

LBUSD Small Learning Communities Grant – Cohort 07

**Year 2 Evaluation Report - FINAL
2008-2009**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	4
Program/Grant Description.....	7
School Characteristics	7
Evaluation Details	8
Format of Remainder of Report	9
District Grant Administration Support.....	9
Respondent Demographics.....	10
Lakewood High School	13
SLC Membership	13
SLC Development	13
SLC Culture and Climate.....	14
SLC Governance	16
Challenges to SLC Development.....	17
Overall Grant Awareness.....	20
Goal #1	22
Goal-Related Activities.....	22
Expectations of Students	24
Post-secondary Support, Knowledge, and Preparedness	25
Support and Remediation.....	29
Goal #2.....	30
Goal-Related Activities.....	30
Tutoring.....	31
College Aides.....	34
Goal #3.....	35
Goal-Related Activities.....	35
Vertical/Horizontal Teaming.....	36
Course Selection and SLC Requirements	38
Goal #4.....	38
Goal-Related Activities.....	38
AP Program – Implementation and Outcomes.....	40
Millikan High School.....	45
SLC Membership.....	45
SLC Development	45
SLC Culture and Climate.....	46
Class Structures and Interventions.....	49
Challenges to SLC Development	51
Overall Grant Awareness	54
Goal #1	55
Goal-Related Activities	55
Expectations of Students	57
Post-secondary Support, Knowledge, and Preparedness	59
Support and Remediation.....	62

Goal #2.....	63
Goal-Related Activities.....	63
Tutoring.....	64
College Aides.....	67
Goal #3.....	67
Goal-Related Activities.....	68
Vertical/Horizontal Teaming.....	69
Course Selection and SLC Requirements.....	70
Goal #4.....	71
Goal-Related Activities.....	71
AP Program – Implementation and Outcomes.....	72
Report Summary.....	77

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY KEY FINDINGS

SLC DEVELOPMENT

- Teachers/staff, students and parents generally agreed that they understood purpose and goals of SLCs although students were more likely to feel a sense of belonging in their SLC. However, a greater proportion of Millikan teachers understood the overall purpose of SLCs in general. (Lakewood HS, see pp. 14-15; Millikan HS, see p. 45)
- The majority of teachers/staff believed that there was a strong SLC culture on campus which supported SLC identification among teachers and students. This was attributed to such factors as teacher buy-in, increased collaboration, greater cohesion due to common goals, increased teacher control. (Lakewood HS, see pp. 14-17; Millikan HS, see pp. 45-47)
- Challenges that hindered SLC development included a perception of hierarchical structure among SLCs, the Master Schedule, and pure vs. mixed classes. (Lakewood HS, see pp. 17-20; Millikan HS, see pp. 48-52)
- Although teachers reported an increase in collaboration time, it was believed that more time and professional development is needed to meet the requirements of the grant. (Lakewood HS, see p. 20; Millikan HS, see p. 52)

OVERALL GRANT AWARENESS

- Although school principals and SLC coordinators demonstrated understanding of the grant and its goals, teachers/staff were less able to distinguish the grant's goals from those of other district and school initiatives. (Lakewood HS, see pp. 20-22; Millikan HS, see pp. 53-54)

GOAL #1: PREPARE ALL STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND CAREERS WITHOUT THE NEED FOR REMEDIATION

- Both schools were similar in their implementation of College Preparedness Workshops, Bi-Annual Parent Institutes, SLC Parent Booster Clubs, training and use of School Loop, Digital Individualized Learning Plans, and Increased Connections to Faith and Community-Based Organizations and Businesses. Millikan reported greater participation in Bi-Annual Saturday Report Card Parent Meetings, Tele-Parent programs, Middle School Outreach, and School-wide Newsletters. (Lakewood HS, see pp. 22-24; Millikan HS, see pp. 54-56)
- Teachers/staff, students and parents generally agreed that clear communication of student expectations exists at their schools. (Lakewood HS, see p. 24; Millikan HS, see pp. 56-57)
- Teachers/staff, students and parents were all confident that students would pursue post-secondary education. Teachers were more likely, than students and parents, to report that they talked with students about how to get into and pay for college. (Lakewood HS, see pp. 25-29; Millikan HS, see pp. 57-59)
- Students were engaged in widespread college and career research activities and programs; AVID curriculum (Millikan also implemented a similar Pathways program for upper grade students); field trips; and, had guest speakers in their classrooms.

(Lakewood HS, see pp. 25-29; Millikan HS, see pp. 59-61)

- Overall, parents and students had the greatest confidence that students' would be prepared for success by graduation from their respective schools.
(Lakewood HS, see pp. 28-29; Millikan HS, see pp. 60-61)
- Teachers/staff and students were more confident than parents that students would be prepared to succeed in postsecondary college/careers by the time they graduated from school.
(Lakewood HS, see pp. 28-29; Millikan HS, see pp. 60-61)
- Overall, students were aware of A-G requirements necessary for college. Awareness of required standardized tests was more a function of students' grade level.
(Lakewood HS, see pp. 27-29; Millikan HS, see pp. 58-61)

GOAL #2: PROVIDE INTENSIVE INTERVENTIONS IN READING/LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATH SKILLS.

- In both schools, teachers reported the implementation of literacy and numeracy strategies, where applicable. Tutoring and the use of college aides emerged as the major intervention areas.
(Lakewood HS, see pp. 30-31; Millikan HS, see pp. 62-63)
- Both schools instituted tutoring efforts, with varying degrees of success due primarily to student transportation issues and conflict with other after-school activities. Tutoring was offered in classrooms, libraries, and labs. Administrators/staff acknowledged the need for greater structure.
(Lakewood HS, see pp. 31-34; Millikan HS, see pp. 63-66)
- College aides were used in study labs, with AVID curriculum, and individual student assistance. The data indicated that college aides had limited classroom responsibilities.
(Lakewood HS, see p. 34; Millikan HS, see p. 66)

GOAL #3: ENROLL AND SUPPORT STUDENTS IN A COHERENT SEQUENCE OF RIGOROUS ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS, MATH, AND SCIENCE COURSES.

- Both schools reported similar participation rates in District-wide Professional Learning Community workshops and the development/modification of curriculum tied to SLC themes. Millikan reported greater participation in Summer Curriculum Institutes, School-based Professional Learning Community workshops, and Differentiated Instructional Techniques. Lakewood reported successful implementation of Link Crew, with little data to support implementation at Millikan. Science Depts. employed college aides with responsibilities more related to laboratory upkeep.
(Lakewood HS, see pp. 35-36; Millikan HS, see pp. 67-68)
- Staff engaged in vertical/horizontal teaming, which occurred school-wide, within departments and across grade levels. The results of teaming included greater collaboration among teachers, greater connectedness within SLCs, and the ability for students to learn topics more in-depth.
(Lakewood HS, see pp. 36-37; Millikan HS, see pp. 68-69)

GOAL #4: INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS TO EARN POSTSECONDARY CREDIT THROUGH AP COURSES.

- Implementation of AP Bridge Program and AP Teacher Training hinged on adequate funding. Other goal-related activities were reported with varying, albeit limited, participation. Both schools had AP

coordinators and were firm in their commitment to increasing AP success; Millikan administrators were very specific in their efforts and motivation.

(Lakewood HS, see pp. 38-39; Millikan HS, see pp. 70-71)

- In terms of encouragement to enroll in AP courses, it was found that there was some inequity across SLCs in teacher/counselor encouragement.
(Lakewood HS, see p. 41 Millikan HS, see pp. 72-74)
- Students were reportedly less knowledgeable about how to sign up for the AP exams than staff expected.
(Lakewood HS, see pp. 42-43; Millikan HS, see pp. 72-74)
- AP enrollment and numbers of AP exams increased from the previous school year. The percentage of scores that reached a 3 or above remained relatively the same.
(Lakewood HS, see p. 44; Millikan HS, see pp. 76-77)

PROGRAM/GRANT DESCRIPTION

This particular grant was funded in Fall 2007 to implement academic reform through the use of the Small Learning Communities (SLCs) structure operating within both Lakewood and Millikan High Schools in the Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD), a large, urban school district located in Southern California. SLCs are geared towards raising student achievement through the personalization of education by developing foundations and processes that encourage deeper and more meaningful relationships among teachers, between teachers and students, as well as among students themselves. SLCs at Lakewood and Millikan High Schools were initially developed under a previous federal grant in from 2003 to 2007. Of the six comprehensive high schools in LBUSD, Lakewood and Millikan were identified as having a high need for SLC enhancements and the ability to continue making gains through this model and was therefore re-funded. This is the second year of implementation for this particular grant.

In the effort to raise student achievement in all district high schools, LBUSD is currently in the midst of a major long-term local reform. The first two goals for this high school reform initiative include a commitment to improving student achievement and attempting to close the achievement gap. The third goal is to build the capacity of teachers to lead and the fourth, and final goal, is to improve the culture and climate of high schools. In addition, the district's High School Office has a short-term reform that seeks to prepare all students for postsecondary educations and careers, provide intensive interventions to assist them, and, enroll and support students in a coherent sequence of rigorous courses. To support all of the above high school reform initiatives and continue the development of SLCs, the district and the two schools applied for and received this SLC federal grant. To focus their reform efforts, the schools committed to the following goals as written in the grant:

Goal #1. Prepare all students for success in postsecondary education and careers without the need for remediation.¹

Goal #2. Provide intensive interventions in reading/language arts and math skills.

Goal #3. Enroll and support students in a coherent sequence of rigorous English, math, and science courses to succeed in postsecondary education and/or careers.

Goal #4. Increase opportunities for students to earn postsecondary credit through AP Courses.

The action management plan, included as part of the grant proposal, specified the activities both schools would employ as a guide to achieving the grant goals.

SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Both Lakewood High and Millikan High continue to serve diverse student populations that included a significant number of students from high-poverty backgrounds. District-wide enrollment in 2008-09 by ethnicity showed that students in the district were comprised of approximately 52% Latinos, 17% African Americans, 8% Asians, 16% Whites, 4% Filipinos, 2% Pacific Islanders, and 0.2% Native Americans. Approximately 21% of the total enrollment was comprised of English language learners. Each school was challenged by low achievement, high mobility, and teacher turnover. Both of these

¹ This is how the goal appears in the grant proposal. In the management action plan, this goal is written as, "Through a comprehensive guidance and academic advising program for students and their parents, prepare all students to succeed in postsecondary education and careers." In this report, we will refer to the goal as written in the grant.

large, urban high schools had 9th through 12th grade student populations of over 4,000 (2008-09). A majority of students on each campus were bussed to school on a daily basis. At Millikan, 75% of enrolled students lived in neighborhoods outside the school's attendance area, while at Lakewood, 50% lived outside its boundaries. With both of these schools serving primarily as commuter campuses, the ability to provide before and/or after school academic interventions was limited. Both schools currently have "wall-to-wall" SLCs so every 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grade student, teacher, administrator, and staff member was affiliated with a specific SLC. At the conclusion of the 2008-09 academic year, this grant supported seven SLCs at Lakewood High and eight SLCs at Millikan.

EVALUATION DETAILS

There were two general questions that guided the evaluation during Year 2 of the grant:

- 1) What is the nature of SLC development at the two schools?
- 2) To what extent have the four goals of the grant been implemented?

The evaluators worked with designated program and school staff in structuring the evaluation activities and clarifying some of the grant's ambiguous language. The primary data collection effort consisted of: principal and SLC coordinator interviews; counselor², teacher and student focus groups; and, three survey protocols administered to school staff, students, and parents. The staff survey was closely aligned to the activities specified under the goals of this grant. This was possible given that the staff survey was produced by the evaluators at a later date than the student and parent surveys, which were formatted, produced, and administered by district staff. Due to the district's early deadline, there was insufficient time to include specific goal activities in the student and parent surveys. Questions asked of participants in all focus groups and interviews were aligned with the goals. The interviews and focus groups were conducted in Spring 2009, as was survey administration to staff, students, and parents.

Focus groups and interviews were conducted for the purpose of gathering insight on the implementation of the grant and the general state of SLC development at the high schools. The items on the teacher/staff, student, and parent surveys also intended to gather perspectives on grant implementation and SLC development. As mentioned previously, the staff survey also sought to collect data on the specified activities proposed in the grant. Most questions asked in focus groups, interviews, and surveys were aligned across all participants while a few were specific to each respondent group. The aligned items provided insight into how the different groups perceived similar issues.

As a result of the student and parent survey conditions mentioned above, the survey data collected and presented in this report may, in a few cases, not directly address the implementation of some of the grant's goals. However, every attempt has been made to align survey items and questions to the most applicable goal in order to respond to the evaluation questions and provide relevant, meaningful, and useful information. Throughout the course of this three-year evaluation, data will be collected in five general areas. The first area is SLC development. The remaining four areas correspond to the four goals as written in the grant and management action plan. Although there were data limitations in year one of the grant evaluation, multiple data collection methods, including surveys, interviews, and focus groups were used for year two and will continue to be used in year three to gather data from numerous sources, including teachers, administrators, students and parents. An attempt will be made to access

² Counselor focus groups took place at Millikan High School at the request of the SLC Coordinator.

data on student achievement and course enrollments through collaboration with the district's research office.

FORMAT OF THE REMAINDER OF THIS REPORT

The first section provides an overview of LBUSD's support of the grant and how it has been administered. The second section presents the demographic information of all survey respondents, both disaggregated by school and in total. The report is then divided by school, Lakewood High School and Millikan High School, respectively. Within each school's section, the evaluation findings are discussed under the following major categories:

- A. *SLC Membership*
- B. *SLC Development*
- C. *Overall Grant Awareness*
- D. *Goal #1: Prepare all students for success in postsecondary education and careers without the need for remediation.*
- E. *Goal #2: Provide intensive interventions in Reading/Language Arts and Math skills.*
- F. *Goal #3: Enroll and support students in a coherent sequence of rigorous English/Language Arts, Math, and Science courses.*
- G. *Goal #4: Increase opportunities for students to earn postsecondary credit through AP courses.*

Each school's section includes all findings related to data collected during the 2008-09 school year. The final portion of this report consists of a brief summary inclusive of both schools.

DISTRICT GRANT ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT

As previously mentioned, LBUSD is currently administering two SLC grants at five high schools: Lakewood and Millikan High Schools, comprise cohort 2007 and Cabrillo, Jordan, and Polytechnic High Schools are part of an earlier cohort (2005). To support the implementation of the activities specified in both grants and monitor their progress, the district's SLC director has established monthly meetings and quarterly workshops during the academic year. At the monthly meetings, SLC coordinators for both cohorts shared their successes and learned about available resources. Similarly, the quarterly workshops allowed SLC coordinators and lead teachers from schools in both cohorts to discuss SLC-related issues, gain awareness of available resources, and learn new skills.

In 2008-09, the SLC coordinator monthly meetings also served as a place to monitor progress in achieving LBUSD's High School Office goals. The SLC grant goals are closely aligned with the High School Office goals. Specifically, the purposes³ of these SLC coordinator meetings were to:

- Build support systems for SLC leaders
- Monitor progress in achieving the High School Office goals
- Create a strategy for seamless communication with middle schools regarding SLC pathways
- Create an SLC protocol for looking at formative and summative data and using the information to affect collaboration and instruction
- Discuss SLC protocol for using formative and summative data from the UCLA evaluations

³ This list was generated from 2008-09 meeting agendas.

- Determine the types of professional development opportunities needed to advance the District Initiative for Expanding Pathways
- Discuss SLC courses of study for alignment to High School Office goals
- Discuss possible SLC protocols for using formative and summative data to improve SLC practice
- Discuss implementation of the High School Reform Initiative 2009-2013 & the District Initiative for Expanding Pathways
- Strategize an approach to School Choice 2010

The attention to detail and preparation the SLC director dedicated to these meetings, along with consistent attendance by the SLC coordinators, contributed to a supportive and collaborative environment.

In addition to the above-mentioned monthly meetings, the SLC coordinators and SLC lead teachers participated in quarterly workshops, or Lead Teacher Institutes, where they received support, guidance, and resources to enhance SLCs and encourage progress in meeting the grant goals. The purposes and topics of those Institutes were to:

- Equip SLC leaders with research-based, data-driven strategies that will advance and achieve the High School Office goals for 2008-2009
- Build each SLCs leadership capacity to support a personalized and meaningful, theme-based and/or career-related course of study for all students
- Review the professional development calendar for 2009-2010
- Update the SLC Resource Guide for 2009-2010
- Build high school leadership capacity to design, implement, and sustain reform and improvement efforts in conjunction with the High School Office goals for 2008-2009

At these Institutes, SLC coordinators and lead teachers were divided by school to allow for in-depth discussions and school-based collaboration. These meetings and institutes provided a space where discussions took place regarding accomplishments, challenges, and needs for the successful implementation of the grant's goals. Due to the unique context of each site, it was understood by all that implementation of the grant will vary across schools. Despite these contextual differences, however, schools shared some similarities. Thus, the monthly SLC coordinator meetings and quarterly SLC Lead Teacher Institutes provided a venue where colleagues could share ideas, brainstorm, support each other, commiserate, and receive guidance from the SLC director. This was critical for assisting SLC coordinators and lead teachers in their work towards meeting grant goals and, for the SLC director, in monitoring their progress.

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Teachers and Staff - Survey

For the 2008-2009 school year, there were 212 teacher, administrator, and staff respondents to the survey. Of this total, 102 respondents were from Lakewood High School and 110 were from Millikan High School. The response rates were 63% and 61% for Lakewood and Millikan, respectively. The following tables contain demographic information of the respondents from each school, respectively, as

well as aggregated totals. The table below shows that the overall majority of respondents were classroom teachers.

Table 1. Assignment and Position of Staff Survey Respondents (N = 211)

	N	Teacher	Counselor	Administrator	Classified
Lakewood HS	101	100%	---	---	---
Millikan HS	110	86%	7%	2%	6%
TOTAL	211	92%	4%	1%	3%

Table 2 presents both gender and grade levels taught by survey respondents. As shown, slightly more than one half of the teachers from both schools taught students in lower grade levels (9th and 10th grades). Table 3 presents the ethnic distribution of the respondents.

Table 2. Gender and Grade Level Taught of Staff Survey Respondents (N = 186 and 199, respectively)

	N	Female	Male	N	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th	Multiple
Lakewood HS	89	60%	40%	99	32%	26%	16%	11%	14%
Millikan HS	97	63%	37%	100	28%	27%	22%	9%	14%
TOTAL	186	61%	39%	199	30%	27%	19%	10%	14%

Table 3. Ethnicity of Staff Survey Respondents (N = 175)

	N	White	Hispanic/ Latino	African American	Asian/ Pac. Isl.	Biracial/ Multiracial	Filipino	Other
Lakewood HS	84	74%	10%	4%	2%	2%	1%	7%
Millikan HS	91	65%	10%	3%	4%	8%	2%	8%
TOTAL	175	69%	10%	3%	3%	5%	2%	7%

Note: No respondents indicated American Indian – category was removed from table.

Table 4 below presents the various content areas taught among survey respondents. Overall, teachers in the four core subjects of English, Math, Science, and History/SS were evenly represented. The most common responses in the “other” category included special education, business/career related courses, and general studies.

Table 4. Content Areas Taught by Staff Survey Respondents (N = 188)

	N	English	Math	For. Lang.	Science	Hist/ SS	Tech- nology	Art	P.E.	Other	Multiple
Lakewood HS	98	19%	15%	4%	15%	16%	5%	5%	2%	16%	1%
Millikan HS	90	23%	16%	12%	16%	16%	3%	3%	---	11%	---
TOTAL	188	21%	15%	8%	15%	16%	4%	4%	1%	14%	1%

Students - Survey

For the 2008-2009 school year, there were 6,354 respondents to the student survey. Of this total, 3,262 respondents were from Lakewood High School and 3,092 were from Millikan High School. Tables 5 and 6 present the gender, grade level, and ethnic distribution of the student respondents.

Table 5. Gender and Grade Levels of Student Survey Respondents (N = 5933)

	n	Female	Male	n	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
Lakewood HS	3168	52%	48%	3135	30%	29%	24%	18%
Millikan HS	2765	49%	51%	2763	32%	29%	26%	13%
TOTAL	5933	51%	49%	5898	31%	29%	25%	15%

Table 6. Ethnicity of Student Survey Respondents (N = 5743)

	n	White	Hispanic Latino	African American	Asian/Pac. Isl.	Filipino	Bi/Multi-racial	Amer. Indian	Other
Lakewood HS	3009	25%	38%	11%	10%	5%	6%	<1%	4%
Millikan HS	2734	20%	56%	8%	5%	3%	5%	<1%	2%
TOTAL	5743	23%	47%	10%	8%	4%	6%	<1%	3%

Parents - Survey

For the 2008-2009 school year, there were 2,072 respondents to the parent survey. Of this total, 1,640 respondents were from Lakewood High School and 432 were from Millikan High School. Tables 7 and 8 present the students' gender, grade level, and ethnic distribution corresponding to the parent respondents

Table 7. Gender (n=1963) and Grade Levels (n=2027) of Students Related to Parent Survey Respondents

	N	Female	Male	N	9 th	10 th	11 th	12 th
Lakewood HS	1561	56%	44%	1611	33%	26%	23%	19%
Millikan HS	402	52%	48%	416	28%	27%	25%	19%
TOTAL	1963	55%	45%	2027	32%	26%	23%	19%

Table 8. Ethnicity of Students Related to Parent Survey Respondents (n=1909)

	N	White	Hispanic Latino	African American	Asian/Pac. Isl.	Filipino	Biracial / Multi	Amer. Indian	Other
Lakewood HS	1516	26%	38%	10%	12%	6%	7%	<1%	2%
Millikan HS	393	15%	57%	8%	6%	6%	6%	1%	1%
TOTAL	1909	23%	42%	10%	11%	6%	7%	<1%	2%

Focus Groups and Interviews

The principal and SLC Coordinator from both Lakewood and Millikan each participated in one-on-one interviews. Two teacher focus groups conducted at each school (four in total). At Lakewood, 15 teachers in all participated from various grade levels, departments, and SLCs. At Millikan, 14 teachers

participated in all and represented both mixed and pure classes. Seven Millikan counselors participated in one focus group. There were also two student focus groups conducted at each school. At Lakewood, 27 students participated; 18 students participated at Millikan. All grade levels and most SLCs were represented.

LAKEWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

A. SLC Membership

During the 2008-2009 school year at Lakewood High School, seven Small Learning Communities were in operation. Table 9 below presents the SLC membership for all survey respondents. As shown, one percent of the students had trouble recalling their SLC while 2% of the parents were unaware of their child’s SLC. This was a positive change from 2007-08 where 10% of the parents did not know their children’s SLC membership. In terms of representation, with the exception of ATM and GLOBE, the teacher and student groups were relatively well distributed. While ATM was overly represented, GLOBE was underrepresented among teachers and students. As for parents, there was low representation for The Arts, GLOBE and PALMS and a high ATM representation.

