Smaller Learning Communities

Arleta High School

SLC Proposal
For

Social Justice
Vision

After years of planning, collaborating and building, Arleta High School opened its doors October 3, 2006 to 9th and 10th grade students in three small learning communities. The overarching vision of Arleta High School is to provide rigor, relevance and relationships to all students through its small learning communities.

Prior to its opening, the growing faculty and staff had the benefit of professional development and facilitated collaboration in order to build the vision, mission and expected school-wide learning results for the host school, as well as, for each SLC. While these thoughtful products guide the growth and development of the SLC, the dynamic process of building community and culture in a new school and new SLC, will necessitate continual reflection and refinement.

The current mission statement that guides the work of the Social Justice SLC is as follows:

**Social Justice Mission Statement**

The mission of the Social Justice Small Learning Community is to promote awareness and involvement in local and global issues through career options and inspiring experiences that explore equality and justice.

The Social Justice SLC is dedicated to building a community of learners that empowers students to be community contributors, critical thinkers, effective communicators and self-directed learners. (For a full listing of the Expected School-Wide Learning Results (ESLRs), see attachment.) In order to achieve these expected results, the Social Justice SLC is dedicated to providing a rigorous standards-based curriculum, learning experiences that are relevant to students, the local, domestic and global community, and an environment that fosters positive relationships among students, staff, and the community.

The Social Justice SLC offers an ongoing, sequential, standard-based curriculum at a rigorous level that is aligned with district mandates and state standards and fulfills the A to G requirements. Instruction in the core content areas follows the curriculum guides provided by the district as modified by collaborative teams to meet Arleta’s 4X4 instructional block schedule. Additionally, core content instruction attempts to highlight and deepen the student’s exploration of the themes of social justice. Collaboration within the content areas and across content areas, and the use of project based learning, provide rigorous, active and engaged avenues of learning for students.
In addition to the core content, the Social Justice SLC has identified elective course offerings, enrichment experiences and extracurricular opportunities to support the A to G requirements, to create additional opportunities to enhance the relevance of the student’s course of study, and to provide opportunities to nurture relationships. The table identifying the proposed four-year plan for the Social Justice SLC follows this narrative.

Electives that are currently offered or planned include Geography, International Relations, Latin American Studies, Urban Ecology and Demography, Law and Youth, and Conflict Resolution. These electives were selected in order to prepare students for successful, in-depth study of the standards (Geography), to enhance the student’s understanding of standards (International Relations and Latin American Studies), and to extend learning beyond the standards (Urban Ecology and Demography, Law and Youth, and Conflict Resolution.)

Extracurricular opportunities that are either currently offered or planned include participation in school clubs, SLC leadership opportunities, the Model United Nations, Teen Court, and educational travel, including trips to Washington, Sacramento, New York and Washington D.C.

In addition to electives and extracurricular activities, the Early College Program, in partnership with Los Angeles Mission College, provides the opportunity for students to take college classes while at Arleta High School. Course offerings provide students with the opportunity to earn college credit that will transfer to the California State University, University of California, or private university systems. Course offerings include general education requirements and additional social science electives that enhance the Social Justice curriculum.

The Social Justice SLC has a strong culture of collaboration and distributed leadership. The faculty and staff of the Social Justice SLC meet weekly during professional development time to develop skills and knowledge and to reflect and problem solve. Issues of community safety, student conduct, scheduling, student achievement, culture, and instruction are common topics of reflection, discussion and problem-solving.

Although Arleta High School and the Social Justice SLC are in their infancy, the culture, programs and procedures that are being built by the community are in line with the school’s vision of promoting awareness and involvement in local and global issues through career options and inspiring experiences that explore equality and justice.
**Expected School-Wide Learning Results (ESLRS)**

Graduates of Arleta High School Social Justice Small Learning Community will be

**Community contributors who:**
- Donate their time and individual talents to improve the quality of life within their community.
- Demonstrate an awareness that fosters acceptance of individual and cultural differences.
- Understand how local and global issues impact their community.
- Identify and apply themes of social justice to community activities.

**Critical thinkers who:**
- Identify and solve problems effectively.
- Read with comprehension, discerning relevance and reliability of information.
- Interpret, evaluate, and reflect on learning.
- Analyze and interpret social and political issues.

**Effective communicators who:**
- Write skillfully with meaning and clarity.
- Speak with confidence to an audience.
- Present organized information using technology.
- Communicate knowledge of social systems by participating in school and/or community activities.

