

RANCHO BUENA VISTA HIGH SCHOOL

WASC Self-Study 2009-2010

Chapter III: Progress Report

Action Plan 1

Area for Growth: Refine curriculum and assessments to incorporate the ESLRs and to address the CAN.

Rationale: ESLRs have not become an integral part of RBV's curriculum and culture. The revised ESLRs lack articulated rubrics and should be imbedded into content area assessments

General Background

Since the last WASC self-study in 2003-2004, the school has been involved in an ongoing process of curriculum review. In the summer of 2004, a Vista Unified School District (VUSD) initiative focusing on a comprehensive alignment with state standards (identified as "Essential Standards") across the curriculum focused specifically on assessments common to each core subject and grade level resulting in district-wide "benchmark" assessments.

The benchmarks, as originally conceived, were summative assessments for the purpose of determining student mastery of the Essential Standards in the core academic subjects. This was facilitated through the use of the web-based program from Pearson Education, called EduSoft. This program facilitated the accumulation of individual teacher and departmental results. As a result, a collaborative effort was launched to analyze data, refine curriculum and design summative assessments that would, in time, lead to greater student mastery of the standards as they are reflected on the California Standards Tests (CST). Initially, on the high school level, the benchmarks were intended to be given as part of each teacher's final exam.

Over the course of the last several years, the school has utilized the benchmark data and recognized the necessity of expanding the number of benchmarks and administering them in a more intentional way. We currently give as many as four benchmarks per school year in the core academic subjects. The emphasis has changed from summative to formative benchmarks to more closely align with the Essential Standards and support the instructional focus and pacing within the classroom. The use of the benchmarks has required deliberate pacing strategies so that the summative assessments may be given across the district. This development has not only aligned the two high schools in the way in which they look at the standards, but it has also influenced the curriculum design for the three alternative schools: Alta Vista High School, Major General Murray High School, and Palomar High School.

The RBV staff has utilized the "Late Start Monday" schedule to establish a collaborative process within departments and between grade levels/subject areas. On the department level, it reflected a process where teachers needed to struggle with uncertainty and a resistance to the district's introduction of the EduSoft program.

This was uncharted territory. Many teachers were not comfortable with the prospect of preparing students for any type of external examination, yet alone having an outside entity be able to scrutinize individual teacher data. Initially, anxiety levels were raised as to how that data might be used by the district and site administration in the evaluation of teacher performance. To calm these fears, the district emphatically stated in various ways that the results of the benchmark would not, in any manner, be used in the evaluation of teachers.

The immediacy of accessing student achievement data provided through EduSoft proved beneficial. The analysis of that data primarily provided a starting point for collaboration and the discussion of both instructional practices and assessment strategies. Soon, these discussions would inform the development of variety of authentic assessments across the curriculum.

The VUSD Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Curriculum continued to support the intradistrict dialogue on curriculum and assessment. At least two full day sessions, one in the Fall and one in the Spring, were devoted to align curriculum, instructional pacing and refine assessments. Each of the school's subject area departments sent at least two representatives for each grade level.

Unfortunately, district budgetary constraints ultimately led to the formulation of a policy that significantly reduced the released time available during the student instructional day. As a result, while continuing to fund the development of curriculum at the contractually established hourly rate, teachers had to find time outside of the school day to continue their collaboration. Some departments ceased to address anything more than the revising of the existing district benchmark assessments; however, a few departments at RBV, specifically English and math, shifted to a focus on internal school-based common assessments.

Concurrently, with the declining district support for intradistrict collaboration, RBV began to explore how we might be able to adopt the concepts of *Understanding by Design* (UbD). A delegation of teachers from the core subject area departments took advantage of an opportunity to attend a national UbD conference in Denver, Colorado, in the summer of 2006. The "backward design" emphasis of UbD struck a chord with those who attended and others with whom they shared their findings. The idea of looking at outcomes that indicated the level of student understanding was not new, but it addressed a growing concern that the multiple-choice format most compatible with the EduSoft program was not a valid means of assessing true student mastery of the standards. Instead, the UbD concepts would allow for the design of units of curriculum in which each learning activity and each performance assessment focused on student mastery. Classroom instruction centered around an essential question that guided the student's inquiry in a way that combined many of the elements that teachers had been intuitively seeking, yet not systematically applying to their lessons or their assessments.

Thanks to the initiative of Tim Leary, the RBV social studies delegate to the Denver conference, the social studies department began to take the lead in considering the ways in which the UbD concepts could be utilized in creating a framework for the ongoing articulation and refinement of curriculum. Site staff development funds were allocated to broaden staff awareness of the UbD and to facilitate collaborative groups within and across departments. UbD concepts were, thus, expanded to include other subject areas over the course of several years through teacher-led mini training sessions, introducing the basic elements of the UbD process. Thus, these UbD training sessions began to influence the curriculum design of across all subject area departments, including Special Education, ELD, and International Languages.

1. Refine curriculum to reflect content standards and ESLRs

The school's long standing commitment to academic collaboration is evidenced through the site budget and the scheduling of instructional days so as to prioritize late Start Mondays. These structured morning sessions have long been part of the Rancho culture of collaboration. The departments have the use of two collaboration sessions per month and two additional monthly sessions are used for interdisciplinary adjunct groups. The departments and subject/grade level groups have the opportunity to address more of their vision for curriculum refinement and revision.

In particular, this was supported when, beginning in the Fall of 2007, the principal set about integrating the concept of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) throughout the school program. As part of an introductory presentation and activity at our first staff meeting in August, 2007, Mrs. Levy sought to connect the concept to established site practices. Many of the staff understood the impact that more specialized PLCs might focus on long-neglected areas and would revitalize and re-energize efforts to improve student learning. This initiative was supported with both the time and the financial resources necessary to create and sustain the PLC concept.

This concept has become a part of the staff culture and, even with the temporary freezing of the financial support for PLCs in November, 2008, continues to influence the focus of staff collaboration to this day.

PLCs have helped focus each of the four core subjects. Though each subject has many concepts from the state content standards in common, they have been able to identify specific standards that are essential to instruction at every grade level. Most of the course/teacher syllabi, in these subjects, identify these VUSD "Essential Standards." This was ably demonstrated when our Superintendent, Dr. Joyce Bales, first came to the VUSD in 2006. To better acquaint herself with the standards by which the high schools operated, she called for the English, social studies, and math departments to provide evidence of their course syllabi and the use of rubrics to evaluate student work.