Table 9. SLC Membership of all Lakewood HS Survey Respondents

	Teachers/Staff	Students	Parents
The Arts	16%	10%	7%
ATM	24%	27%	27%
GLOBE	8%	9%	7%
HERO	12%	13%	11%
Merit	11%	15%	20%
Odyssey	14%	15%	19%
PALMS	10%	10%	8%
Don’t Know	---	1%	2%
Not part of an SLC	5%	<1%	<1%
TOTAL N	100	3211	1599

Lakewood teachers were asked to describe how they were assigned to their respective SLC’s. The two most common methods were placement (44%) and self-selection (37%). Twelve percent reported that they were recruited into their SLC and 8% were assigned through “other” or multiple methods. Of the students who participated in the focus group, 13 indicated that they chose their SLC, six were randomly assigned, and one was “selected.”

B. SLC Development

Although not explicitly mentioned in the grant, SLC structures are intended to facilitate the implementation of the activities proposed as part of the grant goals. Given the nature of continuous reforms at LBUSD schools, the state of SLCs at Lakewood High is also changing. It is critical, therefore, to first examine the state of development of SLCs, as they are the vehicles through which the grant goals will be met, before assessing the implementation of each of the four grant goals.

As part of the focus group and interview process, participants were asked questions regarding the general state of SLC development at Lakewood High. During these discussions, two central themes emerged: SLC culture and climate, and SLC governance. Although the conversations focused primarily on successes in those areas, there were also in-depth discussions on the challenges faced by administrators and teachers in the continuous development of SLCs. The following are the data findings broken down into three sections: SLC culture and climate, SLC governance, and challenges to SLC development.

SLC Culture and Climate

There was consensus among the staff that there was a well-built SLC culture on campus that has both students and teachers strongly identifying with their SLCs. This belief was supported by survey responses to items pertaining to understanding SLC purpose, goals, and roles. As may be seen in Table 10, all three respondent groups generally agreed that they understood the purpose and goals of their specific SLCs. Furthermore, 70% of the teachers reported that they understood the overall purpose and goals for having SLCs.

Table 10.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
I understand the purpose and goals of my SLC.	Teachers/ Staff	102	7%	8%	48%	35%	2%
	Students	3234	3%	10%	59%	29%	---
I understand the purpose and goals of my child’s SLC.	Parents	1616	2%	10%	60%	20%	8% (DK)
The faculty and staff at this school understand the purpose and goals for SLCs.	Teachers/ Staff	100	8%	21%	54%	16%	1%

Teachers provided a number of reasons that could explain the presence of a strong SLC culture and the above survey results. One focus group participant commented that, at this point, all teachers have had the SLC teaching experience now that students have fully cycled through all the grade levels. Some of the student activities that, in the past may have been construed as small successes, have since become part of the norm, such as SLC academic achievement celebrations. Thus, there was a perception that SLCs have become ingrained in the school’s overall culture. Some teachers attributed the strengthening of the SLC culture to both a new and supportive school administration and an increase in teacher control of SLCs. Teachers felt they have a voice and that SLCs have become more teacher-driven. The improved teacher buy-in, according to those in the focus group, may also be due in part to teachers being allowed to move to better-fitting SLCs. This in turn has led to less teacher turnover within SLCs. As evidence of improved teacher morale, one focus group participant indicated that in 2008-09 only two grievances were filed with the union as opposed to 89 grievances filed last year. In general, teachers reported that there was more SLC buy-in and improved morale that has strengthened SLC identity and culture on campus.

Both teachers and students reported that students were identifying with and enjoying being part of their SLCs. Students described getting to know new people, especially everyone in their classes, as a benefit of their SLCs. In addition, students pointed out that in their SLCs they learn how to work as a group. Because SLC peers work together for four years, students indicated that they became a family of some

sort. Teachers reported that they have also sensed this cohesiveness. Although student interaction across SLCs took place, students generally agreed that they got to know their SLC peers better than those in other SLCs. Similarly, students reported that they also get to know their teachers better, especially the core class teachers. Students attributed this to the fact that teachers were able to focus on a smaller group of students. Additional structural changes that have led to more personalization pertained to students with special needs. In 2008-09, students with special needs and their teachers were incorporated into the SLC communities for the first time. This act was perceived by staff and administrators as a huge accomplishment. Thus, there was a general consensus among teachers and students that teacher/student and student/student personalization was present.

In the teacher survey, respondents were asked to describe changes to the culture and climate of their school that could be attributed to SLCs. The specific question stated, *“Since the implementation of this grant (F2007), in what ways are SLCs changing the culture/climate of this school?”* Fifty-nine teachers responded to this question. The main categories that emerged through the analysis were: “Teacher/Staff-focused,” “Student-focused,” “SLC Placement/ organization,” and “School-focused.” The described changes varied by focus and level of positivity. Below is a list of the most common responses by focus.

Teacher / Staff –focused changes

- More teacher collaboration

Student-focused changes

- Sense of belonging/connectedness among students
- Segregation of students/cliques

SLC Placement/organization changes

- Stratified SLC system

School-focused changes

- Negligible/no change

The above responses reflect varying teacher perspectives of the overall culture and climate of their school since the implementation of this SLC grant. As previously mentioned, there was general agreement that SLC identity has improved as teachers worked more closely together and students felt a sense of belonging. However, many teachers also reported that they have noticed no change at all. There were two negative observations reported regarding the school culture: a stratified SLC system and student cliques. In the challenges to SLC development section, there is an in-depth discussion of the findings regarding this perceived stratified SLC system. Student cliques were mentioned in the teacher survey responses but not discussed in focus groups. Although students disagreed, there was a belief among some teachers that students did not interact with those outside their SLC.

According to teachers, collaboration and planning time activities differed slightly than in the previous year. Some SLC teachers reported collaboration with AVID and CTE to bring real work application to students. Some teachers focused on horizontal team building to develop cross-curricular projects to make learning relevant across all disciplines. Others have chosen to focus on vertical teaming to take cross-curricular projects to the next level to see what seniors should accomplish. Similarly, one teacher indicated that there was collaboration, not necessarily on cross-curricular projects, but on aligning what was taught to better define what a senior should achieve. There were also more discussions pertaining to assessment and requirements. Time to collaborate and plan increased as a result of changing the

schedule so that SLC meetings take place on Wednesday morning. In addition, one teacher indicated that s/he and colleagues could get a duty-free day to collaborate. Some teachers found various professional development activities to be motivational.

In addition to one SLC redefining its themes and changing its name, other SLCs have also implemented changes. These changes focused primarily on providing additional support to students and included introducing junior achievement to freshmen, adding a mentoring program for incoming 9th graders, incorporating a digital exit portfolio for graduating seniors, developing and expanding tutoring services, hiring college aides for science classes, and expanding Link Crew, a peer mentoring program. This year, some SLCs have also placed an emphasis on teacher commitment. There were also efforts to incorporate the foreign language department into SLCs. Due to the push this year to connect with businesses and partners, teachers commented that the number of guest speakers had increased three to four times when compared to last year. Furthermore, SLC staff has pushed to establish ROP connections. This emphasis on connecting with the community seemed to influence on students as some have indicated that SLCs were helping them to find a profession of their interest.

SLC Governance

According to teachers, the first year of this grant provided an opportunity for the school's leadership to "finish with SLC development." The first year of the grant was described as a refocus year for SLCs as the grant allowed staff to address what one teacher referred to as "some issues." However, those issues were not defined. Many discussions took place regarding budgetary decisions. It was generally believed that teachers were more familiar with the entire grant as a result of these meetings. Moreover, teachers and administrators indicated that working on outcome charts helped personalize SLC goals, brought staff together to discuss goals, and strengthened SLC culture and identity. Outcome charts, "half-way curricular tasks for SLCs", mapped out the activities that SLCs will employ to reach particular goals. Whenever outcome charts were mentioned, they were done so in a positive light.

Survey results supported the comments made in focus groups and interviews regarding staff engagement in (re)defining SLCs. Certain survey items were aimed at investigating how all three respondent groups perceived the availability of opportunities to suggest changes to SLCs that would be heard and considered. These opportunities represent a form of support in that they provide members of each group with a voice, membership, and a potential role in SLC development. As shown in the response distribution in Table 11, 73% of the teacher respondents and 72% of the students were in general agreement that these opportunities were provided for them at their school. However, only 50% of the teacher respondents were in general agreement that students have such opportunities.

Table 11.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
The faculty and staff at this school have opportunities to suggest changes to the SLCs that are heard and taken into consideration.	Teachers/ Staff	100	4%	20%	57%	16%	3%
Students at this school have opportunities to suggest changes to the SLCs that are heard and taken into consideration.	Students	3219	5%	24%	59%	13%	---
Parents can share their thoughts about decisions that affect their children.	Parents	1617	3%	11%	59%	20%	8% (DK)
Students at this school can suggest changes to the SLCs that are heard and taken into consideration.	Teachers/ Staff	100	7%	37%	38%	12%	6%

Parents were asked to respond to a slightly different statement, one that addressed the opportunity to share thoughts/opinions on decisions specifically affecting their children. Although this item differs in scope from the other item, it still provides some indication of the support given to parents and by parents in the development of SLCs. In general, 79% of the parents agreed that they can express themselves with regard to decisions affecting their children.

The following items in Table 12 address the involvement of parents and community members in connection with SLC development. The item addresses the support Lakewood High provides to involve families and community members. Teachers (67%) and students (76%) generally agreed that the school supported this involvement. A third of parents, on the other hand, reported a “don’t know” response (31%), while 47% did agree with the statement. It is possible that the inclusion of both families and community members in the same statement limited the parents’ responses.

Table 12.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
The school supports the involvement of families and community members in planning, reviewing, and improving SLC programs.	Teachers/ Staff	100	6%	19%	53%	14%	8%
	Students	3192	4%	20%	60%	16%	---
Families and people from the community help plan, review, or improve SLC programs.	Parents	1594	5%	17%	38%	9%	31% (DK)

Challenges of SLC Development

Administrators and teachers were asked to describe the challenges of SLC development. The most common responses, by far, pertained to issues surrounding the master schedule, including serious concerns regarding student placement in appropriate SLC courses and dilemmas over pure classes. In addition, there was a lengthy discussion among teachers regarding SLC inequity issues and the

separation of low and high achieving students. Also briefly mentioned was the need for a student representative at SLC meetings, more professional development, a more academically-focused school culture, and solutions to help improve student attendance at tutoring.

In terms of the master schedule, conversations with teachers revealed that it was unclear as to why scheduling problems had taken place in 2008-09. It was clear, however, that these scheduling problems disrupted SLC plans. According to some teachers, if students were not placed properly in their SLC classes, then classes were not pure. There was consensus that pure classes invited collaboration, allowed projects, and strengthened the SLC community. If classes were not pure, however, then cross-curricular projects were difficult to implement because there was no incentive for teachers to collaborate to develop such projects. Similarly, for students, there was no incentive to participate in those projects if they were in different SLCs. Also, without pure classes, 12th grade teacher teams could not accomplish what they had intended with seniors. This year, students assigned to teachers from other SLCs did not receive the same instruction as their SLC peers. Another challenge was that attendance rosters did not have the SLCs listed next to students' names, making it difficult for teachers to identify students and their respective SLCs.

Teachers also acknowledged the challenging realities of keeping classes pure. It was difficult to create and maintain pure classes if low numbers of students were assigned to that particular class. One example referred to the difficulty of creating pure AP courses given that some SLCs did not have enough AP-ready students to enroll in such classes. Students who are pulled out from core classes to be assigned to a mixed AP class, may have different experiences than their SLC peers who remained in their core classes. One teacher indicated that one SLC planned to investigate the success of this pullout method. Although a minority, some teachers did express concern with the professional experience they have gained as a result of pure classes. They indicated that pure classes can lead to a sterile teaching experience given that they see the same type/kind of student on a regular basis. Interestingly, despite their initial concerns with classes not being pure enough, by the end of the focus group discussions teachers generally agreed that flexibility was a necessity in terms of dealing with pure classes.

Some students expressed their concerns regarding class scheduling differently from administrators and teachers. Students did recognize the benefits of pure classes and knew that language, math, and elective courses were generally mixed. Although most agreed that they enjoyed pure classes, at least a few students indicated that the nature of being in their SLC tracked them into a certain type of class. As an example, one student indicated that instead of biology, s/he was assigned to a cooking class as required by his/her SLC. A few students in the Specialized Student Programs (SSPs), formerly known as magnet programs, further supported this tracking assertion by indicating that they were "set" or got "first pick" on the college-required courses available at their school. In addition to these course scheduling challenges, other common class restrictions were placed on students. Teachers indicated that students in certain SLCs simply could not take courses beyond the A-G requirements, like ROP or work-experience classes at Long Beach City College because they could not fit them into their class schedule. Teachers felt, however, that modifying the school day to allow for more interventions during the day should be considered.

Teachers in the focus groups reported the manner in which students were assigned to SLCs as problematic. Several teachers took accusatory tones towards the manner in which SSPs recruited and enrolled students. According to these teachers, two SLCs selected students with high GPA's and good test scores, leaving the "left-overs" for the other SLCs. Other teachers disagreed that SSPs selected students this way. Instead, they argued that SSPs did not have GPA requirements but due to the high number of applicants, they were able to select the top students. Some teachers also indicated that there

was a disregard for student choice. Students seemed to have a different opinion. Of the students who participated in the focus group, 13 indicated that they chose their SLC, six were randomly assigned, and one was “selected.” Given the chance, some of the students randomly placed in their SLC would switch to another one. Random assignment was the only disadvantage mentioned by students in regards to SLCs in general. One student indicated that s/he had a difficult time selecting an SLC due to having a sincere interest in more than one.

Another challenge addressed by teachers pertained to a perceived inequity among SLCs, an issue that seems rooted in student recruitment and SLC placement. As mentioned above, most teachers participating in the focus groups expressed frustration with having the higher achieving students assigned to a couple of select SLCs. They believed this has led to those SLCs being identified as superior when compared to the rest. This has, in turn, affected the number of accelerated students assigned to the other SLCs. These teachers stated that there were not enough advanced students to create accelerated pure classes in those SLCs, which meant that those students were placed in other programs to gain access to those crucial courses. Students further supported these claims in focus group discussions when indicating that certain SLCs did provide more privileges and access to rigorous courses. Interestingly, however, these students reported that although SLCs did not have reputations, some SLCs were “on top.” One student attempted to clarify this statement by saying that at the time of selecting an SLC, s/he was indifferent but acknowledged that since then, s/he has learned that some SLCs were more academically rigorous than others. Another type of inequity issue was also identified by a couple of teacher group participants. Gender inequity in SLCs led to one SLC’s classes being 90% female while classes in another SLC were 90% male. These teachers stated that it was unfair to have 90% males in one class.

The last challenge to SLC development mentioned by focus group teachers pertained to the practice of separating low and high achievers. This challenge generated a lengthy discussion. Teachers recognized that although it was good to focus on accelerated/Honors programs aimed at every student in a class, it isolated those kids from the rest. Because in many cases, SLCs cannot create pure accelerated classes of their own, students end up in mixed AP and Honors classes. When placing high achievers in these mixed accelerated classes, they are removed from their SLC, thus weakening their connections to their SLCs, and preventing them from serving as role models for low achievers in their SLCs. One teacher indicated that integration of low and high achievers could successfully take place in history class but not in an English course. Thus, teachers felt that this separation of low and high achievers was a dilemma that needed to be addressed.

Challenges identified in the teacher/staff survey pertained to the specific connection between SLCs and student achievement. Teachers were asked to describe the ways in which student achievement has improved since the implementation of this grant. Although a total of 54 responded, only eight teachers actually addressed the question. A boost in AP enrollment was mentioned twice by teachers as was an increase in CAHSEE test scores as evidence of improved student achievement. Furthermore, a greater interest on the part of students in careers was briefly addressed twice, as was a more dedicated student effort in academic work. Although the question pertained specifically to student achievement, some survey participants mentioned teacher successes, such as improved teacher collaboration, or SLC-focused benefits, such as stronger SLC identification and an improved sense of community. The majority of teachers who responded to the survey question indicated that either there were no improvements or that they did not know. It appears that either improving student achievement through SLC structures continues to be a challenge or that the majority of teachers were unaware of improvements that have taken place.

To explore ideas on how to address some of these challenges, teachers were asked on the survey, “*What additional resources do you feel you will need to meet the goals of the SLC grant?*” Fifty-two teachers responded to this question. The most common responses by theme are summarized below.

Teacher/Staff –focused resources

- Planning/collaboration time
- Professional development/technology training

School-focused resources

- College/career events, pathways, guidance
- College aides in classroom/tutoring

Scheduling resources

- More pure classes
- Master schedule training/proper placement
- Smaller (AP, Algebra) classes

Other resources

- Money (for supplies and activities such as fieldtrips)

Although teachers reported in focus groups that they have more collaboration time than in previous years, they nevertheless felt they needed more time to meet the requirements of the grant. They also recognized the need for more professional development. Having small and pure classes were also critical needs for teachers. Furthermore, teachers reportedly lacked the necessary resources to raise college and career awareness. These were all necessities that teachers believed were essential in order to, presumably, further develop SLCs and meet the goals proposed in the grant.

To summarize, teachers and students reported that there was a strong SLC culture on campus that has improved personalization at both the student/student and teacher/student levels. Teachers indicated that there was an improved understanding of SLCs and that more colleague collaboration was taking place. Furthermore, they also reported that there was restructuring aimed at introducing or enhancing SLC services, including expanding the peer mentoring program, tutoring services, incorporating digital exit portfolios for seniors, hiring college aides, and introducing junior achievement. Challenges to SLC development, however, persisted. There was consensus among teachers and administrators that the master schedule continued to pose a challenge in generating pure classes, which in turn affected SLCs, teacher collaboration, and student/student and teacher/student personalization. Some students reported feeling restricted in terms of the courses they were limited to by their SLCs. There was a lengthy discussion regarding SLC inequity issues given that some teachers and students detected a hierarchical SLC structure at their school. It is important to recognize and understand these successes and challenges as they illustrate the state of development of SLCs at Lakewood High. Because this state of development provides the context under which the grant goals are being implemented, it is critical to review it continuously when investigating if and how the grant goals are being met.

C. Overall Grant Awareness

The individuals most familiar with details of the grant were the two primary administrators (principal and SLC coordinator). Both administrators were very familiar with the grant goals and indicated that they adhered exclusively to the management action plan. They individually discussed the status of each

goal and highlighted the successes and challenges of each. The status of the goals, which one administrator condensed to College and Career, Interventions, Rigor, and AP, are the following:

- Goal 1 (College and Career) - *Through a comprehensive guidance and academic advising program for students and their parents, prepare all students to succeed in postsecondary education and careers.* According to the administrators, Lakewood has done well in terms of meeting the activities stated under this goal. However, they have experienced challenges with implementing web-based individual learning plans and the Fred Jones program, as well as expanding parent workshop and staff team building opportunities.
- Goal 2 (Interventions) - *Provide intensive interventions in reading/ language arts and math skills.* Administrators mentioned some of the interventions listed under Goal 3 (Rigor) as part of Goal 2. Both administrators mentioned that implementing a tutoring program has been a challenge. There was interest in supporting the informal and formal tutoring programs already in place in lieu of implementing new ones. Student attendance has improved as a result of the attendance dean, who focused on contacting students and parents. Intervention counselors were meeting with students at risk of not graduating. There have also been discussions to identify and consolidate intervention programs in order to organize the services that are available. Administrators mentioned that next year, interventions will be an area of focus for the school.
- Goal 3 (Rigor) - *Enroll and support students in a coherent sequence of rigorous English, math and science courses to succeed in postsecondary education and/or careers.* According to one administrator, there was more work needed towards meeting this goal given that there was much disagreement among staff as to how to address it. This goal is strongly aligned with a district-wide initiative. One administrator mentioned that teachers needed more professional development on rigor. There have been successes with Link Crew, the student mentor program. One administrator credited working on outcome charts for generating more discussions on cross-curricular projects.
- Goal 4 (AP) - *Increase opportunities for students to earn postsecondary credit through AP courses.* Administrators spoke of a strengthened AP program. Although student participation in the AP Café was low, parent participation in informational sessions has improved. Both administrators indicated that more students were enrolled in AP so the current focus will be to prepare and encourage them to take the AP exam.

The grant's management action plan has been integrated into the school's site action plan, which also includes the goals of other district-wide and school-wide initiatives. According to the administrators, the leadership team (comprised of department heads and lead teachers) recently met to discuss the activities in the action plan and evaluate their status. Despite this recent leadership team meeting to "rework the activities and prioritize them by focus for the next year," few focus group teachers described grant activities to which the school was committed. Teachers also mentioned activities in which they participated that worked towards meeting the grant goals but they did not link them directly to the grant. It appears that some initiatives overlap, making it difficult for teachers to distinguish which activity was connected to which reform.

According to the administrators, leadership teachers have copies of the grant and should be very familiar with the grant's action plan. During teacher focus group discussions, participants indicated that they understood the grant to be the school's second SLC grant but did not provide details. Teachers spoke of leadership team meetings during the first year to discuss grant and budgetary decisions and

primarily dispersing funds to the various academic departments to finish SLC development. One administrator also mentioned extensive discussions with the leadership to, first, prioritize grant funds and, secondly, raise awareness about how to use those funds. As one teacher stated:

Teachers here are getting maybe a little more familiar, or a little more comfortable with the entire grant and so they're understanding a lot of the grant better, which, I know going in, some didn't know anything about.

Grant awareness, however, seemed rooted in financial matters, specifically, on how to navigate through the administrative procedures to access grant funds. This awareness may be due in part to one administrator's determination to avoid being overloaded with questions as to whether "the grant [could] pay for this and [could] the grant pay for that." Efforts were put forth to inform and train staff on the proper procedures for using grant funds. Therefore, grant awareness for administrators and teachers differed slightly in that the emphasis for teachers has been primarily on financial matters.

Although not explicitly stated, some teachers and administrators credited the first year of the grant as leading SLCs to refocus/restructure and to build SLC identity, goals they seemed to perceive as part of the grant. The principal, however, described the purpose of the grant with the following detail:

This SLC grant is a way for our school to make whole school change through SLCs. Not only to create that relationship piece but also to improve on the curriculum and increase rigor and create opportunities for students to have career connections as well. And as opposed to the last grant, which was structural for us, this one gets to the core of the matter, changing instruction and changing it in a way so that students find more meaning to what they are doing in the classrooms, and have a real clear direction on once they graduate knowing what they are going to do... The SLCs are promoting the goals. SLCs are vehicles to achieve the four goals.

The principal's understanding of the grant was more aligned with the district's understanding while other staff sees the emphasis as continuing to be SLC development. It was evident that this administrator demonstrated greater awareness of the grant's purpose and goals while others continued to work through their understanding.

D. Goal #1: Prepare all students for success in postsecondary education and careers without the need for remediation.

The goal of preparing students for success in postsecondary education and careers is very broad and encompasses school-wide as well as SLC-specific efforts. The majority of the activities under this goal are geared toward postsecondary success and do not directly emphasize the objective of preparing students "without the need for remediation." Nevertheless, two major areas emerged through the data that supported achievement of this goal: student expectations and post-secondary knowledge, support, and preparedness. Under these major themes, survey results associated with academic support and remediation are also addressed. It is important to note that while remediation is not specifically addressed here, efforts such as tutoring are discussed under subsequent goals.