**Self-directed learners who:**
- Set and accomplish personal, academic, and social goals.
- Exercise honest self-evaluation.
- Demonstrate motivation and discipline.
- Create and implement solutions for issues impacting the community.
# Social Justice Smaller Learning Community

## 9th Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Algebra 1a</td>
<td>Algebra 1B</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>English 9A</td>
<td>English 9B</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Math Prep</td>
<td>Algebra1B</td>
<td>Life Skills</td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>English Prep</td>
<td>English 9B</td>
<td>Life Skills</td>
<td>Computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Algebra1B</td>
<td>World Hist. A</td>
<td>Spanish A</td>
<td>Fine Art A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>English 10a</td>
<td>World Hist. B</td>
<td>Spanish B</td>
<td>Fine Art B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>English 10B</td>
<td>Biology A</td>
<td>PE</td>
<td>International Relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Geometry A</td>
<td>Biology B</td>
<td>PE</td>
<td>Latin American Studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Extra Curricular:** Club of Choice, OPI Institute Trip

**College:** Health, Life Skills

**Summer:** Chicano Studies

**Theme:** Identity, Community and Personal Responsibility

---

## 10th Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Math Prep</th>
<th>English Prep</th>
<th>PE</th>
<th>Geography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Algebra 1a</td>
<td>Algebra 1B</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Math Prep</td>
<td>Algebra1B</td>
<td>Life Skills</td>
<td>Computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Algebra1B</td>
<td>World Hist. A</td>
<td>Spanish A</td>
<td>Fine Art A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>English 10a</td>
<td>World Hist. B</td>
<td>Spanish B</td>
<td>Fine Art B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>English 10B</td>
<td>Biology A</td>
<td>PE</td>
<td>International Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Geometry A</td>
<td>Biology B</td>
<td>PE</td>
<td>Latin American Studies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Extra Curricular:** Model UN, New York Trip

**College:** Speech, Intro to Sociology, Psychology, Cinema

**Summer:** Anthropology 101, Art

**Theme:** Global Connections: Our Individual and Collective Responsibility to our World

---

## 11th Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>English 11A</th>
<th>US Hist. A</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>English 11B</td>
<td>US Hist. B</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Chemistry A</td>
<td>Algebra 2A</td>
<td>Urban Ecology/ Demography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Chemistry B</td>
<td>Algebra 2B</td>
<td>Urban Ecology/ Demography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Law and Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Conflict Resolution Or Internship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Math Analysis</td>
<td>Spanish (AP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Math Analysis</td>
<td>Spanish (AP)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Extra Curricular:** Teen Court; Choices Trip to DC; Academic Decathlon

**College:** US History A/B; Administration of Justice, Sociology 2

**Summer:** Geography 1 and 15, PE

**Theme:** Creating and Sustaining the American Ideals: Equality, Justice, Opportunity

---

## 12th Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>English 11A</th>
<th>US Hist. A</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>English 11B</td>
<td>US Hist. B</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Chemistry A</td>
<td>Algebra 2A</td>
<td>Urban Ecology/ Demography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Chemistry B</td>
<td>Algebra 2B</td>
<td>Urban Ecology/ Demography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Law and Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Conflict Resolution Or Internship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Math Analysis</td>
<td>Spanish (AP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Math Analysis</td>
<td>Spanish (AP)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Extra Curricular:** Teen Court, Mock Trial, Internships

**College:** English 101, English 102, Math 227, Anthropology 104

**Summer:** Geography 1 and 15, PE

**Theme:** Rights, Responsibilities and Building Our Democratic Society

---
Identity

Each SLC has an educational philosophy and approach that is known and shared by students, staff, families and community partners.

The Social Justice SLC has a strong commitment to the development of a community of learners that is aligned to the school’s vision and that supports the school’s learning results. This approach was founded in the spirit of fairness, equity and community and has been collaboratively designed and implemented. This sense of community that continues to grow has been fostered through faculty collaboration, parent engagement, student assemblies and SLC activities, and community involvement. Parents have been engaged in school site council activities and parent orientation meetings. Student activities have included the Social Justice Assembly, advisory logo contest and election, student advisory council elections and honors breakfasts. Community partnerships are building. City Councilman Alarcon has supported our students by guest lecturing in Social Justice classes and including students at his swearing-in ceremony.

SLCs have a unique academic identity, distinct and heterogeneous groups of students, distinct physical boundaries and an administrator or teacher leader that leads a cohesive faculty team.

