

Group B: Curricular Paths

Focus Group Leader:

Milburn, Juli, Art Teacher

Teaney, Gretchen, Science Teacher

Focus Group Members:

Anderson, Matt, Counselor

Belcher, Jason, Student

Berkeley, Elinore, Spanish Teacher

Bodner, Amy, English Teacher

Carnes, Nancy, Science Teacher

Carnevali, Jamison, Student

Carrisoza, Slade, Sheriff

Chalmers, Ruby, Special Education Aide

Choe, David, Science Teacher

Christensen, Eric, Spanish Teacher

Coleman-Levy, Judy, Health Teacher

Davis, Lawrence, Parent

Dunn, Dylan, Student

Eisenbarth, William, Custodian

Farnes, Katie, Independent Study Clerk

Ford, James, History Teacher

Godde, Jim, Special Education Teacher

Gonzales, Laura, Student

Grashaw, Trish, Security

Grimes, Cynthia, Computer Technician

Hibbert, Suzette, Special Education Aide

Kerr, Gail, Parent

Knight, Tim, Independent Study Teacher

Mascari, Phil, Counselor

Mettler, Ty, ROP Teacher

Molina, Anita, Cafeteria Manager

Murray, Mike, History Teacher

Murray, Peggy, Art Teacher

Myers, Cassie, County Special Education Teacher

Reinford, Corrine, Retail Marketing Teacher

Reyes, Rachel, Special Education Aide

Rodriguez, Theresa, Health Clerk
Russell, Jo, Learning Center Technician
Seres, Pat, Library Technician
Stewart, Marlene, Special Education Teacher
Weaver, Denise, Security
Wolan, Nancy, Business Teacher
Yasumoto, Erin, Student

Structure and Process

In the month of October of 1998, the focus group leaders were chosen and began work on gathering evidence for Focus on Learning. Focus group leaders and other members of the staff attended WASC training sessions to assist them in this process. On December 2nd, the first official Focus on Learning Group Leader meeting was held and the first group meeting was established for December 10th. Another group meeting was held on January 22nd, 1999, and another on February 18th. Throughout this process, work was conducted on ESLRs and evidence was gathered for the Focus on Learning self-study. In the 1999-2000 year, the focus groups met on September 10th, September 24th, October 8th, October 22nd, December 10th, January 14th, February 25th, and March 10th, prior to the visitation, and are scheduled to meet for follow up work on March 24th, April 28th, May 12th, May 26th, and June 10th for follow-up work after the visitation.

Criterion B1: To what extent do all students participate in rigorous, relevant, and coherent curriculum that supports the achievement of the Expected Schoolwide Learning Results.

Current educational research, thinking, and vision documents—such as *Second to None* and the *California Frameworks*—were used to define and infuse ESLRs within discipline areas. For instance, the District has adopted new curriculum standards in the subjects of English, Science, Social Studies, and Mathematics. AVUHSD continues to align curriculum with the state standards and is in the process of completing the remaining curricula. During the development of the ESLRs, and many of the programs on campus (including Steps for Success and the Comprehensive Guidance Program), documents such as *Second to None* were reviewed and used as guideposts. Each ESLR is addressed in one or more of the new curricular standards being used throughout the District. Furthermore, the document *Breaking Ranks: Changing an American Institution* by the National Association of Secondary School Principals is the basis for the LnHS House program, transition plans, freshman transitional programs, curriculum integration, the Senior Project, and authentic learning.

The congruence between the actual concepts and skills taught and Lancaster High School’s ESLRs is measured through each teacher’s Course Goals and Objectives. These Goals and Objectives are validated upon peer and administrative review. Additional evidence of ESLR implementation can be found through teachers’ lesson plans, daily activities, portfolios, and projects completed within the classroom. The entire LnHS staff works every day to meet the standards which have been established in the ESLRs. The ESLRs require the abilities to think analytically, communicate effectively, and be responsible citizens and life-long learners.

Integration of disciplines exists in the CAMP Academy and the freshman House teams. They set the model for cross-curriculum integration through cooperative planning. Three schoolwide areas of curricular integration are reading, writing, and the use of technology. For instance, the Interactive Mathematics Program (IMP) incorporates writing, reading, science, and fine arts within the mathematics curriculum.

Discussion among administration and staff occurs on a regular basis to ensure that the *California Frameworks* are implemented. This opportunity is offered regularly, as department chairs meet on a quarterly basis with the site’s administration, and then each department chair meets with their teachers. Department chairs disseminate standards information at these meetings and keep teachers apprised of site and district decisions which affect the classroom.