Goal-Related Activities

Several activities are listed under Goal #1 in the grant's action plan. These activities are as follows:

- Bi-Annual Saturday Report Card Parent Meetings

- College Preparedness Workshops
- Bi-Annual Parent Institutes
- Counselor Training - Effective Strategies for Working with SLCs
- Develop/Sustain SLC Parent Booster Clubs
- Development, Training, and Implementation of Digital Individualized Learning Plans
- Training and Use of School Loop Program
- Training and Use of Tele-Parent Program
- Middle School Outreach Regarding SLC Pathways
- School-wide Newsletter Highlighting SLC, Postsecondary, and Career Information
- Increased Connections to Faith and Community-Based Organizations and Businesses

Data pertaining to a portion of the above activities was generated through interviews, focus groups, and survey items. Not all of the above activities could be addressed through the data collection efforts. Reasons primarily included time limitations for interviews/focus groups and generalized descriptions by respondents. Furthermore, absence of specific activities does not necessarily indicate that they did not occur; rather, it may be that since they were not specifically part of the interview, respondents may not have discussed them. This possibility was raised by the principal, who noted while looking over the list of Goal #1 activities that they had “done most of the activities that were in here.”

- 1% (of 102) of the teacher survey respondents reported participation in Bi-Annual Saturday Report Card Parent Meetings. One teacher focus group participant added that they attempted this effort for students receiving failing grades but that it wasn’t “popular.” One administrator stated that this was a focus for next year.
- 8% (of 102) of the teachers reported that they participated in College Preparedness Workshops. However, such workshops or similar activities may have been geared toward the students. Various college preparedness activities did take place (e.g. field trips, AVID activities) and are discussed more fully in the subsequent section “Post-secondary Support, Knowledge, and Preparedness.”
- 2% (of 102) of the teachers reported that they participated in Bi-Annual Parent Institutes. One administrator stated that outside of Parent Booster clubs, there had not been much done in this area. Although these institutes were not implemented, survey responses indicated that 84% (of 1607) of the parents generally agreed that “the school uses many ways to keep parents informed.” Furthermore, 89% (of 101) of the teachers and 49% (of 3169) of the students agreed that teachers had regular contact with the parents to inform them of their children’s progress.
- There was little to no data collected which specifically addressed Counselor Training - Effective Strategies for Working with SLCs.
- 13% (of 102) of the teachers reported that they engaged in developing/sustaining SLC Parent Booster Clubs. One administrator spoke positively about the implementation of Parent Booster clubs. Various SLCs (but not all) had joined efforts to develop these clubs. The major role of the boosters, according to the administrator, was to help raise money and support SLC activities through planning and organization. The administrator added, “it’s a nice way to support academics...it was one of the outcomes of SLCs when I first started.”

- 1% (of 102) of the teachers reported that they participated in training on Digital Individualized Learning Plans; 6% reported that they personally developed Digital Individualized Learning Plans. One administrator shared that Lakewood may need some help in developing this particular activity. What was needed, offered the administrator, was an individual to create and run the program. Administrators needed to work through this area before time, money, and effort was spent on this endeavor. This appeared to be the only listed activity linked to the “without the need for remediation” aspect of Goal #1.
- 47% (of 102) of the teachers reported that they participated in training and use of School Loop Program.
- 4% (of 102) of the teachers reported that they participated in Training and Use of Tele-Parent Program.
- 8% (of 102) of the teachers reported that they participated in Middle School Outreach Regarding SLC Pathways. One administrator spoke of an Explorer Test through the College Board that was given to 8th grade students which contained potential career interests and academic information.
- There was little to no data collected which specifically addressed a School-wide Newsletter Highlighting SLC, Postsecondary, and Career Information.
- 10% (of 102) of the teachers reported that they participated in Increased Connections to Faith and Community-Based Organizations and Businesses. One administrator spoke of a particular SLC that did have some business connections but limited college connections. Overall, it was acknowledged that this was an area where work was needed. Additional discussion of college and career connections will be addressed in the subsequent section “Post-secondary Support, Knowledge, and Preparedness.”

In addition to the list above, both administrators and teachers spoke of career fairs organized by SLC, a Career Center; college field trips, career research, and other career-related activities in which students engaged that aligned to this first goal. These activities will be discussed more fully in the subsequent section “Post-secondary Support, Knowledge, and Preparedness.”

Expectations of Students

Research has shown that establishing high expectations for students leads to high academic achievement (NCREL, 2004).⁴ As presented in Table 13, 87% of the teacher respondents generally agreed with the statement, “Teachers have high expectations for all students.” Similarly, 78% of the students and 79% of the parents also believed that teachers held high expectations for all students.

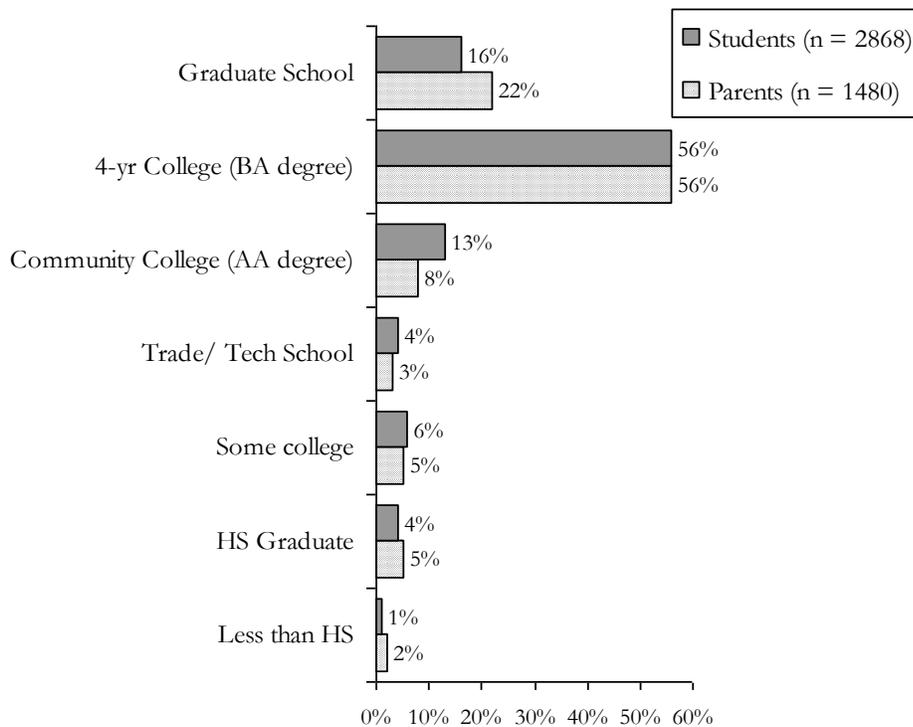
⁴ North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (2004). High Expectations. Available online: <http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/students/atrisk/at6lk11.htm>. Retrieved July 2009.

Table 13.

	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	
Teachers have high expectations for all students.	Teachers	100	2%	9%	63%	24%	2%
	Students	3192	5%	17%	52%	26%	---
	Parents	1625	3%	11%	58%	21%	8% (DK)

The potential for post-secondary educational attainment is also related to the expectations of students at Lakewood High School. Students and parents were asked to name the highest level of education that they or their children would be likely to attain. Figure 1 shows the response distributions for both groups. For the most part, we can see that the parents and the students were very similar in their responses. The only disparity of note between the two groups was for attending graduate school (6%); the parents were more likely to expect this advanced post-secondary education for their children.

Figure 1. Perceptions of Lakewood Students' Highest Level of Education



Teacher survey respondents were asked a similar version of this question with a different response structure. Furthermore, they were asked to indicate what percentage of their students they believed would achieve each potential educational level. It was intended that each educational option would stand alone; however, analyses of the data revealed the likelihood of response overlap and therefore should be interpreted with caution. On average, respondents believed that about half of the students would graduate from high school; at least 20% of the students would complete some college; and 10%

of the students would attend a trade/technical school. In addition, 40% of students would attend a community college or a 4-year college and 6% would attend graduate school. Comparison of these responses to the student/parent responses was difficult due to the dissimilarity in item structure. Nonetheless, it is apparent that there was an expectation among the teachers that students will pursue post-secondary opportunities.

Post-secondary Support, Knowledge, and Preparedness

The results in this section specifically address the support, knowledge, and preparation necessary for post-secondary success. The first series of survey items refer to the teacher-student communication that would support students in their understanding of the application and financial requirements of post-secondary education (see Table 14 below). As shown in the table, the vast majority of teachers (98%) responded that they spoke with their students about how to get into college. On the other hand, students were equally divided in their levels of agreement about whether they spoke to their teachers about getting into college, 51% generally agreed while 49% generally disagreed. In considering the disparity in responses between staff and students, it may be important to note that these items were written with the respondent in the active role. In other words, had the student item been written as “Teachers talk to me about how to get into college,” there may have been less of a disparity. It is highly possible that the students were considering their own active role in engaging teachers in these conversations and less about whether or not these conversations took place at all. With regard to paying for college, 62% of the teachers generally agreed that students spoke to teachers and/or counselors, while only 37% of the students were likely to agree. As expected, students at higher grade levels were more likely to agree than their younger counterparts. Finally, although close to 20% of the parents responded that they did not know whether these communications occurred, they were more likely to agree than disagree that their children communicated with teachers about getting into college (57% vs. 27%) and paying for college (48% vs. 33%).

Table 14.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
I talk with my students about how to get into college.	Teachers	101	---	2%	50%	48%	1%
I talk to my teacher about how to get into college.	Students	3251	9%	40%	40%	11%	---
My child talks to his/her teacher about how to get into college.	Parents	1617	5%	22%	45%	12%	17% (DK)
Students talk to teachers and/or counselors about how to pay for college.	Teachers	99	4%	25%	54%	8%	9%
I talk to my teacher or counselor about how to pay for college.	Students	3234	13%	50%	30%	7%	---
My child talks to his/her teacher or counselor about how to pay for college.	Parents	1611	6%	27%	38%	10%	19% (DK)

Providing students with knowledge about post-secondary opportunities was evident through the various activities that the Lakewood teachers implemented to engage students. Teacher and staff members, including administrators, also spoke of the objectives that drove these activities and what

they hoped students would gain through their engagement. Many spoke with specific reference to their SLC goals. For example, one administrator spoke about a particular SLC's goal as helping the students understand that the objective was not simply to get to college but to have a successful career after college. One SLC teacher shared that the emphasis was not on individual careers but getting them qualified for college. Many teachers spoke of having students investigate and research careers in order to see the "bigger picture." The role of SLCs was more about providing a strong academic foundation, a "foundational stepping stone," and helping students research what career they were interested in and figure out "how to get there." Another teacher shared that within their SLC, the goal was to show "realism." In other words, "bringing down one glorified job and broadening it to have a better idea of where they can go."

With regard to the connections between SLCs and specific post-secondary options, one teacher shared, "We are not that rigid- I don't think we can be. We'd be doing a disservice to our population if we were - I'd rather prepare them so they can decide what they want to do, know how and figure out how to get there. Sometimes we don't have the best guide in that path but we try and we learn from our peers, we learn so much from other people that we dialogue with, and it enriches our classrooms and it makes us better at what we do and how to reach kids, and we get the best of the best."

One teacher added that s/he wasn't sure if they prepared students for the career force because they didn't have all of the necessary tools. Nevertheless, it was evident that post-secondary success was a primary goal and several activities took place, school-wide and SLC-specific. Two teachers spoke of the use of career interest surveys including a survey tied to military interests. One other teacher spoke of mentoring and job-shadowing. Several teachers spoke of having students actively researching options through computer labs, working on career units in class, creating portfolios, and completing mock applications and interviews. Three SLC teachers spoke of having representatives from universities, trade schools, and independent businesses come in and speak to the students. Field trips were also discussed, however it was shared that these have been impacted by budget cuts.

Teacher and student survey respondents were also asked about field trips and guest speakers. As may be expected, greater frequencies of student responses were associated with increasing grade levels.

- 37% (of 102) of the teachers indicated that "at least one speaker visited my classroom to talk to students about careers." 78% (of 3225) of the students agreed with this statement.
- 32% (of 102) of the teachers indicated that "at least one speaker visited my classroom to talk to students about college/university." 80% (of 3213) of the students agreed with this statement.
- 11% (of 102) of the teachers reported "I have taken my students on at least one trip to visit a college/university." 34% (of 3198) of the students agreed that they had taken at least one trip to a college/university.
- 20% (of 102) of the teachers reported "I have taken my students on at least one trip somewhere to explore careers." 32% (of 3210) of the students agreed that they had taken at least one trip to explore careers.

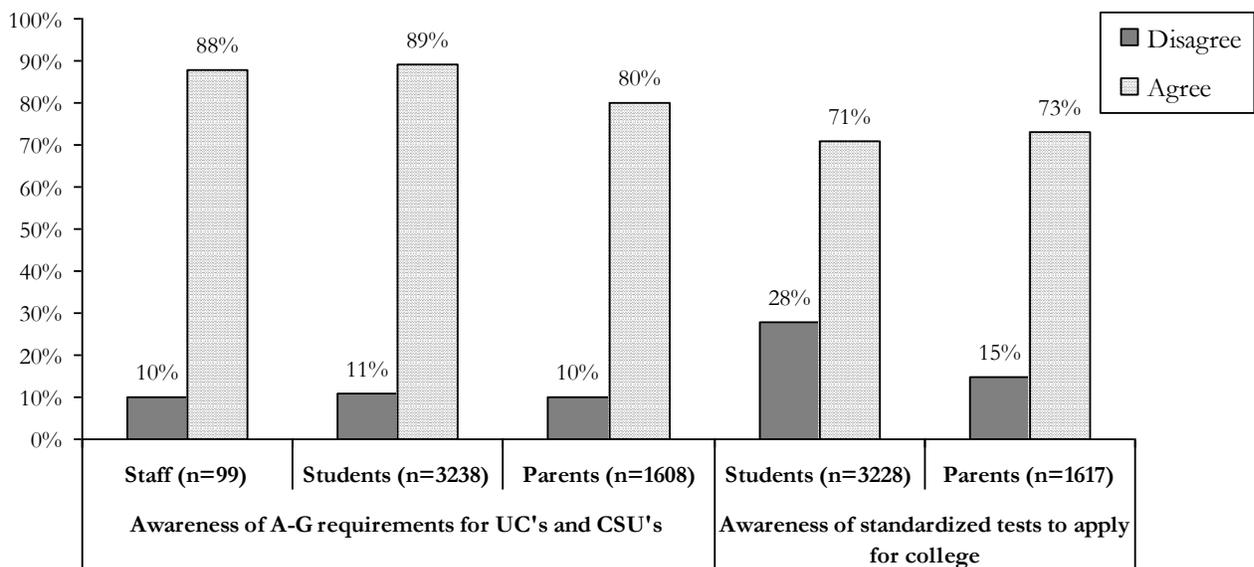
Student focus group respondents were asked how their teachers helped prepare students for college. Responses included teaching organizational skills, AVID curriculum that involved mandatory note-taking and tutorials, instituting deadlines, and AP classes. Three students responded that their SLCs

were more geared toward career options while two others reported that their SLCs were specifically college oriented. Two students also reported that they had “heard” about SAT preparation programs but none stated that they actually participated. Four students reported that they heard the most about college through the Career Center.

State universities in California, whether in the UC or the CSU systems, have specific course requirements (A-G requirements) that students must complete prior to admission. In addition, successful completion of one or more standardized tests is required. These test requirements are not limited to state universities and may also be used for placement into particular majors and programs. Figure 2 contains the results of the two items that address students’ knowledge of these two critical requirements for application and admission into universities. As the figure shows, 80% and greater of all three respondent groups agreed that students were aware of the A-G requirements. With respect to increasing awareness, at least four teacher focus group respondents spoke of medallions, a form of student reward, that were granted for meeting A-G requirements. Furthermore, other teachers spoke of posters around school reminding students of these requirements as well as an increase in certain core subject sections and enrollment. Several teachers also spoke of a “planner” for 9th grade students that emphasized the A-G requirements. Besides the specific A-G item addressed in Figure 2, students also responded to an item stating “When I graduate, I will have taken the courses necessary to be accepted to college.” In general, 88% of the students agreed that they will have taken all necessary courses.

Figure 2 also shows that similar proportions of students (71%) and parents (73%) agreed that students were aware of what standardized tests were required. These proportions were lower in comparison to the first item. Disaggregating student responses by grade level, it was clear that student awareness of standardized tests was a function of grade level. The reported awareness of students in 9th and 10th grades ranged from 60% to 69%, whereas 11th and 12th grade students reported awareness ranged from 79% to 86%.

Figure 2. Lakewood Students’ Awareness of Post-secondary Requirements



Survey respondents were asked about students' preparation for post-secondary success in two ways: subsequent to high school graduation and overall. It is implied, in this first item in Table 15 below, that time and engagement in high school has provided the necessary preparation for either a post-secondary education or a career. Of all three respondent groups, students and parents were the most confident in this preparation (87% and 82%, respectively). Teachers were also generally confident albeit to a slightly lesser degree (77%).

Table 15.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
By the time students graduate from this school, they will be prepared to succeed at the college or career of their choice.	Teachers	95	4%	16%	65%	12%	3%
By the time I graduate from this school, I will be prepared to succeed at the college or career of my choice	Students	3223	3%	10%	55%	32%	---
By the time my child graduates from this school, s/he will be prepared to succeed at the college or career of his/her choice.	Parents	1595	2%	8%	54%	28%	9% (DK)

The items in Table 16 address the students' and parents' perceptions of their ability to pay for a post-secondary education from various sources. In general, students were generally more confident (75%) that they could afford attendance at a 4-year institution. A smaller proportion of parents (66%) were as confident. A small portion of the parents reported that they did not know at the time of survey completion (12%). It is possible that although parents have a great awareness of the family resources, they may not be as aware of scholarship and financial aid opportunities. Conversely, students may not be aware of the actual status of the family resources and therefore may be more confident in that particular source of income than the parents.

Table 16.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
I think I can afford to attend a public, 4-year college using financial aid, scholarships, or my family's resources.	Students	3210	6%	18%	54%	21%	---
I think I can pay to send my child to a public, 4-year college with my income, financial aid, or scholarships.	Parents	1611	7%	15%	50%	16%	12% (DK)

Support and Remediation

The following survey items address academic support. As described earlier, the portion of the goal that specifies support without the need for remediation was not evaluable since both the activities listed under this goal and the data collected were not sufficient to draw valid conclusions. The items presented in Table 17 below give some indication as to the academic support given to and perceived by the students and may serve as an indirect indicator of fulfilling this portion of the goal.

Table 17.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
The administration, teachers, and staff at this school work together to assist students who may be at risk of failing.	Teachers	98	3%	13%	64%	18%	1%
	Students	3110	8%	25%	54%	13%	---
	Parents	1617	5%	15%	51%	15%	15% (DK)
I talk with other teachers about students who might be struggling academically.	Teachers	100	2%	7%	48%	41%	2%
I feel supported by my teachers in my academic performance in class.	Students	3211	5%	17%	58%	19%	---
My child feels supported by his/her teachers in his/her academic performance in class.	Parents	1601	4%	14%	58%	13%	11% (DK)

The first item addresses a school-wide effort at supporting students deemed at risk of failing. As shown, 82% of the teachers agreed that all worked together to provide this support. Students and parents also agreed, although to a lesser extent (67% and 66%, respectively). Furthermore, 89% of the teachers agreed that they personally talked with other teachers regarding struggling students. This was consistent with teachers’ responses to the first item. Finally, 77% of the students agreed that they received academic support from their classroom teachers. Parents also agreed (71%) that their children received this support.

E. Goal #2: Provide intensive interventions in reading/language arts and math skills.

Lakewood administrators discussed various activities and efforts made at providing interventions for the students. They also spoke of intervention as an area in which much time was spent during this school year. They emphasized the need for more structure in this particular area, in terms of format and organization. Both administrators and teachers referred to a specific group or team whose responsibilities included intervention. For example, on administrator stated that the “leadership team” needed to go through, modify, and prioritize intervention activities. Within the focus groups, one teacher spoke of an “interventions committee” as a leadership effort while another teacher added that the “core group” worked to drive the school and give input addressing needs and reaching students in need. One teacher reiterated by praising Lakewood’s staff as a group that persevered and was willing to learn new things. All of the above comments support Lakewood’s efforts at meeting this goal.

Goal-Related Activities

Several activities are listed under goal #2 in the grant’s action plan.

- School-wide Data Analysis on Literacy and Numeracy Needs
- Develop School-wide Literacy and Numeracy Strategies Based Data Analysis
- Implement School-wide Literacy Strategies
- Implement School-wide Numeracy Strategies
- Math Department Lesson Study

- Support Language!, Literacy Workshop, and Stretch Algebra AB/CD Classes with College Aides
- Carnegie Lab Training and Computer Support

Data pertaining to a portion of the above activities was generated through interviews, focus groups, and survey items. Not all of the above activities could be addressed through the data collection efforts. Reasons primarily included time limitations for interviews/focus groups and generalized descriptions by respondents.

- There was little to no data to support whether school-wide data analysis activities took place or if strategies were developed based on these analyses. This is not to imply that these activities did not occur; rather, these activities are very broadly described in the grant and may be embedded in various other activities. For example, one teacher explained that teaching strategies were embedded in department level meetings in which they learned and used the strategies in all different curricular areas.
- 69% (of 102) of the teachers reported that they implemented literacy strategies.
- 28% (of 102) of the teachers reported that they implemented numeracy strategies.
- There was no data collected to support the implementation of a Math Department Lesson Study.
- 57% (of 100) of the teachers generally agreed that the school has employed the assistance of college aides to improve literacy and/or numeracy achievement; however only 9% of the teachers reported that a college aide was assigned to their classroom. A more comprehensive discussion of college aides is presented in the sections below.
- There was no data collected to support the implementation of Carnegie Lab Training or additional computer support.

There were several other intervention-related activities described by both administrators and teachers that are not explicitly listed in the grant's action plan. Such activities included: an Attendance Dean, who worked for two periods to increase student attendance by calling home and working with attendance clerks; and, Intervention counselors, who have been meeting with students possessing a range of problems (e.g. at risk for not graduating, not passing the CAHSEE, discipline, non-attendance). According to the administrators, this grant-funded position enabled counselors to also do home visits and establish parent connections. Another grant-funded activity was the implementation of a study lab. The administrator reported that this lab was more than a study hall; rather, a teacher and college aide were present to provide one-on-one student support. Although described as "highly successful," the administrator noted that a stronger curriculum and clear criteria for inclusion were areas for improvement. Other activities included the implementation of "Revolution Prep" material (an outside vendor source) that is geared toward passing the CAHSEE. This program included teacher training as well as a study lab for students to strengthen individual skills. Also mentioned was the growth of Link Crew. One teacher spoke of the efforts made to place incoming 9th grade students in reading classes designed to meet their specific needs. Overall, both administrators acknowledged that interventions were to be a school-wide, primary focus for the next school year with the goals of modifying and prioritizing activities.

Tutoring, in its various forms and content emphases, emerged as the primary intervention effort that the school has engaged in during the year. Tutoring is not listed under this goal as an intervention activity; rather, it was written in the grant under Goal #3. However, the majority of the data that were collected on tutoring emerged as part of the school's intervention efforts and therefore is discussed under this goal.

