



BERTCORONA

CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

To: Yvette King Berg
Re: September/October Monthly Board Report
Date: October 23, 2015

Enrollment

Our enrollment is now 64 students, 52 ninth grade students and 12 tenth grade students. We have 10 students with individualized education plans.

Academics

We began incorporating RTI (Response to Intervention) work into our professional development and planning this month. We have a shared document in which we have placed each student at RTI levels (Tier 1: Independent and on grade level, Tier 2: One to two grade levels behind, and Tier 3: More than two grade levels behind), and have begun the work of developing strategies for supporting those students with the most intensive intervention needs. Our learning outcome and rubric design work are producing a body of targeted skills along with the indicators that determine whether or not these skills are being learned to automaticity. We conducted a parent training night that attempted to explain the nature of authentic assessment and standards-based grading compared to traditional assessment and grading practices. While the initial reception was guarded, our parent-teacher conferences proved to serve as an opportunity for clarification and increased understanding. Parents are grasping the inherently fundamental and critical nature of an education that depends on both students and teachers being totally transparent about what is expected from students, and to what extent that learning is now producing independent skills. A recent article published by KQED entitled "Could rubric based grading be the assessment of the future?" summarizes the work of a consortium of colleges and universities who are trying to pilot our exact approach to authentic assessment at their post-secondary institutions, and it is transforming both their teaching and, more importantly, student success in the classroom. I know we're on the right track. The article can be found here, with links to the rubrics:

http://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/2015/10/14/could-rubric-based-grading-be-the-assessment-of-the-future/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+kqed%2FnHAK+%28MindShift%29

Facilities

The following facilities upgrades and/or repairs were completed in the last month:

- Tripping hazards in the asphalt near the student restrooms were broken up, removed, and repaved.
- YPICS network communications wiring was trenched and installed.

We continue to wait on the following repairs and upgrades:

- Access to Special Ed RSP Pull-out Classroom on the Maclay Campus.
- Blinds for every room for lock-down safety and P.E. changing privacy.
- Security Camera and Phone at the main access gate (LAUSD install).



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Staffing

Elizabeth Gutierrez, an intern for Ms. Funk, is no longer meeting with students for the foreseeable future. She experienced the theft of her car and cannot arrange alternative transportation to work. Ms. Funk said she would hold her spot as an intern while transportation issues are resolved.

Cori Redstone has submitted a verbal intent to resign by the end of first semester. She stated an inability to keep up with the workload, a lack of financial capacity to pursue a teaching credential, and the impact of work on her personal life and health.

Ms. King-Berg stated that she would be working with Mr. Meyers on filling the position and looking for qualified candidates that have been appropriately vetted by the YPICS recruitment site.

Logistics

The meal program is experiencing some challenges due to timing and facilities needs. Students are not eating breakfast to the extent we would like them to, and the current thinking is that they are eating at home before they come to school. Our late start time is likely allowing them the flexibility to take this option over a school-provided meal. Our serving practices will shift to actual classroom distribution next week, during our morning SFA class. This may provide a more captive audience and a natural encouragement for students to participate.

Pizza Hut and Pick Up Sticks chinese food will become a regular offering for lunch in the next several weeks. Pizza is once per month and chinese food will be weekly.

A meeting with Ms. King Berg, Ms. Gamez and Ms. Castellon confirmed that a hot water facilities and kitchen prep tables are needed to achieve an ideal level of compliance for the meal program. We apparently did not receive the kitchen / meal distribution facility here as a part of our Prop 39 agreement with LAUSD. This facility, which is in the covered eating area on our campus, would provide optimal resources for preparation and distribution of food.

College and Career

I begin meeting with students next week to discuss the college and career goals they have selected in their College and Career Elective class. These preferences are likely to change over time, but there will be formative value in the introduction to college entrance requirements and degree requirements for specific careers. We are taking 45 students and 5 staff to the UCLA vs Washington State football game at the Rose Bowl on November 14.

Compliance

The YPICS Executive Team and Ms. Castellon (Program Coordinator) compiled data and logistics information and hosted representatives from the LAUSD Charter Schools division who came to conduct an oversight visit for operations compliance. I was informed that our compliance measures passed in all required areas.



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The principal of Maclay Middle School walked me through the emergency response plan for the Maclay site, including the evacuation route, meeting site, and reunion gate for YPI Valley Charter High School. A Search and Rescue Team was identified for YPI VCHS, first aid stations were located, and I walked the evacuation route with Mr. Villanueva (campus safety aid) and Ms. Castellon.

Mr. Dueñas informed me that we will be required to conduct metal detector searches per LAUSD mandate. He is procuring the wands and will conduct training for our staff.

Technology

We are in the latter stages of having the YPICS Network extended to our site. Mr. Harvey's report will likely detail progress on this initiative. The 1-to-1 chromebook rollout is allowing our students to work in a cloud-based and shared learning environment that will allow them to transition seamlessly to collaborative work environments both in college and in the workplace. Google Classroom is our chief platform for this work. These are real skills that last and will give our students a considerable edge over many of their peers, but more importantly, will allow our students to be California's Future Leaders in a very concrete way as they support their new post-secondary communities in the work of collaboration through cloud technology.

Climate and Culture

The After School Program was launched this month, led by Ms. Guzman. Students are building rockets, learning kick-boxing, playing football, hiking, playing basketball, receiving academic tutoring, and developing a Leadership Class. There are 30 students enrolled in activities that take place both before and after school.

Students celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with poetry, dancing, and artwork that was created and performed/shared at our monthly assembly last Monday, Oct 19.

We took the entire school to the headquarters of the Children's Hunger Fund in Sylmar last week. They packed elements for emergency food boxes for families facing poverty throughout our world. They learned that 21,000 children die every day from nutrition-related illnesses stemming from hunger. Our kids worked like champs. The staff of CHF asked if we would come back on an ongoing basis. That was a reflective moment for all of us.

Students were the big hit at a recruitment night at Bert Corona Middle School. While Mr. Garcia and I shared the technical specifics of high school programming, the students shared about how much they felt heard, respected, and cared for by their teachers. This was their primary pitch to the 8th grade families as to why they should attend YPI VPCHS. Their sharing generated spontaneous applause. It was a good indicator for me as to how our students are feeling about being part of a startup.

Larry Simonsen
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