SCHOOLS AND THE CITY: MAKING THE CONNECTION

FINAL REPORTS
CP 290G, Fall 2003

Lincoln High School

Galileo Academy of Science & Technology

Burton High School

Mission High School

Final Report and Recommendations for:

Phillip & Sala Burton Academic High School

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CP 290G
Urban Education and Community Development
Fall 2003

Executive Summary

This report begins with an introduction (section I) which lays out the intent of our research, as well as a review of literature on communities and schools (section II) that served as a theoretical foundation for our investigation. Following the literature review is a methodology section which describes the five main elements of our research methodology (see section III):

- Interaction with Burton High School Academy of Finance Teachers and Students
- Community Profile
- Student Survey
- Identification of Student Travel Commercial Corridors
- Student Conversation Groups

Driving the research and preparation of this report were several key questions that fall under two main themes:

Theme 1: Community

Question 1: How do we define community?

Question 2: How can the community surrounding Burton High School support the
Academy of Finance?

Theme 2: Academy of Finance

Question 1: What parts of the city (or region) do the students come from?

Question 2: What are the students' 'comfort zones' within the city?

Question 3: How is transportation a factor in School-to-Career opportunities for students?

In order to answer these key questions posed by the Academy of Finance teachers, we conducted a community profile (see sections IV through VI) to better understand the issues, assets, and obstacles within the local community, a written student survey given to Academy of Finance students, and follow-up student conversation groups. The profile provides a description of the neighborhoods surrounding Burton High School (Visitation Valley and Portola), a brief outline of the school's history, and a selected description and mapping of existing community resources. This section of the report also contains demographic information specific to Burton as well as a breakdown of demographics for the neighborhoods surrounding the school.

Section VII of our report discusses the findings of the three main school-based research methods employed: Academy of Finance teacher dialogues, written student surveys, and small student conversation groups. The community profile, the surveys, the student conversation groups, and teacher interviews were used to construct three main recommendations for the Burton High School Finance Academy and San Francisco Unified School District in order to improve its School-to-Career and work-based learning program (section VIII**). The recommendations are: 1) Utilize a transportation oriented strategy, 2) Engage in community-based projects, and 3) Create new comfort zones for students.** Within the context of these recommendations, we describe each recommendation's goal and outline specific strategies for achieving them. We then provide concrete examples that the Burton Academy of Finance could employ to carry out the recommendations. These include information on local businesses and organizations interested in forming partnerships as well as in-class strategies to enhance the learning experience of these opportunities. The report concludes with a discussion of key challenges that exist in implementing these recommendations as well as themes and topics that need further attention and understanding (section IX).

I. Introduction

This report was created for the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), including its administrators, students, and teachers, to support and enhance the District's School-to-Career program. The information and analysis contained herein was compiled by a project team consisting of three doctoral students – one in UC Berkeley's Department of City and Regional Planning and two in the Graduate School of Education. As a team, we worked with the teachers from Burton High School's Academy of Finance in order to both identify and develop possible connections between the Academy and the surrounding community. Research partners included the three Academy of Finance teachers, Becky Gerek, Pam Brockmeier, and Karl von Brockdorff. The overall intent of this report is to provide background information and recommendations that will be useful for teachers, administrators, and school officials in developing and maintaining school/community partnerships that can enhance educational opportunities for Burton High School's Academy of Finance students.

Several key questions, under two main themes, drove the research and the preparation of this report.

Theme 1: Community
> Question 1: How do we define community?
> Question 2: How can the community surrounding Burton High School support the
> > Academy of Finance?

Theme 2: Academy of Finance
> Question 1: What parts of the city (or region) do the students come from?
> Question 2: What are the students' 'comfort zones' within the city?
> Question 3: How is transportation a factor in School-to-Career opportunities for students?

Out of our research emerged a set of three recommendations, as well as associated strategies for and challenges to implementation. Our intent is that the recommendations contained herein represent a product uniquely suited to the needs of Burton Academy students, based on the realities and possibilities that exist within their daily lives. It became evident within the research

that Burton High School's relative geographic distance from many parts of San Francisco poses a number of significant obstacles for work-based learning opportunities. This report considers the reality of those constraints by better understanding them and looks at ways to maximize student opportunities near Burton High School. Ultimately, this report was written with consideration for the community and local issues that could be of potential interest to Burton High School and, specifically, it's Academy of Finance.

II. Literature Review

This report is situated within an exploration of the concept of school and community connections. Within this context we will attempt to set forth strategies explicitly intended to improve Burton High School Academy of Finance students' educational opportunities by strengthening the relationship between the school and other institutions and actors with the local community. Plainly stated, this report is concerned with finding ways to get community members into the school and to get students out into the community, all for explicit learning opportunities. Public schools exist as one of the largest elements of both the social and physical infrastructure of local neighborhoods, cities and regions. School have also long been regarded as communities that develop a strong organizational and educative culture; yet, the historical professionalization and bureaucratization of public education has led to a disassociation between public schools and their local, spatial communities- physically, socially and institutionally (Tyack 1974; Andrews 1987; Katz 1987; Furman and Merz 1996).

Currently underway are a number of efforts attempting to bridge this divide and better understand the ways that public schools can become more central elements within their communities and cities.
Research supports the fact that students do well in environments in which the school is central to the life and learning in the community (see U.S. Department of Education 2000). However, the challenge lies in (re)orienting the school towards the community and explicitly tying the curriculum to local work-based learning opportunities. This strategy of a community-oriented pedagogy, or community-based education, is centered on the student's ability to recognize and

support the needs of the surrounding community (Villani and Atkins 2000). Community-based education can provide real-world, contextual learning experiences for students, offering a powerful alternative to the more traditional didactic methods by teaching-what Freire (1970) labels a "critical pedagogy of active problem-posing," as contrasted to the more traditional and passive banking model. Whereas Gardner (1991) notes the benefits of the community coming into the school, Villani and Atkins (2000) argue that the students must also enter the community and conduct community-based problem solving to promote learning and community improvement. It is these two frameworks that most influenced the approach set forth within this report.

As researchers, we constantly struggled with defining the "community" and the "Burton school-community." These concepts can mean different things and can have varied criteria of social networks, geographic space and District policy-making. The definition is further complicated in this instance by the nature of SFUSD's consent decree on school attendance. As a result, Burton High School students come from all over San Francisco, and some from outside the city. For purposes of this report we use a conception of the Burton school-community that looks at the immediate geographic locale with its varied people, assets, and obstacles surrounding the school-that is, Visitation Valley and Portola. At the same time, we also consider students' personal links to other parts of the city and region. We further utilized the student conversation groups to understand students' definitions of their multiple communities and their perceptions of the Burton school-community. This is evident in the literature as sociological research on school communities has recently gained a renewed focus on "community" as a unit of analysis (Arum 2000), but the definition of school community has changed. Researchers now acknowledge that looking just at the neighborhood ecological unit misses the entire spectrum of institutional forces that weigh heavy upon schools. Today, a school's community is equally its neighborhood cultural and demographic environment (and/or families served) and its institutional environment. As Stone et al (2001) notes, a wide numerous actors and institutions within urban areas are needed to 'build civic capacity' around school reform.