Tutoring

Tutoring and related efforts took place school-wide, by SLC, and by teacher. The administrators described their school-wide efforts as somewhat challenging in many ways. One administrator shared that a lot of money was spent on a school-wide tutoring effort that covered all core subject areas. This effort, in the words of the administrator, was a “good idea in theory, and bombed in action.” Both administrators acknowledged that the primary cause was little to no student participation. The administrators also shared that many teachers did not want to go to “other” rooms to tutor and therefore getting teachers to participate was also a challenge. One administrator agreed that “a lot of teachers already do tutoring and why change something that seems to be working.” In other words, the majority of teachers at Lakewood (95% according to one administrator) already engaged in tutoring students in their classrooms at various times throughout the school day. There were other tutoring programs, however, that were described as more successful. A peer-to peer math tutoring program was described as very successful; one administrator shared that “you could go any day after school and see a hundred kids in there.”

Focus group discussions about tutoring mirrored, in many ways, the statements shared by the administrators. Teachers gave several reasons for the challenges that emerged with the school-wide afterschool tutoring effort. One teacher shared that many students faced transportation issues and could not stay after school. A few teachers also explained that students preferred their “own” teachers for tutoring. Such challenges have prompted many teachers to open up their classrooms and tutor their students in the morning and/or lunch time. As one teacher stated, “...kids sign up and they say what they need help with. They know someone is going to be there to help them. That's working out fairly well, but that's maybe around 10 or 12 kids on a good day.”

Other tutoring efforts described by teachers included a Chemistry peer-tutoring where advanced senior students helped struggling students during lunch as well as before and after school. One teacher mentioned that his/her SLC lead teacher also offered tutoring in the classroom. Other tutoring-related efforts discussed included a mentoring program for incoming 9th grade students, the AP café, and a parent letter informing parents of teachers' tutorial hours and availability. It appeared through these discussions that some of these activities were SLC-specific while others were more related to the departments or grade levels. Nevertheless, tutoring is an ongoing intervention at Lakewood.

Focus group students also spoke of tutoring in its many forms: before school, after school, and in the library. They expressed awareness that their own teachers as well as others were available to them when they needed help. Two students also spoke of the math tutoring offered school wide as well as the peer tutors. A few students added that after school commitments such as sports kept students from participating in the after school tutoring sessions. They acknowledged that not enough students took advantage of the tutoring that was offered at Lakewood, but more students should.

Teachers, students, and parents responded to several survey items which addressed tutoring and other academic help. The first series of items pertained to the tutoring efforts provided by the school in both

reading/language arts and mathematics. As shown in Table 18 below, teachers and students were similar in their general agreement that Lakewood provided additional tutoring in reading/language arts (80% and 77%, respectively.) However, students were less likely to agree about math tutoring (66% vs. 94% of the teachers in terms of agreement). This is a curious finding given that administrators, teachers, and students all spoke of the availability of school-wide math tutoring. It is possible that students had different perceptions of the survey item that included the phrase “outside the school day.” It is possible that students may have considered the math tutoring as occurring within the school day and therefore responded differently. Responses to the parent survey showed that 74% of the parents generally agreed that the school offered reading or math to students who need it. A smaller proportion of parents (55%) agreed that it occurred outside of the classroom.

Table 18.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
For students who need it, the school provides additional tutoring in reading/language arts.	Teachers	97	2%	10%	57%	23%	8%
For those who need it, the school gives them more tutoring in reading/language arts outside the school day.	Students	3218	5%	18%	56%	21%	---
For students who need it, the school provides additional tutoring in math.	Teachers	101	1%	3%	53%	41%	3%
For those who need it, the school gives them more tutoring in math outside the school day.	Students	3229	5%	28%	53%	13%	---
The school provides more academic tutoring in reading or math for those who need it.	Parents	1614	2%	9%	56%	18%	15%
My child got more academic help (like tutoring) in reading or math outside his/her class.	Parents	1595	7%	26%	41%	14%	13%

Over half of the students disagreed that they received more help in reading (68%) and math (57%) through tutoring or by having more than one class in that subject per semester (see Table 19 below). Given that students positively reported on the availability of tutoring, it is unclear whether students were responding to the tutoring portion of the item or the additional class.

Table 19.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
I got more help in reading/language arts through tutoring or by having more than one English class per semester.	Students	3008	22%	46%	26%	6%	---

I got more academic help in math through tutoring or by having more than one math class per semester.	Students	3238	16%	41%	33%	10%	---
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Finally, all three groups responded to the tutoring support provided by the students' individual teachers. Table 20 shows that of all the groups, teachers were the most likely to report that they were personally involved in tutoring students (74%). Students' (62%) and parents' (61%) were very similar in their agreement although less than the teachers counterparts. Interestingly, over one-third of the students disagreed that their teachers provided them with tutoring given the previously described occurrence of tutoring by classroom teachers. One possible explanation would be that although students were aware of all of the tutoring opportunities, they were not engaging in them. This non- or limited engagement may be reflected in these responses. Nonetheless, these interpretations are speculative and would require further investigation.

Table 20.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
I am involved in tutoring students who need additional academic support.	Teachers	99	2%	15%	43%	31%	8%
My teachers tutor me when I need more academic support.	Students	3230	7%	31%	49%	13%	---
My child's teachers tutor him/her when s/he needs some additional academic support.	Parents	1602	5%	18%	48%	13%	15%

College Aides

As listed in the above section on Goal #2 activities, Lakewood has employed college aides to provide support in various English/language arts, mathematics, and other core subject classes.⁵ These aides have come primarily from two neighboring state universities. During interviews and focus groups, several respondents spoke of college aides, where they were placed, and to some extent, their responsibilities:

- Study lab – assisted teacher in providing one-on-one support to students that are struggling in academic areas.
- English teachers have used college aides to help students with writing, individually or in small groups.
- Student reported college aide in Spanish class.
- Student reported college aide in AVID program – assisted students with helpful tips for note-taking on college classes
- Student reported that an aide in English class assisted teacher with grading papers and checking for understanding of lessons.

⁵ The use of college aides in Science courses is listed as a Goal #3 activity and is discussed in that section.

Although the above list suggests that college aides have indeed been used as an intervention strategy to support teachers, only slightly more than half of the teacher survey respondents (57%) believed that Lakewood employed the assistance of college aides to improve literacy and/or numeracy achievement. It is possible that teachers responded to the specific use of college aides to improve literacy and numeracy and not the use of college aides in general. This possibility is supported by the placement of college aides in other areas that teachers may not consider directly literacy or numeracy related (i.e. AVID, study lab, Science lab – see Goal #3). Furthermore, only 9% of the teachers indicated that a college aide was placed into their specific classroom. Therefore, it is possible that many teachers were not aware of the purpose of college aides since they have not had direct opportunities to work with them. These possibilities are not intended to be conclusive but are presented as a potential starting point for future consideration.

F. Goal #3: Enroll and support students in a coherent sequence of rigorous English, Math, and Science courses to succeed in postsecondary education and/or careers.

In attempting to gather information regarding the underlying meaning of this goal, we found that there was limited clarity and consistency in how it was interpreted by administrators and teachers. For example, one administrator acknowledged that there was a need for more discussion because “everybody disagrees about rigor.” Furthermore, when teachers were asked about their understanding of what a coherent sequence meant to them, initial responses illustrated some confusion. Regardless, once the discussion ensued, it was clear that all agreed that coherence was related to the collaborative efforts made by teachers toward interdisciplinary curriculum. Vertical teaming across grade levels, horizontal teaming and cross-curricular projects were discussed as the primary endeavors engaged in by school staff toward achieving this goal.

Goal-Related Activities

Several activities are listed under goal #3 in the grant’s action plan. These activities are as follows:

- Data Analysis with English, Math, and Science Departments
- Modify Curriculum Based on Data Analysis
- Summer Curriculum Institutes to Further Refine Curriculum
- District and Site-Based Professional Learning Community Workshops
- Training on Differentiated Instructional Techniques
- Develop and Modify Curriculum to Provide More Connections to SLC Themes/Careers
- Master Schedule Building

Data pertaining to a portion of the above activities was generated through interviews, focus groups, and survey items. Not all of the above activities could be addressed through the data collection efforts. Reasons primarily included time limitations for interviews/focus groups and generalized descriptions by respondents.

- There was little to no data collected which specifically addressed the use of data analysis in the various departments or for the purpose of curriculum modification. This is not to imply that

these activities did not occur; rather, these activities are very broadly described in the grant and may be embedded in various other activities.

- 12% (of 102) of teachers indicated that they participated in Summer Curriculum Institutes.
- 23% (of 102) of teachers participated in District Professional Learning Community Workshops; 30% participated in Site-based workshops.
- School administrators indicated that the Link Crew implemented this school year was “very successful.” No additional data was offered to support this statement.
- The development and implementation of after-school tutoring programs as well as other tutoring efforts is discussed under the Goal #2 section.⁶
- The Science Dept. reportedly employed a college aide for approximately 18 hours per week. Although there was no other data to address the specific activities of this aide, one teacher reported that the aide had made a “huge difference” in the program. One student also stated that there was a college aide in his/her Biology class; however, this student claimed that the aide spent most of the time working “downstairs” and therefore did not see the aide very often.
- 14% (of 102) of teachers reported receiving training on Differentiated Instructional Techniques.
- 42% (of 102) of teachers reported that they worked to develop and modify curriculum to provide more connections to SLC themes/careers (also discussed in subsequent section on Vertical/Horizontal Teaming).
- Master Schedule Building – This activity is addressed in a previous section on SLC development.⁷

In addition to the list above, administrators spoke positively of the use of “outcome charts” as making a difference in creating rigor and stimulating dialogue among teachers regarding cross-curricular projects.

Vertical/Horizontal Teaming

The occurrence and extent of vertical and horizontal teaming may be considered indicators of the overall goal of coherence as well as the activity related to the development and modification of curriculum with greater SLC connections. Several teacher focus group respondents discussed the purpose of teaming both across grade levels and departments. These purposes included making learning “more relevant across all disciplines” and working toward “what we want our seniors to look like at the end of their path.” One teacher added that being able to “hear the same conversation” and the ability to “talk the same language” across various classes was a benefit to the students. Another teacher added that in his/her SLC, the goal was not necessarily to emphasize cross-curricular projects but to align curriculum so that it was “representative of the goal of the SLC.” As several teachers spoke

⁶ See pages 30-33 of this report for the discussion on tutoring.

⁷ See pages 17-20 of this report for the discussion on the Master Schedule.

of teaming within the context of their specific SLCs, there were also a similar number of teachers that agreed that articulation and teaming occurred more at the department or grade level rather than within a specific SLC.

Two items on the staff survey specifically addressed collaboration in both grade-level and department-level teams within the SLC context. As may be seen in Table 21 below, teacher respondents were more likely to agree that they collaborated in SLC department-level teams (67%) than in SLC grade-level teams (58%). Nevertheless, based on focus groups and survey responses, it was evident that the majority of teachers engage in teaming toward the goal of creating coherence.

Table 21.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
I collaborate with other members of my SLC grade-level teams.	Teachers	100	7%	31%	31%	27%	4%
I collaborate with other members of my SLC department-level teams.	Teachers	102	8%	21%	41%	26%	5%

Several students also discussed various cross-curricular projects that they have engaged in at their school. Two students were able to articulate beyond the actual projects and provide insight into the purpose of teaming. For example, one student commented, “All the teachers get together and work out their lessons to be connected with each other. You learn everything really in depth once they teach it.” Another student added, “The teachers also develop with the SLC...so they have to work together and learn how to work together.” Only one student offered that his/her SLC was “still developing” because it was “so new” and therefore he/she was not able to see any evidence of collaboration or cross-curricular projects. Nonetheless, these students’ comments provided additional evidence for teaming and coherence of courses.

One item on the student survey addressed teaming and cross-curricular projects and the ability for students to earn multiple credits. Over half of the students (58%) generally agreed that “because of the way teachers in my SLC work together, I have done assignments for which I received credit in more than one class.” Alternatively, 43% of the students generally disagreed, which does not indicate that teachers did not work across curriculum but only suggests that students may not have received credit in more than one class.

Both teachers and students responded to a survey item about lesson design and the connection to SLC themes. As Table 22 below shows, teachers were less likely to agree (56%) that lessons were designed with the SLC theme in mind than their student counterparts (77%). On the other hand, teachers were in great agreement (95%) that teachers’ lessons were designed to encourage critical thinking. The majority of students (84%) were also in agreement, although to a lesser degree. Finally, over two-thirds of the students agreed (68%) that their SLC courses were challenging.

Table 22.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Lessons are designed with the SLC theme in mind.	Teachers	99	7%	33%	46%	10%	4%

	Students	3221	4%	20%	57%	20%	---
Teachers' lessons are designed to encourage students to think critically.	Teachers	100	2%	4%	62%	32%	---
My teachers' lesson are designed to encourage me to think critically	Students	3212	3%	14%	63%	21%	---
My SLC courses are challenging.	Students	3208	6%	26%	50%	18%	---

Course Selection and SLC Requirements

This section addresses course selection and SLC course requirements. These two areas pertain to goal #3 in that they support students' in their enrollment of appropriate and rigorous courses. Table 23 on the next page shows both teacher and student responses to corresponding survey items.

Table 23.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
I talk to, or refer students to talk to a counselor, about their course selection.	Teachers	100	4%	12%	64%	19%	1%
I talk to my teachers or counselor about my course selection.	Students	3107	5%	18%	58%	18%	---
I inform my students about SLC course requirements.	Teachers	101	7%	29%	39%	19%	7%
I know which courses are required by my SLC.	Students	3138	4%	16%	55%	26%	---

The majority of teachers (83%) indicated that they talked to, or referred students to a counselor, about course selection. A slightly smaller percentage of students (76%) also agreed that they talked to their teachers or their counselor about course selection. A greater disparity in responses may be seen regarding information and knowledge about SLC course requirements. Only 58% of the teachers agreed that they informed students about SLC required courses whereas 81% of the students agreed that they knew which courses were required by their SLC. It is possible that students received this information through other sources such as a counselor or other students.

G. Goal #4: Increase opportunities for students to earn postsecondary credit through AP courses.

Advanced placement (AP) exams offer students the opportunity to earn college credits while still attending high school. The state offers AP courses in over 20 subject areas. Successful completion of the classes and the culminating exam provide students with credits as well as advantages in competitive admissions processes of many universities. Participation in AP courses also provides students an accelerated academic environment which may foster postsecondary academic success. It is important to note that students may take the AP course and not take the exam as well as take an AP exam without

necessarily participating in the course. Nevertheless, college credit is only granted with successful completion of an AP exam.

Goal-Related Activities

Several activities are listed under this goal in the grant's action plan. These activities are as follows:

- Hire an AP Coordinator
- Participate in College Board Conferences
- Develop and Implement an AP Faire for Students and Parents
- Annual PSAT Parent Workshop to Explain 10th Grade Students Scores
- Refine and Implement an AP Bridge Program
- AP Teacher Training
- Support College and Academic Enrichment Experiences
- Offer SAT Preparation Programs
- AVID Path Training

Data pertaining to a portion of the above activities was generated through interviews, focus groups, and survey items. Not all of the above activities could be addressed through the data collection efforts. Reasons primarily included time limitations for interviews/focus groups and generalized descriptions by respondents.

- At Lakewood HS during the 08-09 school year, the SLC Coordinator also served as the AP Coordinator.
- 3% of the teachers (n=102) reported having participated in College Board Conferences.
- 5% of the teachers (n=80) reported that they helped with the development of an AP Faire. 36% of the teachers reported that they did not have any knowledge of an AP Faire. None of the students reported having any knowledge of an AP Faire.
- There was little to no data to support the implementation of an Annual PSAT Parent Workshops to Explain 10th Grade Students Scores. In the Goal #1 section, it was noted by an administrator that little was done in the way of the parent workshops. It is possible that this PSAT workshop may have been included in the administrator's statement.
- 8% of the teachers (n=80) reported that they helped with the development of an AP Bridge Program. 31% of the teachers reported that they did not have any knowledge of an AP Bridge Program. One administrator added that they would not have the Summer Bridge program this year. One teacher acknowledged that in the past, the Summer Bridge program provided a "good start." Four students stated that they knew of the AP Bridge program and one student described the program as a prerequisite that helped students to prepare for AP courses.
- 6% of the teachers (n=102) reported having participated in AP Teacher Training professional development.

- Support College and Academic Enrichment Experiences – this activity is very broad and is essentially implemented through the activities listed for all four goals. Therefore, it was not evaluable in its current form and was considered an implied objective of the overall grant.
- Offer SAT Preparation Programs - Two students reported that they had “heard” of SAT preparation programs. However, there was little to no data to support the implementation of such programs at the school.
- 6% of the teachers (n=102) reported having participated in AVID Path Training professional development.

Additional activities related to this goal were described by respondents. The administrators spoke of an “AP support group” and two “AP informational nights” for parents that were held in both the fall and spring. An AP café was an effort at providing AP tutoring. However, this was not viewed as a successful endeavor.

AP Program – Implementation and Outcomes

All respondents were asked several questions regarding the AP program ranging from access and encouragement to awareness and knowledge. This section provides a synthesis of the results that illuminates various aspects of the implementation as well as some outcomes of this AP goal.

School administrators at Lakewood HS were positive with regard to how the AP programs were working in the 08-09 school year. They both acknowledged a rise in AP enrollment. The two major challenges were in increasing the number of students taking the AP exam and providing interventions to students who want to “challenge themselves” but need more skills to do so. One teacher also acknowledged that there was a “huge increase” in the number of students who were enrolling in AP classes. This teacher also recognized a “small drop” in the number of students passing the classes while stating that, overall, the number of students passing the tests has increased.

In terms of students’ understanding the benefits and advantages of taking AP courses, both students (83%) and parents (81%) were in agreement (see Table 24 below). The proportion of teachers also in general agreement (73%) was slightly smaller than the other two groups.

Table 24.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Students understand how taking AP courses will help them in college.	Teachers	99	2%	18%	59%	14%	7%
I understand how taking AP courses will help me in college.	Students	3223	4%	12%	50%	33%	---
My child understands how taking AP courses will help him/her in college.	Parents	1607	2%	8%	54%	27%	8% (DK)

Access to AP courses may also play a role in student enrollment and the encouragement students receive to enroll in AP courses. Over half of the teachers (58%) believed that students had equal access

to AP courses regardless of SLC membership (see Table 25). Students were more confident in the equity of AP access (71%). An equal percentage of students (71%) also believed that they, personally, were eligible to enroll in AP courses. Student focus group participants varied in their responses to the question of who could enroll in AP courses. Two students agreed that anyone could enroll. Another student acknowledged that “you could take as many of the classes that are available.” Two teacher focus group respondents offered similar comments. One teacher agreed that all students regardless of SLC were eligible to enroll in AP courses. Another teacher shared that efforts were being made to structure AP courses within the SLCs to diminish any inequities.

Table 25.

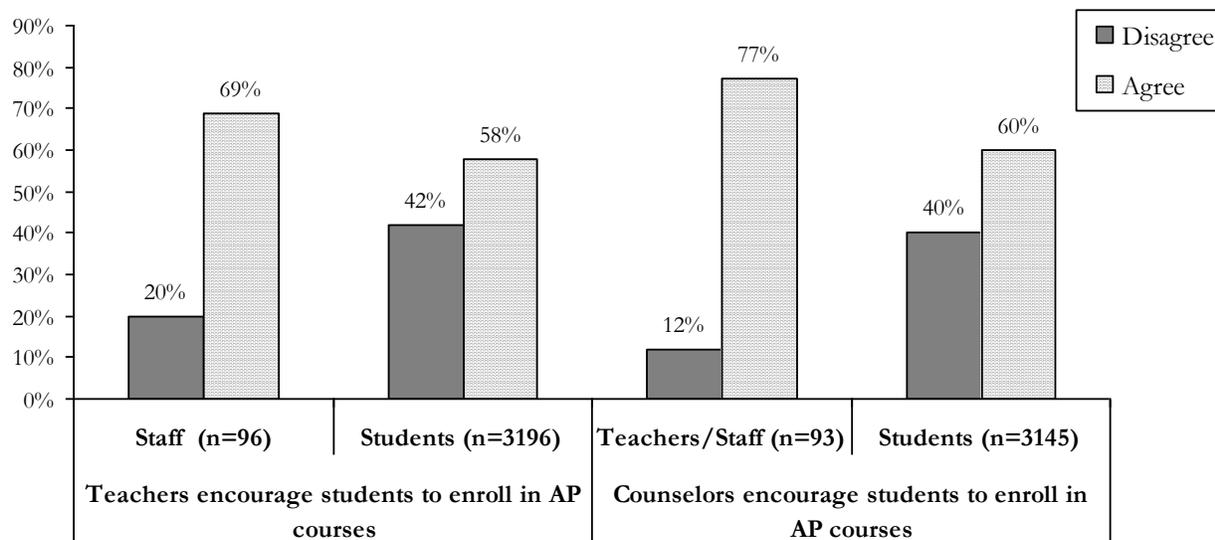
		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Students in all SLCs have equal access to AP courses.	Teachers	97	12%	24%	49%	9%	6%
	Students	3206	7%	22%	52%	19%	---
I am eligible to enroll in AP courses.	Students	3194	6%	23%	44%	27%	---

The remainder of the student participants believed that there were conditions that needed to be met for enrollment. For example, two students reported that good grades were an important prerequisite. Another student stated that time was a factor – if a student was involved in sports, taking an AP course would be difficult. Two students commented on the availability of AP courses; one 9th grade student stated that they were not offered at their grade level and the other students stated that offerings were relatively new for their particular SLC. Nevertheless, most students indicated that they were either currently enrolled in at least one AP course or that they planned to enroll prior to graduation.

A smaller, but notable group of students (29%) did not believe that all students had equal access to AP courses nor did they believe that they were personally eligible to enroll. The fact that over one-third of the teachers disagreed that access was equitable may be somehow connected to the corresponding students’ perceptions that they were not eligible to enroll. Further investigation would be necessary to draw specific conclusions.

As described above, the encouragement of students to enroll in AP courses plays an important role in actual enrollment. According to participants in both the student and teacher focus groups, teachers and counselors have both been acknowledged as the primary promoters of such encouragement. Figure 3 shows the results of the survey responses pertaining to encouragement.

Figure 3. Survey Responses Pertaining to Encouragement for AP Enrollment.



As may be seen in the figure, students believed that teachers and counselors were relatively equal in their encouragement to enroll in AP courses. Not surprisingly, the teacher respondents were more positive than students about the encouragement offered by teachers and counselors. This was particularly evident in the levels of disagreement across the two respondent groups. Although not included in this graph, the parents also responded to the question of encouragement. Two-thirds of the parents (66%) believed that their students were encouraged to enroll in AP courses. Parents were not asked to differentiate between teacher and counselor encouragement.