Additionally, the updating of the VUSD textbook adoption process has demonstrated increased attention to the state standards, specifically in math, science, and social studies, as well as the international languages. There has also been a concerted effort on the part of the RSP teachers to use the mainstream regular education textbooks for their delivery and amplification of the state content standards. As part of this process, the RSP teachers also use the district benchmark assessments most directly related to their classes.

Instituting the UbD has created a mechanism that has brought coherence to the delivery of curriculum, emphasizing the learning process and authentic assessments rather than merely “covering” content standards. Because teachers are more conscientious about the students’ approaches to learning and to the accumulation of knowledge within a core subject area, more teachers understand the necessity of articulating expectations for clarity in all verbal, written and oral communication. A schoolwide effort has increased the emphasis on critical thinking skills which lead students to make connections and to more personally apply their learning in all subject areas.

The English department has identified Essential Standards at every grade level and they have included these on each of their syllabi. At this writing, they acknowledge that they have not included the ESLRs in their syllabi, but they will make this part of their next review. In addition, they have completed a comprehensive review of their grammar pacing guides and have incorporated state content standards in their revised pacing guides. They have also developed a site-specific literature pacing guide (9-12).

Similarly the 9th grade social studies team has restructured their pacing guide from its traditionally regional sequencing to a thematic and chronological approach. The 10th grade team was the first to make inroads into a true interdisciplinary approach as they worked with English, the art department and our ROP team to create the Digital Arts Design Academy (DADA). Much of their new curriculum revisions have been formatted using the UbD process. The 11th grade team has built upon their foundation of chapter goals and objectives linked to the content standards to incorporate standards-based daily journal responses and academic vocabulary development with “Focus Points.” Three members of the team are also piloting the TCI *Pursuing American Ideals* texts. The 11th grade team continues to incorporate the TCI resource guides, as applicable to the standards. The 12th grade team has developed a “Line in the Sand” poster project for Government, while the IB History team has developed a thematic unit integrating literature and the visual and performing arts into their study of Latin America.

The math department has developed a number of different avenues to enhance standards-based instruction for their students. The Math Analysis teachers have students demonstrate their understanding of lesson objectives using verbal and written methods by including SIOP warm-ups. Through their “Friday problems,” the Geometry-Trigonometry students solve a non-routine problem based upon content standards. Students are then required to explain their solution process completely. Algebra 2 now

uses a vocabulary review lesson at the end of each chapter relying upon students working in groups to create sentences using non-math and math examples of each word. In Geometry classes, students create formula and vocabulary flip charts and posters to reinforce the standards they are learning. The computer-based ALEKS curriculum for Pre-Algebra has a feature that allows students to chart how they are doing relative to all the applicable state standards.

As part of the new Earth Science curriculum, students are using the “Me and My Shadow” lab to better understand the earth-sun relationship which address many of the Energy in the Earth standards. The Life Science course has also been transitioned from Integrated Science II. Life Science teachers have coordinated their curriculum and pacing guides with Vista High School science teachers. These new pacing guides have specifically targeted standards reflected on some of the sections of the CST, where our students have shown their lowest performances. The Biology curriculum was redesigned in 2004; however, it has only been over the last two years that biology teachers have introduced various literacy techniques, such as “Talk to the Text,” KWL, and Pair-Share into the course. To more closely match state standards, the Chemistry course has been streamlined and some activities have been eliminated to better allow other elements such as atomic structure to be refined and enhanced. Literacy activities such as outlining have been implemented with content specific readings for Physics students.

The International Languages department has refined their learning activities to match the newly-released state standards. While much of the national standards they had previously relied upon remain part of the state standards, activities such as “Diálogos,” verb relays, verb mobiles, “Lotería,” “Big Spin,” and “Memória,” along with culture research and presentations, have cemented student learning to be aligned with the state standards. Level 3 students in American Sign Language develop the skills necessary to tell a story by watching samples of signed stories, analyze the narrative structure and practice the visual sequence of events before they write and translate their own original story. While written and spoken dialogues are part of each language experience, French students learn word origins and how they might also apply them in their English study as well. German 2 students develop their narrative skills by summarizing and retelling stories from the text and, in particular, the story of “Silent Night.” Some Spanish students read current events in Spanish language newspapers and incorporate them into class discussions and written self-reflections.

Special Education students have the opportunity to support their study of the core subjects by demonstrating many skills, ranging from their ability to organize their daily schedules and creating a shopping list for the Student Store to dissecting a chicken leg to relate the form and function of tissue in Life Science. They regularly include Cornell notes and graphic organizers into their study of World History. They also practice test taking skills using sample CST questions in U.S. History. In addition, one of the RSP teachers requires her Study Skills students to follow-through by getting their Weekly Grade Sheet completed and to reflect upon their progress and to relate their progress to our ESLRs.

Within the Visual and Performing Arts department, teachers have incorporated “Art Critiques” where students analyze various art works and must appropriately use art terms and other “power” vocabulary to demonstrate the application of state standards. They have also created a unified syllabus for Art 1. As other students listen to musical performances, they are asked to respond through writing and speaking about the musical content and the effectiveness of the performance as it relates to the content standards. Similarly, mastery in all levels of Drama is based upon a foundation that is aligned to standards. Drama students use journaling to chronicle their growth as performers.

While much of the curriculum within Business and Technology has been established in accordance with content—and industry—standards, both the Architecture course and Photo Imaging have curriculum that can be modified to more closely meet the needs of each student, allowing each student to master the course standards.

The PE department has added lifetime sport/activity to the curriculum. Consequently, we have introduced golf, mountain biking, and yoga to the curriculum. In addition, PE teachers are continuing the development of Tabattas and its infusion into PE sessions.

The Counseling department is now using *Naviance* as a new curriculum resource that provides them the opportunity to develop lesson plans unique to each grade level and the standards associated with it.

Because teachers have been conscientious about the students’ approach to learning and their mastery of knowledge within the core subject areas, more teachers articulate the schoolwide expectations for **Knowledge, Critical Thinking, and Communication**. In addition, there is a growing awareness that we need to be more intentional in raising student and parent awareness of our ESLRs as they were stated for our 2003-2004 self-study and beyond 2009-2010 as they have been expanded to include **Connections**.

