indicators for ELA and Math are still low the school is progressing while trending in the right direction. She also referred to the improvement of the Special Education scores and how the students in special education now had a different exam.

Several participants had questions about whether this would be a chartering process as it had been rumored. Another parent had questions about the school that they wanted answered before formally starting the session. Same parent said he wanted answers, he felt that writing the questions and submitting them would not suffice. There were several exchanges between participants and LAUSD staff. Some of the comments captured during this exchange were as follows:

- “Talk to us in Spanish, so that we understand.”
- “We need answers and not lies.”
- “Respond to our questions.”

Parents were offered to continue in the PSC process, but the participants persisted through their comments to seek answers to their questions. The participants stated “we are tired of processes” and demanded their questions to be answered.

At this point the parents applauded this last statement and one parent leader stated: “they need to learn to respect us.” Subsequently, parents began leaving the session with roughly 11 out of 40 parents remaining behind.

Principal Jackson (after the parents left) addressed the remaining participants and explained to them the importance of the PSC process in order to have a voice and continued with the session.

I. Student Performance: Where is the School Now?

Workshop participants reviewed the data from the LAUSD School Report Card. Participants were divided into 4 groups and reviewed the following areas of the School Report Card:

1. Student Groups
2. Progress
3. Learning environment
4. Readiness



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Group One: Student Groups

This first group chose to review the data points for English Language Learners proficiency (23 %) and Special Education proficiency in Math (31%) and ELA (29%). The following were verbal and written comments that were shared during their review process and during the share out for this piece of the report card:

- There are a lot of deficiencies with these groups.
- One parent commented that her child was diagnosed with Autism and she does not understand why the child is not getting the appropriate support services to raise the proficiency level. She also stated that she would like to help her child obtain better grades but doesn't know how to do that and would like training.
- Another parent stated "I have observed my child during class and I see that the kids don't understand the lesson, are not paying attention to the teacher, but the teachers keep on talking and teaching". This parent explained that the kids should pay attention and that the teacher should also be able to manage this situation.
- Another comment was "some kids have no parent support".
- One more comment was "I cannot help my kids myself because I don't have the education but I take my kid to the library to get help".
- "Parents are saying that the school principal does not pay attention to them or listen to them".
- Parents play an important role and we need to be active".
- Some teachers have deficiencies and we need to control it.
- More parent involvement.
- We have to assess and build capacity of teachers
- What can the district do to better the proficiency level of student in Special Education?
- How can I help and how can the school help the students be proficient?
- Students, parents and teachers all together.

Group Two: Progress

This second group chose to review the data points for proficiency levels across the school in Math (26%) and ELA (23%) for the academic year 2010-11. The following were verbal and written comments that were shared during their review process and during the share out for this piece of the report card:

- We need to prepare the students a week before the CST testing.
- We need to do much better in math.
- We need to work together to help the students achieve higher proficiency levels.
- Go to bed earlier and eat healthier. Provide a healthier diet w/ less sugar and fat
- First we need to organize ourselves as parents and show our kids to respect each other.
- "Longer hours in Pre-K to help with proficiency rates". If we teach them well at an early age we will not have to deal with a bigger problem later on.
- Are kids with memory loss being helped?

Group Three: Learning Environment

This next group chose to review the data points for Suspension Rates (3%) and Staff Attendance (62% met the 96% LAUSD attendance goal) for the academic year 2010-11. The following were verbal and written comments that were shared during their review process and during the share out for this piece of the report card:

- "When kids are suspended they miss instruction and this leads to other issues".



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- “Kids come with problems from home; school should look into why kids are acting up. They should have a school psychologist or social worker that can help the kids with behavior issues.”
- They stop learning when absent.
- Instead of sending the kids home suspended the kids should be given activities at the school.
- We need to focus on the students and learn why they are behaving badly.
- When the staff is absent the students don’t learn, the students are confused or get behind because the substitutes just follow the notes that were given to them and do not teach.
- Staff shows their irresponsibility when absent.
- The staff doesn’t care about the student learning.
- The staff does not love their work.
- Not good. This should be at 0
- Students don’t do anything. They go home and watch t.v. They lose on valuable instruction and fall behind [when suspended].

Group Four: Readiness

This last group chose to review the data points for 5th grade proficiency on ELA (20%) and Math (16%) for the academic year 2010-11. The following were verbal and written comments that were shared during their review process and during the share out for this piece of the report card:

- “We have a concern about the low proficiency rates of these two points”
- “We want more learning activities for the students”
- “We think that the kids are at an age when they should be kept aware of current events”.
- We are far below on proficiency. As parents we need to participate more with our children’s education and we need to focus on our children’s’ future and participate with the school and teachers. We also need to make sure our children know how to read.
- 20% equals only 200 out of 1000 students are at grade level.
- English will help students with all subjects.
- We had a 2% gain math in one year. Students entering middle school may not be prepared for Algebra.
- Parents may need some classes in math in order to help their child.
- Extra support for tutors for math and English.
- The students’ behavior can impact learning.

II. School Plan Priorities Brainstorm

Participants conducted this exercise in small groups by writing their ideas in a “cloud” as part of a brainstorm. There were several themes that emerged from this brainstorm and they were: parent involvement, safety and student discipline, build more staff capacity, and better strategies for improving the proficiency levels, better communication between the school/staff and parents and school cleanliness.

The following are the comments provided verbally and written by the participants under each themed group:

Parent Involvement

- More parent support.
- We need English classes for parents so that we could help our children.
- We need to talk to our children every day about what kind of help they need in what subject.



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- We need to help our children in whatever we can as parents.
- More volunteer parents.
- Parents should be allowed to come into the cafeteria in the morning with their kids.
- We need to look for a strategy to involve more parents so they in turn can involve themselves in the education of their children.

