



## **ACAC (Academic Choice Advisory Council) Meeting Minutes – 10/8/09**

Lawrence Grown facilitating, Minutes by Kate Spohr

### **In Attendance**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Titles</b>	<b>eMail Address</b>
Maggie Heredia-Peltz	BHS Vice Principal, AC Administrator	<a href="mailto:mhp@berkeley.k12.ca.us">mhp@berkeley.k12.ca.us</a>
Amanda Green	ACAC, AC Co-Lead Teacher, English	<a href="mailto:agreen@berkeley.k12.ca.us">agreen@berkeley.k12.ca.us</a>
Evy Kavalier	Teacher, Science Department Lead	<a href="mailto:ekavalier@berkeley.k12.ca.us">ekavalier@berkeley.k12.ca.us</a>
Jon Marley	Parent, ACAC Fundraising & Outreach,	<a href="mailto:marley@stanfordalumni.org">marley@stanfordalumni.org</a>
Karen Meryash	Parent, ACAC Student Support, Events	<a href="mailto:kspivey@ix.netcom.com">kspivey@ix.netcom.com</a>
Kate Spohr	Parent, ACAC Parent Coordinator, Website	<a href="mailto:kspohr@berkeley.edu">kspohr@berkeley.edu</a>
Lawrence Grown	Parent, ACAC Teacher Liaison	<a href="mailto:lawrence@metrolighting.com">lawrence@metrolighting.com</a>
Roia Ferrazares	Parent, ACAC Treasurer	<a href="mailto:roia@sbcglobal.net">roia@sbcglobal.net</a>
Cecilia Aragon	Parent, AC PLC	<a href="mailto:aragon@dcai.com">aragon@dcai.com</a>
Diana Aragon	BHS sophomore	
Peggy Scott	Parent, SGC	<a href="mailto:plscott@stanfordalumni.org">plscott@stanfordalumni.org</a>
Margit Roos Collins	Parent, SGC	<a href="mailto:margitrooscollins@comcast.net">margitrooscollins@comcast.net</a>
Gregory Lewis	Parent, AC PLC	<a href="mailto:gregory.lewis@earthlink.net">gregory.lewis@earthlink.net</a>
Jaime Brantley	Parent, AC Parent Leadership Committee	<a href="mailto:jaim.brantley@sbcglobal.net">jaim.brantley@sbcglobal.net</a>
Pamela Woodbridge	Parent	<a href="mailto:depampar@yahoo.com">depampar@yahoo.com</a>
Christina Mitchell	BHS student support coordinator	<a href="mailto:cmitchell@berkeley.k12.ca.us">cmitchell@berkeley.k12.ca.us</a>

### **LEAD TEACHER REPORT-Amanda Green**

#### **AP class segregation**

AC math, science, history, and English teachers met to address why AC's advanced placement classes are so segregated. Why are students of color not signing up? Within English and history there is a high degree of fear among students who think they cannot succeed in AP classes. Teachers are also asking themselves how or whether they may have discouraged kids of color from signing up. At the meeting, teachers requested additional enrollment and student outcome data to better understand the current situation, and Amanda has gathered this data & will give it to teachers.

Amanda and Sherene teachers want to develop a concrete action plan to address the problem—then build support among teachers. A potential goal is to prepare all AC students for AP Language & Composition by 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Advantages: AP is a strength of AC and we need this “identity” for our program. Jim Slep reports that students at other high schools have succeeded with all-AP required classes. Most importantly, this will encourage accountability among teachers. i.e. set rigorous standards for teachers as well as students. Lead teachers are also convening a panel of students to get student response to this proposal. Jaime Brantley recommended getting feedback from students of color who are now in AP and feel isolated.

#### **Comments/questions:**

Maggie Heredia Peltz: The discussion of how to handle AP classes is just a beginning step to look at where we are with AC and where we want to be. Teachers/administrators are looking at the student data, and Sherene/Amanda are examining results of AC's common English assessment. Science department has done some common assessments already. Math is considering the same.

Evy Kavalier: The PD plan for science for the year is to pick four questions (common to each discipline). This is applied to AP and non-AP classes. They are looking for patterns.

### **Focus on Five:**

Amanda Green: Focus on Five PD has been delivered and teachers have selected their 3-5 students in each class. Some teachers have targeted the same students in different classes & can share info w/ one another. The strategy is to get discussion going with teachers about how support can be provided to these kids. It's possible that AC parent volunteers may have a role in helping provide this support/outreach.

Jon Marley suggested the need for communicating with families about Focus on Five. (See Jon's report below).