The above results on students’ perceptions of AP eligibility and encouragement were analyzed on a school-wide basis. Variability in student perceptions emerged through the disaggregation of responses by SLC. Referring back to the school-wide results, we found that 69% of students believed they were eligible to enroll in AP courses, 61% were encouraged by their teachers, and 61% were encouraged by their counselors. While the overall pattern of greater perceived eligibility over encouragement remained, the range of responses by SLC demonstrated that perceived eligibility and encouragement varied. Using the highest and lowest percentages to illustrate the span, we found that perceived eligibility ranged from 98% (MERIT) to 58% (GLOBE, HERO, The Arts). In terms of teacher encouragement, the range was from 94% (MERIT) to 43% (HERO). Finally, perceived counselor encouragement ranged from 92% (MERIT) to 39% (GLOBE). Although it may not be surprising that MERIT was consistently at the top of the range given the goals and structure of the SLC, it may be of practical significance that students from other SLCs differed from MERIT in their responses by as much as 53%. Furthermore, if the grant’s goal is to increase AP opportunities for all students, then these findings indicate the need to emphasize AP encouragement across all SLCs.

Another factor that plays a role in AP participation is the awareness of course offerings and their perceptions of what participation entails. Student focus group responses indicated a general awareness of the types of courses that were available at their school. In addition, many students described AP courses in general as requiring time for “a lot” of reading, notes, practice tests, and in particular, homework. One student specifically described the “accelerated” nature of these courses. Three students spoke of optional AP study sessions and/or tutoring offered by their AP teachers. Table 26 below presents the survey responses corresponding to awareness of courses and availability.

Table 26.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Students are aware of the AP courses available at school.	Teachers	96	3%	14%	58%	19%	6%
I am aware of the AP courses available in my school.	Students	3180	5%	14%	52%	29%	---
The school should offer more AP courses.	Teachers	99	7%	38%	31%	14%	9%
My school should offer more AP courses.	Students	3074	6%	31%	45%	18%	---

As shown above, teachers (77%) and students (81%) were in general agreement that students were aware of the AP courses available at their school. There was more of a disparity across responses pertaining to whether or not the school should offer more AP courses. Equal proportions of teacher respondents (45%) agreed and disagreed that their school should offer more courses. It was unclear why this balance occurred. Teacher focus group responses provided little supporting information for either “side.” Some teachers did, however, speak of challenges that came with the AP program. For example, one teacher spoke of the challenge of aligning AP participation with the AVID curriculum and their particular SLC focus. Another teacher added that AP participation, particularly during senior year, resulted in a disconnect from their SLC. The teacher added that this may be due to a limited collaboration among AP and SLC teachers. One teacher spoke of the limited training of some newer AP teachers. Three teachers added the need for support; primarily “transition” support which would provide assistance for students who need additional academic support to be successful. On the other side, three teachers did positively acknowledge that the number of AP sections has increased. Student responses showed a similar variation with 63% in agreement for more AP course offerings and 37% in disagreement. There was no additional data to help explain any variation among student responses.

As described in the section introduction, college credits are only earned with a passing score on an AP exam. Survey respondents were asked to respond to whether students’ knew how to “sign up for the AP exam.” Table 27 presents these results. Just over one-half of the students (51%) agreed that they knew how to sign up. Teachers and parents were slightly more confident (67% and 60%, respectively).

Table 27.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Students know how to sign up for the AP exam.	Teachers	98	3%	14%	58%	9%	15%
I know how to sign up for the AP exam.	Students	3029	14%	35%	31%	20%	---
My child knows how to sign up for the AP exam.	Parents	1601	5%	18%	41%	19%	18% (DK)

In addition to signing up for the exam, focus group students were knowledgeable about how to pay for the exam. The students’ responses indicated an awareness of the exam fees as well as the process for obtaining fee waivers.

According to the LBUSD Research office, Lakewood High School offered 14 AP courses during the 2008-09 school year. There were 1,379 students enrolled in these courses, an increase of almost 44% from the previous year. In addition, there were 1,144 AP exams taken during the school year by 601 students, an increase of about 20% in test-takers.

Passing scores for granting college credits are typically determined by the post-secondary institution; however, the College Board has determined that a score of 3 or above is predictive of college success.⁸ Table 27a shows the number and percentage distribution of students and their AP exam scores. As shown in the table, 36% of the scores were at a 3 or above on their respective exams. This percentage was slightly lower than the 42% of AP scores from previous school year.

Table 27a. 2008-09 AP Exam Scores for Lakewood Students (N=1,144)

AP Exam Score	# Students	%
0	10	1%
1	328	29%
2	383	33%
3	233	20%
4	131	11%
5	59	5%
TOTAL	1,144	100%

The evaluation team was unable to acquire disaggregated results by AP content, relevant subgroup, or SLC for this report. The above numbers may only be considered in comparison to the 2007-08 student scores. Overall, although there was not an increase in the percentage of “passing” scores, there were increases in the number of students enrolled and the number of AP exams taken. Furthermore, Lakewood was able to add an additional AP course to its offerings.

⁸ College Board information available on their website <http://www.collegeboard.com>.

MILLIKAN HIGH SCHOOL

A. SLC Membership

During the 2008-09 academic year at Millikan High School, there were eight Small Learning Communities in operation, although one, KIUP, was in the process of phasing out.⁹ KIUP is being replaced by GREEN. Thus, as KIUP membership decreased, GREEN membership increased. Table 29 below illustrates the SLC membership for all of the survey respondents. As noted, approximately one percent of the students as well as the teacher/staff members did not know their assigned SLC while 2% of the parents could not identify their child’s SLC. As expected, the representation across groups for GREEN and KIUP was lower than the other SLCs given their respective phasing in and phasing out status. Similar to last year, STELLAR was the least represented by all three groups. Perhaps because many in this SLC were also ELD (English Language Development) students, they and their parents may not have felt comfortable responding to an English language survey or were unaware that a Spanish version was available.

Table 29. SLC Membership of all Millikan HS Survey Respondents

	Teachers/Staff	Students	Parents
COMPASS	13%	17%	9%
Global Tech	17%	20%	24%
GREEN	6%	5%	7%
KIUP	4%	7%	9%
MBA	10%	14%	7%
PEACE	17%	18%	17%
QUEST	16%	15%	24%
STELLAR	8%	2%	1%
Multiple SLCs	4%	---	---
Don’t Know	1%	<1%	2%
Not part of an SLC	6%	1%	1%
TOTAL	108	3025	415

Millikan teachers were asked to describe how they were assigned to their respective SLCs. The two most common methods were placement (44%) and recruitment (28%). Twenty-five percent reported that they self-selected into their SLC and 3% were assigned through “other” or multiple methods. Of the 18 students who participated in the focus groups, 12 chose their SLC, two were randomly assigned, two were enrolled in their second choice, and two did not specify details about their SLC placement.

B. SLC Development

Although not explicitly mentioned in the grant, SLC structures are intended to facilitate the implementation of the activities proposed as part of the grant goals. Given the nature of continuous reforms at LBUSD schools, the state of SLCs at Millikan High is also changing. It is critical, therefore, to first examine the state of development of SLCs, as they are the vehicles through which the grant goals will be met, before assessing the implementation of each of the four grant goals.

⁹ Millikan administrators reported seven SLCs as they considered KIUP/GREEN as one SLC.

As part of the focus group and interview process, participants were asked questions regarding the general state of SLC development at Millikan High. During these discussions, two central themes emerged: SLC culture and climate, and class structures. Although the conversations focused primarily on successes in those areas, there were also in-depth discussions on the challenges faced by administrators and teachers in the continuous development of SLCs. The following are the data findings broken down into three sections: SLC culture and climate, class structures and interventions, and challenges of SLC development.

SLC Culture and Climate

There was consensus among teachers/staff that there was a strong SLC culture on campus that has both students and teachers identifying with their SLCs. This belief was supported by survey responses to items pertaining to understanding SLC purpose, goals, and roles. As evident by the results in Table 30 below, all three respondent groups generally agreed that they understood the purpose and goals of their SLCs. Furthermore, 92% of the teachers who took the survey reported that they understood the overall purpose and goals for having SLCs.

Table 30.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
I understand the purpose and goals of my SLC.	Teachers/ Staff	108	---	4%	30%	64%	3%
	Students	3041	2%	9%	56%	33%	---
I understand the purpose and goals of my child’s SLC.	Parents	424	1%	9%	56%	26%	8% (DK)
The faculty and staff at this school understand the purpose and goals for SLCs.	Teachers/ Staff	107	---	8%	62%	30%	1%

Teachers/staff provided a variety of reasons that could explain the strong SLC culture and the above survey findings. They reported that they attended professional development sessions where the purposes and goals of SLCs were reinforced. There was also more team-building and, presumably as a result, more teacher buy-in. Furthermore, teachers also indicated that they could see more cohesion due to the common goals they shared and because SLC meetings led to good communication. Having the same conference periods free, even if for some SLCs it was just their grade level teams, and working on action plans as a team, helped foment the bond between colleagues. Co-workers were generally very supportive of each other. Moreover, the SLC grant allowed teachers to collaborate in the summer when horizontal planning and review of action plans could take place. Teachers also reported that there was more fluidity. In addition to these issues, those who teach mixed classes reported that there was a great sense of community and that “students seem to genuinely care about their SLC.” These teachers attributed this to fieldtrips which, in their opinion, helped build community. Counselors pointed out that more students were wearing their SLC t-shirts than before. As additional evidence that SLC awareness has improved, teachers of mixed classes pointed out that there has been an increase in application numbers and SLC enrollment.

Focus group students in all grade levels also described a very strong SLC culture on campus. They used words such as “family units,” “home,” and “big family” to describe SLCs. Students attributed the tight-

knit community feeling associated with SLCs to the fact that students were able to take core classes with their SLC peers throughout their time at Millikan. As one student put it, “you know other people from different academies but you are more close with the people in your own academy,” given the simple reality that students within an SLC spent more time together. Students indicated that in an SLC structure, they made “closer friends” and “teachers are more active because they don’t work with like the whole school, they just work with a smaller group.” In an SLC, teachers pushed students to achieve. Furthermore, they insisted that teachers tailored whatever students’ interests into the curriculum.

Students did admit, however, that the degree of interaction between SLC peers depended on the number of SLC activities made available. One student summed it up by saying that s/he thinks “it’s the activities that connect you and make your academy more like a family.” Apparently, not every student experienced the same strong peer connection. In fact, students indicated that the level of interaction among students across and within SLCs depended partly on the individuals themselves. Some SLCs have active clubs on campus in which students could take additional classes or discuss potential SLC projects. If a student was heavily involved in extracurricular activities, that student was more likely to befriend students outside his/her SLC. Similarly, students in the 9th and 10th grades may not have opportunities to interact with 11th and 12th graders in their SLC, unless there was an older sibling or they participated in extracurricular activities. The 9th and 10th grades students indicated that they could learn from older students in their SLCs if more opportunities for interactions were available.

The role counselors played in the SLC structure may also have contributed to the strengthening of the SLC culture on campus. Counselors were generally assigned to SLCs by grade, which made it easier to schedule and serve students. They stayed with their SLCs but migrated with their students to the proceeding grade levels. Speaking from their experiences recruiting at middle schools, counselors indicated that 8th graders and their parents selected Millikan High because of the personalization factor associated with the SLC programs. Student attrition at some SLCs has improved, which to counselors was evidence that student SLC placement has been more successful. Counselors also mentioned the very active participation of parent booster clubs.

According to students, SLC awareness began at the middle schools. Students reported that some general information about SLCs was provided to them in the 8th grade. Millikan counselors met with them at their middle schools and helped them select an SLC. Counselors confirmed that they did help recruit at middle schools. Teachers who have recruited at the middle schools also reported that “8th graders were really concerned about what SLC they should sign up for.” Despite efforts to properly place a student in the best fitting SLC, some students, nevertheless, switched SLCs at some point. Generally, however, students stayed in their SLC because it was difficult to switch and switching may mean starting all over. According to one student, “it’s very rare that you switch.”

Survey results supported the comments made in focus groups and interviews regarding staff engagement in (re)defining SLCs. Some survey items were aimed at investigating how all three respondent groups perceived the availability of opportunities to suggest changes to SLCs that would be heard and considered. These opportunities represent a form of support in that they provide members of each group with a voice, membership, and a potential role in SLC development. As shown in the response distribution in Table 31 below, 93% of the teacher respondents and 76% of the students were in general agreement that these opportunities were provided for them at their school. Approximately 75% of the teachers also agreed that students have such opportunities. Parents were asked to respond to a slightly different statement, one that addresses the opportunity to share thoughts/opinions on decisions specifically affecting their children. Although this item differs in scope from the other items, it still provides some indication of the support given to parents and by parents in the development of

SLCs. In general, 84% of the parents agreed that they can express themselves with regard to decisions affecting their children.

Table 31.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Faculty and staff at this school can suggest changes to the SLCs that are heard and considered.	Teachers/ Staff	105	1%	6%	55%	38%	3%
Students at this school can suggest changes to the SLCs that are heard and considered.	Students	3046	4%	20%	63%	13%	---
Parents can share their thoughts about decisions that affect their children.	Parents	423	1%	9%	57%	27%	5% (DK)
Students at this school can suggest changes to the SLCs that are heard and taken into consideration.	Teachers/ Staff	106	1%	19%	55%	20%	6%

The following items in Table 32 address the involvement of parents and community members in connection with SLC development. The item addresses the support Millikan provided to involve families and community members. Teachers (86%) and students (80%) generally agreed that the school supported this involvement. A quarter of parents, on the other hand, reported a “don’t know” response, while 57% did agree with the statement. It is possible that the inclusion of both families and community members in the same statement limited the parents’ responses.

Table 32.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
The school supports the involvement of families and community members in planning, reviewing, and improving SLC programs.	Teachers/ Staff	105	---	14%	50%	36%	---
	Students	3003	3%	17%	59%	21%	---
Families and people from the community help plan, review, or improve SLC programs.	Parents	419	3%	15%	45%	12%	25% (DK)

In the staff survey, respondents were asked to describe changes to the culture and climate of their school that could be attributed to SLCs. The specific question stated, “*Since the implementation of this grant (F2007), in what ways are SLCs changing the culture/ climate of this school?*” Sixty-one teachers responded to this question. The main categories that resulted from the analysis were: “Student-focused,” “Teacher/Staff-focused,” “Parent/Community-focused,” “Academic-focused,” and “School-focused.” The described changes varied by focus and level of positivity. Below is a list of the most common responses by focus.

Student-focused changes

- Sense of belonging/SLC pride
- School pride/spirit
- Safer/friendlier/student bond
- More focused/motivated students
- Less cohesiveness/divisiveness with Millikan High student body

Teacher/Staff –focused changes

- More teacher collaboration/involvement
- More divisiveness between staff

Parent/Community-focused changes

- More community involvement
- More parent communication

Academic-focused changes

- More focus on college/academics

School-focused changes

- SLC inequity/divisiveness

The above responses reflect varying teacher perspectives of the overall culture and climate of their school since the implementation of the SLC grant. As previously mentioned, there was general agreement that students felt a sense of belonging and teacher collaboration/involvement has improved. Despite reporting that there were more positive interactions among both students and staff, there were nevertheless some teachers who indicated that divisiveness existed within the student body and among staff. Another negative finding was a perceived divisiveness or inequity among SLCs. In the challenges to SLC section of this report, there is an in-depth discussion of the findings regarding the identified student and teacher divisiveness as well as the perceived stratified SLC culture. As illustrated by the list above, most changes were student-related.

Class Structures and Interventions

Teachers, counselors and students discussed their experiences in the classroom and the successes of various interventions. Teachers of pure classes indicated that they constantly worked on action plans every year to “build and add more rigor and structure to our SLC.” This past year, they introduced rigor to the courses taught at Millikan by working towards establishing more AP classes. Teachers/staff from one SLC were preparing Honors students for the AP exam, another teacher indicated that members of his/her SLC were revamping the SLC curriculum to require five APs, while a different SLC will require AP in 11th grade. As they discussed these actions, teachers recognized that they needed to address how to provide academic support to tutor students so they can meet those academic challenges.

Students, in particular, discussed the benefits of pure classes as well as some of the challenges. Students reported that SLC classes were generally pure in the 9th, 10th, and 11th grades. For the most part, it was the core courses that can achieve purity. Specialized courses, such as AP classes, were generally mixed. Interestingly, students acknowledged the difficulty in creating pure classes. One student stated:

It's also like people are on different levels of science, different levels of math, so it's kind of hard to find a pure class of the same Academy that are on the same level.

Despite the difficulty in achieving pure classes, it was certainly possible in the core classes in the 9th and 10th grades. Students who have been the only ones from a particular SLC in a class comprised primarily of students from a different SLC reported that they were not made to feel uncomfortable. One student stated that "that's the good thing about SLCs... [students] are always welcomed to different academies." At times, some students may not have even realized that other students in the class belonged to a different SLC. As one student shared:

It doesn't really matter what SLC you come from because I mean you are going to be learning the same thing. But, it kind of does throw you off. You know, you are not used to seeing other people from other SLCs, and you are like what is she or he doing in here.

Thus, engagement in classes with students from different SLCs did not appear to cause stress nor impose discomfort on students.

Teachers of pure classes described future plans and a number of successful SLC interventions. First, they indicated that tutoring services were organized by both SLC and department which, consequently, led to overlap and low student attendance. Therefore, this year teachers/staff have begun to brainstorm and plan on how to organize study halls to address these issues. Teachers also mentioned that although grant funds did not pay for all costs associated with fieldtrips, they did pay for substitutes. Another success mentioned by one SLC teacher was that parent conferences included the student and all four SLC teachers. Another SLC teacher indicated s/he would be giving up his/her conference period to teach a study skills class to struggling students in his/her SLC.

Teachers of mixed classes also discussed what they perceived as SLC successes. First, teachers reported that community outreach has improved. Teachers have "gone above and beyond their call of duty putting events together" to encourage community service. One such service, Beach Walk, has become an established multi-SLC activity. Secondly, teachers described the manner in which teachers of mixed classes were participating within the SLC structure. For example, the history department was trying to collaborate with teachers in all SLCs to do junior theses successfully in a mixed class format. Also, one teacher mentioned that a way to do an intercurricular project in a mixed class was to collaborate with another teacher and use his/her materials rather than having students work on one assignment for both classes. A final success mentioned by a teacher who teaches mixed classes was the fact that all SLCs have a capstone class (Elevate, Virtual Enterprise) where seniors produce a project.

On the staff survey, teachers were asked to describe the ways in which student achievement has improved since the implementation of this grant. A total of 58 teachers/staff responded to this request. Twelve of those who responded mentioned improved test scores, CAHSEE and AP in particular, and an increase in API as evidence that student achievement has improved. In addition, a boost in AP enrollment was mentioned by nine teachers/staff while seven mentioned improved academic skills. Although the question pertained specifically to student achievement, some survey respondents mentioned teacher successes, such as improved teacher practice, or SLC-focused benefits, like improved student/student interaction and a sense of belonging. Others reported student interventions, including tutoring and an enhanced delivery of student services. The most common teacher/staff response for this question was that either there were no improvements or that they did not know. Overall, it appeared that teachers were attributing some form of student achievement to the implementation of this grant.

Challenges of SLC Development

Teachers, counselors, and students were asked to describe the challenges to SLC development. The responses varied by group. For those teachers assigned to pure classes, the challenges pertained to raising awareness about the interventions currently available to students, funding for professional development, and building SLC identity. Those who teach mixed classes described challenges they faced with implementing intercurricular projects and in dealing with the master schedule. Counselors, on the other hand, reported SLC concerns regarding placement, SLC perception, competition among SLCs, and the master schedule.

Teachers of pure classes described all the interventions available to students but lamented that many students did not take advantage of them. In particular, teachers described all the tutoring opportunities available to students. Unfortunately, teachers recognized that the hours of operation for most of these tutoring programs overlapped, making it difficult for students to take advantage of all that was available. Also, most programs took place after school, which limited the participation of those students involved in sports and other extracurricular activities. Teachers concluded that they needed to raise awareness of the tutoring programs and, perhaps, better organize what was available. Counselors believe that teachers were already making tutoring interventions available to students.

Teachers of pure classes also expressed a concern regarding funding. They did not know if the new grant would cover funding for planning time in the summer. Teachers indicated that in the past the summer planning time had been instrumental in preparing them for the upcoming academic year. However, it was unclear whether funding would be available for Summer 2009. As they discussed this funding concern, they also mentioned that they were unsure where funding would come from to enhance their SLC communities. Because the conversation was somewhat ambiguous, it was unclear whether the discussion pertained to a present concern or anxiety over what will happen at end of the grant.

Teachers of mixed SLC classes also spoke extensively of the challenges of implementing intercurricular projects. These challenges manifested themselves in relation to both colleagues and students. Teachers were “left out” of the vertical team planning due to having mixed classes. These teachers could not collaborate with colleagues because most of the intercurricular projects were designed between the English and science courses, where most of the classes tended to be pure. Obstacles arose from the varying skill levels that students from different SLCs may bring into the classroom. SLC curricula focus on different skills, thus, some students may not have learned a certain skill or lesson in one class that may be required for an assignment connected to another class. Therefore, “pacing and reviewing” class material would become a challenge. As one teacher explained, those who have mixed classes “need to be careful to make sure that it feels like [all students] can contribute and they’re all equally valued, and that just because you’re the QUEST teacher doesn’t mean you’re not happy to have that Global Tech kid in your class.”

Although teachers spoke of these challenges of implementing intercurricular projects, they did not seem to express frustration with the situation. They simply explained in detail their SLC experiences. In addition, one teacher noted that students needed more computer classes to be better prepared in the area of their SLC focus. Students were also limited by other required courses they had to take while the SLC was limited by resources and the primarily outdated technology available. A challenge not discussed directly by teachers of mixed classes but observed during their participation in focus groups was an apparent uncertainty in their descriptions of their SLC’s requirements. Unlike counselors and

teachers of pure classes, those who teach mixed classes preceded their statements on SLC requirements with “I think.”

Counselors perceived slightly different challenges to SLC development. First, one counselor indicated that students were made to select an SLC, which was almost akin to selecting a major, at a very young age. As a result, some students did not make the right choices. Some ended up feeling stuck in their SLCs while others attempt to switch. There was a protocol in place for switching SLCs that required a written request from the student and consultation with, and written permission from, counselors, parents, and teachers. Although it was difficult to switch, it could be done. However, the percentage of students who change SLC has decreased every year. The protocol was in place to ensure the request to switch was sincere and substantive. The second issue discussed pertained to negative perceptions students have of certain SLCs; STELLAR, in particular. One counselor indicated that some SLCs had a lot to offer and some did not. A third issue addressed the conversations that have taken place with teachers accused of “stealing” students from other SLCs. A fourth issue dealt with the master schedule and the need to create it so that a majority of SLC students were in one class. Classes cannot be too large or too small because they can lead to problems. In addition, all of the numerous SLC requirements made scheduling problematic. The last concern mentioned pertained to STELLAR, an SLC designed to transition students to another SLC once they learn English. However, students in the new SLC may have already developed bonds so STELLAR students may feel “left out.”