2. Design and implement authentic, standards-based assessments.

The efforts, begun with the VUSD benchmark assessment process in 2004, have become part of our collaborative fabric. While initially a prescriptive from the district, the increased familiarity with EduSoft and a growing understanding of the nature of assessment itself, as well as the PLC’s focus on student learning, have been a catalyst to initiatives within many departments across our campus.

The English department currently employs two VUSD Benchmarks that are given at the end of each semester at each grade level. They have also developed a series of common assessments at each grade level which are administered twice each year. All of the data compiled from these assessments are not only reviewed by the teaching staff, but are included in the principal’s quarterly reports that are submitted to the superintendent. The ELD team uses benchmarks in October, January and May to

evaluate their students' performances. Notably, each grade level has identified an assessment model to use that reflects the content standards associated with it: Grade 9—the AXES paragraph, Grade 10—the “Letter to the Front” and a portrait poem, Grade 11—Junior Exhibition, and Grade 12—the Rhetoric Essay and a personal narrative.

The 9th grade team in social studies has created six different assessments to go along with their revisions to their standard-based curriculum, including a religion character collage and a Korean children's book. The 10th grade team has maintained standards-based assessments such as the “Enlightenment Press Conference” and the World War I Storyboard, while now including an American Revolutionary newspaper, Cold War game board and Greco-Roman cereal boxes. The “Robber Barons or Captains of Industry?” essay has been an 11th grade tradition even before the content standards featured it as a prime example of an assessment which is aligned with standards. The World War II Project provides an excellent connection to the standards as well as a great “Into” for our annual “USO Show and Oral Historians Day.” “Imperialism debates” and “Postcards from an Immigrant” test student understanding of US History concepts in more authentic ways. Each semester, our 12th graders have a specific assessment linked to the standards for Government (“What it means to be a citizen of our nation” essay) and Economics (“Demand and Supply Curve Shift”).

With their new text for this year, Math Analysis has infused the entire course with new assessments ranging from quizzes to chapter tests. Geometry students design a house floor plan as a way of showing their understanding of area and perimeter. They also build models of prisms and include them into a poster that explains how to find volume and surface area.

All of the Biology and Life Science students do the same “Membrane Permeability Lab” that reflects the standards for Investigation and Experimentation. The Earth Science teachers have created benchmarks assessing the four main disciplines (oceanography, plate tectonics, meteorology, and astronomy). All Chemistry teachers now use the “Qualitative Lab Activity” as a formative assessment of practical laboratory techniques. Physics incorporates “Clicker” reviews.

3. Design and implement departmental rubrics to measure content standards and the ESLRs.

During the development of their grade level assessments (noted in #2 above), the English department also included a rubric for evaluation of the content standards.

The Social Studies Department has also developed rubrics to go along with their assessments. In Grade 9, they have revised the rubric used for National History Day projects and, in collaboration with the English department, they are in the process of creating a rubric for their end-of-the-year map assessment. In Grade 10, they, too, have a rubric for their portion of the “Letter from the Front” essay and the portrait poem. Also retained by some of the 10th grade team is an “Exposé” with its rubric. The 12th

grade team has continued to revise and define the expectations for Community Participation through the use of a rubric.

For the Algebra I program, our Math department has designed a new pacing guide, a new VUSD Algebra 1 Benchmark, and new rubrics. Geometry teachers employ rubrics to evaluate the tessellation construction projects and group chapter presentations. Math Analysis teachers have standardized the grading system for department assessments throughout the year. A new IB curriculum has been instituted in Math Studies and Calculus AB/BC. Teachers in the Essential Math class team with the ALEKS teachers once a week to give their students both direct classroom instruction and the opportunity to expand their knowledge through the use of alternative math programs. This year, the department completed the adoption of three new texts (algebra I, Algebra II and Math Analysis) and next year will introduce a new textbook in Calculus and Geometry.

The Earth Science teachers created baseline math assessments to monitor student improvement throughout the year. The assessment is given at the beginning, middle and the end of the year. Teachers in Life Science, Biology, and Chemistry utilize common lab rubrics.

Within International Languages, all teachers use rubrics for writing and speaking assessments. Special Education teachers have coordinated the use of rubrics with their colleagues in the core subject area departments. The student oral critiques of art work have been standardized between teachers in accordance with the state standards. Rhythmic proficiency is evaluated with a rubric to establish a rating that can chart student improvement from test to test and year to year. Within the various levels of Drama, students are assessed with criteria of performance rubrics. In PE, students are evaluated by a set of established guidelines for physical fitness standards. The Business and Technology department continues to employ industry criteria that must be met to show proficiency in any given career path.

4. Reflect upon student achievement to realign curriculum.

At the beginning of each year, teachers and departments are provided with extensive data about the CST results of their students from the previous year as well as the performance level of their current students. Teachers and departments evaluate and discuss what instructional area(s) require improvement. All teachers receive information about their current students' performance on the English/Language Arts CSTs.

The English department has purposely designed goal packets, a formative AXES paragraph assessment, implemented CST unit review packets, and modified assessments to reflect CST format. The 10th grade teachers have put in place an additional novel to better prepare students for the expectations of the second semester. In the 11th and 12th grades, curriculum has been realigned to reflect non-fiction lessons. The Junior Exhibition research outline was implemented in place of the research paper.

The 11th grade teachers have incorporated student reflections in all sections of the Junior Exhibition. A new Rhetoric class has been added as a means of better addressing student preparation for college, and the study of rhetorical techniques has been into all senior classes. Students now have a stronger foundation in the style of writing that is expected by universities. The department, as a whole, has seen fit to redesign the portfolio component as it touches upon student work in each of the four years.

The Social Studies Department used the results from the VUSD Benchmark exams to make a series of modifications to their curriculum in grades 10-12, taking the opportunity to completely reconfigure the 9th grade curriculum to provide a better foundation for students to draw from on the 10th grade CSTs. There has been a concerted effort to use strategies such as essay circles/peer editing to improve student writing. The success of the 12th grade team's collaboration has relied upon the constant refinement and calibration integral with their use of UbD.

In the Math Department, the ALEKS curriculum constantly readjusts to address the individual student achievement. IB Math Studies has refocused the Internal Assessment process on statistical standards requiring students to use proper notation and academic vocabulary in their five to fifteen page essays. Math Analysis has consistently used white board warm-ups and mathematical worksheets to address identified areas of weakness. All of the math classes have adjusted pacing to differentiate instruction for student success.

