

Defining a Healthy School to Build a Healthy Community

Richmond, CA, Richmond High School Health Academy
9th Grade Cultural Geography



ISSUE

The new Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) dramatically changes the way public education will be funded in California, presenting an opportunity for more local control, greater transparency, and equity through the creation of Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAPs). As the recipients of LCAPs, West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) recognizes that creating pathways for authentic student voice in the LCAP process is essential to the success of this policy. For the past semester, WCCUSD has partnered with Y-PLAN at Richmond High School to examine the school environment from a health perspective and identify priorities for LCAPs. Students created, distributed, and analyzed over 60 community surveys that asked students to define a healthy school, community, and learning environment. Student surveys revealed a high level of overlap between the social, emotional, physical, and environmental factors that structure the health of schools and the larger community. As one student wrote, a healthy school is defined as “A school with fresh lunches. People would remain tolerant of different beliefs, ethnicities, and sexual orientation (no bullying), and students and teachers would be enthusiastic about learning.”

“I learned the difference between equality and equity. I’ve also learned adults aren’t the only ones who can make a difference. Us teens, including freshmen, have the power to change and to improve our school and our community.”

– *RHS Y-PLAN Student*

QUESTION

How should the WCCUSD School Board use LCFF funding to create an equitable, healthy learning environment for all Richmond High School students to succeed?

YOUTH DRIVEN DATA AND INSIGHTS

Y-PLAN Instructor: Angel Ponce-Larsen
Students: 9th grade cultural geography
Client: West Contra Costa School Board
Community Partner: Youth Enrichment Strategies
Civic Partner: City of Richmond

“We often plan with those who just happen to come to the table – and they happen to not be young people of color. Y-PLAN forces us to open our minds – to get youth who are students of color, who have families that live in the community, who are representing a different generation to the table, to hear what reality is for them and to incorporate that in the process.”

– *Y-PLAN Client, City of Richmond*

LCAPs require districts to set annual goals in eight state priority areas. Through school-based research, students at Richmond High School identified Basic Necessities, Student Engagement, and School Climate, as top priority areas to develop recommendations for the LCAP. Students adapted the California Department of Education’s FIT Assessment into a digital survey tool to map assets and challenges of