The Social Justice SLC is one of three current SLCs at Arleta High School. The Social Justice SLC consists of the faculty team of 21 teachers, one counselor, one clerk and one assistant principal who serve the diverse student community. All Social Justice students have an Advisory Teacher who is a member of the Social Justice Faculty. Social Justice students are engaged in a course of study that includes enriched electives in the social sciences (Geography, International Relations, Latin American Studies, Urban Ecology and Demography, Conflict Resolution and Law and Youth.) Within core content and elective classes, teachers work together to plan Project Based Learning Opportunities tied to the identified themes of the SJ SLC. In alignment with the mission of the Social Justice SLC, extracurricular activities are planned for students including Model United Nations, Teen Court, travel opportunities to Washington, DC, New York and Sacramento, and extensive local community service opportunities.

Students are heterogeneously grouped for instruction and to the extent possible according to student need, a full-inclusion model is used. For the most part, Social Justice classrooms are located on the first and second floors of the east wing of the B building. The Social Justice administrative and counseling office is similarly located on the second floor of the east wing of the B building. Most administrative and counseling functions for students (attendance, counseling, etc.) take place in the Social Justice Office.

The identification and funding for a part-time SLC Lead teacher is a priority for the Social Justice SLC. It is hoped that this person will expand community partnerships, parent activities and student engagement opportunities.
SLC teams make decisions related to: curriculum, instruction and assessment; budget, personnel and facilities; master schedule and students conduct and issues of community safety.

While the Social Justice Team employs a data-based, reflective practice approach to the functions and operations of the SLC, the Social Justice SLC will continue to work with school-wide resources in the areas of scheduling, safety concerns and maintenance and operations as outlined in the School Impact Report.
Equity and Access

The SLC has developed a variety of strategies to support a diverse community of learners who represent the range of different student subgroups present at the school.

The Social Justice SLC is open to all incoming students. Currently enrolled Social Justice students represent the full spectrum of learning and cultural differences that exist in the larger Arleta community. These include English Language Learners, students with special learning needs, students with physical disabilities, and GATE students. One focus of the Social Justice Team and the professional development program is instructional strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners. Such strategies are co-teaching, SDAIE, CRRE, and Thinking Maps.

There is an open and inclusive admissions policy. The SLC accommodates student interest and parental desires in admissions and course programming.

Admission to the Social Justice SLC is open to all interested students in the Arleta High School attendance area. Prior to enrollment, incoming students and their parents are informed of the SLC options at the school and invited to attend an orientation session detailing the SLC options. Students then are asked to indicate SLC preference during the enrollment and programming process. To the extent possible, given the limits of program needs, students are enrolled in their first choice of SLC.

The SLC Team completes frequent analysis and review of disaggregated student outcome data and modifies plans as appropriate.

As AHS is a new school, available student outcome data is limited. However, professional development time is targeted for the analysis of student outcome data. A data-based reflective practice approach is being developed to employ outcome data in the modification and implementation of the Social Justice SLC.

The SLC employs heterogeneous grouping of students to support academic and personal development.

Students are heterogeneously grouped for instruction and to the extent possible according to student need, a full-inclusion model is used. Although a special day class model has been developed to meet the needs of students who need the most academic support, the Advisory program in particular is a full-inclusion model.

The SLC actively encourages and supports students to participate in Advance Placement and or honors courses. The SLC hold high expectations for all students. The SLC utilizes a well-articulated academic intervention plan.
While the entire Social Justice SLC has high expectations for all students, the team recognizes that students have diverse achievement experiences and learning needs. To that end, Social Justice students are held to rigorous standards of academic achievement and provided with systematic opportunities for enrichment and intervention. Currently, enrichment opportunities exist primarily in the form of the Early College program. However, Advanced Placement and honors options are planned for fall 2007. Intervention opportunities exist in the form of CAHSEE preparation classes both within and beyond the school day, Beyond the Bell, Title I tutoring, credit recovery opportunities through summer school and Pacoima Skills center, and extended Math and English Language Arts offerings.

The SLC is located in a space that is clearly identified and provides a safe learning environment that is equitable for instruction. There is an equitable distribution of qualified and experienced teaching staff. All members of the Arleta High School community recognize that a clean, safe campus is essential for a positive learning environment. To that end, all members of the faculty and staff support campus-wide beautification efforts and the discipline and tardy policies. Collaborative efforts help to ensure that our new facility remains a positive and productive place of learning.