Safety and Student Discipline

- Teachers should address kids by their last name and kids should respond back yes sir or yes mam.
- There should be more respect between one another. Kids should address themselves as Mr. and Miss.
- We need better discipline.
- More overall security in the school for all kids.
- More security.
- We need more safety in the yard because of bullying.
- We need radical changes to deal with kids with bad conduct/behavior.
- We need for the teachers to have more authority so that they can keep the kids inside the classroom.

Build More Staff Capacity

- We need cafeteria staff to be friendly and courteous with the kids during meal times.
- More capable staff to supervise the kids in the yard.
- We need more proficient teachers at the school.
- Training for the cafeteria and yard staff.
- Office staff needs more disciplined and friendly.
- We need the secretaries to be friendlier.
- There should not be any discrimination towards parents.

Better Strategies for Improving the Proficiency Levels

- There should be a reading and writing program at the school.
- Non-repetitious homework each week.
- Extend the hours for Pre-K. Kids need more hours to focus.
- More progress in Math and English.
- There needs to be additional help in the classroom for teachers.
- There should have spelling contests between grade levels.
- Strong teachers should share best practices with other teachers.
- More help for the Standard English Learners (African American students)
- Fewer students in the classrooms so there is more focus and attention.
- More games.
- More books, more pencils.
- More help in the classrooms, cafeteria and yard.
- More bilingual staff.
- School should give tutoring.
- We need to give the kids more math so they can learn and also help them improve their writing.
- Teachers of kids who are behind should talk to their parents and give them ideas of how to help these students at home.



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- Higher education (better curriculum and better strategies to teach the kids that are behind and have trouble with the material).
- More qualified teachers.
- Enough books for every child.
- Summer school.
- Make groups of kids and teach them in groups all together.
- We need to give teachers more capacity building in whatever area they're deficient.
- More motivation for kids and focus on teaching.
- Tutoring for children that are behind.
- Have a group of children and give them more attention and be more responsible.
- Family activities such as Literacy Night, Math Night, and/Science Night so that parents can be better prepared to help their students.

Better Communication between the School/Staff and Parents

- We need for the main office to give correct/accurate information.
- We need for the school principal to be more accessible.
- Improve communications between teachers and parents.
- Parents need to feel more welcomed at the school.
- Staff in the main office needs to be more welcoming.

School Cleanliness

- The cafeteria should be clean.
- Have a clean environment.
- Cafeteria needs more cleanliness.
- More cleanliness.
- Clean the bathrooms.

III. School Priorities that Lead to a High Performing Community of Learning

Participants were highly engaged into examining academic data and inquiring into solutions as to how students at Harte Middle School can achieve with greater success. Once again the main concern of the parents was the safety and security of students at the school. The prevalent comments made through the small group sharing reflected a need to address the issues of student discipline, parent engagement, staff capacity, and strategies to improve proficiency. The priorities per each of the School Report Card segments shared by the participants were as follows:

1. Fewer students in the classroom so teachers can focus more on every student.
2. Office staff that is more welcoming.
3. More Teacher Assistants to help students.
4. Student motivation
5. Extended class hours for Pre-K
 - a. It's too short. They're only there for two hours
6. Find a better strategy to get more parents involved in the education of their children.
7. Teachers should have more authority in their classrooms to better deal with the students.



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Session 2 Report – Dialogues with Planning Teams

NAME OF SCHOOL: -Woodcrest Elementary School

DATE OF SESSION 2: 10/25/12

NAME OF ORGANIZATION: Building Skills Partnership

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

DATE THIS REPORT IS COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED: 10/23/12

The Woodcrest Elementary School team included: Principal Jackson and parents Mrs. Jones, Mr. Davis, and Ms. Mazariegos.

- Parents have been involved in the process of developing the PSC plan.
- They have been to [planning team] meetings and have given valuable input.
- Talked about and addressed all of their concerns from the last [PSC workshop] meeting in the plan.

Four Areas of the Plan

1. A strong academic literacy program that embodied the habits of mind and methods for discerning meaning that enable students to learn deeply and critically in all areas.
 - a. Critical thinking skills
 - b. Good problem solving skills
 - c. Better writers to be able to communicate better
 - i. “Growing educators”
2. Meaningful professional learning opportunities for staff and administration
3. Creating multiple programs and opportunities for parents to become directly involve in their children’s learning.
4. A safe and healthy learning environment where children excel academically and personally.
 - a. Cultural sensitivity
 - i. Respect of all cultures at Woodcrest
 - ii. Create a curriculum that is responsive to all cultures
 - b. College prep

Principal Jackson: *** School vision was guided by all of your input. ***

- “The same things that you all want are the same things that we want.”
- “Through the process I know that we will continue to do well.”
- “Progress is being made and it is evident in the School Report Card”

Principal Jackson mentioned to the parents that the following items from the report are included in the plan:

1. Bullying
2. Reading, writing, and Math
3. Increased parent involvement



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Questions & Answers for Team:

Question: Is there a bilingual class [for parents]?

Answer: We have a shortage of bilingual teachers. Right now we have an ESL class and we want to write that into our plan.

There was a follow up question: Wanted to know if there is a way for there to be more than two days of ESL class instruction to three?

Answer: We are also mandated by the state to teach in English. We can put in a proposal for a dual language program.

Clarification from participant: I was talking about the parents

Answer: We can call the adult education department and get more days.

Question/comment: I want to learn more math to help my kids.

Answer: We want to do a Math Family Night. These would be workshops to learn how to help your child. We have it in the plan. I will also call the adult education department to add a math class.