



ACAC (Academic Choice Advisory Council) Meeting Minutes – 6/05/09

In Attendance

Name	Titles	eMail Address
Jim Slep	BHS Principal	jim_slep@berkeley.k12.ca.us
Maggie Heredia-Peltz	BHS Vice Principal, AC Administrator	mhp@berkeley.k12.ca.us
Sherene Randle	ACAC, AC Co-Lead Teacher, English	Sherene_Randle@berkeley.k12.ca.us
Amanda Green	ACAC, AC Co-Lead Teacher, English	agreen@berkeley.k12.ca.us
Ben Sanoff	ACAC Teacher, Social Science	ben_sanoff@berkeley.k12.ca.us
Alex Angell	ACAC Teacher-Parent Liaison, History	alex_angell@berkeley.k12.ca.us
Jane Wise	Parent, ACAC Teacher-Admin Liaison, BHS Development Group	wiselevin@gmail.com
Jon Marley	Parent, ACAC Fundraising & Outreach, School Governance	marley@stanfordalumni.org
Karen Meryash	Parent, ACAC Parent Events	kspivey@ix.netcom.com
Kate Spohr	Coordinator, Website	kspohr@berkeley.edu
Lawrence Grown	Parent, ACAC Secretary, Events	lawrence@metrolighting.com
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Mia Levin	ACAC Student Leadership	mia.levin77@gmail.com
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Doug Powers	Teacher, AP Economics, Theopsychology	doug_powers@berkeley.k12.ca.us
Margit Roos-Collins	Parent	margitrooscollins@comcast.net
Cecilia Aragon	Parent	aragon@dcai.com

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Student leaders met with Ms. Randle, are creating a binder for next year’s leadership
 4-5 interested students came
 Sherene will tap 4 for mentorship
 One AC student was elected to the SGC (student’s name?)

TEACHER AND PARENT LEADERSHIP

Amanda Green was elected Co-Lead teacher with Sherene Randle. Welcome Amanda!
Roia Ferrazares was elected to the ACAC and will be the Treasurer. Welcome Roia!

COMMUNITY EVENTS

AC Reaching Out was on May 17

Outreach efforts were made, could have been better, but attendees were demographically diverse. The majority of attendees were incoming families. Teacher leadership was unable to attend, only two teachers were there.

AC Co-Leads Sherene and Amanda commit to better teacher outreach in the future. Spanish translation should be there next time.

Next Community Event-The Back To School Barbecue, will be Sunday August 30th.

A flyer will be made to put in teacher's boxes before the end of school.

AT RISK STUDENT SUPPORT

The new committee, including Karen Meryash, Amanda Green, Anthony Smith, Christina Mitchell, Jaime Brantley and Sherene Randle has developed the following plan for next year.

1. Gather a list of incoming at risk freshman (Dave,Amanda,Anthony)
Letter home this summer to invite to Study Skills Workshop and Resources Program for orientation week. (Karen,Jaime,Christina, all)
2. Create a calendar of plans/action for the year (Karen, Jaime to circulate)
3. Assessments and Math tutoring (Sherene/Mendel/Jessica)
4. Powerschool training for parents (Jon/Cecilia) Get Maggie ok and contact Chrystal Jensen
5. Resources Information Packet(Jaime and Karen)for orientation week. Information about tutorials, powerschool access, etree, progress reports, attendance, etc
6. Parent Resource Group to develop and conduct powerpoint presentation for classrooms re: resources (Karen/Jaime/others)
7. Development of script for phone outreach/ (Jaime/Karen/Christina input)
8. Parent Resource Group to contact late entering incoming families
9. Peer tutoring to be encouraged for most AP classes. Structure to be developed as time permits.
(Amanda et al) Amanda to contact Science Department for feedback.

Please see calendar attached.

Professional Development at the AC teacher retreat will include the "Focus on Five" concept for teachers to identify 2-5 at-risk students, and help them connect with available support resources.

Admin has reached out to the public Middle Schools to identify incoming at-risk 9th graders.

Pre-recorded, computer-dialed messages will happen more regularly next year.

OTHER STUDENT SUPPORT

Two "Bridge" Classes will be offered in Summer School
2 weeks before school for Pre-AP students and for struggling students.

This will serve as a limited scope pre-advisory program.

Next year there will also be an accelerated reading class for 40 students.

Math and language assessments to happen in September.

Cal Readers program will continue. Coordinating schedules between BHS and UC has been very helpful. BHS teachers schedule papers when readers will be available.

BUDGET REPORT

The Federal stimulus money will not help much will help to cover the latest round of State cuts.