Arleta High School’s campus is divided in a fair and equitable way to meet the needs of its three smaller learning communities. Each SLC is allotted geographically clustered classroom space, a teacher collaboration room, an administrative office, and counseling, administrative, clerical and teaching staff to support the instructional program. In the interest of equity and access, the staffing resources of the faculty’s experience, knowledge, skill and cultural assets have been distributed across SLCs.
Personalization

Students receive personalized instruction that incorporates their experiences and cultures and makes connections to the real world. Instruction is based on diverse learning styles and multiple intelligences. The SLC team utilizes specific strategies that help to transition students from grade to grade, build upon skills, and support them academically, personally and socially.

Instruction at Arleta High School is structured in a 4 by 4 block schedule. In this model of instruction, students are given only four classes each semester. Periods are 82 minutes long. As students and teachers have fewer classes upon which to focus and class periods are longer than the traditional 50 minute class period, there is more flexibility in planning instructional activities that embrace diverse learning styles. Additionally, the school’s focus on project based learning allows students to develop academic, personal and social skills while approaching real-world tasks. Additionally, the 4 by 4 block schedule allows students to earn more credits each school year. This opportunity can allow for flexible scheduling of intervention classes, credit recovery or SLC specific elective offerings thereby increasing the opportunities for students to graduate.

The SLC serves a population of 120 to 500 students who are known well by the adults. Students have the opportunity to work with 1 or more adults for multiple years in caring, supportive relationships. Students have access to adult mentors and role models. Students complete a written postsecondary plan with guidance from teachers and counselors.

At Arleta High School the Advisory program is an integral piece of each student’s day. Every day begins with the Advisory period. During this daily 30-minute instructional period, students meet with their Advisor. The Advisor is a faculty member in the SLC who will be the Advisor for the student’s entire time at AHS. This “looping” of Advisory allows for the development of a caring and supportive relationship between the student and the Advisor. Instructional time in Advisory is devoted to skill building, team building, values clarification, and educational and postsecondary planning. Students create and maintain an Advisory Portfolio which contains progress and report card grades, resume building information and a postsecondary plan.

Additionally, because the size of the school is small and the students spend the majority of their day in close proximity to the SLC faculty and support staff, student-faculty relationships are more personal than on a large comprehensive school campus. Teachers, counselors, administrative and clerical staff report that they know more students by name at Arleta than they did at previous assignments and can therefore more effectively support students.
**The SLC Team conducts monthly outreach activities to parents and biannual conferences on student’s personal needs. Students and parents are able to clearly articulate the names of adults they go to when they have a question, concern or special need.**

Parent questionnaires indicate that parents feel welcome and supported at Arleta High school. Parents participate in the school-wide CEAC, ELAC, and School Site Councils and have attended the Parent Institute designed to increase the understanding of standards-based instruction, SLCs and parental support for student success. While regular communication with parents in the form of letters, personal phone calls, automated phone calls, progress reports, report cards, open house and PHBAO conferences exist at Arleta High School and the Social Justice SLC, additional outreach activities are a priority for the future of the Social Justice SLC. The SLC lead teacher will be an additional resource to increase outreach activities to parents.

**Staff has ready access to accurate and timely academic and behavioral data for each student. The SLC program includes multiple opportunities for learning that extend beyond the regular school day.**

Academic and behavioral data is readily accessible to staff and faculty members to support student learning within the classroom and to support student participation in the array of intervention and enrichment opportunities previously mentioned in this narrative.
Standards-Based Instruction

The SLC course offerings align to district graduation and university admission (A-G) requirements and state content and performance standards and ESLRs. Curriculum and instruction is organized around distinctive SLC educational philosophy, theme or interdisciplinary focus. The SLC curriculum and instruction is articulated to provide a coherent educational experience resulting in students moving toward graduation and college entrance. Students complete a minimum of one rigorous, standards-based activity each week per subject.

The Social Justice SLC offers an ongoing, sequential, standard-based curriculum at a rigorous level that is aligned with district mandates and state standards and fulfills the A to G requirements. Instruction in the core content areas follows the curriculum guides provided by the district as modified by collaborative teams to meet Arleta’s 4X4 instructional block schedule. Additionally, core content instruction attempts to highlight and deepen the student’s exploration of the themes of social justice. Collaboration within the content areas and across content areas, and the use of project based learning, provide rigorous, active and engaged avenues of learning for students.

In addition to the core content, the Social Justice SLC has identified elective course offerings, enrichment experiences and extracurricular opportunities to support the A to G requirements, to create additional opportunities to enhance the relevance of the student’s course of study and to provide opportunities to nurture relationships. The table identifying the proposed four-year plan for the Social Justice SLC follows this narrative.