Following the review of CST results, Earth Science teachers, including Special Education, are redesigning the "Energy and the Earth System" unit. Life Science teachers have adjusted their pacing guides and the curriculum sequence to include emphasis on the lowest achievement areas. Biology completed an item analysis of the benchmark exams and changes have been submitted to the district. Curriculum and pacing guides have been modified to fit the benchmark exam windows for administration. Chemistry and Physics used data analysis of outside testing results, including AP, IB, CST and benchmark exams, to modify curriculum.

Other departments, such as International Languages, have made adjustments based upon ELA exams or have made changes to pacing guides when they have reviewed student achievement on department assessments. Special Education teachers are including SIOP strategies like "Ticket Out the Door" to get immediate feedback on student learning. A particular emphasis is being placed on the re-teaching of content, should student achievement show this is needed. Lesson plans are based upon ELD level, CST scores and IEP information; modifications are made to address student needs and skills. The annual art festivals (both site and district), along with dramatic and musical performances, provide the opportunity to review student portfolios to adjust course pacing. Our PE department has reviewed the year-end fitness scores and determined which areas need improvement and have adjusted their curricular focus accordingly, so that students may be successful in those areas. With the

implementation of the state-mandated PE 9 fitness tests, review of student success in the six identified areas of fitness is ongoing.

5. Administer annual reflective survey to seniors regarding knowledge and attainment of ESLRs.

Through the self-study process, we have come to the conclusion that the idea of a senior reflective survey has not been implemented by the site. Previously, a district-wide survey had been distributed to all seniors. When that practice ceased, the site did not implement its own comprehensive senior survey.

Several departments encourage students to write an “end-of-the-year” letter that will be given to incoming students the following year outlining the necessary skills required to be successful in any given class. This has proven to be successful for both math and visual and performing arts. It has helped them to examine their curriculum to help determine if they have been successful in accomplishing their course goals and objectives.

Many of our 12th grade IB English and IB History students continue to produce “This I Believe” essays, in the style of the National Public Radio segment’s format, as a means of reflecting upon their high school experiences and the ways in which their past will inform their futures after graduation.

In Special Education, a senior “Summary Of Performance (SOP) Review” is given with attention to reviewing student grades and an analysis of their strengths and weaknesses. A social/emotional review is completed with emphasis on future academic and career goals.

Action Plan 2

Area for Growth: Improve communication among all stake holders.

Rationale: Self-study findings from the parent and student surveys and focus group discussions indicate a need to improve communication. We believe that enhanced communication will lead to improved student achievement.

General Background

Monday morning meetings remain the central mechanism for staff dialogue at RBV. These meetings, while dedicated to subject area/department collaboration of curriculum design and alignment with content standards, integration of assessments, rubrics and classroom strategies, also provide dedicated time to special student groups such as English Learners, honors students, as well as other under-represented groups. These meetings have also been a dedicated time for regular communication between the administration and staff to discuss and collaborate on resolving current campus issues. Members of the Shared Governance Committee (SGC) also participate in regular bi-monthly meetings with the principal to discuss issues regarding the progress of school programs and policy.

1. Research and implement effective communication practices for exchange of information among large number of people.

One of the first places we began to implement more effective communication practices was amongst our staff. With the only guaranteed collaboration time being our Monday morning meetings, the importance of a Professional Learning Community (PLC) to overall school improvement and improved student achievement is crucial. Traditionally, teachers might have thought that they were collaborating effectively to improve student learning. Though progress in this area was seen, the processes associated with a PLC were far more intentional.

Since the last self-study, the PLC model for collaboration has become the driving force to shape the work of the school around four schoolwide essential questions:

- What do we want our students to know and be able to do?
- How do we know that they have mastered the knowledge/skill?
- What do we do when the students know?
- What do we do when the students do not know?

At this point, the staff has begun to embrace these concepts with the understanding that the Monday morning meetings will utilize the PLC model. The use of the essential questions has become a definitive guide for staff articulation.

Late last year, in an effort to further expand communication, one of our English teachers launched the idea for a “touchstone” video that took a campus tour capturing a five minute snapshot of the campus with the intention of increasing awareness and appreciation for the school’s diversity and energy. From there, other means of connecting students have blossomed. The RBV Podcast is another new internet feature which is increasing our ability to reach out to our school community on a monthly basis. These podcasts, featuring staff and students, have been produced to help connect students, parents and community with the campus. The programs have included, “A Message from The Principal” and “Respect the Ranch,” and recitations of famous literary works like “The Raven.”

Administrators, counselors, and coordinators of special programs use the *ConnectEd* program, a dial-out phone system, to inform families of special events and emergency information both in English and in Spanish. In addition, RBV parents are kept current with the school through regular PTSA meetings and the annual “Dessert with The Principal” meeting. This year, the dessert function had simultaneous Spanish translation and, as a result, there was a significant increase in the number of Spanish-speaking parents attended, including members of the ELAC committee. The PTSA newsletter (*Longhorn Lines*) and the school newspaper (*The Bull’s Eye*) have also continued; the newspaper has significantly expanded since the last self-study and has earned awards in several journalism competitions. In addition, students have partnerships with the California Newspaper Association, the High School Journalism Initiative, the News in Education Program, and the San Diego Journalism Association. Parents also have the opportunity to become involved in the school’s activities by joining several active booster clubs, such as those for drama, band, football, baseball, basketball, and the Longhorn Foundation. The ASB marquee, on Melrose Avenue and Longhorn Drive, is another very functional communication tool for the school community.

The site technology committee continues to survey and train the staff to support the dynamic web trends available to the school community. Currently, the pressing site issues include building teacher websites that support the teacher’s communication goals for her classroom as well as provide information, content, review and interactive links. The Tech Committee also has been training more teachers in the integration of *Google Apps* and *SurveyMonkey*. Students are being trained in use of *Blackboard* web program that enables them to upload homework, projects and collaborative group work.

The Honors program has expanded its means for parents to get more specific information regarding student class choices, honor’s requirements, external exams, etc., making information more accessible for different grade levels. This information is available via a link from the RBV homepage or directly accessed at www.rbvhonors.com. Throughout the year, informational meetings and classroom visits have also been organized. The PATrons group, long a fixture on the RBV scene, provides vital services for proctoring, scholarship fundraising, and support of Junior Exhibition, Career Days, and its signature event—The Ranch Revue. The IB Club is in

its third year of activity and has become a vibrant connection for our honors students, their interests, and their involvements.

