Long Beach Unified School District ~ Millikan High School
Small Learning Communities (SLCs) Initiative
Year 1 ~ Staff Spring 2008 Survey

Staff Survey Participants:
- One hundred sixty-two staff members from COMPASS, Global Tech, GREEN, MBA, PEACE, QUEST, and STELLAR. COMPASS staff had the most participation at about 17% of the total while both QUEST and STELLER had the least at 8% each. Approximately 10% of staff indicated that they did not belong to an SLC, about 5% noted that they belong to multiple SLCs, 1% did not know, and 4% did not identify their SLCs.
- Teachers comprised the majority (76%) of survey participants. Those teaching 9th grade had greater participation (approximately 24%) than those teaching in other grades.
- Approximately 32% indicated being assigned to their SLCs while about 29% reported having had a choice.

SLC Development
In general, the majority of staff report very positive experiences with the development of SLCs at Millikan High.
- Staff understand SLC purpose and goals (86%), understand their role in their SLCs (70%), have time to meet with SLC teams to share information (discuss students' academic progress, curriculum needs, etc) (83%), and have time to meet to satisfy their SLC goals (68%).
- About 63% of staff indicated that the Master Schedule is adjusted to strengthen the SLCs.
- Staff report having opportunities to suggest modifications to SLCs (80%) and point out that students share the same opportunities (58%).
- Approximately 48% of staff report that the culture and climate of the school has changed with the development of SLCs. When asked how the culture and climate has changed, staff provided the following answers: more teacher collaboration, less staff cohesiveness, individualized focus, stratified SLC system creates perceived/actual inequity, individualized monitoring of student progress, more academic, more school pride, students know each other better/sense of belonging, and great teacher/student connection.
- Staff report the following as the most rewarding aspect of SLCs: teacher/curricular collaboration, great administrator, connections/communication with students, improved student behavior, working with a variety of students from all SLCs, working with small groups of students, introducing Habits of the Mind to 9th graders, seeing students grow academically, student-focused community/sense of belonging, graduation rate increase, tracking students, students have direct access to personal interests, ownership/pride, school recognition, watching school grow, community service, and parent support.
- Staff report the following as the most challenging in developing SLCs: teacher buy-in, time (to develop SLC purpose/goal/mission, to develop cross-curricular assignments, to work more closely with students), understanding role of SLCs and keeping themes in lessons, school/class size, teacher/staffing constraints, achievement disparity, recruiting strong students/less non-motivated students, SLC placement (arbitrary, special education students), inter-SLC tension/stigma attached to some SLCs, discipline when students know each other well, Master Schedule problems, incorporation of electives, not enough resources, and money.
- To help further develop SLCs, staff mentioned a variety of resources. The more common were: time, money, teacher planning/ collaboration time (common conference periods), professional development time, teacher buy-in, recruitment of motivated teachers, improved recruitment at middles schools, technology resources, support from

administration, smaller class size, life skills/critical thinking classes, understanding special education needs, parent and community outreach/ involvement, equity among SLCs, work on focus/goals/outcomes of SLCs, Master Schedule that supports SLCs, and more electives.

Curriculum & Instruction
The majority of staff report engaging in SLC-related activities inside and out of the classroom.
- More teachers (47%) teach at least 50% of classes within their SLC than not (24%).
- About 45% of staff reported collaborating with members of their SLC grade level teams and approximately 72% of staff indicated that SLC teams pursue professional development goals consistent with SLC needs.
- The majority of staff agreed that SLC-specific data is used to inform instruction (46%) or that lessons are designed with SLC theme in mind (43%).

Personalization
Staff report very high levels of personalization within their SLCs.
- Staff felt a sense of belonging in their SLCs (66%) and identify a climate of trust among students, between student and teachers, and among students, teachers, and administrators (69%).
- Staff report having students receive guidance on course selection and college/career planning (75%), having students talk to them about non-academic problems (79%), being aware of how students are doing in non-academic areas of their lives (70%), and talking to teachers about students who might be struggling academically (82%).
- Staff report having high expectations for all students (75%), providing students with prompt feedback and regular progress reports with specific suggestions for improvement (83%), and changing lesson plans because of student suggestions (56%).
- Staff indicate that administration, teachers, and staff work together to assist students who may be at risk of failing (80%).

Parent & Community Relations
SLCs has developed strong relations with both parent and the community.
- Staff report having regular contact with parents to inform them of their child's progress (74%) and indicate that the school supports family and community involvement in planning, reviewing, and improving SLCs (71%).
- A majority (66%) of staff agree that strong connections exist within SLCs that provide students with the opportunity to engage in activities related to college and career interest.

Student Achievement
Staff report that expectations for achievement are communicated clearly and college awareness among students is high.
- Staff report clearly communicating goals, standards, and expectations for achievement and behavior to students (85%) and feel confident that upon graduation, students will be prepared to succeed in the college or career of their choice (74%).
- Staff report talking to students about how to get into college (84%), informing students how to pay for college (65%), and tutoring students who might need additional academic support (68%).
- Staff report students knowing about the A-G requirements (83%) and having equal access to rigorous courses in all SLCs (62%).