Many of the current educational reforms place community as a central concept and much of this focus is predicated on the notion that communities, neighborhoods and families are in decline

(Coleman 1985; Putnam 1995; Putnam 2000) through a loss of "social capital." Goodlad (1981) stated that the withering of the community and erosion of the common school have gone hand in hand. But what exactly do we mean when we speak of community and especially in relation to schools and education? Furman and Merz (1996) note that much of the discussion of community is vague and romantic. Likewise, Wagstaff and Gallagher (1990) note that this lack of clear definition of community (notably the relationship between families, communities and schools) underscores the current dilemma facing broader players concerned with changing and improving schools. Mitchell (1990) argues that we seem to have a nostalgic notion of what community means, and we can experience its loss as a lack of belongingness. We utilized the student conversation groups to get an understanding of student perceptions of their belongingness in the Burton High School locale. The understanding of community provides a conceptual tool for improved thinking on current issues of schools, community and reforms.

Researchers have identified three distinctive, yet related, approaches that enable schools and communities to cross traditional boundaries of separation in order to build stronger relationships between one another (Miller 1993): 1) the school as a community center sees the school as a hub for community activity including lifelong education, social service coordination (Coalition for Community Schools 2003), and, as Riley (1999) noted, widespread decision-making participation in creating "centers of community" and learning and cultural parks;" 2) using the community as curriculum, emphasizing the study of the contextualized social and physical space of the locale (Strategies include student-generated data collection such as conducting needs assessments, studying environmental and land use patterns, and conducing local oral histories through interviews. Nachtigal et al. (1989) show that students who study their community and get directly involved with local residents tend to value their community more highly); 3) School-based enterprise (SBE), including Social Enterprises for Learning (SEfL), approach emphasizes the school as developer of entrepreneurial skill (Stern et al. 1994; Stern et al. 2000; McKoy 2002) where the students identify a local unmet need and establish a business to address it. These three elements come together to form the basis of a community-based learning model that promotes possibilities for local engagement with area leaders and residents.

There are two additional concepts within the nexus of community development and educational reform that both hinge on community participation (Timpane and Reich 1997). The first is that there is no cookie cutter model that can be applied; strategies will need to be structured based on the unique situations of the local context. Each community will need to cater strategies that build on local strengths and specific needs. The second is that participation among diverse groups, including the school, cannot be taken as a base assumption. A model that assumes harmonious buy-in across groups ignores the various stakeholders' political and social ideologies as well as their perceptions of what the problems are.

It is our assumption that community change is fundamentally about relationships. Relationships form the essence of creating partnerships among the school and other groups. However, these partnerships must be predicated on a mutual benefit for all parties, not just the school, in order for them to be sustainable. Thus, problem-posing strategies that enable students to identify community needs and devise solutions can be both an educational experience for students and provide a community service.

III. Methodology

The following section describes the five main elements of the research methodology.

a. Interaction with Burton High School Academy of Finance

Dialogue with Academy Teachers: Our team met with the coordinator of the Academy of Finance in order to gain a basic understanding of the Academy as well as to identify key issues and questions for further investigation. In addition, we had email discussions with the other two teachers early on in the research. Contact with teachers continued with the various site visits to observe classes, administer the written surveys, and conduct the student focus groups.

Class Observations: Members of our team observed both Academy classes (eleventh and twelfth grade) in order to gain a better understanding of the Academy format and course operation. We also learned more from the Academy teachers about the specific areas of focus and goals of the Academy curriculum.

b. Community Profile:
A significant amount of the research involved creating a community profile of the Burton High School area, by utilizing a community asset mapping strategy[1]. The assumption in community asset mapping is that community improvement begins by a "process of locating the assets, skills, and capacities of residents, citizens associations and local institutions (Kretzman and McKnight 1993)." The goal of these efforts is to recognize the relationships and interconnections that exist and/or are possible between resources and actors. In addition, we paid particular attention to not only community assets, but also community needs, problems, and deficiencies. Using census data, community planning documents, and school statistics, we compiled a profile of the community surrounding Burton High School. Included in this profile is background information that helps to "set the stage" for the discussion of community/school partnerships, such as demographic data, school and community history, geographic and environmental considerations, and a

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[1] Our strategy was largely based on the methodology described in Kretzman and McKnight 1993.

description and mapping of existing community resources. Two key methodologies employed were:

Community Tour: In order to better familiarize ourselves with both the neighborhood surrounding Burton and our study area, our team participated in a community tour led by a representative from the Visitation Valley Planning Alliance. During this tour we gained valuable background information on the history of Visitation Valley, as well as current politics and community projects. We also attended several community meetings.

Meetings with Community Organizations: Members of the research team met with several leaders of community organizations in both Visitation Valley and Bayview/Hunter's Point. We sought to obtain a better understanding of the programs and activities that these organizations offered, as well as discuss potential connections between their work and Burton's Academy of Finance.

c. **Student Survey:** A written survey was administered to the Academy of Finance students in order to explore the research questions that were constructed through collaboration between the research team and the Academy teachers.[2] To explore these questions, students were asked to complete a survey that addressed their transportation routes, internship preferences, and any foreseeable challenges that might arise in doing an internship. This report provides an analysis of the survey results.

d. **Identification of Student-Traveled Commercial Corridors:** Based on the survey data, student transportation routes were analyzed to identify the most highly-student-traveled commercial transportation corridors that could be targeted for School-to-Career opportunities. Four main commercial corridors were identified as those frequently-traveled by students, and a database of businesses and their contact information along these routes was created that could serve as potential internship placement sites for students.

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[2] See Appendix for survey instrument

e. **Student Conversation Groups:** In order to more deeply explore the survey findings and our research questions, six small, student conversation groups were conducted with Academy of Finance students.[3] Questions to lead the discussion were posed by the participating research team members that addressed the broad themes of "community" and the "Academy of Finance." One student volunteer recorded student responses on chart paper while the graduate student researchers took individual notes. The conversation groups lasted approximately 40 minutes. Results were organized according to general themes and used to create our recommendations.

IV. Community History and Description

a. Defining the Community

Burton High School sits on the border between the San Francisco neighborhoods of Portola and Visitation Valley. For purposes of this profile we have defined the community spatially as these two neighborhoods, which share the same boundary with the 94134 zip code area (see Figure 1). These two neighborhoods serve as a context for a more in-depth study of the Burton High School community. We also take into consideration the broader southeastern section of San Francisco, which serves as an expanded local context from which we selectively point to assets, problems and issues in relation to Burton and its School-to-Career work in the Academy of Finance (See Figure 2). This region includes, but is not limited to, the neighborhoods of Crocker Amazon, Excelsior, Outer Mission, and the Bayshore neighborhoods of Bayview/Hunters Point.