The school board will decide by the end of June, how the cuts will be distributed. (see last month's minutes for a breakdown.)

BHS is well-funded compared to other High Schools in California, but California's funding for education is below most other states'.

The counselor : student ratio will be equalized among all small learning communities next year.

(previously small schools had a lower ratio than the larger programs, approx. 240:1 vs 400:1)

Late incoming students in the fall will be assigned to under-enrolled small schools first, then assigned proportionally to all schools, small and larger.

ACAC WORKSHOP

Please see handouts attached

MASTER SCHEDULE

Coring is coming together.

Sherene and Amanda are on the hiring committee for 0.8 FTE English

Courses have been assigned to teachers, though very limited flexibility still exists.

Teacher input into course assignments will be improved next year.

The meeting with teachers and lead teachers didn't happen as intended,
due to the change in leadership, although all teachers had previously
filled out

a survey as to their priorities of small school and course offerings.

LEAD TEACHER REPORT

Please see attached 2009-10 leadership outline

Teacher retreat August 28th.

The Development Group will fund the balance for the proposed mobile computer lab.

Roia just received the budget info, she and Jon will provide their report via the etree.

Academic Choice 2009-2010

Mission Statement*

The Academic Choice mission is to provide a rigorous college preparatory curriculum encompassing the full breadth of diversity within the Berkeley High School population, and to create a community of academically motivated students working together with teachers and parents to realize their full potential.

Vision Statement*

The vision of the Academic Choice program is to close the achievement gap while maintaining excellence as the standard for teaching and learning at Berkeley High School.

Leadership*

Lead Teacher

Per BFT contract regulations the AC Lead Teacher will be elected by AC teachers. The lead teacher will work with the vice principal in charge of the master schedule to provide collaboration time for – minimally – the Academic Choice English and History teachers, and will coordinate all special assemblies, seminars, and field trips.

The Lead Teacher will:

1. In collaboration with teachers, set curriculum goals and standards commensurate with those set by State, National, and International Standards and in agreement with UC admission requirements.
2. Determine methods of assessing the goals and standards of Academic Choice.
3. Work with the ACAC to develop a system from grades 9-12, providing additional tutorial support, coordinating as required with the Academic Pathways program.
4. Coordinate curriculum among departments.
5. Give feedback to the BHS administration for teacher evaluations along criteria of professionalism determined by the standards of their profession and the program expectations.
6. When possible, make recommendations to the administration regarding staff assignments.
7. Consult with BHS counselors regarding student scheduling, program needs, and other related issues.

Parents

The parent members of the ACAC will be involved in a variety of ways to support, educate and enable all students in Academic Choice to complete the goal of high achievement and getting into college. For example, parents will:

- Fundraise for various needs of the program including the Lead Teacher position release time, AP Pathways tutoring, testing and test preparation, educational materials, and field trips for educational enhancement and Academic Choice community building activities.
- Facilitate early exposure to colleges (including campus visits) and meetings for students and parents to educate them as to the process of preparing for college and how to get help.
- Provide direct support to teachers as they request, to include such tasks as photo copying, obtaining classroom materials, and organizing field trips.

Proposed Allocation of Responsibilities

<i>Sherene</i>	<i>Amanda</i>
Developing AC meeting agendas	Managing communication and emails with AC teachers
Attending and representing AC on the SGC	Liaison to ACAC and work on expanding our parent outreach. Recruitment of parents, students, teachers for ACAC
Attending all-BHS PD team meetings and incorporating ideas into department collaboration	Organize staff retreat
Planning and organizing staff development days	Planning and organizing staff development days
Planning for and facilitating 9 th and 10 th grade curricular group	Planning for and facilitating 11 th & 12 th curricular group.
Coordinating development of support resources and information for struggling students including Pre-AP Academy and Pre-AC Bridge for incoming freshmen	Coordinating development of Program, Curriculum and Course Binders for AC
Gathering, organizing, presenting data about student achievement	Ensuring student placements and correct schedules in the first three weeks of school
Managing and ordering supplies, books, teacher editions, overhead projectors, calculators, etc.	Creating department schedule, including communicating to administration
Managing department accounts such as BSEP and Development Group	Assigning classrooms and master schedule
Working with Mendel Chernack to develop assessments and work on AC literacy issues	Preparing for and attending Parent Information Nights
Work with the BHS Redesign Committee	Placement on Hiring Committee
Coordinating new teacher support	Coordinating phone list & social events
Support to Ben Sanoff and Technology Upgrades	Liaison to Math and Science teachers
Fulfilling other tasks and attending other meetings as needed	Fulfilling other tasks and attending other meetings as needed

