



SESSION 3 REPORT – SCHOOL PLAN GUIDE REVIEW

NAME OF SCHOOL: SYLMAR HIGH SCHOOL

DATE OF SESSION 2: 11/14/2012

NAME OF ORGANIZATION REPORTING: Boys and Girl Club of San Fernando Valley

NAME OF INDIVIDUAL REPORTING IN BEHALF OF THE ORGANIZATION: MARIA AGUILAR

DATE THIS REPORT IS COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED: 11/18/2012

REVIEWING YOUR EDUCATION, YOUR OPTIONS

I. Step One: Examining a School Plan Guide

The participants were divided into small working groups. Each group was given the task to review the School Plan Guide submitted by the Planning Team. Each of the groups spent 10-12 minutes on each school plan, noted any questions that they had and identified if the school plan meets their expectations in the following areas:

- 1) Student Vision
- 2) School Vision
- 3) School Performance: Where is the School Now?
- 4) School Priorities

The following is the captured feedback, questions, and comments the participants provided as they reviewed each area of the School Plan Guide.

Area One: Student Vision

During the review of the School Plan Guide, and based on the amount of written feedback provided, session participants wrote questions **asking for more information on the schools vision on skills and knowledge students will gain**. The following is the written feedback asking for more information on the vision on skills and knowledge students will gain:

1. How will you identify student's strengths and potential? What kind of class will students receive to identify their strengths and potential?
2. What do you mean with the term critical thinkers?
3. What will you do to help students become critical thinkers?
4. What do becoming self advocates mean?
5. How will you achieve for students to develop healthy lifestyles?
6. What can I do as a parent to help my daughter integrate in the school? The plan?
7. What do you mean with goal setting and time management as a vision for the students?
8. I want students to realize that one of their goals is to achieve better grades.
9. I like the vision in the plan and I like how it will focus on their strengths and talents and to become responsible members of the community.



Area Two: School Vision

During the review of the School Plan Guide, and based on the amount of written feedback provided in session participants commented on asking for qualified teachers, competent counselors, and support systems. The following is the written feedback provided on asking for ***qualified teachers, competent counselors, and support systems***:

1. It's not only important to focus on the efforts of the students, but strongly focus on the high qualifications of teachers.
2. Teachers must also be empathetic and supportive of all students and ensure students are learning the subject matter and not given any negative advice.
3. Teachers must be available to meet with parents on a regular basis.
4. Teachers should be able to change teaching methods accordingly, not only when being observed by peers or staff.
5. I want to see more competence from the teachers.
6. Observe teachers.
7. Students surveying their teacher's teaching methods are essential. This should have been implemented last month!!! Surveys should be done on a yes or no answers and be anonymous.
8. To have great teachers who will support student's learning and achievement.
9. Teachers should be more dedicated to their vocation which is teaching!
10. Want our counselors to talk to us more about the careers we can seek at the university level.
11. We need school counselors to talk more to our children about careers and university.
12. Provide more elective courses that will have an end of preparing them for a career.
13. For counselors to provide more opportunities for students.
14. For school counselors to give students all the classes they need to graduate.
15. Provide students with pre-exams prior to final exams to assess the students and to help them improve in the subject matter.
16. Need more tutoring
17. What types of resources will be made available to our students and their families who have problems? What type of organization?
18. Would like to see more one on one help with students in areas that are their weaknesses.
19. We need more help for students struggling with English and Math and any subject matter where performance is low.

Area Three: School Performance: Where is the School Now?

During the review of the School Plan Guide, and based on the amount of written feedback provided in session participants commented on *overall academic school performance*. The following is the written feedback provided on ***overall academic school performance***:

1. Why has the school's overall performance been low and inconsistent?
2. Why did it take the school so long to identify that its performance was low and inconsistent?



Public School Choice 4.0 Academy Session Reporting

3. In what area is the school performing the lowest in?
4. What is the overall percentage of students who need to improve in each subject? Does that include special education?
5. One area of concern is math.
6. What information was used to determine the school's current reality as far as student achievement?

Area Four: School Priorities

During the review of the School Plan Guide, and based on the amount of written feedback provided in session participants on the asking of improvement of *student achievement, student support, parent participation and school safety*. The following is the written feedback provided on the asking of improvement of ***student achievement, student support, parent participation and school safety***:

1. Any number of students who are having problems grasping the subject matter should have the undivided attention of teachers until the student understands. No matter how long it takes!! Extra time!! Or Overtime!!
2. I want my daughter to get all the support that she needs so that she can graduate.
3. I want to see more emphasis on improving in math.
4. Keep providing support for all students who need the help.
5. Continuous support for students and separating students who are at different grade levels.
6. We need more counselors to help our children reach college.
7. I would like for students to receive therapy if they are having a problem.
8. I want to see an increase in communication between the school and parents.
9. What is the best way for parents to stay informed, as our children do not give us all the information that is sent to us parents to receive.
10. Need to improve the safety of the school or safety of our children.
11. I do not see anything written in the plan on increasing school security, we need to increase security.
12. I am not happy with the outcome of the school plan. Safety was not an area discussed.

