

Chapter 3: Responses to Previous Recommendations

The committee recommends that the District and site administration, teachers, and parents pursue obtaining financial resources to expand the print collection in the library media center.

The Lancaster High School Library Media Center is in the process of expanding its print collection, using a variety of financial resources to achieve this end.

District funds are available to the library through the principal's allocation fund. In the 1999-2000 school year, \$8,000 was given to the library from this fund, specifically for the purpose of purchasing books for the shelves.

Further funds have been obtained through the California Public School Library Protection Fund, an annual grant supplied to qualifying California schools. In the 1997-1998 school year, \$4,700 was granted to LnHS, which was used to purchase 198 books for the library shelves. For the 1999-2000 school year, \$54,336 has been awarded to Lancaster High School's Library Media Center. A committee assists with the purchase of books from this fund. This committee is composed of the District librarian, library technician, and four teachers (one each from the History, English, Science, and Math departments), along with the aid of a survey sent out to all teachers so that book purchases are adjusted to fit the school's curricular needs.

Another source of books for the library media center has come about through book sales. Two companies, Universal Books and Books are Fun, sell books through the library. For every tenth book sold, the participating company then donates one book to the library. This results in approximately 6-8 new books for the library from every book sale. Approximately five book sales are held every year.

Furthermore, donations are always accepted from the community, and several individuals have contributed repeatedly to the LnHS Library Media Center. With the aid of a parent organizer, the Library Media Center recently conducted an event in which magazine subscriptions could be bought at discount rates from the Girl Scouts of America and donated to the library for student use; this resulted in several new magazine subscriptions being added to the shelves, and plans to make this a yearly event are under consideration. Another program involves students, staff, and parents recommending and donating books to the library which are displayed on a "recommended" shelf for student use.

The District currently has a procedure in place by which donated books that are considered inappropriate for library use are traded to used bookstores for more appropriate material. Similarly, several used bookstores are collecting and donating books to the library when they acquire slightly damaged books which they feel are not suitable for resale, but will benefit a public school collection.

The committee recommends that the Governing Board, administration, and staff, with assistance from parents and the

community, develop a long range strategic plan to accommodate the projected increase in the school's enrollment.

When Lancaster High School was constructed, the projected school population was placed at 2,000 students. However, population growth in the Antelope Valley has risen sharply since the school's original inception.

As a result of this growth, the projections for LnHS school population were low upon ground breaking, as the school's original design aimed for a capacity of 2,000 students. However, the school's first-year enrollment (of freshman only) was 883 (CBEDS, 1995). By its third year, limitations in open enrollment gradually buffered the freshman numbers, eventually reducing the freshman class to below 700 in only two years (CBEDS, 1997). Nonetheless, overall enrollment numbered 1,998 students, with only eight empty classrooms remaining to house the fourth year class, scheduled to enter the next September.

The campus added twelve portable classrooms that summer and avoided classroom shortages when attendance peaked at 2,492 students (CBEDS, 1998). Three additional portables were added over the summer of 1999 to house County Special Education students, for which the District will assume responsibility in the 2000-2001 school year.

In April of 1999, Lancaster High School underwent a "substantive change" visit to ensure that the school had anticipated the growing enrollment and addition of grade 12. Results of that visit include commendations on the smooth implementation in terms of classrooms, textbooks, curriculum, and related support services for seniors.

In the November 2, 1999, ballot election, Measure E was introduced to the Antelope Valley to help fund the repair and maintenance of existing schools in the District, including the construction of new science classrooms with additional lab stations and more portable classrooms at Lancaster High School. This measure was created by the Antelope Valley Union High School District's Board of Trustees, all of whom are elected officials from the community. Measure E read:

- To relieve serious overcrowding by adding classrooms, repairing and rehabilitating school facilities to meet current health, safety and instructional standards including reducing dangers from earthquakes with seismic upgrades, replacing inadequate lighting, deteriorated plumbing, heating, air conditioning, ventilation, and electrical systems, refurbishing classrooms, laboratories, and restrooms, to construct additional high schools under an independent oversight committee, shall Antelope Valley

Union High School District issue \$91 million in bonds, at the lowest interest rate possible, with all money raised benefiting local children.

Measure E allowed for the construction of three new schools within the school district, each helping to alleviate overcrowding throughout all the high schools in the Antelope Valley. Upon its adoption, an independent oversight committee composed of taxpayer groups and parents skilled in finance and construction would ensure that the funds were spent appropriately. The plan included a ten year Districtwide plan for implementation.

While Measure E received 61% of the votes, it needed a two-thirds majority in order to pass. In order to rectify this situation, the District is actively supporting Proposition 26, which would allow for this type of measure to pass with a simple majority. If Proposition 26 passes, the District will resubmit a bond measure similar to Measure E that will most likely pass.

Meanwhile, other plans under consideration to deal with overcrowding includes 100% room utilization with roaming teachers, double schedules (day and night classes), and extended days (zero and seventh period) for the students.

The committee recommends that the administration develop procedures to ensure a follow-up of graduates as one means of measuring school performance.

The counseling and administrative staff are currently looking into ways that students may be effectively tracked after graduation. As part of Lancaster High School's award-winning Comprehensive Guidance Program, students have completed a transition plan which incorporates two visits with a guidance counselor during the senior year (once each semester), a senior project, and a completed information packet indicating post high school plans. A follow-up contact is scheduled at five and ten year intervals. Unfortunately, some guidance personnel transferred during the latter half of the 1998-1999 school year, and the program had to be placed on hold at that time. Lancaster High School understands the importance of tracking its graduates as a measure of school performance, however, and the program will subsequently continue as planned.

Proposals currently under consideration include:

- Providing students with postcards prior to graduation and having them fill out the cards with a permanent address (either their own or a relative's) that they project to have within the next year. The postcards are left at LnHS until needed. These postcards can then be mailed to the students in order to initiate contact after graduation, while simultaneously allowing address files to be updated for future contact, once the postcards are returned.
- Checking old attendance records and writing or calling the previous addresses of students with a brief questionnaire, while updating address files as corrections are reported by the respondents.
- The completion of a senior packet with addresses of family members who will likely remain at their residences for many years to come and using those secondary addresses for future contacts, again updating files according to the responses of those interviewed.