Chapter III: Student/Community Profile--Overall Summary from Analysis of Profile and Progress Data

Implications of the Data

Vanden High School is a school community that has dedicated, caring staff and great students. Overall, the data tell us that many students at Vanden High School have high achievement in traditional core academics and outperform their peers across the county and the state, placing Vanden in the top 100 schools in the state of California. Vanden High School students also graduate at higher rates rates when compared to their county and state peers.

Even though VHS sees success in student achievement, we see evidence that not all students achieve at high levels. We have several student subgroups performing below our target goals. They include our African American students, Hispanic/Latino students, English Language Learners and our socioeconomically disadvantaged students.

In addition, while nearly all of our students meet our local graduation requirements, a small percentage do not meet UC a-g eligibility requirements which will allow them to apply and to attend a CSU or UC.

VHS offers a number of opportunities for students to participate in classes that will prepare them for college or university enrollment,. We have not seen significant representation from these subgroups in these programs and classes. In addition students who fail Algebra early in high school can become ineligible to take higher math and science classes

It is clear that interventions are necessary within the school day and after school to support student success in the core academic areas and to increase the number of students who successfully complete courses that satisfy UC or CSU entrance requirements.

While VHS does look at standardized testing data annually, the data analysis is short term and the scope is limited. The data suggests that we have a group of students who are minimally engaged in the learning experiences that we provide and more school-wide analysis, discussion, and problem-solving is needed.

Based on the implications of this data, the school has identified three Critical Learner needs:

Critical Learner Need #1:

Collect and use local data, including formative and summative assessments along with standardized achievement data, to determine student success and to inform instruction.

School-wide Learner Outcomes:

Students demonstrate persistence when met challenging academic content or skills.

Rationale:

Staff remains at the development stage of data analysis and needs additional time and professional development to gain the skills necessary to effectively analyze student data and learn ways to link data to instructional strategies. The PLC time provided by the district has encouraged discussion within the math and English departments and a great deal of work has been done developing and scaffolding curriculum that supports students' needs. More time and training is needed to continue this work in departments across the campus, a need that is supported by district office.

The Vanden teaching staff recognizes the need to create more skills based common assessments and essential assignments and have been using district supported PLC time to develop these products. Each department is in a different stage of making this transition. Math and English have had a head start in that they have been working in PLCs for two years and this year is the first year for science, social science and Foreign Language.

The PLC and staff discussions can lead to meaningful changes both to instruction, but also in the ways that we approach student data and constitutes student success or mastery of content or skills.

Critical Learner Need #2

Completion of UC a-g requirements allows students a wide-range of post high school opportunities.

School-wide Learner Outcome:

Students evaluate their strengths and abilities to make informed decisions about their postsecondary plans.

Rationale:

The intent of the UC a-g eligibility is to ensure that students can participate fully in the first-year program at the university in a wide variety of fields of study. Fulfillment of the UC a-g pattern also demonstrates that the student has attained essential critical thinking and study skills.

Vanden has career pathways which require students to take to two years of elective courses in the same concentration area. Vanden wants to create well rounded students that have been exposed not only to rigorous core curriculum classes, but also to give students a choice of supplementary classes that can enhance their worldview and expose them to new career possibilities.

Vanden strives to promote lifelong learning by exposing students to a variety of rigorous courses and teaching skills that students can use beyond the classroom.

Another way that Vanden is seeking to help students set goals that match their post secondary ambitions is by rolling out the Naviance system. Naviance is an online tool designed to supplement the work being done with counselors to make sure that students are making the course decisions and meet the academic progress that match their post-secondary goals. The Individual Learning Plans will help with students by evaluating their strengths and areas of growth throughout their high school careers.

Critical Learner Need #3

School-wide, systematic interventions need to be in place to support students who are not achieving.

School-wide Learner Outcome:

Students set short term and long term educational and personal goals and use strategies to achieve them.

Rationale:
Our data continues to indicate that there are a significant number of underachieving students. We feel that there is a need to provide intervention programs to support these students and provide them with the necessary skills to be successful students and to master content knowledge. Intervention strategies should include time and resource management, as well as subject-specific academic support.

Naviance is one way that we are hoping to improve students abilities to set goals and make a plan to reach those goals. Naviance has the tools to help students set goals that match their post secondary ambitions and together with counseling they develop a course schedule that builds toward that goal.

Starting in 2013-14 Travis Unified has offered Kagan Training to all teachers that provide engagement strategies. An area that will help improve instruction is a round table on best practices amongst staff on differentiated instruction and maybe some professional development opportunities. Some of the most pertinent questions that came from the staff analysis of data were about embedding differentiated instruction into everyday classroom routines. In the questions below both number 5 and 6 are jumping off points for further discussion moving forward.

Questions from the analysis of data:

1. How can we move beyond an occasional and superficial analysis of standardized test data to identify and support our underperforming students?
2. How can we increase UC a-g eligibility in our student population in order to increase post high school opportunities and reduce the D-F rate in our underperforming student groups?
3. How can we increase student and parent involvement in decision-making processes and provide information regarding school programs?
4. How can data from standardized testing (SBAC, AP, SAT, CELDT) help guide our curriculum development?
5. How well are we incorporating research-based instructional strategies in our classrooms to support student-centered learning and to increase engagement and student success?
6. Are we able to differentiate instruction in our classrooms to meet the needs and diversity of all students?

School-wide Learner Outcomes

Vanden students strive for: Personal Growth, Academic Proficiency, Community Responsibility, and Employability (P.A.C.E.)

Personal Growth
- *set short term and long term educational and personal goals and use strategies to achieve them.*
- identify *their own strengths and values in order to become more self aware.*
- *make sound decisions about social, physical, emotional and mental health and demonstrate resiliency in the face of adversity.*

Academic Proficiency
- *analyze and comprehend complex texts across all content areas and acquire knowledge through real world experiences.*
- *demonstrate literacy through effective communication skills in both written and oral expression.*
- *demonstrate technological competency, including the ability to evaluate and cite sources.*
- *demonstrate persistence when met challenging academic content or skills.*
- *justify understanding by citing specific evidence.*
- *evaluate and appreciate the arts -- visual arts, dance, music, theater and literature--from a variety of cultures.*

Community Responsibility
- *demonstrate knowledge of diverse cultures and foster acceptance for individual differences.*
- *are active in the local community and involved and informed global citizens.*
- *are accountable for their individual actions and are respectful of others.*

Employability
- *collaborate with others to gather and evaluate information,draw conclusions and produce a product or service.*
- *evaluate their strengths and abilities to make informed decisions about their post-secondary plans*