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[3] See Appendix for conversation group protocol

Figure 1: Primary Study Area (94134 Zipcode)
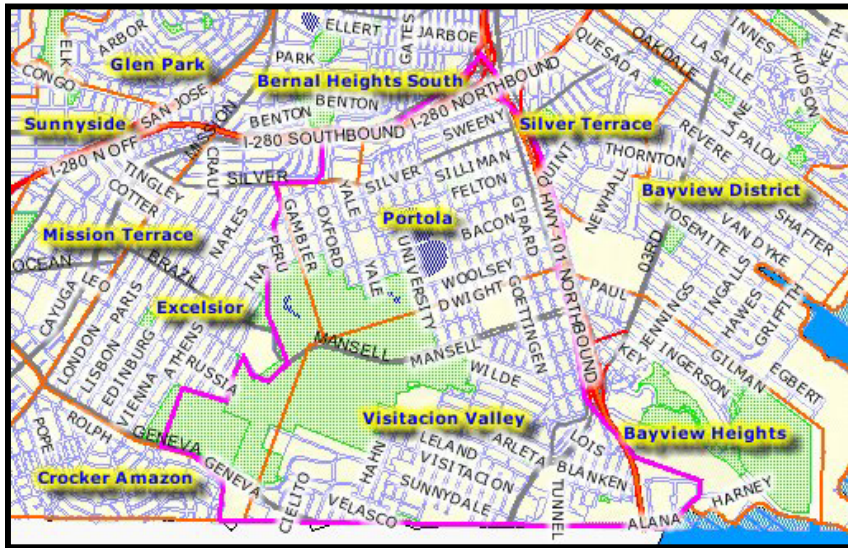

Figure 2: Southeastern San Francisco: Neighborhoods in and near the Study Area

b. **Geography and Neighborhood Overview**

The Visitation Valley and Portola neighborhoods are bounded by the city limits to the south, Interstate 280 to the north, Highway 101 to the east and McLaren Park to the west. Both neighborhoods are highly residential, consisting primarily of single-family one-story above-garage housing. The businesses within this area are mostly neighborhood commercial,

consisting predominantly of small, locally owned retail and services. However, Visitation Valley does contain a fair amount of industrial land uses, mostly in its southeast section. Across Highway 101, in the nearby Bayshore neighborhoods there is considerably more industrial land uses. In general, land uses within the Visitation Valley neighborhood are a bit more diverse in type than its northern neighbor, Portola. The relative geographic isolation of Burton High School from many other areas of San Francisco presents a unique challenge to finding ways that the nearby community can support various School-to-Career efforts.

c. Environment

McLaren Park is a major environmental feature and amenity in the study area. The park's 317 acres form much of the western border of the study area. Just a few blocks from Burton High School, McLaren Park boasts 7.5 miles of maintained trails, views of the Pacific Ocean and the East Bay, a nine-hole golf course, seven tennis courts, three baseball diamonds, four playgrounds, and a swimming pool. The park offers a sampling of the Bay Area regional natural biodiversity and is largely maintained for its natural habitat. The park is a popular site for dog walkers, naturalists and others who seek a quiet and peaceful outdoor atmosphere.

Figure 3: McLaren Park

Historically, the area's extremely hilly topography deterred any development and the city eventually acquired and dedicated the site a park in 1934. It was named after then-director of Golden Gate Park, John McLaren, whose original intent was for people to have an "unspoiled alpine joy in the city." The City of San Francisco, Friends of McLaren Park and the San Francisco Neighborhood Parks Council continue to work together to keep McLaren's vision a reality while working to improve the park by replacing invasive plant species with native plants and developing habitats for the reintroduction of quail (the California state bird) and swallowtail and mission blue butterflies.

As a result of the many industrial activities within the southeastern section of the city, Burton High School is in close proximity to many environmental health hazards. Figure 4 shows the

distribution of various hazardous waste and contaminated sites in the Bayshore area. There has been significant community organizing around environmental justice issues in this area of San Francisco. This problem poses opportunities for student research and analysis of area conditions and strategies for improvement. In the recommendation section of this report, we provide an example of how Burton Academy of Finance students can become involved in this issue and utilize it as a project-based learning opportunity.

Figure 4: Environmental Hazards in the South Bayshore Area

Visitation Valley neighborhood organizations have been working in conjunction with the Trust for Public Land to create a series of parks from six contiguous lots owned by the San Francisco Water Department-formerly the route of an underground water pipe. Named the Visitation Valley Greenway Project, the parks will eventually be administered via a public/private partnership between the Greenway Project and the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department, in collaboration with various other partners including the California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco Conservation Corps and the San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners. The lots serve as a pollinator's corridor (habitat for bees and butterflies), neighborhood open space, and an outdoor classroom. Specifically, the lots are planned to include a community garden, picnic areas, a children's play garden, an agricultural lot, and a native plant garden. The Project has coordinated with the California Academy of Sciences to teach general science classes on the lots--classes that are available for young people in the greater Visitation Valley Watershed

and are a resource to school teachers for their classes. The organizers hope the project will continue to serve as a catalyst for building a sense of community and pride in the neighborhood-- a place that members of this diverse community can share[4]. Community work parties on the greenway are normally held on the 4th Saturday morning of each month. As will be noted in the recommendation section, this local project offers numerous opportunities for Burton student involvement. Figures 5 and 6 depict the concept plan and three of the six lots designated for the Visitation Valley Greenway Project, respectively.

Figure 5: Concept Plan Diagram for Visitation Valley Greenway Project

VISITACION
VALLEY
GREENWAY

North

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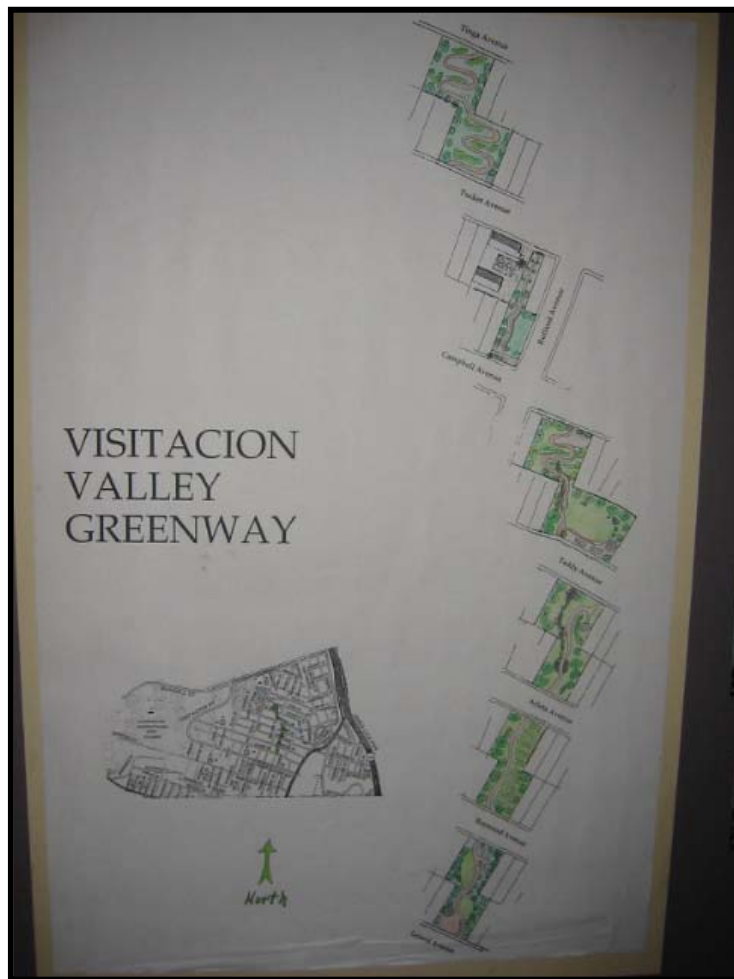
[4] Interview with Fran Martin, Visitation Valley Greenway Project Co-coordinator.

Figure 6: Three of the Six Lots of the Visitation Valley Greenway Project

d. Demography and Land Use

Labeled as two of San Francisco's 'forgotten neighborhoods,' Portola and Visitation Valley had a combined 2003 population of 40,668, with 8607 total family households.[5] These neighborhoods have a younger population than the rest of the city. Population under 18 is slightly higher (23.2%) than that of the entire city (19.8%).[6] From 1990 to 2000, population under 18 fell slightly for the city as a whole, while Portola and Visitation Valley's numbers rose slightly.

