# Session 1 Report – Student Vision

*NAME OF SCHOOL: BANNING HIGH SCHOOL*                    *DATE OF SESSION 1: 9/18/12*
*NAME OF ORGANIZATION REPORTING: FAMILIES IN SCHOOLS*
*NAME OF INDIVIDUAL REPORTING ON BEHALF OF THE ORGANIZATION: NADIA M. HERNANDEZ*
*DATE THIS REPORT IS COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED: 9/28/12*

Parents and community members at Banning High School provided feedback on their student vision through a group activity, discussion, and written comments.

**A common theme that was expressed by the participants was for students to possess a number of life skills and career ready abilities that will prepare them for the future.** The participants shared on the habits they would like their students to possess such as the ability to administer their time, know how to respect their peers and teachers, be able to resolve conflicts or problems in a logical manner, be confident and successful, be self sufficient, be a productive member of society, and be adept at social skills. Several written comments reaffirmed this vision for students at Banning High School:

1.  More realistic classes beyond high school classes that will help students in the future.
2.  My wish is for students to have a lot of motivation to study and feel the need to be better students.
3.  Possess the ability to have feelings such as empathy, compassion, and respect.
4.  To be responsible, respectful, studious, and be a productive member of society.
5.  Respect the opinion of others, not harm one another, enjoy life and do what they want to do without harming other people. Achieve their goals.

**Several participants agreed that they would like to see more technical classes offered to students.** For instance, one participant explained that he wants children to have an education where they can learn real basic mechanic/life skills. He envisions students who have the knowledge of real tangible, hands-on skills such as knowing how to read the phone bill and balance a check book. He commented, *"My vision is for students to be self sufficient and productive members of society who feel fulfilled. Learn real world skills like sewing, mechanics, and financials (like balance a check book); and be adept at social skills."* He wants students to possess the necessary skills to be self-sufficient in life. Another parent also reaffirmed that in the past Banning High School offered these types of technical classes but the school does not offer them to students anymore.

Another theme present in the discussion of the participants was the issue of academics and improving the quality of the education offered to the students at Banning High school. Some participants commented that they would like to see better instruction in the classroom, for students to read and write critically, solve math and science, and be prepared for college. Also, the participants would like for teachers and counselors to be more receptive toward the students and guide them through the necessary steps to be college ready. The participants would like for their students to be college ready to have career opportunities available for them after graduation. The following are additional written feedback and questions provided by the participants:

1.  I would like to see frequent visits to the counselor; this should be required for students. Some college courses should be introduced to prepare them for college.
2.  What is available for my daughter after she leaves Banning? She is able to graduate at age 22. She is a special Education Child. What programs are there for her to continue on to college?
3.   What reading programs are out there?

4.  My vision is for my children are to graduate from the university, for them to have a better future and for them to feel proud of their roots.
5.  For my daughter to be able to understand what the teacher is trying to explain, have patience and not give up because she can't understand what the teacher is saying.
6.  Need resources and community building. Need to make sure resources are given not taken away.
7.  Be able to make the adjustment from high school to college.
8.  I would like my child to know what careers are out there for him and what is required of him to get there.
9.  To have the knowledge of the curriculum that is expected of the college/university.

Overall, the participants expressed having a feeling of pride in Banning that they would like to see reflected in their students and school. They would like to see academics that are more geared toward life and social skills, classes that will prepare them to be college ready, and provide the students with the necessary resources to succeed.

Banning High School – Session 1

Public School Choice 4.0 Academy Session Reporting

# SESSION 1 REPORT – SCHOOL VISION

**NAME OF SCHOOL:**        Banning High School                                    **DATE OF SESSION 1:** 9/18/12
**NAME OF ORGANIZATION REPORTING**:        Families In Schools
**NAME OF INDIVIDUAL REPORTING IN BEHALF OF THE ORGANIZATION:**        Nadia M. Hernandez
**DATE THIS REPORT IS COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED:** 9/28/12

The School Vision was created by a combination of feedback provided by parents and community members through their participation in a small group activity, discussion, and observations. During the small group activities, participants were asked to discuss and comment on what type of school they envision for their children.

**An overall theme that was voiced by the parents was centered on the quality of education they want their children to obtain.** For instance, a parent shared that she would like to see *"qualified teachers, better trained students, and a school that is 100% qualified to teach at the level of the student, and have better technology."* The participants would like to see more qualified teachers who are encouraging toward their students. They would also like to see a more engaging environment inside the classroom so that students can stay on track with their lessons. A way to improve the quality of education for their children is by reducing the size of classrooms. The participants expressed that they would like to see the school address the issue of overpopulation in the classrooms. Lastly, the participants would like to improve the communication between staff, teachers, students, and parents.