The counseling staff continues to meet with our feeder middle schools to help incoming ninth graders assimilate into the high school academic and social culture. In the past, RBV counselors have met with eighth graders to register for ninth grade. In order to better prepare the middle school student for our campus, individual departments visit the middle schools to assist them in gaining a broader vision of the opportunities available to them. The RBV administrative staff also meets with the middle school administrators to identify problem students and plan support for those students before they arrive at the high school.

Each March, we host a Freshman Orientation Night which highlights the many various academic and extra-curricular opportunities for incoming 9th graders. Teachers from our math, science, English, social studies, international languages, etc. all make presentations to the students and their parents so they can better determine their academic plan. Representatives from co-curricular activities such as sports, clubs, ASB, and performing arts feature the ways in which students can get connected to RBV.

Each year, RBV provides the Student Handbook for all students. The handbook contains information relevant to all rules and practices on campus. Both students and parents are provided this pertinent information via this handbook. In the past, the handbook containing the "Longhorn Law" was given at an assembly after the start of school. Staff was given the task of reviewing critical areas within the handbook to reaffirm expected behaviors from all students on campus. The administration has determined that delaying the presentation of the handbook had a direct impact upon student conduct. It was determined that students need to be aware of the rules of conduct before the start of the school year. RBV will now include the handbook with the summer mailer for parents and students to study and sign.

2. All staff will use email as the primary method of campus-wide communication.

The internet has also become *the* preferred tool at RBV for communication between school, home and the community. Beyond the now commonplace use of email by 100% of teachers and staff members to communicate daily about school business and parent communication, RBV maintains an up-to-date school website with the aid of a school webmaster who updates communication such as the Daily Bulletin, special announcements, and calendar events. She manages the site's links to academic departments, teacher websites, sport teams, visual and performing arts, and the counseling department, among others. Data from the website's "counter" indicate the tool is used extensively by our community.

3. Develop a mission-vision-values statement for RBV.

This previously-neglected element has been fully developed and implemented through a very deliberate and reflective process involving teachers, administrators, classified personnel, parents and students. While the process was fully recounted in our Student-Community Profile, it is important to recognize that these statements are intended to be a driving force for who we are, what we do, and how we do it.

The establishment of our mission-vision-values statements has begun to provide coherence to our efforts to improve student learning. Seen in conjunction with the self-study process, there has been a much deeper purpose in what we are currently doing and in what we hope to accomplish. With the mission-vision-values concepts in place, RBV has a better focus of what it will take to be a high achieving school.

4. Modify and adjust the grade reporting document to begin to reflect the content standards and the ESLRs.

There are six grade reports (four progress reports and two semester reports) that the school distributes to parents to inform them of their student's achievements. Currently, the grade reporting documents include the grades themselves, citizenship, and positive and negative comments regarding a student's approaches to learning. Spanish-speaking parents receive the comments in Spanish.

Upon review, we have found this area to best be served through the changing of teacher comments to more accurately represent student progress in the acquisition of academic standards. This process continues to be discussed within departments and brought to the Department Chairs for further articulation. Our expectation is that these types of modifications will be ready for review within the next year.

5. Continue Focus Group meeting for interdisciplinary discussions and WASC follow-up.

While our intentions to sustain the Focus Group meetings beyond the scope of our self-studies were sincere, we cannot truly state that interdisciplinary meetings of this sort have occurred. We have, through our PLC process, created mechanisms for interdisciplinary dialogues. These opportunities for interaction have been focused on curricular and assessment needs, rather than the more structured guidelines of a genuine Focus Group. Similarly, as it is currently formatted, our Department Chair meetings, which occur twice monthly, provide consistent opportunities for discussion and interaction regarding interdisciplinary issues.

In acknowledging our shortcomings in this area, we have made a commitment to creating a more sustainable process for Focus Group and WASC follow-up. In the course of the next six years, we will incorporate this critical element into our regular Monday morning staff collaboration time.

6. Communicate student achievement results through an Internet-based system.

The VUSD *Parent (and Student) Portal* is gradually becoming a key component of communication between school and home. Each year, more teachers are utilizing the ABI Gradebook associated with *Parent Portal* to upload individual classroom information and grades. Parents with established accounts can also access information about attendance in real time. Parents have been able to obtain a password and username at various parent meetings such as Back-to-School Night. They can reach us daily through our Data Processing Technician and then login to monitor their student's progress, as desired. Through *Parent Portal*, parents have unprecedented access to their child's classroom attendance and academic progress. The *Student Portal* provides students access to running grade reports, homework and project dates, as well as, email communication with teachers. This year, 10th, 11th, and 12th graders used the ABI system to make their class choices. Parents are now able to monitor the classes their child selects through ABI and can make any necessary adjustments. Teachers also use the ABI to make their recommendations for students' class selections.

A number of our teachers are in regular email communication with parents. Most teachers provide their email contact information through their course syllabus at the beginning of the year. This vehicle has allowed teachers to update parents on student achievement or communicate the need for individualized conferences.

Teachers also use other web-based programs, such as *TeacherWeb*, to communicate with parents and students by utilizing their email features to send reminders regarding homework and projects. *MicroGrade* and *WebGrade* are other forms of electronic grade books used by teachers. The Special Education department provides supplemental three-, nine- and fifteen-week progress reports for all students and parents. Our Counseling Department maintains an expanded website for parent and student access to social, emotional, academic and career planning information.

For their own collaborative communication, teachers are becoming increasingly familiar with and have more access to Edusoft software technology. As teachers and staff continue to work with the technology, the possibilities for communication and use of the data become more and more a reality. Departments and individual teachers are now able to use benchmark assessments results to study how students are progressing in their mastery of content standards. In the past only basic assessment data was available for study. Now, a teacher can use the software to look at trends between one year to another, between classes, as well as strands from CST to identify struggling students. Teachers can then identify specific needs for individual students to raise CST scores. Additionally, teachers can look at data from other teachers who teach the same subject and collaborate with those teachers to determine what piece is missing in her own instruction. Communication between teachers and departments regarding assessment has never been accessed so readily as to make a difference in content instruction. Eventually, the goal is for teachers to bring this discussion to PLCs in Monday morning meetings. The district continues to support teachers by employing a data collections analyst for EduSoft who is available to meet with staff to help them

understand the data as well as help teachers use the software to generate various assessments in order to more fully study our students' mastery of content standards.

Action Plan 3

Area for Growth: Implement new and improve existing support systems that foster success for all students.

Rationale: Self-study findings indicate students' desire for a greater sense of community and connectedness.