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[5] Unless otherwise noted, 2003 zipcode data source is Mayor's Office of Business and Economic Development, City and County of San Francisco. SF Prospector website. http://www.ci.sf.ca.us/site/sfprospector_index.asp. Unless otherwise noted, 2000 zip code data source is U.S. Census. http://www.census.gov. Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF1) 100-Percent Data.
[6] California Insitute of County Governments 2003 Data.
http://www.cicg.org/publications/profiles/san_francisco_county.pdf

Diversity

These neighborhoods are more racially diverse than the city as a whole. Figure 7 shows the difference in racial diversity between this area[7] and the City of San Francisco[8]. While approximately 50% of city residents are white, the Burton community is only about 19% white. Asians make up a significantly larger percentage of the population in this area (52%) than the city as a whole (31%). Cantonese-speaking Chinese make up the largest single ethnic group in the area. Blacks/African Americans are also higher at 13% in this area, compared to 8% in the entire city. The area is characterized by a large immigrant population, which is manifested in high levels of limited English language proficiency (LEP) in local elementary schools. For the 2002-2003 school year, both Visitation Valley Elementary School and Portola's E.R. Taylor Elementary School reported 57% LEP levels.[9] About 20% of the population is Hispanic or Latino, which is higher than the citywide percentage of 14%.

Figure 7: Race in San Francisco and the Burton area (94134 Zipcode)
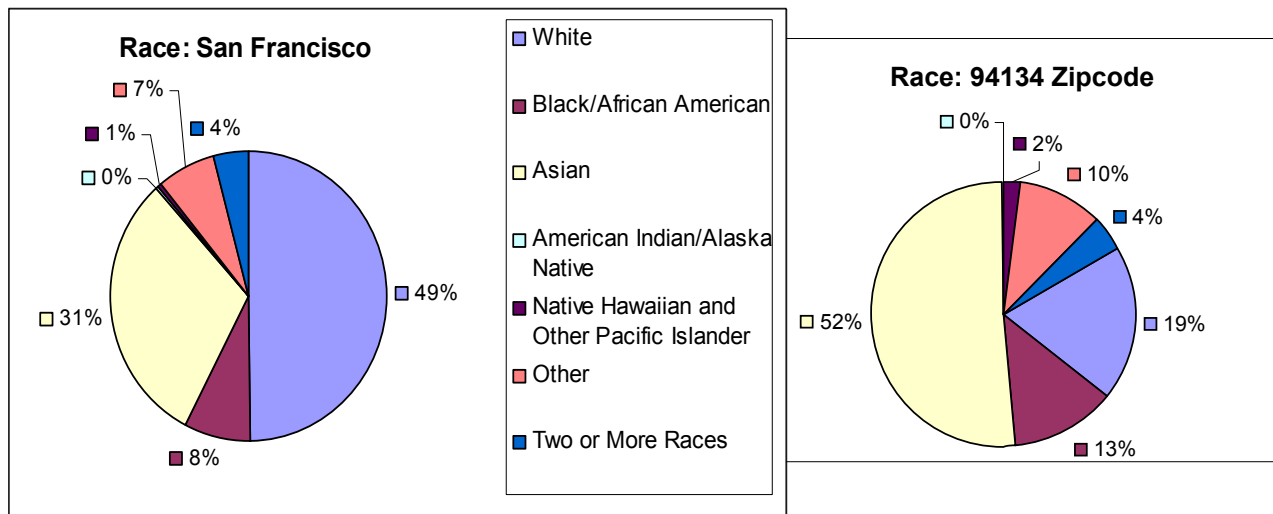
[7] U.S. Census 2000
[8] San Francisco Center for Economic Development 2002
[9] San Francisco Unified School District. http://www.sfusd.k12.ca.gov. School Profiles 2002-2003

Income

Median income in 2000 for the area is comparable with that of the city as a whole, $54,342 and $55,221 respectively.[10] However, study area and city mean incomes differ substantially; $63,335 and $80,325. Thus, the average household income in this area is nearly $20,000 less than that for the city was a whole. In 2003, 15% of households make less than $20,000 per year and 22% of households have a net worth of less than $15,000.[11] The Visitation Valley and Portola neighborhoods are relatively less well-off than the rest of the city.

Nearby South Bayshore has a similar story, but income levels generally are less than those of the study area. In 2000, median household income was $37,146, while mean household income was $49,537. In 2003, 27% of households make less than $20,000 per year and 25% of households have a net worth of less than $15,000. Seen as a relatively depressed area, the South Bayshore does not offer the type of work-based learning opportunities that might be found in other parts of the city. For example, finance-related internships may be hard to come by. However, this context offers other opportunities that will be addressed in later sections of the report.

Housing

Visitation Valley and Portola are characterized largely by single-family bungalows built around the post-WWII time. These neighborhoods are known for lower home prices and rents in comparison to other parts of San Francisco, which is most likely due to their geographic isolation from many parts of the city as well as their close proximity of large amounts of industrial space. While home prices have risen in the past decade, they have done so at a slower rate than the city as a whole and this is still considered one of the few remaining affordable areas for middle- and lower-middle class families. The total number of housing units in the study area is 11,115 with 65.6% being owner occupied in 2003[12]. This is significantly higher than the citywide average of 34.5% and points to a local strength of homeownership. Most homeowners tend to be Chinese and White. Figure 8 shows typical neighborhood housing in the primary study area.

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[10] U.S. Census 2000
[11] SF Prospector 2003
[12] SF Prospector 2003

Figure 8: Typical Neighborhood Housing

In the valley's southeastern corner, where Bayshore Blvd. and Highway 101 split to form a triangle, sits the residential neighborhood of Little Hollywood (see Figure 9). This neighborhood is characterized by pastel Southern California–style bungalows. In relative isolation, it is surrounded by freeway and Visitation Valley's industrial corridor.

Figure 9: Little Hollywood

Another reason for the relative affordability of the neighborhood is the presence of a number of public housing developments within Visitation Valley, some of which have been recently completed. The oldest, Sunnydale, is a public housing development built in the early 1940s originally for war-time shipbuilders working in the nearby Hunters Point naval shipyard. The Sunnyvale neighborhood is shown in Figure 10. Sunnydale has a reputation of crime, poverty

and unemployment, with the population being predominantly African American but also including some Chinese as well as a significant and visible Samoan population. In a recent study of the area, Urban Ecology found that persons having a Sunnydale Drive address could not get a pizza delivered to their door.[13] More recently constructed public housing includes the townhouse-style developments of Heritage Homes and Britton Court, which were completed in 1995 to replace the older high-rise Geneva Towers.

Figure 10: Sunnydale Public Housing Neighborhood

Visitation Valley and Portola's characteristics are quite different from the nearby South Bayshore area to the east. In the South Bayshore there were 7,181 households and just under 10,000 housing units in 2003, with 50% owner occupied and 47% renter occupied. While homeownership is very high, poverty levels are also high. Home prices and rental costs in this area also remain relatively low, mostly due to the poverty concentrations and the close proximity to heavy industrial land uses. Housing development and industrial activity have resulted in conflicts over health concerns that have pointed to local environmental injustices.