The SLC utilizes multiple forms of student assessment to measure student progress toward meeting or exceeding state content and performance standards. Instruction in the SLC is adapted and or modified to meet the individual learning needs of all students The SLC includes embedded, structured academic interventions to meet students needs. Teaching and learning is enhanced through adequate and appropriate instructional technology.

Students participate in all applicable LAUSD Periodic Assessment programs and California State Testing and Reporting (STAR) programs. Data when available is used to inform instruction. In addition to the standard formative and summative assessments, teachers assess students in a variety of ways including teacher created tests, culminating performance based assessments, project based learning and portfolio assessment.

For some students additional instructional support is necessary. Students are identified through achievement data and encouraged to attend CAHSEE preparation classes that are offered either during the school day or beyond the
school day. For some students, an alternative form of instruction in Mathematics is indicated by academic performance. In such cases, students are provided with the Standards-Based instructional Carnegie Program of Math instruction. This technology based instructional program is offered within the school day.

Based on English Language Arts achievement data, the school has identified the need for additional, structured instructional support in the teaching of writing. The Vantage Program, a computer-based writing program has been contracted for implementation in fall 2007.

**Weekly teacher meetings focus on instruction and student learning through the use of curriculum maps, common assessment and analysis of student work and data results.**

Teachers meet each Tuesday for Professional Development activities. A primary goal of the professional development program is to provide facilitated and structured opportunities to focus on instruction and student learning including common assessments and analysis of student work.

Although this is a primary goal of Professional Development, the demands of opening a new school and establishing a culture has diminished the time devoted to this goal. Professional development activities, cadre participation, content collaboration time and individual collaboration has built the capacity to practice these important methods. It is our hope that this practice will become a much more established practice of the Social Justice Learning community in the coming year.
Accountability and Leadership

The SLC Team clearly demonstrates personal and collective responsibility for achieving the vision and goals of the SLC and for the success of all students. There is a clearly articulated leadership plan that is individual, collective, distributive and active. The SLC has the support and engagement of the principal and other staff. There is a communication structure for the entire school and among all SLCs. The SLC team has expertise and utilizes internal and external school/students data from multiple sources to make decisions. The SLC Team evaluates and modifies plans at regular intervals based on the above data. The SLC team works with other SLCs and with District staff in obtaining support and technical assistance. The team takes responsibility for decisions related to budget, students conduct, facilities, master schedule, student programming, student behavior, and issues of community safety based on the vision. The evaluation plan includes specific data to be utilized and intervals at which the SLC will be re-evaluated and revised as necessary. Students, parents and staff commit annually to common set of expectations for behavior and learning outcomes.

To ensure the success of all students, the entire SLC community (students, teachers, parents, staff, counselors and administrators) is responsible for developing, implementing, monitoring and improving the SLC.

Each SLC is currently developing a Student Advisory Council. The Student Advisory Council is comprised of an Advisory representative from each Advisory class in the SLC. These Student Advisory Council members will meet at least monthly with the SLC leadership team to plan SLC identity building events, social service and service learning activities, and to provide a student voice for planning within the SLC. Additionally, some members of the Student Advisory Council also serve on the school-wide Leadership Council allowing for coordination of activities between the SLC and the larger Arleta High School community.

In addition to the Student Advisory Council, each SLC is in the process of developing the SLC Advisory Council which consists of students, parents, faculty, community members and administration. The SLC Advisory Council will serve as an advisory committee to further the educational, enrichment and community involvement goals of the SLC. The Advisory Council will meet monthly and some members of the council will also serve on the School Site Council for Arleta High School. This dual membership will support the coordination of activities of both the SLC and the larger school community.

While each SLC has an administrator and counseling staff dedicated to the SLC, the faculty and staff share in the leadership of the SLC. The administrative, counseling and teaching staff meets regularly to develop, implement, monitor and
modify activities in the service of the SLC vision. Additionally, each faculty member is encourage to participate in either the service of the SLC, or the larger AHS community, through club sponsorship, athletic team coaching, extracurricular activity sponsorship, event supervision or participation.

The parents of SLC students are encouraged to participate in the leadership opportunities including School Site Council, ELAC Council, CEAC Council, and SLC Advisory Council. Additionally all parents will be requested to sign the Parent School Compact at the beginning of the school year. The compact identifies expectations and responsibilities that parents, students and the school have in student success.