Additional Leadership Support:

Ben Sanoff

History PD, Parent Communications, Student Academic Intervention, Technological support, New Teacher Support

Jessica Quindel

Math Lead Teacher and curriculum coordinator

Evy Kavelar

Science Lead Teacher and curriculum coordinator

Professional Development*:

Our Professional Development plan for Academic Choice has five distinct strands:

- Advisory / Redesign Preparation
- Vertical Alignment of curriculum 9-12 (maintenance and support)
- Best Practices
- Student Centered Equity work (Focus on Five)
- Grade / Subject Level Collaboration

Academic Choice Advisory Council*

The Academic Advisory Council can support the AC Leadership team in several ways:

1. Craft and give a survey about what they like from the teachers in regard to curriculum, instruction, communication, intervention, etc. The results of the survey should be typed and given to Green and Randle by August 1, 2009. *This document will be reviewed and used to guide our August Academic Choice Teacher retreat.*
2. Continue to help with student intervention early and often.
3. Continue to coordinate more community and social events, beginning with an improved freshman. /Sophomore potluck in October of 2009.
4. Recruit a diverse group of parents to join the ACAC.
5. Continue to plan community building field trips and outings for our students throughout the year.

Upcoming events:

Master Schedule Forum

- Tuesday June 2, 2009- AC English teachers
- Wednesday June 3, 2009- History teachers

Academic Choice Teacher Retreat:

- August 28, 2009, *agenda forthcoming*

Other Goals and Proposals:

- Focus on Five Proposal (Randle, Green, Herdia-Peltz)
- New Literacy Assessment for 9-11th grades (Randle, Green, Chernack)
- New Writing Assessment for 9-11th grades (Randle, Green)
- Reconfiguring history for 9-10th grades (Sadlon, Sanoff, Angell)
- New AC Leadership meeting (Randle)
- Pre-AP bridge summer course (Tammer)
- Pre-AC bridge summer course (*TBA*)

*** from Academic Choice Request For Approval (RFA)**

Why AC needs an ACAC workshop in summer/fall 2009

- 1) Reaffirmation of AC's 'mission' and what we offer to students. Agreement on the main goals for 2009-2010: *curriculum development and student support*? Agreement on what our bottom line is concerning school reforms.
- 2) Though the parents (and students) on the ACAC do not have input in determining curriculum, they must be included by the ACAC teachers in the articulation of this process, its progress, the outcomes, data collected, etc. They must have a clear understanding of the plans for developing these pieces of our program next year and who is responsible for what. Otherwise the ACAC has no recourse for accountability. **A workshop would be a perfect opportunity for teachers to present these plans and for accountability measures to be developed.** It cannot be done in a 45 minute Friday morning meeting.
- 3) The 2009-2010 school year will be the first year where none of the 'founding parents' will be present at the school. Our newer parents need to feel that they are a part of whatever direction the program is taking in the future. The 'founding parents' built our program along with teachers, administrators and students. Though we may not have actually written curriculum we often helped to type it up, get it submitted for UC and Board approval, etc. Thus the parents knew what was going on with the specifics of what AC courses are supposed to be about. In the past year or two we have been kept in the dark unless we ask. Teachers on the ACAC should be sharing this openly in meetings, handing out readers, examples of syllabi, course curriculum, etc. The leadership parents need to have this knowledge in order to be able to communicate with our AC parents. Unless teachers would like to take over the tasks of parent communication and event agendas **we need to be in the loop!**
- 4) All of this brings us to the question of what the **role of the ACAC** is, how to encourage attendance from the teachers, how to make our group more accountable at the same time that our program is trying to greatly strengthen this concept of accountability. Any rethinking of our meetings needs to be done with input from all participants and again-cannot be done in a 45 minute meeting.
- 5) Discussion of how we parents can better support our teachers if any support is wanted.

Part 1

2009-2010 program priorities:

AC Mission Statement: *'Provide a rigorous college preparatory curriculum encompassing the full breadth of diversity within the BHS population, and to create a community of academically motivated students working together with teachers and parents to realize their full potential.'*

Translated as:

- 1) All AC classes will have **well-defined curriculum** (with content standards and outcomes) which will be **intellectually challenging** and **relevant**.
- 2) AC will provide a support structure for its students and families. In an **academic context** it will support struggling students so that they take advantage of their classes to the best of their ability. In a **social context**, AC will provide a structure for, encourage and implement a social support network for students and families.