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The District also provides paid staff inservice sessions for all teachers to learn about new curricular standards, and teachers are further encouraged to attend inservice training which encompass not only their subject areas but other areas to promote cross-curricular teaching. The District similarly furnishes curriculum specialists to each site on an as-needed basis to provide inservice training on how to implement curricular standards to teachers both in and outside of their curricular areas.

Articulation

Efforts are being made to better articulate with K-8 feeder schools and local colleges and universities. Lancaster High School has formed partnerships with Lancaster School District, Westside School District, and Antelope Valley College (AVC).

The local elementary school district that feeds into the LnHS campus works closely with the LnHS guidance team and the LnHS transition coordinator to smooth the transition from eighth to ninth grade. Many programs are offered to incoming ninth graders and their parents. These programs include Eighth Grade Visitations, Steps for Success, Club Eaglet, and Freshman Parent Information Night. Specially trained students, Eagle Guides, are available to transfer students during registration and throughout the year to guide and befriend these new students.

Amargosa Creek Middle School, slated to open September, 2000, will become LnHS’s primary feeder school. The new principal has already met with LnHS and begun the articulation process. Park View Junior High continues to work with LnHS to prepare incoming students and their parents for a successful transition through Parent Night and eighth grade visitations.

Freshman House leaders are provided with the support to assist in the transition between eighth and ninth grades. Common teacher conference periods, Friday morning parent meetings, field trips, integrated curriculum, and House competitions are all a part of embracing freshman into the Lancaster High School family.

In order to assist students with their transition from high school to college, the Antelope Valley College (AVC) counseling department has assigned to LnHS a counselor who provides students with information, advisement, and registration information throughout the year. This is provided in large-group settings (in the theater) and in small group settings (in civics and economics classes). LnHS teachers can make appointments with this counselor for class presentations. AVC and LnHS also enjoy a partnership through the shared use of facilities with the Aviation Program and various sports activities, such as tennis. Lancaster High School and AVC also intend to work together to develop curriculum for 2+2 classes that allow LnHS students to receive col-

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lege credit for classes taken on high school campuses.

The District provides its students with an annual college information night in October. Over sixty colleges from across the nation are represented for one evening. During this time, college representatives meet with parents and students, advising on issues that range from the college application processes to financial aid. Even more directly, the University of Redlands offers LnHS seniors the opportunity to compete for a \$5,000 renewable scholarship at their campus.

An AVC counselor is assigned to LnHS to provide students with information, advisement, and registration information.

Equity and Grading

Lancaster High School recognizes the need to maintain equitable demographics and distribution of students throughout the classes to include gender, ethnicity, primary language, and students with special needs. All students are offered the opportunity to enroll in all subjects. Special care is taken to encourage under-represented populations in all enrichment programs. This may include recruitment in the form of classroom visitations, bulletin notices, and counselor advisement during registration. Parents are also notified of special programs through monthly newsletters published by the counseling team.

Curriculum development, evaluation, and revisions are facilitated by the District Office and the districtwide curriculum committee. This committee consists of parents, community members, and teachers who work together to establish district guidelines for graduation. The graduation requirements and credits for classes are also decided at the district level. Only after intense community and School Board review are graduation requirements changed.

Grading and homework policies can be found in Board policy, but individual teachers are given the freedom to decide—within these guidelines—their personal grading policy. All teachers provide students with their grading and homework policies at the beginning of the semester. The District has published a Grading and Marking Manual to clarify Board policies and procedures, as well as to provide guidelines for beginning teachers and teachers new to the District.

Criterion B2: To what extent do all students have access to the school's curricular paths, assistance with development and ongoing adjustment of a personal learning plan and knowledge of post-secondary opportunities?

A variety of curricular paths are available to all students throughout the district. At the start of their high school careers, students take courses that can lead to college entrance for those who wish to pursue that option. Choices

of elective classes provide for a more personalized student focus, which may lead them to specialized pathways—such as the Aviation or Careers in Arts and Multimedia Productions (CAMP) academies—or culminate in a general education diploma. This diploma may indicate specialized training in areas such as Child Care, Health Occupations, and Automotive Technology.