The historic concentration of industrial activity in the southeastern sections of San Francisco poses special issues and challenges for current and future development in this area. As many industries have shut down or relocated in recent decades, there exists a considerable amount of 'land in transition' in the form of formerly industrial land that is being considered for

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[13] Urban Ecology. 2001. Visitation Valley Neighborhood Planning Packet

redevelopment. However, the soil contamination from these previous uses poses restrictions and/or costly measures in order to redevelop for certain uses, such as residential. However, the restrictions placed on land use redevelopment differ by city; and cities often have different rules. For example, in this region, the cities of San Francisco and Brisbane have different regulations regarding the capping of contaminated soil and what types of land uses can be built upon these spaces.[14] The next section describes three major land use developments occurring near Burton High School, largely on formerly industrial land.

Major Land Use Developments near Burton High School

There are three major land use-related planning developments occurring near Burton High School: the Third Street Light Rail, the Schlage Lock site redevelopment, and the Brisbane Baylands development. These projects will have significant effects on the surrounding neighborhoods and the entire southeastern portion of the city, including those neighborhoods immediately surrounding Burton High School.

The Third Street Light Rail project is a major public transit project underway to enhance area residents' ability to get to other eastern neighborhoods and into downtown that could have a positive impact on Burton High School. San Francisco Municipal Railway (MUNI) is currently working on the Third Street Light Rail Project to reestablish a transit link along the Bayshore/Third Street Corridor, which will further link Chinatown and the

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[14] James Stickley, Director, WRT, Inc. Planning and Design. Presentation to the Visitation Valley Planning Alliance Meeting, November 8.

Figure 11: Third Street Light Rail Project

Financial District with Visitation Valley and South Bayshore. The project's goals are to improve travel times, help spawn economic development and alleviate downtown traffic congestion. The estimated completion year for Phase 1, which includes connection to the Visitation Valley CalTrain station, is 2005. The new travel time from the Visitation Valley Station to Market Street downtown is proposed to be 31 minutes. This project may offer Burton High School students, especially those in the Academy of Finance, improved access to School-to-Career opportunities in the city's financial district.

The redevelopment of the 14 acre former Schlage Lock factory site has been an issue of local contention. The factory closed in 1999 and remains underutilized. The factory had been in operation for over 70 years, and was once an integral facet of the local and regional economy. Home Depot, the national hardware chain, had proposed to build a 180,000 foot regional outlet on the site. However, community members organized and formed the Visitation Valley Planning Alliance, successfully halting the site approval for this use. Working with the City of San Francisco and various planning and design firms, the Alliance conducted a neighborhood survey and held a community design charrette, which proposed a transit- oriented development on the site oriented toward the Caltrain and Third Street Light Rail stops proposed for the

location. Figure 12 shows community design concepts for the site. Currently, official plans for the site are undecided.

Figure 12: Visitation Valley Planning Alliance community design concepts for the Schlage Lock site

Related to the Schlage Lock site is the Brisbane Baylands redevelopment site, a 540 acre redevelopment located almost entirely in the City of Brisbane to the south. The very northern section of this land lies within the San Francisco city limits and abuts the Schlage Lock site. A large portion of the site is located within the Visitation Valley Watershed. The site is former industrial land and the old San Francisco landfill. Redevelopment issues are complex, involving major contaminants on the site, potential traffic impacts, and the desire to link the site to Caltrains and the Third Street Light Rail Project. The site owner, Universal Paragon Corporation (UPC), has plans to develop a variety of uses on the site, which include public open space, a transit oriented village concept with residences and small retail near the transit stops, as well as a more suburban office park campus design in the southeast part of the site targeting research and

development firms.[15] The Visitation Valley Planning Alliance has been very involved in advocating for this redevelopment to be transit oriented and to fit in with the neighborhood scale of Visitation Valley.

Both the Schlage Lock and Brisbane Baylands redevelopment projects have the potential to impact Burton High School and the Academy of Finance students. Ideally, the school should be involved in the public discussions around how these sites will be designed and what they will include, given the close proximity to the school. However, this does not seem to be the case. The school, either at the district level or the school level should consider what urban resources are currently lacking in the area that can support school improvement and student success, and place their support behind including those things in the redevelopment. For, example, these could include adequate bus and train stops, pedestrian-friendly corridors, and business types that could generate student work-based learning opportunities. Because the Brisbane Site is proposed to include a significant amount of office space for research and development firms, this poses an important opportunity for Burton High School and the Academy to explore potential School-to-Career partnerships.

V. Burton High School

a. History

Philip and Sala Burton Academic High School first opened its doors in 1984 as a result of a consent decree between the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the San Francisco Unified School District. Figure 13 shows the location of Burton High School within the surrounding neighborhood. From its inception, the school worked hard to earn a reputation as an academic high school, marked by a rigorous curriculum and strong administrative leadership. The school boasted an internationally renowned choir,

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[15] Presentation by James Stickley of WRT Planning and Design, Inc. to the Visitation Valley Planning Alliance Meeting, November 8, 2003.

strict codes of discipline, and a strong track record in sending the majority of its students on to four-year colleges.[16]

In 1994, after neighboring Woodrow Wilson High School struggled for many years to improve the academic performance of its students, school district officials decided to merge Burton with Woodrow Wilson. The goal of the merger was to improve the academic achievement of Wilson students, as well as to maximize the use of Wilson's facilities. Burton students, staff, and administration moved to the Wilson campus, while roughly 600 of the former Wilson students stayed. The merger was met with resistance from some of the city's teachers, the NAACP, and parents, resulting in a lawsuit filed by the United Educators of San Francisco. Although the plan was allowed to proceed, critics continued to voice their concerns about the transitional period and the creation of virtually two systems within the same school. Wilson's former students were allowed to graduate under the school's old requirements, and the Wilson curriculum did not place as strong of an emphasis on college prep as that taught by the Burton teachers.[17]

Figure 13: Aerial Photo of Burton High School and Immediate Neighborhood

The new Burton was optimistically referred to as the "Son of Lowell," as school officials sought to provide appealing alternatives to parents that were unable to enroll their son or daughter in the city's top public high schools. The new Burton had an emphasis on math and science, and the school made great efforts to prepare students for college and maintain high standards of academic achievement. Fredna

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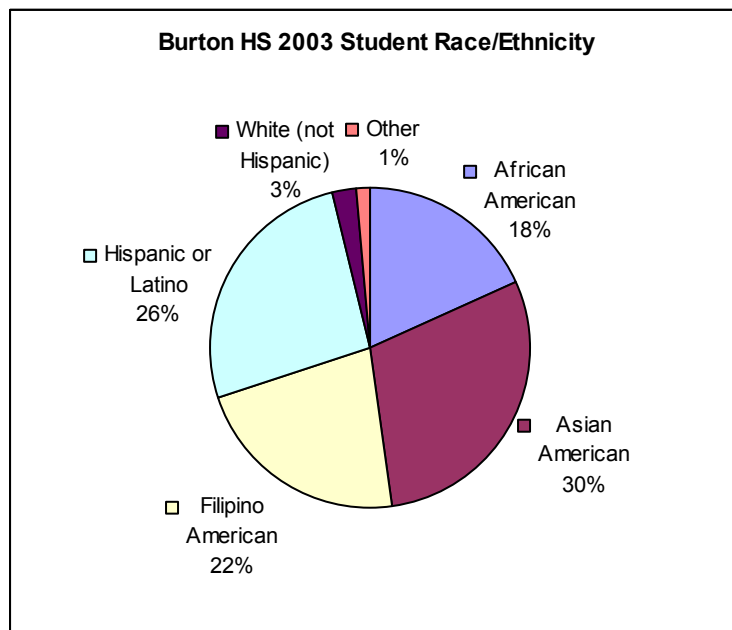[16] Ginsburg, Marsha. "Diverse Campuses Asked to Join Forces." *The San Francisco Examiner.* May 24, 1994.
[17] Asimov, Nanette. "Stand and Deliver at New Burton High." *The San Francisco Examiner.* September 9, 1994.