1) a) Well defined curriculum.....: At a minimum, each course will have a written week by week curriculum. AC will encourage the administration to use these key curriculum concepts when doing teacher evaluations during the course of the year. **Lead Teacher, 'dept heads', administrators.**

Content standards: Each course will have common content standards, tied to those of the state of California standards. These content standards are the basic concepts each student will be expected to understand by the end of the course. **Lead Teacher, teachers.**

Quantifiable outcomes: Each class will use the content standards to develop, at the minimum, a midterm and final which incorporates these content standards so that student progress can be measured and compared, teachers can be held accountable for delivery of material and evaluation of student and teacher can occur. **Lead Teacher, teachers**

Syllabi: Each teacher in AC will provide a syllabus (tied to the content standards and similar for each teacher) to their students which defines breadth of what will be covered in the course, what students can expect in terms of homework, how the grading works and contact information for the teacher. This should also be posted online. **Teachers, administrators.**

b) Intellectually challenging: Curriculum will be developed using materials such as state standards, Pre AP and AP material. Though classroom teachers will have common content for like classes they are encouraged to diversify their delivery of this content. **Teachers.**

c) Relevant: Teachers will use up to date material, methodology and best practices along with the latest research and technology to broaden and diversify curriculum. **Teachers, parents (technology support)**

2009-2010 goals: complete 9th grade, develop 11th grade?

2) **a) Academic support:**

AC will develop a well-articulated process by which teachers will identify students who are struggling and guide them to the proper resources. **Lead Teacher, teachers, counselors, administrators, parents, students, outside resources.**

b) Social network:

AC will work to build community among our students and families so that, starting as freshmen, they feel that they are a part of something and that someone at BHS is accountable for students successes and failures. This community network ensures that families can connect with one another and with teachers and administrators to get the help they need, to get to know each other and have fun sometimes! **Parents, Lead Teacher, teachers, administrators, students.**

Part 2

Define accountability for elements above

Role of ACAC in above?

Is any restructuring of the ACAC necessary?

Student leadership

Suggested participants:

Sherene Randle, Amanda Green, Alex Angell, David Bye, Ben Sanoff, Heather Sadlon, new teachers?

Jim Slempp, Maggie HP, Counselor or two

Kate Spohr, Lawrence Grown, Jon Marley, Karen Meryash, Roia Ferrazares, Margit Roos Collins, Jaime Brantley.....

Students

Academic Choice 2009-2010 Student Support Proposal

FOCUS ON FIVE

Goal: Create a teacher directed process of identifying “at-risk” and struggling students, commit to continuous parent/guardian contact, and use our parent resources to connect these students with academic support.

Overview:

A core value and goal of Academic Choice is to work to eliminate the achievement gap. Focus on Five is a program or way of thinking about at-risk students that encourages teachers to focus their energy behind a few students in each of their classes who may be at risk of failing. We believe that the extra effort to communicate with these students’ families, to communicate regularly with the students regarding their work, and to connect them with the available support services could make a significant difference in their overall success in AC. This process aims to show these students that we care about their success and that we will hold them accountable for improving and doing well in their classes.

For teachers this program encourages focusing on a manageable number of struggling students consistently throughout the year. It is our goal to monitor the success of this program through encouraging any teacher eligible for alternative evaluation to participate in a study of their chosen students and the teachers focused attention on them. Additionally, we will encourage new teachers participating in BITSA to use their Focus on Five students for their required BITSA study.

Finally this program aims to connect our students with the currently available academic support at BHS and successful students in AC who have required tutoring hours. Ideally we will use parents to help monitor students and hold them accountable for getting the available help.

Identifying Students:

The Focus on Five begins with identifying our at-risk students. This will occur in three ways. First, data on Math scores for incoming freshmen will allow us to identify students who are already behind when they enter Berkeley High. Using this data we will flag these students for immediate support. Second, Sherene Randle and Mendel Chernak will develop a literacy assessment test to be administered to freshmen, sophomores, and juniors in the beginning of the school year. Third, we will ask all AC teachers to identify up to five struggling students in each of their classes by the third week of school.

AC teachers have a number of ways to identify their most at risk students. Students who miss class at the beginning, who don’t turn in assignments from the start or who do not do well on literacy assessment test may be identified. The AC lead teachers will be discussing the Focus on Five with our teachers and encouraging teachers to pay close attention in the first weeks of school to select students in each of their classes.

Number of Students:

Teachers should select between two and five students in each class. While five is certainly preferable any number greater than zero will help make a difference. Teachers should select a number of students that they realistically feel they can consistently follow up with for this program. This does not mean that other students will not receive their support, rather that the select students will be part of the process describe in Focus on Five.