General Background

Over the last several years, the staff has had a growing sense that more could be done to meet the needs of each student. Through discussions and presentations, they have become acutely aware of the demographic shift taking place and, as sensitive educators, they have seen the need to “get ahead of the curve.” They intuitively set upon a course to better identify student challenges and to more quickly connect students with the most appropriate interventions.

To assist in confirming these intuitions, the staff has been able to access a great deal more data on student achievement through expanded elements of the ABI system. This has given them immediate access to information about students that previously had to be found through a student's cumulative folder found in the Registrar's Office.

While much had been done to provide support for students, these interventions have typically been limited in their impact. It is only in the last several years that a very intentional set of support options have become directly available to the general student population. We have seen that even these small steps have had a significant impact upon our students...and upon our staff.

1. Develop personal learning plans (PLP) for all students.

We recognize that the transition from middle school to high school is a difficult one. Occasional efforts have been made within various departments to develop activities that would assist students in making this transition, i.e. Decision-making poster in social studies or PE's personal fitness program. These efforts, though, were fragmented.

With the need for a more formalized program to develop these personal learning plans (PLP), the RBV administration noted that the English and counseling departments had previously collaborated on the development of a four-year student academic plan. Once completed, however, these plans were not effectively utilized throughout the entire four-year student cycle. It was determined that these departments should provide an improved method allowing students to create a four-year personal learning plan with specific goal packets for grades 9 and 10. With the very recent adoption (2009-2010) of the *Naviance* program, the development of these PLPs is fully underway. Already, all of our 9th graders, and soon our 10th graders, have established an account within *Naviance*. The program also allows every student and every parent to access this plan.

In addition, 10th and 11th grades will be able to use the Career Interest Inventory component within *Naviance* to support the preparation necessary for the Junior Exhibition. *Naviance* provides access to a tremendous collection of career and college research capabilities, and these resources will be used by the counselors to assist 11th and 12th graders as they enter the final stages of their four-year plan and begin a post high school graduation plan.

Teachers are also able to register for *Naviance* accounts where they have at their disposal the means to send teacher recommendations for class selection and, ultimately, letters of recommendation on behalf of students applying to colleges. Currently, one thousand students have registered for the program. These students, their parents, and school support staff are able to utilize *Naviance* to track the students through four years of high school and to assist and organize the student for the college application process and/or career choices. The program provides a link between students, their high school support team, and college admissions personnel. It is our belief that the new *Naviance* system we have in place will bring a more coherent process to the development of our student PLPs.

2. Investigate and implement methods that allow meaningful student/adult connections (i.e. Homeroom, teacher advisory, community mentors).

To facilitate meaningful student/adult connections, the RBV Shared Governance Committee (SGC) recognized its role in supporting and enhancing these connections. They had been the prime movers behind the investigation of the 4x4 concept, consideration of advisory, or homeroom, and the value of club advisors in support of our academic and extra-curricular programs.

Over the last year, the SGC has helped articulate a process for the development of a homeroom concept that is currently under review. A committee of staff and administration was formed to investigate the current research on ways to connect students and adults in a contemporary high school setting. Homeroom was one of the ideas that seemed to resonate with the committee. They sought out schools within southern California to visit and gather perspectives from those who currently utilize the homeroom format. The committee continued to meet to develop the basic concepts for the staff to review. In support of this, they furnished a sample of the potential lessons that could be used and provided an idea of how the daily schedule could be modified to accommodate the inclusion of a homeroom. The staff voted last spring to continue further study and again voted in early October to select one bell schedule that will accommodate a homeroom in the school day. A final vote in December will determine whether this concept will move forward. If the vote is favorable, the Homeroom concept will be implemented in 2010-2011. The school is working in connection with the Vista Teacher's Association to manage the voting process.

The school supports a variety of clubs and activities that connect the students to not only club advisors, but to many aspects of our curriculum. Various clubs expand upon and enhance areas of the curriculum that otherwise may not be a part of the student's classroom activities. As an example of this, International Languages has a variety of club related activities, such as French Club, German Club, and Latinos United. Special events have included French movie nights, the American Sign Language monthly "Deaf Coffee Night," trips to France and Germany, as well as connecting students with various local cultural events. French students attended professional productions of *Cyrano de Bergerac* and *Les Miserables*. German students take trips to ethnic restaurants, and they also attended a professional German Rock concert.

The Visual and Performing Arts Department organizes annual trips to New York and London to see a variety of stage productions. In 2008, the marching band traveled to China at the invitation of the Chinese government to participate in pre-Olympic festivities. ArtSplash, the annual celebration of the arts, has become part of the school culture and exposes students to forms and mediums of art through its chalk festival, its art walk, its choral, dance and drama presentations, and its showcase of the renowned RBV Band and Pageantry Corps. A wide variety of students and teachers work to create all of these programs in a week-long celebration of art.

As a result of a previous WASC recommendation to provide further career exploration beyond the Junior Exhibition, Rancho launched its Internship Program. The Internship Program involves placing students into career paths, these include (but are not limited to) the arts, accounting, architecture, business, education, journalism, and medicine. The program is also unique in that a professional in the field mentors students in a "community classroom" for five or more hours each week. In the years since its inception, an average of 125 students have participated in this mentoring program. We are most proud of the impact this program has had on student achievement; data from the most recent grade report shows that 27 of our interns have a 4.0 or better GPA, 17 have a 3.5-3.99, 30 have 3.0-3.49, and the remainder have a 2.5-2.99. Currently, we have a ratio of 86% female to 14% male amongst participants. It is the Internship Coordinator's goal to continue to encourage more male involvement.

Gear Up is a national program which prepares students for college entrance. The program provides tutoring and parent workshops to support college preparation, the college application process, scholarship application and fieldtrips to colleges. It has become a much needed communication link between RBV, Palomar College, and four-year colleges. The implementation of the *Gear Up* program at RBV over the last couple of years provided intense mentoring to the classes of 2011 and 2012 which began in their 6th grade year and will follow them through graduation.