### **Student Support-Karen Meryash**

The student support system is fully operational at this point. The 2009-2010 school wide tutorial schedule was handed out at Back to School night, distributed to students in classes, sent out on the AC etree, and posted to the AC website. There is a designated writing tutor this year—available every day. Christina Mitchell has organized special support for every math class using Cal tutors. Student study groups have formed for upper level math classes-chemistry and bio.

It appears that BHSDG support for student support will be sufficient for our needs throughout the year.

Progress reports come out this week. Counselors will be looking closely at 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> grade students who have one or two potentially failing grades. Christina will make phone contact with families re: tutorials, study skills session (in Nov). For 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students, the strategy is somewhat different. Seniors who are failing are in a high alert category and must be followed up with immediately. Students who have 3 or more failing grades will be immediately referred to a counselor.

Evy Kavalier: The tutorial flier is very effective, students look for it and use it!

There is a new .60 time AC counselor: Brenda Espinoza ([bespinoza@berkeley.k12.ca.us](mailto:bespinoza@berkeley.k12.ca.us); 644-6193). Office hours: M-W 10:15 am to 4:00 pm; Th, F 8:00 am to 1:45 pm  
Students from N to Z. This info must be confirmed with Maggie HP and will then be sent out on the etree and posted to the website.

### **AC Budget- Roia Ferrazares**

The monthly financial report was distributed. There are no big shifts from last month. AC's income for the year to date is \$19276.46, up from about \$14,975.54 reported last month.

The ACPLC will be reviewing and voting on projected expenses for the current year at its next meeting on October 22.

Apart from Professional Dev projections, Roia has received little info from AC lead teachers regarding their projected needs/expenses for the year. She will contact Sherene/Amanda to obtain this info.

### **Communication with Families-Jon Marley**

Jon proposed two ideas for outreach to AC families, particularly African American and Latino:

Monthly newsletter: Teresa Gonzalez, a new member of the AC PLC, wants to focus on outreach to the Latino community. Many monolingual Spanish-speaking families do not subscribe to the etree.

As a way to reach these families, she has proposed a monthly newsletter & has offered to translate it. Jon will look at numbers of African American and Latino families in AC and will produce a budget for the newsletter. Discussion to be continued...

Buddy system for Latino and African American families. Utilize our volunteer list to find people willing to buddy up with other families. The idea is a parent volunteer “adopts” a number of buddy families, with whom he/she continues to keep in touch throughout the school year. Irma Parker and Simon Tiles have worked with one of the small schools to create such a system and can advise us on best practices.

### **AC Retreat?-Kate Spohr**

Kate re-proposed the idea of holding a retreat for AC parents, teachers and administration. This idea was proposed at the end of 2008/2009, but no retreat was held last year. The purpose of a retreat is to bring teachers, parents, administrators together for in-depth discussion of “big picture” issues of relevance to AC, such as the initiative to require AP classes in 11<sup>th</sup> grade, the affect of the new BHS schedule on AP classes and teachers, and implementation of advisories in AC. Karen Meryash mentioned that there will be greater participation from teachers if we stick to tangible, relevant topics that affect teachers and students directly.

Possible timing:

Evy Kavalier: Feb/March is a good time frame for teachers. It could be a morale booster.

Peggy Scott-Feb/March is good timing since grades will have already been submitted.

### **General discussion**

#### **New schedule**

There was a general discussion about the pros/cons of a proposed trimester schedule at BHS.

Evy Kavalier: Under the trimester system, science classes will lose almost one hour per week because labs will now be incorporated into the regular school day. This will make it even more difficult for teachers to cover all the content required in AP sciences classes, and for kids to keep up with the faster pace. Thus, most students will need to take chemistry before AP chemistry and biology before AP biology. This will result in fewer science options for kids.

#### **Enrollment and class sizes**

There was general discussion about large class sizes in AC and disparities in enrollment between BIHS and AC. Parents and teachers are exploring strategies for holding the administration of BHS and BUSD accountable for allocating resources equitably for all Berkeley high school students.

Evy Kavalier reported the following data for average class sizes for science classes in AC and BIHS:

AC advanced bio av class size=36

BIHS advanced bio av class size=31

Small schools advanced bio av class size=30.3

AC chem. av class size=33

IB chem. av class size=30

Small schools chem. av class size=26

### **EVENTS, MEETINGS**

*AC PLC meeting, Thurs Oct 22, 6:00 pm, East Bay Community Law Center*

*Next ACAC meeting November 5, 2009, 3:45 pm, location tba.  
Jaime Brantley to create the agenda, Karen Meryash to facilitate, Kate Spohr to take notes.*