Although students reported that there was no competition between SLCs, they acknowledged that there were subtle stereotypes. The 9th and 10th graders insisted that there was no hierarchy when it came to SLCs. SLCs, according to this group, were just different and served students with diverse interests. There were mild stereotypes but, as one student shared, “it’s like people say things but no one really means it.” The 11th and 12th graders, on the other hand, pointed out that students of one particular SLC had many privileges that were not offered to students in other SLCs. One student indicated that students in that SLC got “the most attention, whether it is money wise, activities, or attention.” An example of such privileges was the fact that students in that SLC had free access to the school bus while the rest of the student body was forced to take and pay for public transportation. Students from that privileged SLC were perceived as the smartest. Thus, there was a perceived hierarchy by the older students. One student summed it up by saying that “there is kind of a scale; nobody really likes to admit it.” Another student went further by asserting that “the counselors are not going to admit it.” As evidence of this scale or hierarchy, students described the difficult process to switch SLCs, especially if switching to a “lower” SLC. However, according to these students, it was easier to switch from a “lower” SLC to a “higher” SLC. One student pointed out an extreme example in which a student wanted to transfer out of the highest ranking SLC but ended up dropping out of high school due to the inability to make that SLC switch.

To address some of these challenges, teacher/staff were asked, “*What additional resources do you feel you will need to meet the goals of the SLC grant?*” Fifty-five teachers responded to this question. The most common responses by theme are summarized below.

Teacher / Staff –focused resources

- Planning/collaboration time
- Professional development/training
- Access to resources (books, articles, curriculum)

School-focused resources

- Technology hardware
- College aides in classroom/tutoring

College/Career-focused resources

- Career center (more support)
- College finance awareness
- Support for AP program

Scheduling resources

- More pure classes
- Smaller classes (for IEP students and others)

Other resource

- Field trips
- Parent support
- Support/study hall for at-risk students
- Don't know/None

Although teachers reported that they had more collaboration time than in previous years, they, nevertheless, felt they needed more in order to meet the requirements of the grant. They also recognized they needed more professional development. Having small and pure classes, as well as the assistance of tutors, were also critical needs for teachers. Furthermore, they were limited in the necessary resources to raise college and career awareness. These were all necessities that teachers believed were essential in order to meet the goals proposed in the grant.

To summarize, teachers, students, and counselors reported that there was a strong SLC culture on campus. Teachers indicated that there have been improvements in the understanding of SLCs, personalization, and academic rigor. According to teachers and counselors, increased test scores has served as evidence that SLCs were leading to improved student achievement. Students reported enjoying their SLCs, and for the most part, feeling they were adequately placed. Challenges to SLC development, however, persisted. There was consensus among teachers and administrators that the master schedule continued to pose challenges in generating pure classes. Teachers expressed concern about the need to raise awareness about the interventions currently available to students. They also acknowledged their anxiety with funding for continuous professional development and SLC identity-building activities. Those who teach mixed classes relayed their awkward situation dealing with intercurricular projects and the master schedule. Counselors discussed challenges with placement, SLC perception and competition, and the master schedule. There was a lengthy discussion by students regarding the hierarchical SLC structure they detected at their school. It is important to recognize and understand these successes and challenges as they illustrate the state of development of SLCs at Millikan High. Because this state of development provides the context under which the grant goals are being implemented, it is critical to review it continuously when investigating if and how the grant goals are being met.

C. Overall Grant Awareness

The individuals most familiar with details of the grant were the two primary administrators (principal and SLC coordinator). Both were very familiar with the grant goals and indicated that they adhered primarily to the sections of management action plan that were aligned with other district and school-wide initiatives. Some of the activities of other grants implemented at the school also worked towards meeting the SLC grant's goals despite not being listed in the management action plan. The administrators each discussed the status of each goal and highlighted the successes and challenges of each. The status of the four goals is presented below:

- *Goal 1 – Through a comprehensive guidance and academic advising program for students and their parents, prepare all students to succeed in postsecondary education and careers.* According to the administrators, the school has done well in terms of meeting the activities stated under this goal. During back-to-school night, open house, and freshmen orientation, a staff member trained parents who wanted to get instructed on how to use SchoolLoop, the school's online communication website. One administrator also mentioned that there was extensive engagement in middle school outreach and opportunities for 8th graders to shadow high school students. The staff was very committed to the public relations piece so there were school-wide newsletters highlighting SLC postsecondary and career information. Because the "professional development component is critical," there have been many conferences and workshops that staff have attended. However, the administrators admitted that there were some challenges. One indicated that he would like to do better in terms of further developing the SLC parent booster clubs. Some SLCs have "boosters extraordinaire" while others need assistance. Another challenge was increasing the connections to faith and community-based organizations. Although partnerships did exist with some nonprofits, postsecondary institutions, and large companies, an administrator indicated that they continued to work on expanding beyond those connections.
- *Goal 2 – Provide intensive interventions in reading/ language arts and math skills.* Administrators mentioned that many student interventions existed but "there is so many interventions out there, you get lost." There was an attempt to organize all that was available so that students and parents had access to this crucial information. Both administrators understood this goal to apply directly to students. However, with the exception of providing computer support to students, the activities listed under Goal 2 pertained to counselor and teacher actions or professional development. One administrator described successful tutoring programs aligned with other initiatives that have also served to indirectly meet this goal. Another program that indirectly contributed to this goal provided intensive counseling to struggling students.
- *Goal 3 – Enroll and support students in a coherent sequence of rigorous English, math and science courses to succeed in postsecondary education and/ or careers.* According to one administrator, each SLC had a map of the coherent sequence of rigorous courses that students must follow. However, some SLCs found it difficult to put into practice what had been designed on paper.
- *Goal 4 – Increase opportunities for students to earn postsecondary credit through AP courses.* Administrators spoke of a strengthened AP program that continued to grow. There was an effort underway to increase the number of AP courses offered and the number of AP tests taken at Millikan, from 850 in 2007-08 to 1,000 in 2008-09. The increase in AP courses has been in both the subject matter offered and the number of sessions of a particular AP course. Although some fee waivers were offered to students, there was concern that the current economy may prevent

students from paying to take the exam. There has been an effort to raise awareness about AP courses and exams.

The grant's management action plan has been aligned with the other district-wide and school-wide initiatives. As a result, it became difficult for teachers and staff to distinguish between them. One teacher described the situation in the following manner:

I think we have looked at those a lot [grant goals]. I mean they're tied to the WASC goals, and student achievement, and career focus, and providing smaller communities, and making the students feel more at home here at Millikan. I know those aren't the exact goals, but it's sort of the overall goals. The bottom line being, again, improve student achievement."

Teachers and counselors acknowledged that they had a general awareness of the grant but could not provide details and did not seem to think it necessary. Furthermore, although not explicitly stated, some teachers, counselors, and administrators credited the grant for allowing SLCs to further develop their identity, a goal they seemed to perceive as part of the grant. Because SLC development is continuous, one teacher indicated that she "didn't even know when the first one ended and when the second one started." One administrator explained that as SLCs work towards achieving the goals set forth in the grant, they consequently strengthened SLCs. They seemed to go hand-in-hand. However, administrators were clear that the purpose of the SLC initiative was to achieve the four goals proposed in the grant. Teachers and counselors did mention activities in which they participated that did work towards meeting the grant goals but they did not necessarily link them directly to the grant. Because some initiatives overlapped, it was difficult for teachers and counselors to distinguish which activity was connected to which reform.

D. Goal #1: Prepare all students for success in postsecondary education and careers without the need for remediation.

The goal of preparing students for success in postsecondary education and careers is very broad and encompasses school-wide as well as SLC-specific efforts. The majority of the activities under this goal are geared toward postsecondary success and do not directly emphasize the objective of preparing students "without the need for remediation." Nevertheless, two major areas emerged through the data that supported achievement of this goal: student expectations and post-secondary knowledge, support, and preparedness. Under these major themes, survey results associated with academic support and remediation are also addressed. It is important to note that while remediation is not specifically addressed here, efforts such as tutoring are discussed under subsequent goals.

Goal-Related Activities

Several activities are listed under Goal #1 in the grant's action plan. These activities are as follows:

- Bi-Annual Saturday Report Card Parent Meetings
- College Preparedness Workshops
- Bi-Annual Parent Institutes
- Counselor Training - Effective Strategies for Working with SLCs
- Develop/Sustain SLC Parent Booster Clubs
- Development, Training, and Implementation of Digital Individualized Learning Plans
- Training and Use of School Loop Program

- Training and Use of Tele-Parent Program
- Middle School Outreach Regarding SLC Pathways
- School-wide Newsletter Highlighting SLC, Postsecondary, and Career Information
- Increased Connections to Faith and Community-Based Organizations and Businesses

Data pertaining to a portion of the above activities was generated through interviews, focus groups, and survey items. Not all of the above activities could be addressed through the data collection efforts. Reasons primarily included time limitations for interviews/focus groups and generalized descriptions by respondents. Furthermore, absence of specific activities does not necessarily indicate that they did not occur; rather, it may be that since they were not specifically part of the interview, respondents may not have discussed them.

- 59% (of 110) of the staff survey respondents reported participation in Bi-Annual Saturday Report Card Parent Meetings. One administrator stated that parents were recently contacted to pick up report cards and talk to teachers. Furthermore, report cards would continue to be mailed this year but not in the next school year.
- 11% (of 110) of the staff reported that they participated in College Preparedness Workshops. However, such workshops or similar activities may have been geared toward the students. Various college preparedness activities did take place (e.g. field trips, AVID activities) and are discussed more fully in the subsequent section “Post-secondary Support, Knowledge, and Preparedness.”
- 4% (of 110) of the staff reported that they participated in Bi-Annual Parent Institutes. There was no other data to support whether or not these institutes were implemented. However, survey responses indicated that 87% (of 430) of the parents generally agreed that “the school uses many ways to keep parents informed.” (See bullet on Tele-Parent Program below). Furthermore, 85% (of 107) of the staff and 53% (of 2986) of the students agreed that teachers had regular contact with the parents to inform them of their children’s progress.
- There was little to no data collected which specifically addressed Counselor Training - Effective Strategies for Working with SLCs.
- 22% (of 110) of the staff reported that they engaged in developing/sustaining SLC Parent Booster Clubs. One administrator discussed the need for “better boosters.” Some SLCs were described as being “amazing in their booster organizations” while others needed “a lot of help.”
- 7% (of 110) of the staff reported that they personally developed Digital Individualized Learning Plans; however, no staff respondents participated in training for Digital Individualized Learning Plans. There was little to no additional data on this activity.
- 52% (of 110) of the staff reported that they participated in training and use of School Loop Program. One administrator shared that School Loop was “happening.” This use was further described as “everybody’s trying to let somebody know something.” Two students also spoke of the use of School Loop by teachers. They stated that when students were absent, teachers posted notes and assignments and students were expected to fulfill their classwork and homework obligations.

- 46% (of 110) of the staff reported that they participated in Training and Use of Tele-Parent Program. One administrator explained that this program had just started this year. It was used frequently and whenever there was an issue. Parents were able to receive messages from both teachers and administrators through this program.
- 21% (of 110) of the staff reported that they participated in Middle School Outreach Regarding SLC Pathways. One administrator spoke of the need to refine their efforts in this area. Some efforts already implemented included student shadowing, orientations, parent visits, and a recruitment night in December.
- School-wide Newsletter Highlighting SLC, Postsecondary, and Career Information – One administrator spoke positively of the “PR” that administrators have communicated. A “Happy Friday Report” that was distributed to all staff contained information about “what is going on” in the different SLCs. A parent newsletter created by the principal was delayed due to issues connected to School Loop. Also mentioned was a quarterly newsletter, or “rambler,” about all the SLCs. It was added that SLCs did their own postings on occasion.
- 13% (of 110) of the staff reported that they participated in Increased Connections to Faith and Community-Based Organizations and Businesses. One administrator described activities that were underway. Relationships with Goodwill, California Community for Equality and Justice, Verizon, UPS, and at least two local universities were mentioned. One teacher described how their SLC connected with the Surfrider Foundation to do some work on water purity levels. Another teacher described a statewide Virtual Enterprise Fair, hosted by Millikan, which allowed students to compete and exhibit salesmanship. Judges came from business community such as UPS and Port of Long Beach.

In addition to the list above, administrators, counselors, and teachers spoke of college field trips, middle school exposure to A-G, counseling websites, career research, and other career-related activities that students were engaged in that align to this goal. Relevant activities will be discussed more fully in the subsequent section “Post-secondary Support, Knowledge, and Preparedness.”

Expectations of Students

Research has shown that establishing high expectations for students leads to high academic achievement (NCREL, 2004).¹⁰ As shown in Table 33, 86% of the staff survey respondents generally agreed with the statement, “Teachers have high expectations for all students.” Similarly, 84% of the student and 86% of the parents also believed that teachers held high expectations for all students.

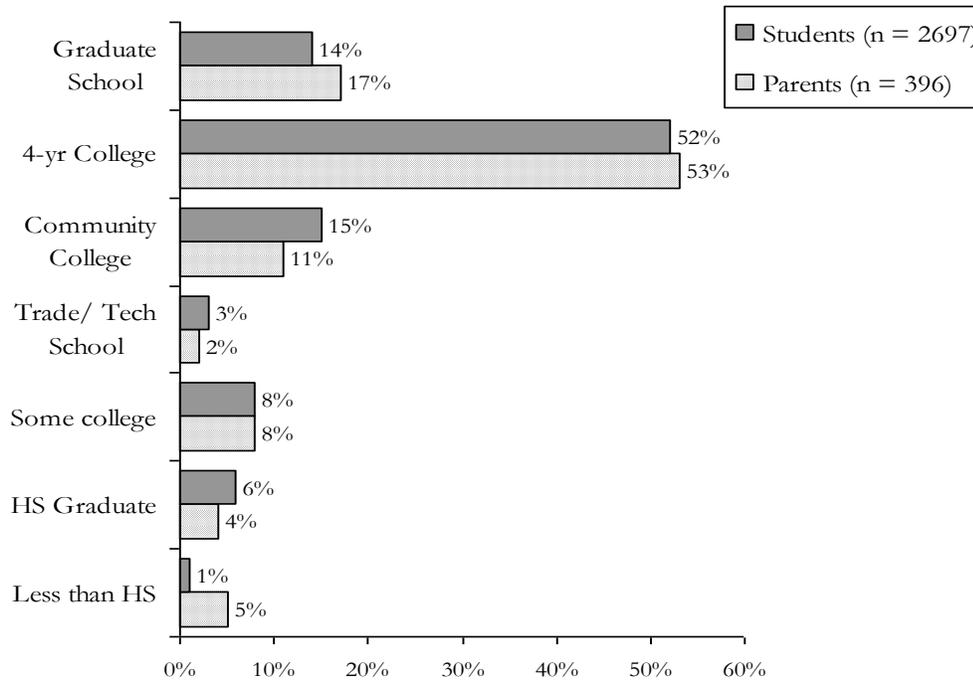
Table 33.

	N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	
Teachers have high expectations for all students.	Staff	109	2%	11%	52%	34%	1%
	Students	3022	2%	14%	51%	33%	---
	Parents	430	1%	8%	56%	30%	5% (DK)

¹⁰ North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (2004). High Expectations. Available online: <http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/students/atrisk/at6lk11.htm>. Retrieved July 2009.

The potential for post-secondary educational attainment is also related to the expectations of students at Millikan High School. Students and parents were asked to name the highest level education that they believed students would attain. Figure 4 on the following page shows the response distributions for both groups. For the most part, we can see that the parents and the students were very similar in their responses. There were very minor disparities between the groups' responses, the largest disparity being 4%. Interestingly, 5% of the parents (about 20 parents) believed that their children would not complete high school.

Figure 4. Perceptions of Millikan Students' Highest Level of Education



Staff survey respondents were asked a similar version of this question with a different response structure. Furthermore, they were asked to indicate what percentage of their students they believed would achieve each potential educational level. It was intended that each educational option would stand alone; however, analyses of the data revealed the likelihood of response overlap and therefore should be interpreted with caution. On average, respondents believed that about 35% of the students would graduate from high school; at least 22% of the students would complete some college; and 11% of the students would attend a trade/technical school. In addition, 21% of students would attend a community college or a 4-year college and 7% would attend graduate school. Comparison of these responses to the student/parent responses was difficult due to the dissimilarity in item structure. Nonetheless, it was apparent that there was an expectation among the staff that students would pursue post-secondary opportunities.

Post-secondary Support, Knowledge, and Preparedness

The results in this section specifically address the support, knowledge, and preparation necessary for post-secondary success. The first series of survey items are about the staff-student communication that would support students in their understanding of the application and financial requirements of post-secondary education. As shown in Table 34, the vast majority of teachers/staff (96%) responded that they spoke with their students about how to get into college. On the other hand, students were somewhat split in their levels of agreement about whether or not they spoke to their teachers about getting into college, 59% generally agreed while 42% generally disagreed. In considering the disparity in responses between staff and students, it may be important to note that these items were written with the respondent in the active role. In other words, had the student item been written as “Teachers talk to me about how to get into college,” there may have been less of a disparity. It is highly possible that the students were considering their own active role in engaging teachers in these conversations and less about whether or not these conversations took place at all. With regard to paying for college, 73% of the staff generally agreed that students spoke to teachers and/or counselors, while only 43% of the students were likely to agree. As expected, students at higher grade levels were more likely to agree than their younger counterparts. Finally, although close to 20% of the parents responded that they did not know whether these communications occurred, they were more likely to agree than disagree that their children communicated with teachers about getting into college (64%) and paying for college (51%).

Table 34.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
I talk with my students about how to get into college.	Staff	107	---	2%	40%	56%	2%
I talk to my teacher about how to get into college.	Students	3033	7%	35%	44%	15%	---
My child talks to his/her teacher about how to get into college.	Parents	428	5%	19%	47%	17%	14% (DK)
Students talk to teachers and/or counselors about how to pay for college.	Staff	106	1%	17%	53%	20%	9%
I talk to my teacher or counselor about how to pay for college.	Students	3028	9%	48%	33%	10%	---
My child talks to his/her teacher or counselor about how to pay for college.	Parents	426	5%	26%	39%	12%	19% (DK)

Providing students with post-secondary support was evident through the emphases on college preparedness. Several teachers from the focus group interviews spoke of how much of the curriculum was based on UC requirements and recommendations. For example, one teacher shared that his/her SLC was focusing on English/Language Arts as the groundwork for preparing students for college. This teacher further explained that universities in the UC system were concerned that students were not passing the writing placement exams. Therefore, “everything we do is aimed toward that UC curriculum.” Another teacher shared that within the SLC, the curriculum had been “revamped” to meet UC requirements. Also mentioned was the EAP (Early Assessment Program) for the CSU schools. This program assesses students on math and English skills as well as allowing students to demonstrate college level proficiency. Overall, it was clear that college preparedness was a school-wide focus. As one teacher stated, “College preparedness starts in 9th grade and we build on it thorough the standards and through team planning.”

AVID and Pathways are two programs that Millikan students also engaged in toward college preparedness. These programs were implemented school-wide and not SLC-specific. As explained by a few teachers, AVID targeted “underrepresented students” that focused on college-ready skills (e.g. note-taking, organization). The majority of students in focus groups attributed their post-secondary knowledge and preparation to their participation in AVID. Pathways is a separate course sequence, funded by another grant, which takes 11th grade students through the application process (including essay writing). The goal was for students to have a collection of sample application essays and research into their schools of interest.

Post-secondary support was also evident in helping students to research and prepare for careers as well as college. One counselor spoke of using Millikan’s career center to give presentations on writing resumes, getting recommendation letters, and completing applications. Teachers also described similar efforts. One teacher spoke of a professional phone interview activity in which students called and spoke with successful professionals in various fields. This activity allowed students to better understand certain professions and the requirements to “get there.” Another teacher spoke of a program called “road trip nation” which also exposed students to various careers. A few counselors added that they traveled to 9th and 11th grade classrooms to instruct students on career models and other post-secondary options. Vocational careers were also presented as one counselor stated, “Not everyone is going to UCLA.”

According to one administrator, this grant allowed each SLC to take students on college field trips tied to SLC goals and/or themes. One teacher described a field trip to San Diego schools within his/her SLC. Field trips were also part of the AVID program. For example, 9th grade students went on three field trips through AVID: a CSU, a UC, and a private university/college. Students were able to understand the differences, talk to “typical” students, and learn about the requirements for each. Staff and student survey respondents were also asked about field trips and guest speakers. As may be expected, all of the following student responses increased in percentage with increasing grade levels.

- 39% (of 110) of the staff indicated that “at least one speaker visited my classroom to talk to students about careers.” 73% (of 3007) of the students agreed with this statement.
- 35% (of 110) of the staff indicated that “at least one speaker visited my classroom to talk to students about college/university.” 77% (of 3004) of the students agreed with this statement.
- 16% (of 110) of the staff reported “I have taken my students on at least one trip to visit a college/university.” 44% (of 3004) of the students agreed that they had taken at least one trip to a college/university.
- 23% (of 110) of the staff reported “I have taken my students on at least one trip somewhere to explore careers.” 35% (of 3003) of the students agreed that they had taken at least one trip to explore careers.

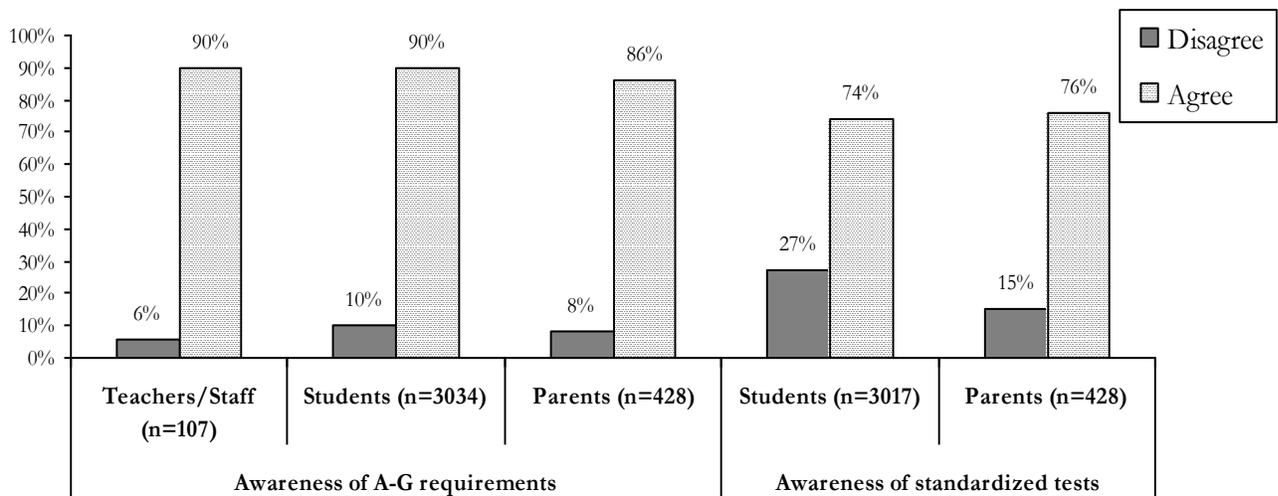
Student focus group respondents were asked how their teachers and counselors helped prepare them for college. Other than what has already been described, various students explained that many teachers spoke with them about their own personal college experiences and backgrounds. According to students, many teachers also geared lessons to include skills that would prepare them for college-level work. Counselors spoke to them more about credits, required courses, and prerequisites for various

majors and career fields. One student spoke of a teacher from the career center as being particularly helpful for accessing information regarding essays, scholarships, and other financial information. There were at least three upper grade students who stated that the counselors were not as available to them as in the lower grades.