The five-year long 21st Century Grant, which was awarded to RBV in 2008-2009, also provides extensions in a wide variety of after school classes from core academic subjects to the arts and PE. As part of the grant application, our principal stated "We need to connect our students on a personal basis and provide students who are not

currently succeeding academically with quality extended learning opportunities.” This rationale describes an urgent need for an after school model that (1) enhances student learning and addresses barriers to academic success, (2) promotes positive youth development and reduces risk for future delinquency, and (3) prepares students for success in career and life endeavors. Using the acronym L.A.S.S.O. (Learning After School Support Organization), they have “roped in” both academic assistance and extracurricular activities. The range of programs offered includes AP review classes, CSU/UC application workshops, Finals Boot Camp for math, Literacy Academy (for struggling students), and special interest classes like culinary arts, hip-hop dance, self-defense, Ballet Folklorico and surfing to name a few. One of the newest additions is our Project REACH program which will provide after school support for students needing both academic and social assistance.

From the counseling standpoint, each of the six counselors is assigned a caseload of approximately 500 students. In addition, there are counselors assigned to specific programs such as ELD, AVID, Teen Parent, Grief, and Honors. They also make referrals to outside counseling services, held at RBV, that address issues such as drug and alcohol abuse, depression, family loss, anger management, and decision-making.

3. Augment peer-to-peer mentoring programs.

In 2006, VUSD received a four-year “Partnerships in Character Education Program” grant. The program serves all students at RBV and Vista High. The overall goal of the Character Leaders’ Program (CLP) is to infuse character education into the curriculum, promote schools as caring communities, and instill leadership skills in students. The program also targets suspension/expulsion rates, CAHSEE performance, and average daily attendance for students enrolled in the Character Leader elective course.

In addition, this program supported the introduction of Link Crew in 2007-2008 as part of our Partnership for Character Education Grant. The purpose of Link Crew is to help incoming freshmen transition into high school. In the first portion of the program, selected juniors and seniors are trained in the interpersonal and study skills needed to mentor the freshmen who will be part of their group. In the second portion of the program, the freshmen meet with their leaders for an hour during their orientation day and begin a series of team building exercises that carry over into a larger group training session where the exercises are designed to build in interpersonal skills and approaches to learning that are vital to a successful transition to high school. Beyond this initial experience, the leaders host twice-monthly follow-up lunch meetings with their groups to continue the transition process.

The Character Leadership class, implemented in 2007-2008, has also added a mentoring program of its own. The Counseling Department came to the Character Leadership class with a proposal for them to be a part of helping struggling students. The class jumped at the opportunity to help mentor over 60 students in goal setting,

organization, time management, and study skills. The success of their program has shown that the personal connection between students, even just asking a student how they are doing, has a significant impact upon student learning.

In the 2009-2010 school year, we have launched a new approach to leadership. As an effort to mitigate the loss of our transitional High School Success classes, fourteen students from the Vista Focus Academy were partnered with students in our Character Leadership class. The idea behind this approach is that by putting students into a leadership setting, they will become a leader in their own social setting and be motivated to do better in school, at work, and within their home. The Focus students are able to see positive role models in the class and see how their work ethic leads to success; they see that these same student leaders can have fun and make their own mistakes, but they can also be successful in school and in life.

As an outcome of the review of student concerns in our last self study, RBV students felt it was necessary to address the issues associate with underage drinking and driving due to recent deaths of students in the community. With the help of the Social Studies Department and its Community Participation requirement, several students took it upon themselves to set about organizing and scheduling a “Safe Driving” forum in cooperation with the City of Vista at the Moonlight Amphitheater this next spring. From this effort, a “Safe Driving” Club was formed and fundraising began with the help of the local business community.

Also, in the spring and near the time of our annual Prom event, students, parents, teachers and CHP put on the “Every 15 Minutes” program, which educates the school community on the dangers of drinking and driving. This two-day program presents the dangers of poor decision-making in a realistic manner. The annual program alternates between RBV and Vista High; RBV will host this event in the spring of 2010. Over 1500 RBV students have and will witness this event in hopes of preventing further tragedies amongst high school students.

Over the last four years, the “Best Buddies” program has grown into a full-fledge club that provides opportunities for high school students to be matched in one-to-one friendships with students who have developmental disabilities. From its modest beginnings with 10 students, the club has more than achieved its goal to build meaningful, fun, and long-lasting friendships between these groups of students. RBV’s club currently has 50 students in all, who meet two times a month to develop and strengthen their friendships to enhance the students’ time here at Rancho. Their motto is about “making a difference.” Through both the regular meeting times and off-campus activities students are able to participate in events such as pizza parties, group picnics, playing games, listening to music, and just “hanging out” together where their motto is fulfilled.

4. Expanding tutoring programs in all subject areas.

Most departments currently offer a variety of tutoring opportunities, some more structured than others. The Math Department has traditionally been the most structured with its provision of the ALEKS program five days a week and individualized teacher tutoring availability. In International Languages, the ESL students participate in tutoring sessions within the regular class structure and after school. For the more advanced Spanish classes, native speakers are very involved in tutoring non-native speakers. Other departments offer student tutoring in a variety of formats from one-to-one through small group sessions.

Students who need additional assistance in passing the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) are provided with the opportunity for tutoring sessions within the school day, after school and on weekends. In addition, there is a broad series of review sessions provided outside school and on weekends in preparation for IB and AP exams each spring. AVID utilizes a tutorial format as part of its regular instruction program. While relying on college tutors, AVID also relies on student peer tutorials to assist in all subject areas.

Gear Up has become a prominent force in the expansion of our tutoring opportunities. Since partnering with us two years ago, they have provided tutoring opportunities Monday through Friday in all subject areas. They have taken the lead with their willingness to provide services in our expanded library hours. Additionally, they have come alongside the new Honors tutoring program that has begun this school year.

The California Scholarship Federation (CSF) emphasizes high standards of scholarship and community service for California high school students. Two RBV teachers are involved in sponsoring CSF. Student tutors offer their services at lunch and at individually-arranged times for those needing their help. All subject areas are covered within this program.

5. Increase a-g completion rates and expand the AVID program by investigating solutions such as alternative scheduling, course offerings, and recruitment strategies.

With an a-g completion rate currently in the mid-30% range, it is evident this is an area of concern. We would like to see an increase in the number of students taking rigorous academic courses and completing the necessary requirements for UC-CSU admission. To accomplish this goal, we will need to redouble our efforts to make students aware of the course offerings that meet the a-g requirements. We also must annually review courses for submittal and/or revision to provide more opportunities for the students to select more rigorous academic courses.

While it is a priority for the school to continue to work on its a-g completion rates, particular attention has been initiated and specifically focusing on our ELD and SEI students. Counselors in collaboration with the ELD teachers are trying to identify

students strengths to better place them in the most challenging academic courses, taking into consideration their language challenges. The better we become at placing students in this manner, the more successful they will be in meeting the a-g requirements.