Parent Contact:

When each teacher has selected their students they will make parent/guardian contact by calling home before the fourth week of school. This is the initial contact with the family and should be used to elicit parent/guardian support in getting the student to turn in work, attend tutoring, and buy in to their course.

Parent/guardian contact for each teacher's selected students should be prioritized and happen at regular intervals. Teachers should work to develop a relationship with the parents/guardian and maintain that over the year.

Anthony Smith will conduct a larger parent meeting with the parents of our selected students to encourage them to get involved and to help them understand the resources and support available for their student at the school as well as the accountability process for their student. ACAC volunteer parents are also working on outreach materials for our parents.

Parent Volunteers:

ACAC will

- Recruit additional parent volunteers representative of the diversity of our population
- Conduct presentations in AC classes on the available support services
- Make outreach phone calls to AC parents about the support services available to their students
- Work to build our parent support community and open dialog between parents regarding struggling students.
- Create and distribute an informational packet for parents on support services (including how to check Power School) at the August Freshmen Orientation
- Help connect AC teachers "Five" to available tutoring and support.
- Help monitor tutoring and maintain student accountability for attending tutoring both as tutors and tutees. This is one key area where teachers need parent support. It is suggested that student tutor provide tutoring in specified tutoring centers with parent monitors who will sign off on tutoring time and ensure that tutoring is happening. Students will not be allowed to tutor outside of supervised locations for credit. This will increase accountability of both tutors and tutees.
- Provide feedback to teachers about what is working and what is not working. Continued dialog between parents and teachers is essential.

Connecting Students to Help:

After each teacher has identified their focus students and made parent contact these students will be connected to tutoring and other academic support. This may be student tutoring (as required by the Math Department) or tutoring services such as Rise and Y-Scholars. We will create an accountability system to make sure our students get the help they need and believe that this is an excellent place to employ the energy of our parent volunteers.

Alternative Evaluation

I will invite teachers eligible for alternative evaluation to participate in a study next year of the progress of Focus on Five. These teachers will keep records of their interactions with students, parent contact, tutoring, and progress. We will compile data and observation to determine what is working and where we need to improve. This can also help us determine the types of resources we still need to help us achieve our goal of eliminating the achievement gap.

**Academic Choice 2009-2010
Proposal For Student to Student Tutoring**

Student Tutoring

The Math Department has traditionally required AP Statistics and Calculus students to complete 10-12 hours a semester. We are currently working on setting up a similar requirement for Humanities APs in AC. Student tutors from these classes could be connected with Focus on Five students through teachers. These students could then receive tutoring in monitored situations held and signed off on by parents.

When asked to participate in tutoring AP Humanities teachers were generally enthusiastic but raised the following questions and ideas:

- 1) Will all students being tutored want to be tutored? How can we make sure that they understand the value of the support provided by the AP tutors?
- 2) How can we make sure that the AP students don't simply complete assignments for students but instead collaborate with them?
- 3) Where and when would this tutoring take place?
- 4) Can we allow students enrolled in AP math as well as humanities classes the choice to tutor in one discipline and not the other to avoid overwhelming them?
- 5) Can we have AP students tutor using class time sessions so the teacher can monitor the tutoring?

We should address all of these questions seriously and limit the scope of our tutoring project to what we can realistically accomplish in the first year. Additionally, in response to question 5 I believe we can also set up some classes as writing coaches who go to under classmen's classes when they are working on essay to help edit and revise student work. This could work in a similar fashion to the former Writer/Coach Connection. This option would be available for teaches who want direct control over student tutoring.

Additional Issues Addressed in the June 2, At-Risk ACAC Meeting

- Should Humanities tutoring be offered as extra credit/volunteer work at first?
- What is manageable to start with?
- What training can we offer our student tutors?
- How will we get kids to tutoring?
- What is a realistic time line for offering these tutoring services in the fall?

I propose we address these questions in ACAC and by asking teachers. I think we will have more than one solution of what to do, but should really keep in mind our capacity to monitor tutoring in order to keep it effective.

Calendar for student support

August Study Skills Class	September In Class Presentations Late incoming families are welcomed by the Parent Resource Group Teachers Make Home Contact and Parent Resource Connections	October Back to School Night Teacher Tutorials begin Progress Reports and List of students in 9, 10 who are failing 2 or more classes. Calls home by counselor	November Study Skills Workshop for Struggling Students	January Push for Finals
February Study Skills Workshop	March Progress Reports List of failing students			