The identification and funding for a part-time SLC Lead teacher is a priority for the Social Justice SLC. It is hoped that this person will expand community partnerships, parent activities and student engagement opportunities and strengthen the distributed leadership of the SLC in the future.
Collaboration, Parent and Community Engagement

The SLC had established partnerships with community members, employers, postsecondary institutions and other necessary to support the SLC. Partners are involved in the development of curriculum, activities and other components to support the SLC. Parents are included as participants in the SLC decisions. The SLC provides frequent opportunities for partners and parents to gather easily at appropriate times and locations for instruction and collaboration.

In our inaugural year, limited partnerships have been formed to enrich the SLC experience. The partnership with Los Angeles Mission College in the development of the Early College Program is very exciting. Additionally, the Social Justice SLC has had the benefit of working with former state Senator, current LA City Council Member Richard Alarcon who has been a guest lecturer in Social Justice classes. It is our hope that in the coming year additional partnerships will be formed and supported in particular by the identification and funding of an SLC Lead Teacher.

Parents participate in the school-wide CEAC, ELAC, and School Site Councils and have attended the School for Parents designed to increase the understanding of standards-based instruction, SLCs and parental support for student success. While regular communication with parents in the form of letters, personal phone calls, automated phone calls, progress reports, report cards, open house and PHBAO conferences exist at Arleta High School and the Social Justice SLC, additional outreach activities are a priority for the future of the Social Justice SLC. The SLC lead teacher will be an additional resource to increase outreach activities to parents.

Student and parents are given thorough information about all SLCs when making an SLC choice for placement. Partners and parents are included in the evaluation of the SLC. The SLC Advisory Committee holds regularly scheduled meetings that are open to the public and published minutes of the meetings.

Prior to enrollment, incoming students and their parents are informed of the SLC options at the school and invited to attend an orientation session detailing the SLC options. Students then are asked to indicate SLC preference during the enrollment and programming process. To the extent possible, given the limits of program needs, students are enrolled in their first choice of SLC.

The identification and funding for a part-time SLC Lead teacher is a priority for the Social Justice SLC. It is hoped that this person will expand community partnerships, parent activities and student engagement opportunities.
The SLC Team meets to review student work and progress. SLC teachers regularly meet to infuse the SLC theme/identity into the common core curriculum, develop cross-disciplinary, standards-based thematic projects, and analyze student projects based on a common set of rubrics. SLC Teams meet regularly through professional development, cadre meetings, and collaboration opportunities to develop, implement, evaluate and enhance content instructional activities using informal lesson study activities. With the help of a consultant, project based learning has been supported and lesson study using the critical friends protocol has been a part of the SLC culture of professional practice. It is hoped that the SLC will adopt a more formalized lesson study protocol to use in the upcoming school year.
Professional Development

There are regularly scheduled meetings to discuss students and their work and to plan and implement SLC lessons and activities. The SLC Team clearly demonstrated that it is a “professional community of practice” that is collaborative and public. The SLC PD supports alignment of instruction with academic standards and accountability requirements. The SLC Team utilizes assessment results and student data to inform instruction and to make mid-course corrections in instructional practice. All PD is aligned with district and site-specific improvement goals. The SLC Team utilizes assessment results and student data to modify the professional development plan as needed. PD supports ongoing leadership development. PD supports instructional experimentation, pilot studies, and the sharing of results.

Goals of the professional development program are to provide facilitated and structured opportunities to focus on instruction and student learning including common assessments and analysis of student work. Additional goals of the professional development program include implementing and monitoring district initiatives, improving capacity for educational practice and leadership, and enhancing the effectiveness of the SLC. The resources that are available to meet these goals include the weekly professional development opportunity each Tuesday, common conference periods for many content teachers, participation in the content cadres, expert consultation support from experts in Project Based Learning, expert support in the content areas from local district personnel, and supplemental resources from Title I.

Prior to opening the school, faculty members had extensive professional development in teaching in the block schedule, project based learning, team building, and meeting the needs of learners with special needs. These professional development opportunities have been followed by consultative support in project based learning on a quarterly basis.

Teachers in English, math, science and history have participated in the local district cadre programs. The work of the cadres has been centered around standards based instruction, the analysis of student work and other student data, and capacity building. Additionally, teachers of English, math and science have participated in additional training on pilot lessons which are being implemented and evaluated through facilitated lesson study.

Although the primary professional development goal is the focus on instruction and student learning, the demands of opening a new school and establishing a culture has diminished the time devoted to this goal. Professional development activities, cadre participation, content collaboration time and informal collaboration have built the capacity to practice these important methods so that
as the demands of opening a new school diminish, the focus can be returned to instruction.