Over the past five years, in an effort to provide increased numbers of course offerings that are UC-approved, courses within all subject areas have been submitted for UC approval. RBV has been consistently successful in having coursework meet the a-g requirements. Some departments, having specific curricular needs, found it necessary to revise existing courses to provide greater opportunities for students to meet specific areas of the a-g components.

In the same way, our AVID population represents a significant group of students at RBV who should take more rigorous courses. AVID targets students in the academic middle—B, C, and even D range—who have the desire to go to college and the willingness to work hard. These are students who are capable of completing rigorous curriculum but are falling short of their potential. Our AVID Coordinator pulls these students out of their less challenging courses and directs them to the college track: acceleration instead of remediation. Our longstanding tradition with AVID demonstrates an ongoing commitment to not only provide the skills and strategies needed for success. By taking the initiative, we have placed more AVID students in more honors classes as a means of providing them with necessary tools for college acceptance as well as success when in college.

Our Science Department has seen a notable increase in the number of students taking a-g courses in science. This increase can be traced to the development of the new Earth Science and Life Science curricula, replacing Integrated Science 1 and 2, thus providing students with a much greater opportunity for success in mastering the standards and improving CST exams scores. Social studies, through its development of two recent elective offerings (History of American Sport and The Socio-Political History of Rock and Roll), continues to create engaging learning opportunities that align their assessments and core expectations with the standards and with the a-g guidelines. The number of course offerings that meet the a-g requirements within our ROP program has grown each year.

6. Increase the numbers of students involved in at least one co-curricular activity.

The staff continues in both formal and informal ways to encourage students to get connected in at least one co-curricular activity. Increased emphasis by teachers on the information about clubs, sports, and all extra-curricular activities has been encouraged. More teachers post notices and require students' attention during the announcements.

RBV hosts over 52 clubs on campus, ranging from traditional clubs like Key Club and Interact to more esoteric interests like mythology and The Capitalist Club. A recent

survey of students indicated that 1812 students are involved in at least one club on campus. Teachers encourage students to not only connect with clubs, but initiate their own.

One of the first distinguishing characteristics of RBV was its athletic program. That tradition continues in the offering of 31 boys' teams and 32 girls' teams in 26 different sports. In any given season, approximately 700 students participate in our athletic program. The school has been very successful in its athletic accomplishments, garnishing a variety of league, county and state titles. A number of our graduates have received athletic scholarships and several have been able to reach the professional ranks.

RBV has an award-winning performing arts program. Each area—dance, band, choir, drama, and pageantry—host major productions twice each year. The band and pageantry corps performs for football halftimes, parades, field competitions and tournaments. This award-winning contingent is frequently asked to perform at various community and regional events. The Silverado Showcase—the advanced choir—has a broad repertoire and participates in site performances as well as schools and hospitals around the county. Students in the dance program have an opportunity to move from the fundamentals to the higher level choreography required for public performances. Our drama program has a long history of award-winning productions, and, just last year, our drama teacher was recognized as the California Drama Teacher of the Year. Currently, over 670 students are involved in these programs.

As an off-shoot of our English Department's Creative Writing class, *Artistic Rhapsody* is our literary journal published in the spring of each year. The contributions come from students and staff alike and range from haiku poems to short stories.

The annual Ranch Revue presents the opportunity for students and teachers to perform serious and not-so-serious numbers to the enjoyment of those in attendance and for the benefit of our PATrons Scholarship Fund.

Our Social Studies Department gives 9th and 12th grade students a variety of ways to involve themselves in our community. Each 9th grader is required to engage in 10 hours of off-campus community service. Our 12th grade Government and Economics students are required to complete a total of 12 hours of Community Participation. The distinction of community participation is that it requires students to be involved with the governmental process through attendance at city council meetings, school board meetings, and other forums where the community comes together to deliberate how it can serve the citizens better. An example of this community participation was evident in the 2008 presidential election where more than 300 students served as poll workers.

7. Promote a healthy, clean, and safe campus.

Believing that a clean campus is necessary for a solid education, several efforts have been made to address the critical needs of campus health and cleanliness. The Student Handbook sets forth rules that address food and drinks within the classroom in an effort to maintain a healthy learning environment. With the reduction of the custodial staff over the last few years, it has become essential for individual teachers to implement practices that will assist in maintaining clean classrooms.

Trash continues to be one area that requires attention. Students are encouraged on a daily basis to be mindful of the need to clean up after themselves. Trash cans have been strategically placed throughout the campus to assist in this endeavor. The Fellowship of Christian Athletes volunteers their time on a monthly basis to clean campus quad area after lunch. Other clubs, such as the Key Club, have also participated in this effort to instill pride in the school.

Over the course of the last two years, there has been a schoolwide initiative towards recycling led by the Environmental club and students in AP Environmental Science, with the help of our ASB. Recycling bins have been strategically placed around campus, along with the additional provision of classroom recycling boxes which were decorated by students.

The existence of a School Resource Officer (SRO) has been a positive presence at RBV for over five years. Currently, the SRO is assigned to Rancho five days a week during school hours. He assists with the security and safety for extracurricular events such as football and basketball games, dance, and graduation. On a daily basis, the SRO works hand-in-hand with Campus Supervisors and administration to provide a safe school environment. RBV is a safer campus because of the presence of the SRO. Continued collaboration between the Vista Unified School District, RBV and the Sheriff's Department will ensure that this position remains even though we may face difficult budgetary times.

For the last six years, we were awarded a TUPE grant to address issues related to student tobacco use. Students were referred to the program by administrators, counselors and health office staff. Though the program proved modestly successful, RBV was not awarded this grant for the 2009-2010 school year. We have, however, developed two new programs to address the life skill issues of high students. We now offer after school decision-making sessions to reduce student discipline issues, address positive student choices, develop ego management, social skills, coping skills for school and community, and dealing with peer pressure. The other after school program addresses anger management which provides information to the student about understanding themselves, focusing on reality versus dreams, identifying personal characteristics, and dealing with power and control. Each of these programs run in six week cycles. Students are awarded a certificate upon completion of each program.

In light of the recent swine flu pandemic, students and teachers have demonstrated an increased awareness of practical health preventatives, such as value of regular hand washing and the use of hand sanitizers. Students have also been advised to remain home when ill.