



Schools, Services

Amenities

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 adults aren't the only ones who can 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

"I learned the difference between equality and equity. I've also learned make a difference. Us teens, including freshmen, have the power to change and to improve our school and our community." – RHS Y-PLAN Student

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."

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

Client: West Contra Costa School Board **Community Partner:** Youth Enrichment Strategies

Civic Partner: City of Richmond

LCAPs require districts to set annual goals in eight state priority areas. Through school-based research,

Y-PLAN Instructor: Angel Ponce-Larsen "We often plan with those who just happen to Students: 9th grade cultural geography 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

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



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their school facility and created and distributed surveys specific to better understand indicators of a healthy learning environment and the priorities and challenges of the larger school community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Priority Area #1: Basic Necessities

- Upgrade and improve water quality & access: more water fountains, filling stations
- Improve bathrooms: cleanliness, soap, dividers, locks
- Make students feel more comfortable at lunch by creating two lunch lines and adding additional lunch carts
- Improve overall cleanliness of school facility, including pests and vermin
- Upgrade school grounds
- Create more windows
- Improve air quality, including access to fresh air and air conditioning

Priority Area #5: Student Engagement

• Upgrade school recreational facilities, including bike racks and basketball courts to provide activities that may encourage or give incentive to students to come to school

Priority Area #6: School Climate

- Create peer-advisory group focused on decreasing bullying and increasing feelings of personal safety
- Improve quality, access, and efficiency of school services
- Create after school clubs to provide low-income, English language learners, and foster youth the opportunity to hang out in a safe location
- Improve opportunities for recycling and composting across campus

NEXT STEPS

Student efforts caught the attention of Youth Enrichment Strategies, who partnered with students to install a hydration station. In addition, the Principal of Richmond High School promised students the administration would take action on student's proposals, beginning with basic facilities. He invited students to submit a formal proposal of priorities including budget for consideration. The Deputy Superintendent of WCCUSD presented student recommendations to the WCCUSD School board, which will consider student input in the final WCCUSD Local Control Accountability Plan.

For more information on Y-PLAN, contact Jessie Stewart, Y-PLAN National Coordinator: jessie.stewart@berkeley.edu



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