The student population and surrounding community influences Lancaster High School curriculum offerings and how the curriculum builds on the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the students and community. LnHS is currently building relationships with community members through a variety of advisory committees. These include the CAMP advisory committee, Principal’s Advisory Committee, Aviation Maintenance Advisory Committee, the WASC Parent committee, WASC Student Committee, Booster Clubs, Student Advisory Committee, and the Student Safety Committee.

Those students who choose to stay with the college preparatory pathway have a variety of choices. Honors and Advanced Placement courses and tests are offered to all qualified students. Other exams are offered to help a student with their post high school transition, such as the ASVAB, PSAT, SAT, and ACT.

Lancaster High School’s focus on freshmen is apparent through its aggressive outreach program monitored by the school’s transition coordinator and the school’s counselors. A three week summer program, Steps for Success, is offered to incoming freshman and is taught by three House teachers, and features a parent component. During the parent evenings, counselors and teachers present a personal learning plan for each child. This is the beginning of a unique collaboration between parents and Lancaster High School. Plans are underway to broaden this program to include Lancaster School District (K-8) non-graduates. This would provide an opportunity for at-risk students to gain the necessary skills to be successful in high school prior to entrance. The parent component is critical to the success of the student and the program’s effectiveness. Parents, students, and staff collaborate in the development and monitoring of a student’s personal learning plan, based upon students’ learning styles and career and educational goals.

On at least one Friday of every month, parents of students in need of extra attention are invited to join their children’s teachers for a roundtable discussion of their child’s school progress. Oftentimes, counselors participate in these discussions, and occasionally the school psychologist, administrators, and/or sports coaches join in as well. This roundtable discussion provides an opportunity for face-to-face communications between students, parents, and staff regarding student progress and the viability of the student’s personal learning plan.

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To address strategies for smooth transitions to post high school options, Lancaster is implementing a Senior Project this year. This pilot project is a culminating event designed to bring rigor and relevance to the senior curriculum. The Senior Project acts as a bridge from school to career and meets the District-adopted Bridge requirements for their senior year. The Bridge Program is implemented in the student’s freshman year, and its primary focus is to provide a smooth transition from high school to post-graduation placement through the active investigation of careers by seniors. Here, community members act as mentors and are able to help focus students on available career opportunities after graduation.

All students have opportunities to make appropriate choices and pursue a full range of realistic career and educational options. For example, every Special Education student has an annual Individualized Education Plan (IEP). During the IEP, courses are reviewed and, after a student turns 16, a detailed Individual Transition Plan (ITP) is completed. At that time, students are also introduced to the North Valley Regional Occupational Center, which assists adults with special needs. The Youth Employment Skills classes also provide special education students with job skills training and real-world job experience.

Similar to the Individual Transition Plan, the Comprehensive Guidance Program provides seniors with the opportunity to meet with a guidance counselor to review transcripts, student progress, and formulate a plan of action for post-secondary transition.

Advanced Career Exploration

Lancaster High School provides for career exploration, preparation for post-secondary education and pre-technical training for all students. As students enter their junior year, they may choose to enroll in Lancaster High School’s Work Experience program and/or the District’s Regional Occupations Program (ROP). In both of these programs, students must be 16 years old, work within the Work Experience Program, and they must be involved in a job that requires twenty hours of work per week. Both of these programs are monitored by credentialed teachers who interact with community members and employers throughout the community.

Students are also introduced to real-world applications, guest speakers, career-day activities, Salute to Youth, internships through Jones Intercable, NASA partnerships, and work related field trips offered through various clubs, classes, and academies. Special programs, such as the Robotics Team, aid in this as well. In order to infuse real-world applications into the classrooms, many elective courses, academies, and core classes utilize real-world technologies and programs to simulate workplace environments.

Parents of students in need of extra attention are invited to join their children’s teachers for a roundtable discussion of their child’s school progress.

The Bridge Program provides a smooth transition from high school to post-graduation placement through the active investigation of careers. All students have opportunities to make appropriate choices and pursue a full range of realistic career and educational options.

The CGP provides seniors with the opportunity to meet a counselor to review transcripts and formulate a plan for post-secondary transition.

Freshman are required to complete a three week course introducing them to Microsoft Word applications, PowerPoint, and Excel. Currently, these programs are standard in the business world. These three programs are taught by the English, Physical Science, and Math teachers, respectively, while integrating their own curriculum.