Howell has served as Burton's principal since the school first opened, and is often described as a "no-nonsense" administrator with a fierce devotion to both her students and school. Bill Rojas, a former superintendent of SFUSD, once commented that many of the district's problems would be solved if there were leaders like Howell in every school.[18]

b. Demographics of Burton High School

Today, Burton's multiethnic, multiracial student body (see Figure 14) consists of approximately 1800 students and 110 faculty. The school continues to place great emphasis on academic excellence, striving to provide students with the classes they need in order to qualify for University of California schools. Burton students showed improvements in their standardized test scores in 2002, and the school received a rank of 6 out of 10 according to the 2002 Academic Performance Index (API).[19]

Figure 14: Burton High School Race/Ethnicity

Burton HS 2003 Student Race/Ethnicity

White (not Hispanic) 3%
Other 1%
African American 18%
Asian American 30%
Filipino American 22%
Hispanic or Latino 26%

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[18] Ginsburg, Marsha. "Diverse Campuses Asked to Join Forces." *The San Francisco Examiner.* May 24, 1994.
[19] 2002 Academic Performance Index (API) Base Report._api.cde.ca.gov/api2002base (Revised August 7, 2003).

c. Finance Academy

In addition to a school-wide focus on computer science, math, and science, Burton has an Academy of Finance. In its fourth year of existence, the Academy offers select eleventh and twelfth graders the opportunity to learn about concepts such as marketing, personal finance, credit and savings, and merchandising. Students are able to apply their knowledge of these subjects through "real-life" experiences such as job shadowing, internships, and mentoring. Students take one Academy class per day, taught by math department faculty.

VI. Community Resource Mapping

The following section contains information on community resources in the Burton High School area. The emphasis is placed on business, community organization, and transportation resources. We briefly describe the local business context and then, based on student survey data, specifically target businesses within four highly traveled corridors. These corridors are further discussed in the survey and analysis in the next section.

a. Businesses

Visitation Valley and Portola overwhelmingly consist of neighborhood commercial business types, which tend to be small and locally owned. Leland Avenue in Visitation Valley represents an example of a popular neighborhood commercial strip. It is commonly labeled the "4th Chinatown" due to the high number of Chinese-American operated establishments. The strip also has a Bank of America branch and a local public library. In 2003, 89% of the businesses in the study area had fewer than 10 employees, while less than 3% had more than 50 employees. This poses a problem for Burton High School in finding creative School-To-Career opportunities, since the vast majority of area businesses are very small operations.

The two largest categories of business type in the study area are services (44%) and retail trade (22%) (see Figure 15). Looking at the local businesses with the Academy of Finance in mind, there are 98 businesses in the 'Finance, Insurance and Real Estate' category according to the city's data, which comprise only 7% of the area's businesses by type[20]. The vast majority of these (86) are real estate agents or title abstract offices. However, the area also has nine accounting offices, one investment office, and three tax return preparation businesses. Figure 16 depicts typical neighborhood businesses.

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[20] SF Prospector 2003

Figure 15: Business Types in the 94134 Zipcode

Business Types in Primary Study Area

- Construction
- Finance, Insurance and Real Estate
- Manufacturing
- Nonclassifiable
- Retail Trade
- Services
- Transportation and Communications
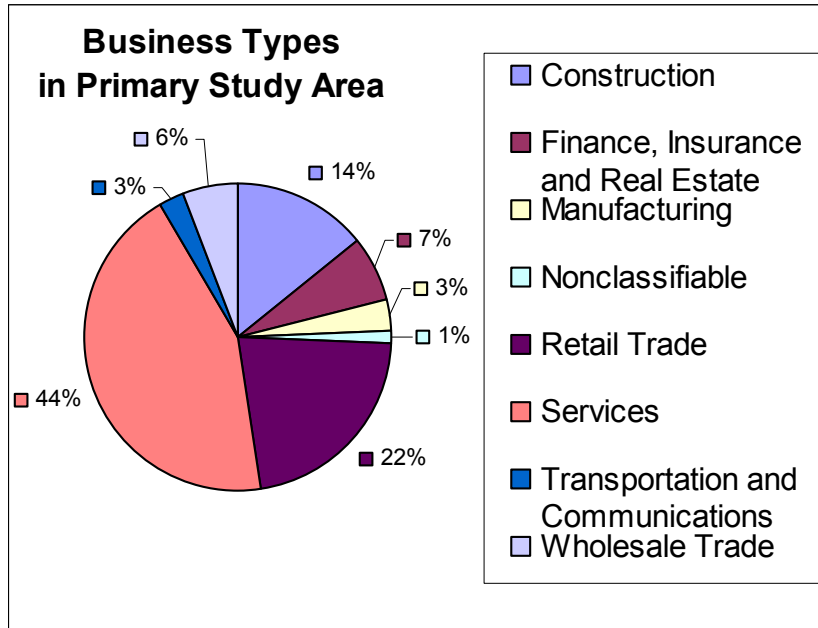- Wholesale Trade

6%
3%
14%
7%
3%
1%
44%
22%

Figure 16: Typical Neighborhood Businesses

Due to the low number of types of businesses in this area, the possibility of finding various opportunities for all Academy students proves difficult. A better strategy might be for the Academy of Finance to target the 321 business services listings since financial aspects are a necessary component of any business. However, this is most likely a bit overwhelming and may turn up little opportunities since these businesses tend to be small. On the other hand, these small businesses may provide new avenues for student opportunities in the immediate locale, which can address logistical transportation constraints of both time and convenience . Therefore, the strategy of targeting businesses along student-traveled transportation corridors was utilized.

Below are business listings for the four key commercial transportation corridors identified.

Transportation Corridor Businesses

- **San Bruno Avenue**
- **Ocean Avenue**
- **Mission Street**
- **Bayshore Boulevard/Third Street**

San Bruno Avenue

Business	Location	Contact
Bank of America	2485 San Bruno Ave.	650-615-4700
Bank of the West	2675 San Bruno Ave	415-468-1492
First Federal Savings of San Raphael	2521 San Bruno	415-468-0700
H & R Block[21]	2750 San Bruno Ave.	415-397-1040 (contact Joe Levine)
Philip Guan Accounting Service	San Bruno and Dwight	415-508-1989

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[21] Joel Levine from H&R block is interested in speaking to Academy classes about his job and accounting in general.