Parents provided written feedback on issues they would like to see improved. These included:

1.  We need well prepared teachers and more technology. Students need to feel safe at school.
2.  I want my child to feel trust in school so that he can express himself with the teachers and speak to them about his frustrations.
3.  I would like for the High School to have teacher 100% qualified to teach and be able to meet individual needs. We need more financial aid.
4.  Positive attitudes from the staff toward students.
5.  We need teachers with more capacity and no more overpopulated classrooms. We need tutoring when students do not understand class material.
6.  We need more security for students and less vandalism.

**A theme that was expressed in the small group discussions was on the issue of safety and creating a school that is clean and with a welcoming environment for students**. The participants envision a school that is a safe space for the students to learn, a space where they are able to have the opportunities to participate in a variety of sports, where discipline is implemented throughout the entire school, and a school that is drug-free. The written feedback reflects these concerns:

1.  To have a safe and clean campus, a place to be proud of.
2.  For the school to be safe and drug free.
3.  As a student, I want to feel like my needs are being met. I want to feel comfortable and clean. I do not want to feel like I am not having a good learning experience.
4.  Environmentally and socially conscious!
5.  I want to see more trust, more attention to our students, have a lot of vigilance (in terms of safety) and for our Principal to be amiable, friendly, and courteous with the community.
6.  The discipline in the classrooms needs to be implemented as well as in the courtyards.
7.  The school should feel proud, welcoming, and create a sense of belonging. Be able to attend football, baseball, volley ball (all sports) and just create a community feeling.

**A last theme that was discussed by the participants was the need for more community and parent engagement between teachers and at school events.** A participant raised the issue on the lack of parent participation and inadequate outreach on the part of the school administrators. The participant expressed that she would like to see more parents attend school meetings, be more engaged in their student's academics, and for the community to be more informed about what is happening at Banning High School. She further stated that it is important to educate the community on the educational issues affecting their students so that they can become aware and participate in making positive changes for the school and students.

The overall sentiment reflected by the participants is that they are a close community and they would like for Banning to be a school they can feel proud of. The participants would like to see the academics improved, more effective teachers, and reduce the class sizes to an adequate number where students can create better relationships with their teachers. Lastly, the participants would like to address some of the security on campus so that students can feel welcomed and safe to learn.

# SESSION 1 REPORT – DIALOGUES WITH PLANNING TEAMS

**NAME OF SCHOOL:**     Banning High School     **DATE OF SESSION 1:** 9/18/12
**NAME OF ORGANIZATION REPORTING**:     Families In Schools
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## DIALOGUE ONE – DIALOGUE BETWEEN FIRST PLANNING TEAM AND PARTICIPANTS

**Team 1: (Banning Magnet):** Ms. Jennifer Tentes presented on behalf of this team.  She is a teacher at the Magnet Center. Her plan is to convert the Magnet Center into a Magnet School on the Banning High School campus. The Center currently operates with about 340 students. By 2014, they hope to triple the number of students accepted into the Magnet Center to become more diverse.

Several of the questions demonstrated that the participants did not fully understand what a Magnet Center was and how this plan would be implemented at Banning High School. The participants thought that her plan was to convert the whole school to a Magnet but she clarified that she only wants to convert the currently operating Magnet center into a separate school within Banning.  Below are some of the questions and comments discussed during the dialogue with workshop participants:

- Ms. Tentes discussed the high success rates of students in the magnet program while maintaining rigorous academic levels.

- When asked to differentiate between the Magnet School and the regular public school, Ms. Tentes explained that Magnet Schools in general are designed for student integration and that bussing at Banning was stopped for students coming in from other areas.

- A participant asked if the plan would take effect without an approval. Ms. Tentes explained the process for Magnet Centers and PSC.  She explained that if the resources fall into place, with government funding the center would be able to transition into a school.

- A parent brought up the issue of exclusivity in the magnet program.  On behalf of the planning team, Ms. Tentes explained that the purpose of their plan was to turn an already existing Magnet Center into a Magnet School within Banning High School serving more students and getting them prepared to graduate.

Participants also provided additional written questions for the first planning team:

1. Why do we need to change a traditional school? Can't we just leave it how it is and just fix the problems to improve education for students?
2. How will being an autonomous and independent magnet school be better for Banning?
3. I am confused, what will the school look like? The requirements worry me.
4. How and why can changes be made with the school without a forum with the community?
5. What are the requirements for my children to attend a Magnet School? And what are the differences between a Magnet School and a Regular School?
6. What is done differently to help them [Magnet students] stand out from the average student?
7. Is a Magnet school also available/open for students in special education?
8. Does applying for Magnet guarantee acceptance in the program at Banning?
9. How do you expect the school to be successful since it has high expectations for students?