Special Education students have a variety of real-world experiences from which to choose. The YES (Youth Employment Skills) class is offered to junior and senior Special Education students, and it involves job shadowing, job-site visitations, and ultimately the opportunity to work in a retail setting. These students are also given the opportunity to work with the North Valley Regional Occupational Center (a county center for developmentally challenged individuals) after graduation to help them build their skills in order to ease the transition from high school to the workplace environment.

Another Special Education work-related program includes the Functional Academic Skills Training (FAST) track, which is a job-skills training Special Education program available to senior Special Education students who are off-track for graduation. These students attend classes at Antelope Valley College, learn job and life skills, and can ultimately work toward their GED and job placement. They are eligible for this program up to their 22nd birthday.

A second program, Developing Realistic Educational Activities to Make You Successful (DREAMS) is sponsored through the District Transition Program. These Special Education students are trained for three weeks by a community member in computer skills, and then they spend the next six weeks in paid employment.

Criterion B3: To what extent are all students prepared upon graduation to continue their academic and occupational goals?

All students have access to a rigorous core curriculum as well as opportunities to explore real-world applications of their educational interests. From its very inception, Lancaster High School has supported the Daggett Application Model, which emphasizes rigorous, relevant, and reality-based education. This philosophy is embedded in all aspects of the school, ranging from the classroom to the playing fields.

All freshman students, upon entering the high school, are given the opportunity to take honors placement exams. Each year thereafter, they are evaluated by their teachers as to the appropriateness of continual placement into those honors courses. Freshmen placed into Geometry or Honors English have the opportunity to choose Biology as their science course, rather than the standard Physical Science course. They may take one Honors course and one elective course, and their math assignment is based on recommendations

Juniors may enroll in the LnHS Work Experience Program and/or the District's Regional Occupations Program.

Many elective courses, academies, and core classes utilize real-world technologies and programs to simulate workplace environments.

The Special Education YES class involves job shadowing, job-site visitations, and ultimately the opportunity to work in a retail setting.

The Functional Academic Skills Training track is a job-skills training Special Education program available to students who are off-track for graduation.

from the feeder schools, test results, and placement exams. They are further required to complete a three week course introducing them to Microsoft Word applications, PowerPoint, and Excel, which are standardized to the business world.

Special Education students and their parents attend an Individual Education Plan (IEP) meeting at the end of their 8th grade year to determine appropriate placement in the high school setting. Thirty days after their arrival at Lancaster High School, another IEP is held to confirm that this is an appropriate placement. Special Education students are always placed in the least restrictive environment possible and are actively encouraged to join available programs within the school setting, such as CAMP, laptop, Honors and AP, athletics, activities, clubs, and the aviation program.

All students are required to meet the District’s graduation requirements, which are based upon A-F requirements for college entrance. The guidance team works with the English department and Houses to present a sequential and developmental guidance program to all students. This program begins in the freshman year and includes developing a 4-6 year educational plan. The plan is kept in the students’ career portfolios in the English classrooms. Parents are included in this process through invitation to classroom presentations and special parent night meetings. This program is partially funded through SB 813 (special funding for at-risk 9th grade students). Each year thereafter, students review their plan.

Special Education students have a variety of real-world experiences to choose from. Junior and senior Special Education Students may take the YES class, which involves immersion into the working world. These students are also given the opportunity to work with the North Valley Regional Occupational Center (a county center for developmentally disabled individuals) after graduation to help them build their skills and successfully transition from high school to the workplace environment. Other Special Education work-related programs include the FAST track and DREAMS.

The school’s educational program maintains the flexibility to accommodate changes in student interests and areas of career exploration. Every student’s academic plan is revised within English classes in partnership with the Comprehensive Guidance Program. In the Spring, students are given the opportunity to choose from a variety of electives, and every effort is made to accommodate the students’ desires. The school’s Master Schedule of classes is based on student interest as indicated through pre-registration results. Students may also choose to take Advanced Placement and Honors courses with teacher and/or parent recommendation. Students then have to complete a summer packet to ensure their registration into those classes. Applications into academies are taken in the Spring and are open to all students, including English Language Learners (ELL)

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All students are required to meet the District's graduation requirements, which are based upon A-F requirements for college entrance.

and Special Education students. Each semester, students are able to enroll in Work Experience and ROP courses, if they meet the proper requirements.

In order to better serve students, the counseling and administrative staff are currently looking into ways that students may be effectively tracked after graduation, with follow-up contact scheduled at five and ten year intervals. It is hoped that the school's programs can be improved overall by identifying areas of weakness as pointed out through alumni experience.

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