Other Potential Sites Near the #29 Bus Route:

Business	Location	Contact
All Year Round Tax Service	1601 Ocean Avenue	415-586-1565
Balboa Park	401 Geneva Avenue	415-753-7268
City College of San Francisco	50 Phelan Avenue	415-239-3203 (Business Department)
Habitat for Humanity	78 Ocean Avenue	415-406-1555 x108 Bre Martinez, Director of Finance

Mission Street

Business	Location	Contact
Alpha Pregnancy Center	5070 Mission	415-584-6800
Bank of America	5150 Mission	650-615-4700
Carlos Ausejo (Taxes/Bookkeeping)	4951 Mission	415-239-6984
Century 21	4977 Mission	415-587-4212
Citibank Financial Center	4638 Mission	800-872-2657
Clement Lo (Dentistry)	4851 Mission	415-841-9200
Excelsior Realty	4830 Mission	415-334-5454
Ezio Paolino Law Shea & Co. Office/Accounting	4655 Mission	415-441-2666 (Van Ness office)
Fidelity National Title	4696 Mission	415-337-1000
Greater Mission Consortium (Youth Employment, Case Management, Youth Law, Referrals)	4667 Mission	415-334-9919
Katz Accident & Injury Center	4879 Mission	415-584-3042
Mission Childcare Consortium	4750 Mission	415-586-6139

Optimum Realty	4873 Mission	415-594-0041
Realty Executive	4949 Mission	415-841-2050
Walgreens	4649 Mission	415-585-6500
Wells Fargo	4648 Mission	415-396-5665

**Bayshore Boulevard/Third Street Corridor**

Business	Location	Contact
Bank of America	6 Leland Ave.	650-615-4700
Bayview Business Resource Center	3801 3rd Street	415-647-3728
Bayview/Hunters Point Foundation, Youth Services Center	1625 Carroll St.	415-822-8200
H&R Block	Bayview Plaza	415-647-8188
Karen A. Chung, CPA	4026 3rd Street.	415-285-6225
Pacific Bell	3rd and Donner	800-310-2355
Royal Pacific Mortgage	49 Leland Ave, off Bayshore	415-333-4900
San Francisco Bureau of Environmental Regulation and Management	3801 3rd Street	415-695-7310
San Francisco Dept of Public Health	1309 Evans Street	415-206-7600
Southeast Health Center	2401 Keith Street	415-715-4000
Union Bank of California	3801 3rd Street	415-550-9311
US Bank	4947 3rd Street	415-330-1824

Eastern San Francisco Business Clusters

In addition to targeting the above mentioned transportation corridors, it may be advantageous for the Academy to look at a larger geographic region of San Francisco as a source of potential student employment opportunities due to the low number of businesses located near Burton High

School and the predominance of small enterprises. Since finance and economics are key aspects of many businesses, there are many possible partnership candidates. One strategy for the Academy to consider is to obtain contacts within large business sectors that are located somewhat near the school.

Figure 17: Business Clusters in Eastern San Francisco
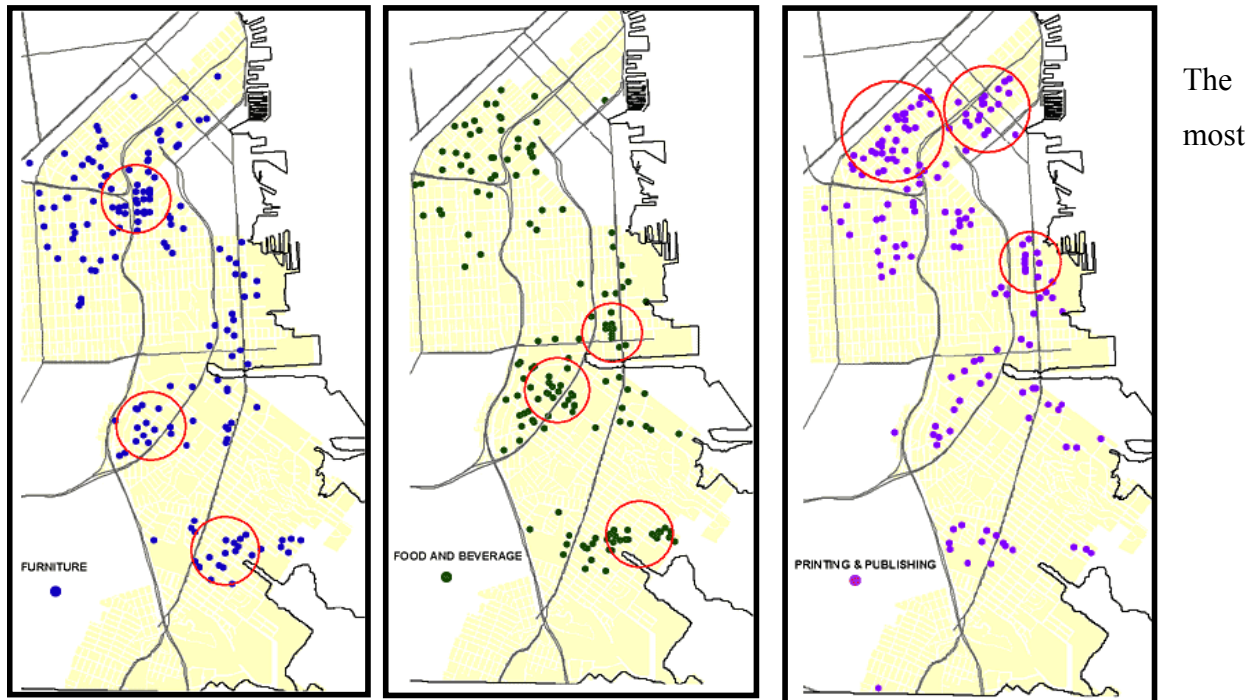
The most significant area of economic activity in San Francisco's eastern neighborhoods south of Market Street is production, distribution and repair (PDR). Within this category there are a number of business clusters--that is, businesses in the same sector that co-locate in order to support each other by sharing information, modes of transportation, services, infrastructure and goods. Key clusters in eastern San Francisco include: the printing and media clusters in South of Market and Central Waterfront; the furniture and design cluster at Showplace Square; and the food and beverage clusters at South Bayshore (see Figure 17). Since clusters typically operate with tight networks between and among firms, the Academy could seek to strategically target the administrative offices of predominant firms within these clusters for School-to-Career opportunities to gain cluster access. PDR firms tend to be less vulnerable to the boom and bust cycles of the local economy than many other sectors since they typically act as essential suppliers to so many different businesses. Given the present economic downturn, PDR clusters

may offer Burton Academy of Finance students career opportunities that are relatively close to the school itself. In addition, the Third Street Light Rail project will provide better access to the PDR clusters located in or near the Bayshore Boulevard/Third Street Corridor.

b. **Community Organizations**

The following table lists potential community partners in the form of community organizations. Some of the organizations listed below are already in the business of providing work opportunities for youth, while others represent organizations that are possible new sources of internship, job shadowing, and other work-based learning opportunities for Burton students.

| Organization	Contact	Description
Visitation Valley Planning Alliance	Fran Martin Phone: 415-468-0639	The VVPA works primarily on planning and land use-related issues in the greater Visitation Valley area. They were formed amidst local community opposition to a proposed big box development adjacent to the neighborhood in the mid-1990s.
SF Neighborhood Parks Council	Isabel Wade Betty Traynor Phone: 415-621-3260	The Council works on various projects and advocacy for neighborhood parks in the city. They do work with other high schools and expressed interest in talking about ways to partner with Burton High School on McLaren Park in conjunction with Friends of McLaren Park.
Friends of McLaren Park	Franco Mancini Phone: 415-239-5378	Friends of McLaren Park works with the San Francisco Neighborhood Parks Council in order to increase use of and lead restoration projects within McLaren Park.
Visitation Valley Greenway Project	Fran Martin Phone: 415-468-0639	The Visitation Valley Greenway Project evolved out of the Visitation Valley Planning Alliance to create a network of contiguous small park spaces with different themes. The Project works in partnership with the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department and the California Academy of Sciences.
Visitation Valley	Allan Saunders	The VVCDC works on many community development-