Participants also provided additional written comments:

1. How will you reintegrate the community and parents?
2. What are SDAIE strategies?
3. Why are students who are in higher grade levels in class with students who are in the 9th or 10th grade?
4. How will students know to which of the four academies students will be enrolled in?
5. I like that the school is focused on the future of our children, I like how you are thinking.
6. I also like that office personnel will treat parents better so that we feel proud of the school.
7. I am in agreement with all of the priorities the school has listed.
8. What does differentiation mean?



Session 3 Report – Dialogues with Planning Teams

This section is split into 3 pieces: 1) The Planning Team Presentation, the 2) Q&A time and if available, 3) the Suggestions/Comments that were shared during the dialogue.

Planning Team Presentation

The first presenter was the **Sylmar High School** planning team. The team provided session participants with a quick summary of all four sections of their plan. A Spanish-language copy of the school plan guide summary was provided as well a copy of the school plan outline. Principal Lee spoke on behalf of the team and introduced the school plan:

The team described the top five priorities areas as:

1. Instructional practices must focus on improved “first instruction” in which both SDAIE strategies and differentiation occurs in all classes.
2. Innovative curricular program that is engaging and relevant for students, and focuses on both college preparedness and career readiness.
3. A strategically designed math program, led by knowledgeable experts, to serve as support for teachers in the improvement of instructional practices.
4. Continued support provided for students who fall behind, including targeted intervention and additional offerings of credit recovery courses.
5. A school climate in which all support staff, including counselors, coordinators and administrators , provide a welcoming and nurturing environment for students and parents, and teachers who communicate with parent on the progress of their children on a consistent basis.

The team also shared the following other points from their proposed plan:

1. We took your information and feedback and created a plan that was short, simple and straight to the point.
2. For students who are struggling in MATH we will have professional development coach that I already hired to work with our teachers to improve their teaching methodologies.
3. I want our teachers to teach at a higher level and connect the information with students.
4. We will be using Access to Core Strategies as a teaching strategy on a consistent basis with all students.
5. We also want to improve our communication with parents. Parents felt disconnected from the school and felt we were not taking parents comments seriously.
6. We will create four small schools (School of Visual & Performing Arts, Leadership, Technology and Magnet) two schools will use either the framework *Linked Learning* or *Humanitas* model. We will be working with teachers to enforce the models.



Questions and Answers Section

The following were questions directed to the Sylmar High School Team:

1. **Participant:** How will you identify the strengths and potential of students?
SHS Team answer: We will do assessments with our students every two to three weeks to assess their levels of understanding.

2. **Participant:** My son has special needs. He is in a class that has a mix of grade levels. Why is that?
SHS Team answer: The district has guidelines and we look at what are the students needs of students, not the grade level. He may have been identified as having mild learning disability and we to put him in a regular class, but would still get extra support.
Participant: I don't think that is the case.
SHS Team answer: I can make myself available to you after presentation to further discuss.

3. **Participant:** You mentioned 4 schools, how will students be placed in those schools?
SHS Team answer: If our plan is approved, In February these schools will have information about them and students will have an opportunity to ask questions. We will also do this format on a Saturday for parents. In early March, students will submit their top two options choices of schools.

4. **Participant:** How will you get commitment from the teachers to focus on the plan?
SHS Team answer: I will have teachers review the plan and introduce our teaching methodologies. At this point teachers would need to agree and sign the plan. If they are not on board, I will let them know that this school is not a fit for them and they would need to find another school. I need teachers to buy into the plan.

5. **Participant:** How will you ensure that teachers implement the new teaching methodologies?
SHS Team answer: All teachers who sign and agree with plan will need to attend a five day training to learn about the methodologies and receive professional development. Also our jobs as an administrator is to check that teachers are doing what they are suppose to do. If they are not, we will meet with them and say "hey you are not doing what you are supposed to do, this is not ok."
Participant follow-up question: Once you leave a classroom how will you ensure that teachers are implanting models?
SHS Team follow-up answer: We will randomly visit three classrooms a day unannounced. If we catch them not following the plan we will meet with them and let them know that they are wasting their time.

6. **Participant:** When will you know if plan was accepted?
SHS Team answer: Mid December. Training for teachers will be in June.