State universities in California, whether in the UC or the CSU systems, have specific course requirements (A-G requirements) that students must complete prior to admission. In addition, successful completion of one or more standardized tests is required. These test requirements are not limited to state universities and may also be used for placement into particular majors and programs. Figure 2 contains the results of the two items that address students' knowledge of these two critical requirements for application and admission into universities. As the figure shows, close to 90% of all three respondent groups agreed that students were aware of the A-G requirements. In general, teacher and counselors acknowledged the school-wide emphasis on meeting the A-G requirements. One counselor stated that this emphasis began with the programming of incoming 9th graders.

Figure 5 also shows that similar proportions of students (74%) and parents (76%) agreed that students were aware of what standardized tests were required. These proportions were lower in comparison to the first item. Disaggregating student responses by grade level, it was clear that student awareness of standardized tests was a function of grade level. The reported awareness of students in 9th and 10th grades ranged from 64% to 75%, whereas 11th and 12th grade students reported awareness ranged from 79% to 81%.

Figure 5. Millikan Students' Awareness of Post-secondary Requirements



Survey respondents were asked about students' preparation for post-secondary success in two ways: subsequent to high school graduation and overall. It is implied, in this first item in Table 35 below, that time and engagement in high school has provided the necessary preparation for either a post-secondary education or a career. Of all three respondent groups, students and parents were the most confident in this preparation (89% and 87%, respectively). Staff members were also generally confident albeit to a lesser degree (72%). Reasons for this 15% disparity between the respondents were undetermined.

Table 35.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
By the time students graduate from this school, they will be prepared to succeed at the college or career of their choice.	Staff	105	2%	23%	57%	15%	3%
By the time I graduate from this school, I will be prepared to succeed at the college or career of my choice	Students	3023	2%	9%	53%	36%	---
By the time my child graduates from this school, s/he will be prepared to succeed at the college or career of his/her choice.	Parents	425	2%	8%	55%	32%	4% (DK)

The items in Table 36 address the students' and parents' perceptions of their ability to pay for a post-secondary education from various sources. In general, students were generally more confident (75%) that they could afford attendance at a 4-year institution. A smaller proportion of parents (65%) were as confident. A small portion of the parents reported that they did not know at the time of survey completion (11%). It is possible that although parents have a great awareness of the family resources, they may not be as aware of scholarship and financial aid opportunities. Conversely, students may not be aware of the actual status of the family resources and therefore may be more confident in that particular source of income than the parents.

Table 36.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
I think I can afford to attend a public, 4-year college using financial aid, scholarships, or my family's resources.	Students	3004	5%	19%	53%	22%	---
I think I can pay to send my child to a public, 4-year college with my income, financial aid, or scholarships.	Parents	427	7%	18%	48%	17%	11% (DK)

Support and Remediation

The following survey items address academic support. As described earlier, the portion of the goal that specifies support without the need for remediation was not evaluable since both the activities listed under this goal and the data collected was not sufficient to draw valid conclusions. The items presented in Table 37 below give some indication as to the academic support given to and perceived by the students and may serve as an indirect indicator of this portion of the goal.

Table 37.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
--	--	---	-------------------	----------	-------	----------------	-----

The administration, teachers, and staff at this school work together to assist students who may be at risk of failing.	Staff	107	1%	5%	62%	33%	---
	Students	2960	5%	15%	57%	23%	---
	Parents	428	2%	10%	55%	24%	9% (DK)
I talk with other teachers about students who might be struggling academically.	Staff	108	---	5%	46%	46%	3%
I feel supported by my teachers in my academic performance in class.	Students	3054	3%	14%	56%	27%	---
My child feels supported by his/her teachers in his/her academic performance in class.	Parents	424	1%	13%	59%	19%	8% (DK)

The first item addresses a school-wide effort at supporting students deemed at risk of failing. As shown, the vast majority of the staff (95%) agreed that all work together to provide this support. Students and parents also agreed, although to a slightly lesser extent (80% and 79%, respectively). Furthermore, 92% of the staff agreed that they personally talked with other teachers regarding struggling students. Finally, 83% of the students agreed that they received academic support from their classroom teachers. Parents also agreed (78%) that their children received this support.

E. Goal #2: Provide intensive interventions in reading/language arts and math skills.

Millikan’s principal described the goals for intervention as a “top to bottom” endeavor. The objective was for all students to have access to support and preventative measures that are academic, emotional, and social. Intervention was an area that has received attention since the beginning of the grant. The principal added that a primary goal was to create a “central clearing house” in which everyone (staff, students, and parents) would have access to all of the intervention support provided at Millikan. In addition to academic interventions, one administrator spoke of a family services program that was geared toward counseling students with their emotional needs. Clearly, Millikan was dedicated to providing well-rounded intervention and support.

Goal-Related Activities

Several activities are listed under goal #2 in the grant’s action plan.

- School-wide Data Analysis on Literacy and Numeracy Needs
- Develop School-wide Literacy and Numeracy Strategies Based Data Analysis
- Implement School-wide Literacy Strategies
- Implement School-wide Numeracy Strategies
- Math Department Lesson Study
- Support Language!, Literacy Workshop, and Stretch Algebra AB/CD Classes with College Aides
- Carnegie Lab Training and Computer Support

Data pertaining to a portion of the above activities was generated through interviews, focus groups, and survey items. Not all of the above activities could be addressed through the data collection efforts. Reasons primarily included time limitations for interviews/focus groups and generalized descriptions by respondents.

- School-wide Data Analysis on Literacy and Numeracy Needs/Develop School-wide Literacy and Numeracy Strategies Based Data Analysis – Teachers and counselors within focus groups spoke about various ways in which data was used to address student literacy and numeracy needs. Standardized test scores (e.g. STAR, CAHSEE, AP) were disaggregated and analyzed by both grade level and department level. “Accountability Reports,” which list diagnostic and mid-year data from various assessments have been used by the English department to plan curriculum and develop strategies for students in need. Counselors also added that their meetings were “data-driven”; data was brought in by lead teachers and analyzed.
- 76% (of 110) of the staff reported that they implemented literacy strategies.
- 43% (of 110) of the staff reported that they implemented numeracy strategies.
- There was no data collected to support the implementation of a Math Department Lesson Study.
- 72% (of 103) of the staff generally agreed that the school has employed the assistance of college aides to improve literacy and/or numeracy achievement; however, only 16% of the staff reported that a college aide was assigned to their classroom. A more comprehensive discussion of college aides is presented in the sections below.
- There was no data collected to support the implementation of Carnegie Lab Training. However 5 teachers did indicate participation in some type of computer/technology training.

Other intervention-related activities described by both administrators and staff that are not explicitly listed in the grant’s action plans included the use of School Loop and LROIX to identify students in need, a new CAHSEE lab for teachers to assist students at various levels, and intervention reading classes using research-based programs that target students with low reading levels.

Tutoring emerged as a predominant intervention effort that Millikan has engaged in during the school year. Tutoring is not listed under this goal as an intervention activity; rather, it was written in the grant under Goal #3. However, the majority of the data that were collected on tutoring emerged as part of the school’s intervention efforts and therefore is discussed under this goal.

Tutoring

Tutoring and related efforts at Millikan took place for various subjects and at different times. The following is a list of tutoring activities, both general and SLC-specific, mentioned within the teacher focus groups:

- After-school tutoring in all subjects (library)
- Algebra tutoring (peer tutoring and teacher-guided)

- Peer tutoring – older students help younger students
- Math Department – teachers scheduled for 2-3 hours, tutor before lunch or after school
- SLC teachers post tutoring schedules for students and parents
- Informal mentoring for top 10 program (10 students at lowest levels per grade)
- Teachers tutoring in classrooms before, during, and after school
- SLC study halls
- One-on-one tutoring for CAHSEE with seniors
- CAHSEE study lab (various grade levels)

Teachers and counselors also spoke of challenges to tutoring and related efforts. Several teachers shared that attendance was an issue due to its generally voluntary structure, after-school location and transportation, and extra-curricular activities. Another challenge described was in making sure that the parents and students were aware of the offerings. One teacher explained scheduling issues that arose because many teachers held the same tutoring hours and students had to make choices on which tutoring to receive. Another teacher added that since all 9th grade teachers had the same 7th period conference, it posed a problem for tutoring. Suggestions were offered to take time to structure tutoring times for the benefit of the students. Although teachers acknowledged that many teachers were willing to tutor students who were not in their regular classes, other challenges arose. For example, one science teacher explained that when his/her students went to other teachers for help, they weren't always aware or knowledgeable of the content. Nevertheless, tutoring appeared to be an ongoing intervention at Millikan.

Focus group students also spoke of tutoring in its many forms. They expressed awareness that their own teachers as well as others were available to them when they needed help. Two students also spoke of summer school as an opportunity to catch up and move forward. A few students also expressed the awareness that students did not have to be referred for tutoring; rather, it was available to anyone who wanted it. Three students specifically stated that tutoring made a difference to them in their personal experiences. Upper grade students described tutoring as something that one had to seek out based on their own initiative. As one student stated, "Everything comes down to you."

Staff, students, and parents responded to several survey items which addressed tutoring and other academic help. The first series of items pertained to the tutoring efforts provided by the school in both reading/language arts and mathematics. As shown in Table 38 below, staff was in general agreement that Millikan provided additional tutoring in reading/language arts (85%) and math (99%). Students also agreed about additional tutoring, albeit to a lesser extent than the staff (75% and 76% for reading and math, respectively). It is possible that students had different perceptions of the survey item that included the phrase "outside the school day." Data on tutoring showed that these activities took place both during and after school and therefore, some students may have considered only after school tutoring as falling outside the school day. Responses to the parent survey showed that 79% generally agreed that the school offered reading or math to students who need it. A smaller proportion of parents (55%) agreed that it occurred outside of the classroom. This lower proportion may also be attributed to inconsistent interpretation of the phrase "outside of the classroom."

Table 38.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
For students who need it, the school provides additional tutoring in reading/language arts.	Staff	108	1%	2%	32%	62%	3%
For those who need it, the school gives them more tutoring in reading/language arts outside the school day.	Students	3022	4%	21%	58%	17%	---
For students who need it, the school provides additional tutoring in math.	Staff	109	---	1%	33%	66%	---
For those who need it, the school gives them more tutoring in math outside the school day.	Students	2996	4%	20%	57%	19%	---
The school provides more academic tutoring in reading or math for those who need it.	Parents	429	2%	9%	54%	25%	11% (DK)
My child got more academic help (like tutoring) in reading or math outside his/her class.	Parents	421	4%	30%	41%	11%	13% (DK)

Two-thirds of the students disagreed that they received more help in reading (66%) and math (61%) through tutoring or by having more than one class in that subject per semester (see Table 39 below). Given that students positively reported on the availability of tutoring, it was unclear whether students were responding to the tutoring portion of the item or the additional class.

Table 39.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
I got more help in reading/language arts through tutoring or by having more than one English class per semester.	Students	2913	19%	47%	28%	7%	---
I got more academic help in math through tutoring or by having more than one math class per semester.	Students	3029	15%	46%	31%	8%	---

Finally, all three groups responded to the tutoring support provided by the students' individual teachers. All respondents similarly agreed that the staff was personally involved in tutoring students – staff (77%), students' (70%), and parents (71%). (See Table 40 on following page).

Table 40.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
I am involved in tutoring students who need additional academic support.	Staff	105	---	9%	37%	40%	14%
My teachers tutor me when I need more academic support.	Students	3012	5%	26%	52%	18%	---
My child's teachers tutor him/her when s/he needs some additional academic support.	Parents	425	3%	16%	53%	18%	9% (DK)

College Aides

As listed in the above section on Goal #2 activities, Millikan has employed college aides to provide support to students in need.¹¹ During interviews and focus groups, several respondents spoke of college aides, where they were placed, and to some extent, their responsibilities:

- CAHSEE Study lab – providing one-on-one support to students for the CAHSEE exam.
- One teacher reported that a college aide in English class would help considerably with writing and prepare them for college – since this was a big issue. Another teacher mentioned that they had one in the past.
- Intervention Reading Classes
- AVID program – assisted students with college preparatory activities
- SLC Study halls

College aides have indeed been used as an intervention strategy to support teachers and 72% of the staff survey respondents believed that Millikan employed the assistance of college aides to improve literacy and/or numeracy achievement. However, only 9% of the teachers indicated that a college aide was placed into their specific classroom. Nevertheless, teachers positively discussed the contributions made by the employment of college aides. Students also spoke positively of the individualized support provided by college aides.

F. Goal #3: Enroll and support students in a coherent sequence of rigorous English, Math, and Science courses to succeed in postsecondary education and/or careers.

The administrators at Millikan both agreed that rigor and relevance provided a push for focus in the instruction and curriculum within the SLCs. According to these administrators, the SLCs have spent at least three years working on creating backwards mapping and coherent sequences of courses. Staff has participated in professional development to further develop these efforts. It was also explained that although much of the planning time has been covered through the SLC grant, this work was also built into the SLC Monday meeting times.

Teachers were asked about their understanding of what a coherent sequence meant to them. It was evident through focus group discussion that teachers believed coherence was related to the

¹¹ The use of college aides in Science courses is listed as a Goal #3 activity and is discussed in that section.

collaborative efforts made by staff. Vertical teaming across grade levels, horizontal teaming and cross-curricular projects were discussed as the primary endeavors engaged in by school staff toward achieving this goal.

Goal-Related Activities

Several activities are listed under goal #3 in the grant's action plan. These activities are as follows:

- Data Analysis with English, Math, and Science Departments
- Modify Curriculum Based on Data Analysis
- Summer Curriculum Institutes to Further Refine Curriculum
- District and Site-Based Professional Learning Community Workshops
- Train and Support Link Crew Program
- Training on Differentiated Instructional Techniques
- Develop and Modify Curriculum to Provide More Connections to SLC Themes/Careers
- Master Schedule Building

Data pertaining to a portion of the above activities was generated through interviews, focus groups, and survey items. Not all of the above activities could be addressed through the data collection efforts. Reasons primarily included time limitations for interviews/focus groups and generalized descriptions by respondents.

- Data analysis was described more fully under the activities aligned with Goal #2 (see p. 63).
- 25% (of 110) of staff indicated that they participated in Summer Curriculum Institutes.
- 27% (of 110) of staff participated in District Professional Learning Community Workshops; 60% participated in Site-based workshops.
- There was no data collected on the implementation or training related to the Link Crew Program.
- The development and implementation of after school tutoring programs as well as other tutoring efforts are discussed under the Goal #2 section.¹²
- The Science Dept. reportedly employed a college aide as a support for the laboratory. This aide did not engage in any teaching or tutoring activities. The aide's responsibilities included working with chemicals, washing instruments and equipment, and taking inventory.
- 48% (of 110) of staff reported receiving training on Differentiated Instructional Techniques.
- 38% (of 110) of staff reported that they worked to develop and modify curriculum with greater connections to SLC themes/careers (related discussion appears in subsequent section on Vertical/Horizontal Teaming).

¹² See pages 63-66 of this report for the discussion on tutoring.

- Master Schedule Building – This activity is addressed in the previous section on SLC development.¹³

Vertical/Horizontal Teaming

The occurrence and extent of vertical teaming may be considered indicators of the overall goal of coherence as well as the activity related to the development and modification of curriculum with greater SLC connections. One teacher described an example of vertical teaming:

The idea that you meet as a team, and this is what we are teaching in ninth grade, and it is building to what we’re going to teach them in the 10th grade, and this is going to prepare them for the AP course in the 11th grade or this honors level course in the 11th grade. So you are building it backwards. That backwards planning aspect of it is a trickle down rigor effect, where your goal is the AP course in the end.

Several focus group teachers spoke positively about teaming both across grade levels and departments. One teacher referred to teaming within the SLC as a “teacher safety net.” Another teacher added that the students realized that through teaming, teachers spoke with one another regarding students and therefore worked to raise students’ effort levels. Teachers and students both experienced greater connection to the SLCs. Teachers reported greater collaboration among teachers with the teaming efforts and an increase in intercurricular projects. Several students also discussed various cross-curricular projects that they have engaged in at their school. They acknowledged that teachers did speak to each other but did not elaborate further on teaming or the purpose of intercurricular projects.

Two items on the staff survey specifically addressed collaboration in both grade-level and department-level teams within the SLC context. As may be seen in Table 41 below, staff respondents were more likely to agree that they collaborated in SLC department-level teams (72%) than in SLC grade-level teams (63%). Nevertheless, based on focus groups and survey responses, it was evident that the majority of teachers engaged in teaming toward the goal of creating coherence.

Table 41.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
I collaborate with other members of my SLC grade-level teams.	Staff	104	8%	15%	39%	24%	14%
I collaborate with other members of my SLC department-level teams.	Staff	104	2%	14%	42%	30%	12%

One item on the student survey addressed teaming and cross-curricular projects and the ability for students to earn multiple credits. Almost two-thirds of the students (61%) generally agreed that “because of the way teachers in my SLC work together, I have done assignments for which I received credit in more than one class.” Alternatively, close to 40% of the students generally disagreed, which does not indicate that teachers did not work across curriculum but only suggests that students may not have received credit in more than one class.

¹³ See pages 50-52 of this report for the discussion on the Master Schedule.

Both staff and students responded to a survey item about lesson design and the connection to SLC themes. As Table 42 shows, staff (74%) and students (78%) were similar in their agreement that lessons were designed with the SLC theme in mind. The staff also strongly agreed (95%) that teachers' lessons were designed to encourage critical thinking. The majority of students (88%) were also in agreement. Finally, almost three-quarters of the students agreed (73%) that their SLC courses were challenging.

Table 42.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Lessons are designed with the SLC theme in mind.	Staff	105	4%	17%	47%	27%	6%
	Students	3047	3%	18%	58%	20%	---
Teachers' lessons are designed to encourage students to think critically.	Staff	106	---	3%	55%	40%	3%
My teachers' lesson are designed to encourage me to think critically	Students	3062	2%	10%	61%	27%	---
My SLC courses are challenging.	Students	3039	4%	24%	53%	20%	---

Course Selection and SLC Requirements

This section addresses course selection and SLC course requirements. These two areas pertain to goal #3 in that they support students' in their enrollment of appropriate and rigorous courses. Table 43 below shows both staff and student responses to corresponding survey items.

Table 43.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
I talk to, or refer students to talk to a counselor, about their course selection.	Staff	108	1%	9%	54%	33%	3%
I talk to my teachers or counselor about my course selection.	Students	2935	4%	17%	55%	24%	---
I inform my students about SLC course requirements.	Staff	108	3%	16%	38%	32%	11%
I know which courses are required by my SLC.	Students	2984	3%	14%	53%	31%	---

The majority of staff (87%) indicated that they talked to, or referred students to a counselor, about course selection. A slightly smaller percentage of students (79%) agreed that they talked to their teachers or their counselor about course selection. A greater disparity in responses may be seen regarding information and knowledge about SLC course requirements. Only 70% of the staff agreed that they informed students about SLC required courses whereas 84% of the students agreed that they

knew which courses were required by their SLC. It is possible that students received this information through other sources such as a counselor or other students.

G. Goal #4: Increase opportunities for students to earn postsecondary credit through AP courses.

Advanced placement (AP) exams offer students the opportunity to earn college credits while still attending high school. The state offers AP courses in over 20 subject areas. Successful completion of the classes and the culminating exam provide students with credits as well as advantages in competitive admissions processes of many universities. Participation in AP courses also provides students an accelerated academic environment which may foster postsecondary academic success. It is important to note that students may take the AP course and not take the exam as well as take an AP exam without necessarily participating in the course. Nevertheless, college credit is only granted with successful completion of an AP exam.

Goal-Related Activities

Several activities are listed under this goal in the grant's action plan. These activities are as follows:

- Hire an AP Coordinator
- Participate in College Board Conferences
- Develop and Implement an AP Faire for Students and Parents
- Annual PSAT Parent Workshop to Explain 10th Grade Students Scores
- Refine and Implement an AP Bridge Program
- AP Teacher Training
- Support College and Academic Enrichment Experiences
- Offer SAT Preparation Programs
- AVID Path Training

Data pertaining to a portion of the above activities was generated through interviews, focus groups, and survey items. Not all of the above activities could be addressed through the data collection efforts. Reasons primarily included time limitations for interviews/focus groups and generalized descriptions by respondents.

- During the focus group interview, one counselor stated that Millikan now had an AP coordinator to head AP activities and supervise program; prior to this, counselors served in this role.
- 7% (of 110) of the staff reported having participated in College Board Conferences.
- 4% (of 110) of the staff reported that they helped with the development of an AP Faire. 36% of the staff reported that they did not have any knowledge of an AP Faire.
- There was little to no data to support the implementation of an Annual PSAT Parent Workshop to Explain 10th Grade Students Scores.

- 11% (of 110) of the staff reported that they helped with the development of an AP Bridge Program. 23% of the staff reported that they did not have any knowledge of an AP Bridge Program. A few teachers did speak of this program as providing students with practice skills as well as a glimpse into what they would be working on in the following year. One counselor stated that this program was dependent on subsequent funding and that they were not sure if it would be implemented this year.
- 9% of the staff (n=110) reported having participated in AP Teacher Training professional development. An additional 4 staff members reported participating in “other” related AP professional development during the school year. Teachers in the focus groups also spoke of the District AP Institute that was held at Millikan. One teacher spoke specifically about his/her ability to incorporate strategies into the curriculum and make changes in teaching style. Two other teachers spoke of grants they had received for AP training, since budget cuts had limited their opportunities.
- Support College and Academic Enrichment Experiences – this activity is very broad and is essentially implemented through the activities listed for all four goals. Therefore, it was not evaluative in its current form and was considered an implied objective of the overall grant.
- Offer SAT Preparation Programs – although no data was provided to indicate whether or not there were programs targeted specifically to the SAT, two teachers mentioned that many of the English classes offered preparation for the SAT as well as other standardized tests.
- 16% (of 110) of the staff reported having participated in AVID Path Training professional development.

Additional activities related to this goal were described by respondents. Teachers spoke of “AP study groups,” an “AP parents’ night,” and a website that listed all AP course offerings and requirements. Both administrators stated that one of the goals for the AP program was to increase the number of AP classes and exams. Although they did share that they have increased over the years, their goal was 1000 exams this year. One administrator added that the higher the enrollment, the more access to funding they would receive from the district which would provide more students with financial assistance for the exams. Finally, communication to parents and students regarding the AP program was described as an ongoing effort.

AP Program – Implementation and Outcomes

All respondents were asked several questions regarding the AP program ranging from access and encouragement to awareness and knowledge. This section provides a synthesis of the results that illuminates various aspects of the implementation as well as some outcomes of this AP goal.

School administrators and staff at Millikan HS were positive with regard to how the AP programs were working in the 08-09 school year. As described earlier, a major goal was to increase AP offerings and the number of exams taken. One administrator spoke of the “push” that was given to 10th grade students to enroll in AP courses, based on PSAT scores. This administrator added that these efforts have added to their growing API as well as AP enrollment and exams taken. Counselors from the focus group also referred to their efforts at identifying students with AP potential through reviewing grades and interests. Other efforts have included specific SLCs increasing their required AP enrollment as well

as increasing the offerings within the SLCs. One counselor shared that as the enrollment has increased, there has been more of an “AP culture” and that even students in middle schools are becoming aware that AP is “a good thing.” Encouragement to enroll in AP is further discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

In terms of the benefits and advantages of taking AP courses, it was evident that all three respondent groups were very confident that students understood how these courses would help them in college. Table 44 shows that this was the case for 84% of the staff, 83% of the students, and 80% of the parents. Examples of this understanding were evident in the student focus groups. Several 9th/10th grade students explained that taking AP courses made students “more competitive for the universities,” and gave students the ability to earn both high school and college credits.