## DIALOGUE TWO – DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE SECOND PLANNING TEAM AND PARTICIPANTS

**Team 2: Banning Academy of Technology:** Mr. Noe Baez and Mr. James Carter are two teachers at Banning working on this school plan. Their school plan is designed around an academy of technology. Their vision for students is to prepare them with technical skills, certification after graduation, and prepare them to enter the workforce. Their vision for their plan is to incorporate more forms of technology where students can succeed with additional resources. The students will be able to have access to school material and resources online, instruction hours online, and parent input on a biweekly basis. The Academy of Technology will start with 400 students as the minimum and then grow to 600 - 800 students.

Some of the questions for the second planning team focused on the use of technology and how it will be implemented in the school. The participants were concerned about how the technology would supplement the education of the students and if it would interfere with their learning. Another concern was the involvement of parents who have limited knowledge of some of the technology used at school. Below are some of the questions and comments discussed by participants and this planning team:

- A participant asked what the classroom setting would look like under this model, including how it would work logistically.  How would parents be trained to understand the technology?  The Planning Team answered this concern by explaining that they are mimicking a college program that is already working at Palos Verdes High School with success. The program is running at no cost and does not involve any sustainability funding. The only cost is a $2,000 software program.  Resources would be shared among students. This team would also implement small class size and focus on graduating students to incorporate more each year.

- A participant expressed concern about the length of classes and how effective using technology would be in a classroom setting since children seem to use too much of it already with computers, phones, etc. The planning team explained that the classes would be 2 hours long so that students would be able to cover all of the concepts in one day.

- The Planning team was asked how they would deal with overcrowding in Banning classes.  Their class size would depend on the number of teachers and students they actually had. They would also include teachers from other subjects in the academy.

- A participant asked how the planning team would involve parents. The planning team responded by suggesting that would use different forms of technology to communicate more effectively about events.

Participants also provided the following written questions:
1. When you are talking about a small amount of students in the class, what are you referring to?
2. How will technology be used and implemented in the classroom?
3. Will it be only one teacher or several teachers? Will the classes by overpopulated?
4. In order to be in the academy, do you have to have a computer on a daily basis at home?
5. Is the academy for all grade levels?

## DIALOGUE THREE – DIALOGUE BETWEEN THIRD PLANNING TEAM AND PARTICIPANTS

**Team 3: Banning Academy of Creative and Innovative Sciences (BACIS):** This plan was presented by Ms. Susan Rupp and Mr. Adam Paskowitz with the goal of  addressing some of the academic problems at Banning such as the low graduation rate and helping more students complete the A-G requirements for college. They are proposing a model with Small Schools where students have had better success rates academically. They explained that the current system is not designed to send all students to college and they want to adjust the system so that more students can go to college. The model would have an advisory committee that would include parents. This advisory committee would be advisors to students for 4 years. This model would also integrate online learning in the classroom, blend traditional work with technological assistance and make use of online assessments that show students what they know and what they need help with.

Several questions for this planning team sought clarity on how Small Schools worked and could improve student achievement at Banning. Below are other questions and comments discussed during the dialogue with workshop participants:

- A participant asked why small learning communities had not been successful. The planning team replied by explaining weaknesses in the structure.

- Some participants were complementary to the Small Learning Communities, recalling success in the 1990s, saying students had more personalized attention, and that this was the jumpstart Banning needed.

- A participant expressed the need to evaluate the differences between successful and struggling Small Learning Communities.

## DIALOGUE FOUR – DIALOGUE BETWEEN FOURTH PLANNING TEAM AND PARTICIPANTS

**Team 4: Banning High School:** This planning team is composed of the Principal Rudy Mendoza along and several teachers and staff at Banning. They presented a school plan that can set an academic foundation for students. In the past caring teachers took time to ensure students passed their classes (mentoring), there was family and student support; they want to bring back programs that ensure student success and reinstate some of these programs like AVID and they also want to address career pathways for student. This school plan will also include small learning communities that will help students be prepared for the future.

This team also received some questions seeking clarity on Small Learning Communities, how they would help students, and how these will be implemented. Below is a summary of some of the questions and comments discussed during the dialogue between the planning teams and workshop participants:

- The planning team explained that in Small Learning Communities, students would be able to get more attention from teachers and class sizes would be smaller.

- A participant asked why some programs that had success at Banning before had been removed. The team's response was that their plan had a goal of bringing some of those programs back like AVID.

Here is a list of additional written questions submitted by workshop participants:

1. Some areas are not functioning in this school, not even the small learning communities. How are we going to see change?
2. Why is the there overcrowding of students in classrooms? Is it the lack of teachers? Are there any empty rooms? What are you going to do to fix this problem?
3. I am an involved parent. My concern is over the lack of parent involvement.
4. How would you like parents to be involved? What is the process for parents to become involved in this process?
5. The school in general does not have the technology. How is this going to be implemented in the classes?