Public School Choice 4.0 Academy Session Reporting

Participant follow-up question: Can you implement plan right away in January? it would be a waste of 6 months.

SHS Team follow-up answer: Reason that I can't implement it sooner, is that I do not know what teachers will be returning. However, we have already started working on improving in math and on *Access to Core* strategies.

7. **Participant:** Will there be resources to help students and their family if they have problems?

SHS Team answer: We already have many resources for our students and families and I can see that we have not done a very good job of communicating to you about what we already have as resources. So yes, we will continue to have resources for our students and families.

Suggestions/Comments made by parents during dialogue

1. **Participant:** I think it's a good idea for students to evaluate their teachers like they do in college. This way you can get feedback from the students to ensure teachers are teaching.

SHS Team Response: I agree with you and we will have students provide anonymous feedback on their teachers. It should be administered and collected by a third party as they do in college.

2. **Participant:** We know that there are good and bad teachers at this school. Will you be responsible for these teachers?

SHS Team Response: That is my job as a principal to ensure and monitor what our teachers are doing. I agree with you, we do have bad teachers at this school, I know who they are. These teachers will see the plan and would need to agree to it, if not this is not the school for them.



Session 3 Report – Participant Feedback Form Responses

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FORM NARRATIVE & RESPONSES

1. Student Vision	Does Not Meets My Expectations	Partially Meets My Expectations	Meets My Expectations	Exceeds My Expectations
The writing team identified the skills and knowledge that students will gain to be prepared for the next level of learning.	2	9	10	1
The writing team has clearly identified what students will know, understand, and be able to do when they leave this school.	0	9	11	2
TOTALS PER COLUMN	2	18	21	3

The following written comments expressed the parents feedback about this section of the plan:

1. It's valuable that you will assess student's strengths and potential.
2. We expect to see the results in our students.
3. This is a very good plan for our students and I see great expectations for them.
4. We have to include culture as part of the plan.

2. School Vision	Does Not Meets My Expectations	Partially Meets My Expectations	Meets My Expectations	Exceeds My Expectations
The writing team has identified what the school culture will feel like for parents and students.	1	9	13	0
The writing team has identified what the school must do to make sure that all students are successful and prepared to go to the next school level and beyond.	1	9	13	0
TOTALS PER COLUMN	2	18	26	0

The following written comments expressed the parents feedback about this section of the plan:

1. I like your support with providing resources to students and parents who have problems.
2. We need more information on where parents can seek assistance, if need be.
3. I didn't see anything in plan regarding safety and security for the school.
4. There was nothing said about the security of the school or about improving school lunches.
5. I liked what the principal said and as parents we need to give him more support and keep united to support our children.
6. I like the plan for the future of our children.
7. I like that there will be emphasis on improving math results.



Public School Choice 4.0 Academy Session Reporting

3. Student Performance: Where is the School Now?	Does Not Meet My Expectations	Partially Meets My Expectations	Meets My Expectations	Exceeds My Expectations
The writing team identified areas within the school's performance that highlight areas of strength.	0	13	9	0
The writing team identified areas of concern where growth is needed.	0	10	9	3
The writing team demonstrated a thorough analysis of data to address the needs of all student groups.	1	8	13	0
TOTALS PER COLUMN	1	31	31	3

The following written comments expressed the parents feedback about this section of the plan:

1. As a parent I feel that more attention should have been given to the needs of our students.
2. How will you improve communication between the school and parents?

4. School Turnaround: School Plan Priorities	Does Not Meet My Expectations	Partially Meets My Expectations	Meets My Expectations	Exceeds My Expectations
The writing team identified the top priorities for the school to improve student achievement.	0	7	15	0
The writing team clearly demonstrated that they know where the school is now and what needs to be done to get to the school of the future where all students are high achievers.	0	4	17	0
The writing team identified various strategies that will be used to ensure the success of students.	0	6	16	0
The writing team identified support that is needed for their faculty and staff to turnaround the school.	0	6	14	1
TOTALS PER COLUMN	0	23	62	1

The following written comments expressed the parents feedback about this section of the plan:

1. Bring back a sense of security to the school and for the students.
2. It is of great value, to provide resources that will improve teaching practices with teachers.
3. All that is stated in the plan is successful and that plan brings a good future for all of our students.
4. The plan is brief, yet you forgot the issue of safety and security for the school.
5. We need more security on the school campus.
6. Ensure that there is more information given to our students about universities.
7. Implementation of the plan is essential to change SHS.
8. I don't feel that our opinions and recommendations were considered in this plan.
9. As a parent, I would like to know how this section of the plan was identified without getting input from us the parents.
10. We need to make sure teachers show effort in this process.
11. I like the part of the plan that states that there will be an increase in communication between parents and teachers.