Table 44.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Students understand how taking AP courses will help them in college.	Staff	105	1%	11%	61%	23%	4%
I understand how taking AP courses will help me in college.	Students	3014	4%	13%	50%	33%	---
My child understands how taking AP courses will help him/her in college.	Parents	427	2%	11%	52%	28%	8% (DK)

Teachers, counselors, and students spoke of the efforts made to support students in AP success. One such effort included AP study groups in which students engaged in skills practice and mock exams. One teacher stated that AP preparation had to begin as soon as the students came to the school. Upper grade students were aware of and/or participated in such study sessions. One student explained that AP’s were more general than their SLCs and did not have much to do with a specific SLC. Other students added that it was more about a student’s relationship with a teacher than what SLC they belonged to. One other student added that one had to seek out support and information in order to receive it. A few teachers also spoke of collaborative and teaming efforts made across departments as well as between AP and non-AP courses.

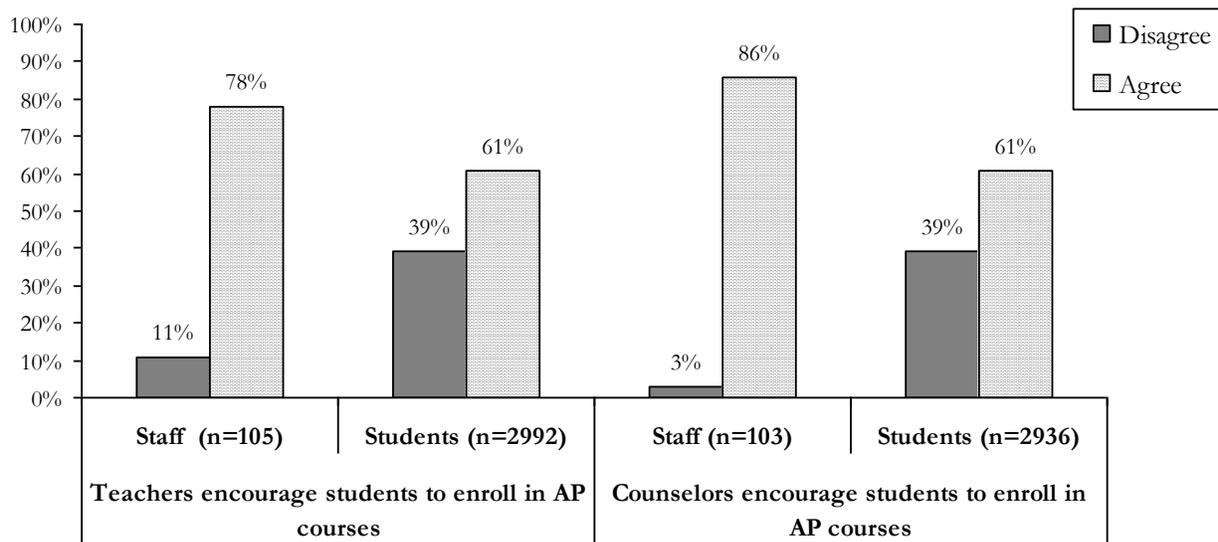
Access to AP courses may also play a role in student enrollment and the encouragement students receive to enroll in AP courses. Over two-thirds of the staff (65%) believed that students had equal access to AP courses regardless of SLC membership (see Table 45). Students were more confident in the equity of AP access (74%). A slightly smaller percentage of students (69%) also believed that they, personally, were eligible to enroll in AP courses. Ninth grade students in focus groups were aware that they would not be able to enroll until the following year. Other students (9th -10th grades) shared that students enrolled were those who wanted to apply themselves, move forward, and work hard. Many students in the upper grades explained that, for most SLCs, students had the option to take AP courses and that anyone could enroll. One student explained that it depended on students’ determination and confidence that they could “handle it.”

Table 45.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Students in all SLCs have equal access to AP courses.	Staff	103	4%	20%	41%	24%	11%
	Students	2985	5%	21%	53%	21%	---
I am eligible to enroll in AP courses.	Students	2971	5%	26%	43%	26%	---

As described in the above sections, there was a school-wide goal to increase AP course offerings and enrollment. Also mentioned were efforts made toward identifying potential students for AP and the increase in offerings for specific SLCs. However, the lower than expected proportion of staff who agreed that students had equal access to AP courses suggests that efforts may not be balanced. The encouragement of students to enroll in AP courses plays an important role in actual enrollment. According to participants in both the student and teacher focus groups, teachers and counselors have both been acknowledged as the promoters of such encouragement. Figure 6 shows the results of the survey responses pertaining to encouragement.

Figure 6. Survey Responses Pertaining to Encouragement for AP Enrollment.



As may be seen in the figure, students believed that teachers and counselors were equal in their encouragement to enroll in AP courses (61%). These results also corresponded with student focus group responses. Students described both teachers and counselors as the primary sources for information about AP courses and exams. Not surprisingly, the staff respondents were more positive than students about the encouragement offered by teachers and counselors (78% and 86%, respectively). Although not included in this graph, the parents also responded to the question of encouragement. More than two-thirds of the parents (68%) believed that their students were encouraged to enroll in AP courses. Parents were not asked to differentiate between teacher and counselor encouragement.

The above results on students’ perceptions of AP eligibility and encouragement were analyzed on a school-wide basis. Variability in student perceptions emerged through the disaggregation of responses by SLC. Referring back to the school-wide results, we found that 71% of students believed they were eligible to enroll in AP courses, 58% were encouraged by their teachers, and 60% were encouraged by their counselors. While the overall pattern of greater perceived eligibility over encouragement remains, the range of responses by SLC demonstrated that perceived eligibility and encouragement varied. Using the highest and lowest percentages to illustrate the range, we found that perceived eligibility ranged from 95% (QUEST) to 55% (STELLAR). In terms of teacher encouragement, the range was from 96% (QUEST) to 43% (MBA). Finally, perceived counselor encouragement ranged from 92% (QUEST) to 49% (MBA). Although it may not be surprising that QUEST was consistently at the top of the range given the goals and structure of the SLC, it may be of practical significance that students from other SLCs differed from QUEST in their responses by as much as 50%. Furthermore, if the grant’s goal is to increase AP opportunities for all students, then these findings indicate the need to emphasize AP encouragement across all SLCs.

Another factor that plays a role in AP participation is the awareness of course offerings and their perceptions of what participation entails. Students in the lower grade focus group shared that AP courses were “hard,” had a lot of homework, and a lot of “busy work.” One student specifically explained that teachers expected a lot more from students in these courses. Table 46 below presents the survey responses corresponding to awareness of courses and availability.

Table 46.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Students are aware of the AP courses available at school.	Staff	107	1%	5%	50%	40%	5%
I am aware of the AP courses available in my school.	Students	2941	4%	13%	52%	31%	---
The school should offer more AP courses.	Staff	101	4%	38%	43%	9%	7%
My school should offer more AP courses.	Students	2843	5%	33%	45%	17%	---

As shown above, staff (90%) and students (83%) were in general agreement that students were aware of the AP courses available at their school. There was more variability across responses pertaining to AP course offerings at Millikan. Just over half of the staff (52%) agreed that their school should offer more courses while 42% disagreed. It was unclear why this variation occurred. The variation among student responses was smaller but still evident. Neither teacher nor student focus groups provided any clarification for this variation; two students did, however, express the wish for an AP Chemistry course.

As described in the section introduction, college credits are only earned with a passing score on an AP exam. Survey respondents were asked to respond to whether students’ knew how to “sign up for the AP exam.” Table 47 presents these results. Less than one-half of the students (46%) agreed that they knew how to sign up. Staff respondents (77%) were much more confident that students had this knowledge while parents’ responses fell somewhere between the two groups (57%).

Table 47.

		N	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Students know how to sign up for the AP exam.	Staff	102	---	10%	58%	19%	14%
I know how to sign up for the AP exam.	Students	2828	13%	40%	30%	16%	---
My child knows how to sign up for the AP exam.	Parents	427	4%	26%	38%	19%	14% (DK)

In addition to signing up for the exam, several focus group students were knowledgeable about how to pay for the exam. The students' responses indicated an awareness of the exam fees as well as the process for obtaining fee waivers. Finally, students expressed some knowledge about the benefits of the exam. At least three of the lower grade focus group students were aware of the passing scores which would earn college credit. In addition, upper grade students were knowledgeable about the relationship between exam scores and the GPA. These students also explained that taking the exam was a choice. Several upper grade students also explained that some students would not make the effort if they did not believe they could pass the exam. Another student stated that not taking the exam was like "quitting the class." This student believed that taking the exam and receiving college credit was the "whole point" of taking the class to begin with. Lower grade students varied more in their understanding. Two students believed that a student could not take an exam without taking the class while another student explained that students in Honors classes could also take the exam if they chose. Overall, survey and interview results showed that knowledge of the exam, how to sign up and its benefits, should also be emphasized when providing students and their parents with AP course information.

According to the LBUSD Research office, Millikan High School offered 18 (19) AP courses during the 2008-09 school year, one less than in 2007-08. There were 1,150 students enrolled in these courses, an increase of almost 10% from the previous year. In addition, there were 947 AP exams taken during the school year by 541 students. Although there was no increase in test-takers, there was a 12% increase in number of exams taken in comparison to the previous year.

Passing scores for granting college credits are typically determined by the post-secondary institution; however, the College Board has determined that a score of 3 or above is predictive of college success.¹⁴ Table 47a below shows that 45% of the students received a score of 3 or above.

Table 47a. 2008-09 AP Exam Scores for Millikan Students (N=947)

AP Exam Score	# Students	%
0	4	1%
1	219	23%
2	288	30%
3	231	24%
4	127	13%
5	78	8%
TOTAL	947	100%

¹⁴ College Board information available on their website <http://www.collegeboard.com>.

The evaluation team was unable to acquire disaggregated results by AP content, relevant subgroup, or SLC for this report. The above numbers may only be considered in comparison to the 2007-08 student scores. Overall, although there was not an appreciable increase in the percentage of “passing” scores, there were increases in the number of students enrolled and the number of AP exams taken.

REPORT SUMMARY

This evaluation report presents the results of the Year 2 evaluation activities pertaining to the SLC-related grant and the implementation of goal-related activities at both Lakewood and Millikan High Schools during the 2008-09 school year. As with Year 1, the evaluators continued to work with designated program and school staff in structuring the evaluation activities and clarifying some of the grant’s ambiguous language. Several of the data collection instruments were revised and, therefore, in alignment with the grant and action plan. Student and parent surveys were limited in their revisions, primarily due to district deadlines. It is anticipated that for Year 3, all data collection instruments will be aligned to the grant and its implementation. Nonetheless, every effort was made to provide evaluation findings that were meaningful and useful to all levels of stakeholders.

The two questions that guided this Year 2 evaluation are:

- 1) What is the nature of SLC development at the two schools?
- 2) To what extent have the four goals of the grant been implemented?

At the district level, monthly and quarterly meetings/workshops have been established by LBUSD’s SLC Director to support grant implementation and monitor school progress. In these contexts, SLC coordinators and lead teachers have shared successes and challenges, gathered information about resources, and had opportunities for discussion and collaboration. The purposes for these meetings were multi-fold and included many data-driven and strategic topics. Overall, these meetings were consistently well-attended and provided support and feedback for implementing the grant’s goals.

At the school level, the nature of SLC development at both Lakewood and Millikan High Schools can be described through the categories and themes that emerged through qualitative interviews and survey responses of administrators, staff, and teachers. These categories included SLC culture and climate, SLC governance, class structures and interventions, and challenges of SLC development.

There was a consensus among teachers/staff at both schools that a strong SLC culture on campus supported SLC identification among students and teachers. The majority of teachers/staff, students, and parents at both schools were in general agreement that they understood the purpose and goals for SLCs and their roles within their SLCs. The improved school culture was attributed to an increase in teacher buy-in. At Lakewood, this buy-in was connected to a new school administration, less teacher turnover, increased teacher control within SLCs, and more opportunities for teachers to have a “voice.” At Millikan, buy-in was attributed to increased collaboration and communication among teachers, greater cohesion due to common goals, and a greater sense of community shared by the students. Millikan counselors also spoke of outreach efforts made to middle school students as contributing to this strengthened culture. Students from both schools spoke of culture and climate in terms of the connectedness they felt to their SLC peers and teachers. Furthermore, at Lakewood, students with special needs and their teachers were incorporated into the SLC communities for the first time. This added to the greater sense of community present at the school. Millikan students spoke of greater

cohesion as a result of activities and opportunities to interact with various grade levels within SLCs. Teachers described several ways that they believed SLCs have changed the culture and climate at their respective schools. Most of the responses were positive (for both schools) and focused on teacher and student changes such as increased teacher collaboration and greater student connectedness. Millikan teachers reported that SLCs have led to greater sense of school pride among students. These teachers also reported SLCs led to greater community and parent involvement as well as a greater school-wide focus on college and academics. Less positive responses, common to both schools, included inequity, divisiveness, and stratification as a result of SLCs. Moreover, many teachers reported that SLCs had not led to any changes in their schools' culture and climate.

Discussions related to governance and structures revealed that staff from both schools believed that the grant afforded them opportunities to re-focus SLCs as well as provide them with more opportunities to suggest changes and have a role in SLC development. Specifically, at Millikan, many discussions revolved around the benefits and challenges of having mixed SLC classes versus pure classes. The primary challenge of SLC development at both schools pertained to the Master Schedule, which continued to impact the mixed vs. pure nature of SLC classes, teacher collaboration, and student-teacher personalization. Another common challenge discussed was the perceived hierarchical structure of SLCs.

In conclusion, it is evident that SLC development and implementation has continued to head in a constructive direction. The results were generally positive and, for the most part, similar between schools. Positive findings and areas of concern emerging from these results may be used to further develop SLCs and improve the levels of implementation to meet the goals of this grant.

The second evaluation question concerned the extent of implementation of the four grant goals. In order to frame the response to this question, the evaluators sought to assess the overall awareness of the grant and its goals among the administrators, staff, and teachers at both schools. As may be expected, the schools' principals and SLC coordinators demonstrated the greatest understanding of this grant and its goals. Moreover, all spoke of adherence to the affiliated management action plan, which had been integrated into the schools' site action plans as had other district- and school-wide initiatives. Because of the overlap of initiatives, teachers and staff demonstrated some difficulty in being able to distinguish between the grant's goals from those of other initiatives. Lakewood teachers seemed to focus more on the grant's budgetary matters while Millikan teachers, although demonstrating general awareness, did not appear concerned with the grant's details.

Goal 1. The first goal, "Prepare all students for success in postsecondary education and careers without the need for remediation," was broken down into three components: student expectations; post-secondary support, preparedness, and guidance; and support and remediation. These areas prepare students, in various ways, for future success. With respect to this first goal's activities, Millikan took the lead in implementation. This was determined by greater participation in Bi-Annual Saturday Report Card Parent Meetings, training and use of Tele-Parent programs, Middle School Outreach, and School-wide Newsletters. Both schools were similar in their implementation of College Preparedness Workshops, Bi-Annual Parent Institutes, SLC Parent Booster Clubs, training and use of School Loop, Digital Individualized Learning Plans, and Increased Connections to Faith and Community-Based Organizations and Businesses. Neither school reported any implementation of the Counselor Training on Effective Strategies for Working with SLCs.

In terms of student expectations, the data supported the belief among all three groups that clear communication of student expectations existed at both schools. Furthermore, over one half of the

students and parents believed that the students would attend a 4-year college institution over any other type of post-secondary institution or activity. In general, all respondent groups were confident that students would pursue post-secondary education. With respect to teacher-student communication to support students in their understanding of the application and financial requirements of post-secondary education, the vast majority of teachers at both schools responded that they discussed how to get into college with students. On the other hand, students were equally divided in their agreement about whether they talked to their teachers about getting into college. It was possible that this disparity was due to the active role of the participants as written in the survey items. A similar pattern was noted for discussions related to how to pay for college. Parents were more likely to agree than disagree that their children communicated with teachers about getting into and paying for college.

It was evident that both schools implemented activities, in addition to those in the grant and management action plan, which supported post-secondary preparation. Discussions revealed that Lakewood's emphasis was not solely college preparation but post-college success. Millikan discussions revealed the emphasis on college preparation through alignment to UC/CSU requirements. Both schools engaged students in college and career research activities, which prepared students for applications, resumes, and interviews as well as learning about prerequisites and required pathways. Students at both schools engaged in the AVID curriculum; Millikan also implemented a similar Pathways program for upper grade students. In addition to widespread engagement in various college and career preparation, teachers and students at both schools reported similar frequencies of field trips and guest speakers in their classrooms.

A large majority of teachers from both schools agreed that students possessed knowledge and understanding of A-G course requirements, necessary for most college admissions. Furthermore, students strongly believed that they would have completed the necessary courses for college application. As expected, older students were more likely to be aware of necessary standardized tests. Overall, parents and students had the greatest confidence that students' would be prepared for success by graduation from their respective schools. Finally, students were, in general, more confident that they could afford attendance at a 4-year institution than their parents. This was likely due to disparities in awareness of family income and financial aid opportunities among both groups.

Although this first goal specifies support without the need for remediation, the activities listed under this goal and the data collected were not sufficient to draw valid conclusions. Nevertheless, academic support given to and perceived by students may serve as an indirect indicator for this portion of the goal. Significant proportions of teachers reported that they personally spoke to one another and worked together to provide academic support for students at risk of failing. Student and parent responses corroborated these teacher statements and acknowledged that students did receive support from their classroom teachers, albeit to a lesser degree than teachers reported.

Goal 2. The second grant goal addressed interventions in reading and math skills. Intervention has been a continuous focus of both schools. Administrators all spoke of a need for more structure and organization in this area. For example, at Lakewood, a committee was formed to prioritize and modify activities to reach students in need. At Millikan, the principal spoke of creating a "central clearing house" in which staff, students, and parents would have access to all of the intervention support and activities provided at Millikan.

This goal's first listed activity pertains to school-wide data analyses on literacy and numeracy needs and development of strategies. Evidence of this implementation at Millikan came through discussions with teachers and counselors regarding the use and analyses of scores from standardized tests, as well as

diagnostic and mid-year assessments. Although comparable findings did not emerge through discussions at Lakewood, it is not valid to assume that similar activities did not occur. Rather, related activities may have been embedded in other goals and activities. In both schools, teachers reported the implementation of literacy and numeracy strategies, where applicable. There was a greater proportion of Millikan teachers that reported the use of college aides in their schools and classrooms. Finally, there was no data to support the implementation of Math Department Lesson Study or Carnegie Lab training at either school. Other activities such as CAHSEE programs and study labs, although not listed in the grant, were implemented. Tutoring and the use of college aides emerged as the major intervention areas.

Both schools instituted various tutoring efforts during the school year. Some were reportedly successful, while others, such as some after-school tutoring, were not. Overall, staff attributed this to student transportation issues and conflict with other after-school activities. Consequently, many teachers offered tutoring in their classrooms, to their own students as well as those from other classes. Both schools worked to ensure that students and parents were aware of tutoring availability. In addition, the schools implemented study labs for various subjects and peer mentoring programs. Administrators and staff at both schools also acknowledged the need to structure tutoring efforts in order to reach the most students in need. In terms of how college aides were used to support intervention efforts, both schools reported their use in study labs, with AVID curriculum, and individual student assistance. Despite the fact that the data indicated limited classroom responsibilities, all respondents spoke positively about their contributions.

Goal 3. The third grant goal addressed the support of students in a coherent sequence of rigorous courses. Staff at both schools reported similar participation rates in District-wide Professional Learning Community workshops and in the development/modification of curriculum tied to SLC themes. Millikan staff reported greater participation, in some cases more than double, in Summer Curriculum Institutes, School-based Professional Learning Community workshops, and training on Differentiated Instructional Techniques. Lakewood reported successful implementation of Link Crew, while there was little to no data to support implementation at Millikan. The Science departments at both schools employed college aides; however, the responsibilities of these aides were more related to laboratory upkeep than working with students.

Administrators and teachers at the two schools differed somewhat in their understanding of this goal. At Lakewood there appeared to be less clarity and consistency in its interpretation. Millikan, on the other hand, reportedly has spent the past three years working on “backwards mapping” and coherent sequences of courses. Despite these disparities, staff at both schools engaged in collaborative efforts, specifically vertical/horizontal teaming, toward supporting the implementation of this goal.

In general, staff at both schools clearly engaged in vertical/horizontal teaming. Although many teachers spoke of within-SLC teaming, it appeared that greater teaming occurred school-wide, within departments and across grade levels. Staff and students spoke of intercurricular projects as well as their benefits. The results of teaming included greater collaboration among teachers, greater connectedness within SLCs, and the ability for students to learn topics more in-depth. Millikan staff and students reported greater connections between lessons and SLC themes; Lakewood students were more articulate in their understanding of the purposes and benefits of teaming.

Goal 4. The fourth goal addressed an increase in opportunities to earn postsecondary credit through AP courses. Both schools had an AP coordinator during the school year. In addition, very small but comparable proportions of staff reported helping with the development of an AP Faire while over one-

third reported that they had not heard of this activity. Similar patterns were seen regarding the AP Bridge Program and AP Teacher training. For both schools, the implementation of these activities hinged on adequate funding. Low participation rates were also reported for College Board Conferences and AVID Path training. There was little to no data to support the implementation of Annual PSAT Parent Workshop to Explain 10th Grade Students Scores or SAT Preparation programs. However, both schools did have parent nights for AP information. Finally, the activity listed as Support College and Academic Enrichment Experiences was very broad and was essentially implemented through the activities listed for all four goals. Therefore, it was not evaluable in its current form and was considered an implied objective of the overall grant. Although both schools were firm in their commitment to increasing AP success, Millikan administrators were very specific in their efforts and motivation.

Both schools reported school-wide efforts and successes for increasing AP enrollment and AP test-taking. Tutoring and other activities were in place to provide information to both parents and students. The majority of students agreed that they understood how enrollment in AP courses would help them in college. More students than teachers believed that there was equity in AP access. In terms of encouragement, it was found that there was some inequity across SLCs in teacher/counselor encouragement for enrollment. Overall, students were reportedly less knowledgeable about how to sign up for the AP exams than staff expected.

Consistent with school reports, AP data from the LBUSD Research Office showed that both schools increased their AP enrollment and the number of exams taken during the 2008-09 school year. Furthermore, Lakewood increased their AP course offerings. For both schools, about 45% of their test-takers achieved scores of 3 or above, similar to the previous school year.

As may be seen through the discussions and perceptions of administrators, teachers/staff, students, and parents, both schools have made efforts at implementing the grant's four goals. Future evaluation activities will continue to focus specifically on activities of this implementation in order to directly assess this progress. This second-year evaluation and its findings provide an indicator of the grant's implementation in the areas of SLC development and the goals for student academic growth and post-secondary preparation.