Community Development Corporation	Phone: 415-587-7896	related issues and projects in the Visitation Valley area, including small business development, affordable housing development, and home ownership, all of which involve detailed fiscal analysis. The VVCDC works with many other local organizations and service providers, and is very interested in potential partnerships with Burton students.
Literacy for Environmental Justice	6220 Third Street San Francisco 94124 Phone: 415-508-0575	Literacy for Environmental Justice (LEJ) is an urban environmental education and youth empowerment organization created specifically to address the unique ecological and social concerns of Bayview Hunters Point, San Francisco, and the surrounding communities of Mission, Potrero Hill, Visitation Valley, and Excelsior.
Habitat for Humanity	Bre Martinez 78 Ocean Avenue 415-406-1555 x108	Bre Martinez, Director of Finance, is interested in having several academy students work as interns to assist her with the organization's budget (from January to May). She would also be willing to come speak to an academy class about her job and work in the area of finance.
Operation Hope	Emily Ausbrooke 415-282-8348	Operation Hope recruits local bankers as volunteers to do financial and literacy training in high schools. They voiced an interest in working with Academy of Finance teachers or students in the future.

c. Transportation

Transportation options within the study areas are severely limited to primarily automobile use and give good reason for the perceived isolation of these neighborhoods from the rest of the city. While there are a limited number of MUNI bus routes through the area (see Figure 18), travel times tend to be long to other parts of the city, thus making public transit use less practical for many residents. In 2000, only 26% of workers over age 16 in the study area took public transit to work, compared to 31% for the city as a whole. MUNI bus route #29 runs along Mansell Street and makes a stop at Burton High School. Many students use this to get to school, but it is unclear how many. Also, the school does not provide a parking lot for students who choose to

drive their own cars to school. Transportation logistics need to be considered in the formulation of any work-based learning opportunities or community/business partnerships that involve students engaging in activities off of school grounds. However, the completion of the Third Street Light Rail in 2005 should increase student access between the eastern neighborhoods and the financial district.

Figure 18: Transit Near Burton High School
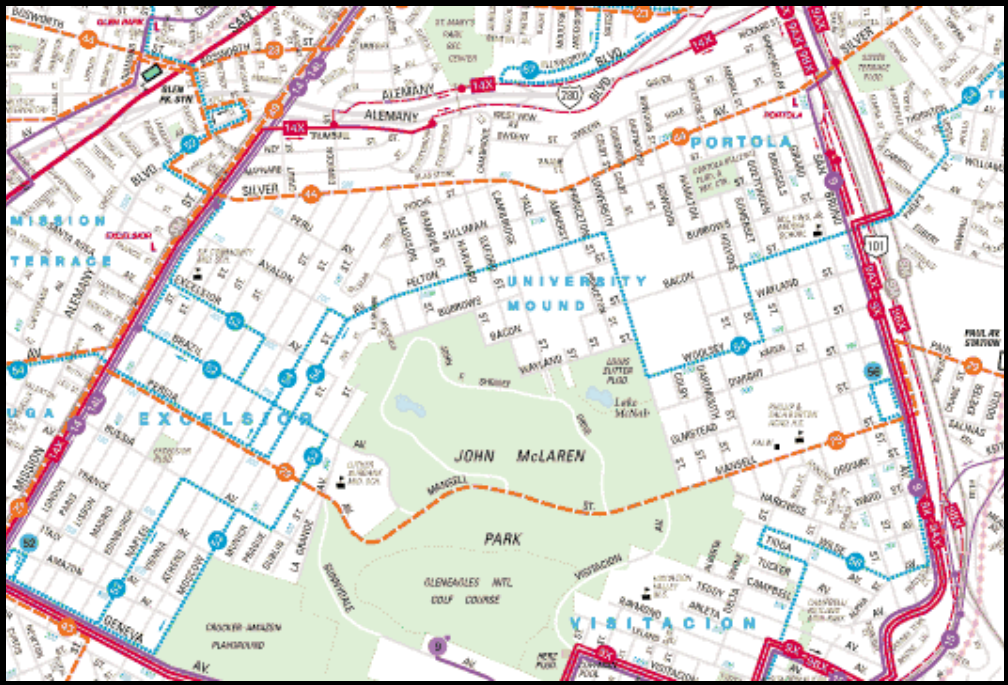
VII. School-Based Research

The following section discusses the findings of the three main school-based research methods employed: Academy of Finance teacher dialogues, written student surveys, and small student conversation groups. After initial collaboration with the Academy of Finance coordinating teacher, the subsequent research was grounded primarily in the student surveys and conversation groups. The teachers framed much of the survey and conversation groups by stating three broad areas of desired information that would be helpful to them in further supporting School-to-Career opportunities for the Academy of Finance students.

a. Strategic Planning with Finance Academy Teachers

The following describes our collaborative efforts with the Burton Finance Academy Teachers.[22] The primary purpose of the collaboration was to discover how this profile could benefit the Academy teachers and students by asking questions that were relevant to their experiences and finding information that could enhance the Academy's desire to increase the availability of work-based learning opportunities such as internships, SEfLs, identifying business and community potential partnerships, and other community project work. More specifically, the collaboration sought to:

- Define the school community
- Define the goals and interests of the Finance Academy teachers
- Dialogue about ways this profile could support the work of the teachers

During the course of our initial meeting and as a result of some follow-up conversations, we were able to learn a great deal about the school as a whole, and the Academy of Finance in particular. We also were able to agree upon some goals for the project, the most important of which being to find internship and other employment-related opportunities for Academy students

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[22] Burton High School Finance Academy Teachers: Becky Gerek, Coordinator; Pam Brockmeier; Karl Von Brockdorff.

that are both desirable to the students and feasible, based on transportation constraints. In order to find opportunities that meet these criteria, three key questions were necessary to answer:

1. What parts of the city (or region) do students come from?
2. What are the students' "comfort zones" within the city?
3. How is transportation a factor in School-to-Career opportunities for students?

The relative geographic isolation of Burton High School from other parts of San Francisco emerged as a constant theme in the course of the research. Transportation access to work-based learning opportunities was perceived by both the teachers and students as a major obstacle. The issue of "comfort zones" emerged because the teachers were interested in gaining a greater understanding of how student perceptions of their own comfort in different parts of the city coincided with the availability of work-based learning opportunities. Similarly, the research sought to discover where students would be willing to travel given the logistics of time and accessibility. The teacher partners felt that the answers to these questions were key to understanding the realistic possibilities of various opportunities for the students; therefore, we used these questions to frame our analysis and recommendations in this report.

b. Description and Analysis of Student Surveys

To get at these and other, related issues, we decided to create and distribute a written survey to both Academy classes, and then to conduct follow-up conversation groups with the students. The purpose of the survey was to gain basic background information from the students regarding how they travel to and from school, where and how they would be willing to travel to a job, and specifically what types of internship opportunities they would be most interested in pursuing. The conversation groups were utilized to further explore the questions the students responded to in the surveys, so that we could better understand student interests and needs. In addition, the conversations were used to dialogue about how the students define and conceptualize the local school community.

The following is a description and analysis of the student survey data and the follow-up conversation groups.[23] The written survey consisted of open and close-ended questions as well as a map of southeastern San Francisco, on which students were asked to trace their daily travel routes, both to and from school (see Figure 19). The survey also included a map of San Francisco neighborhoods, and students were asked to shade in the neighborhoods they would be willing to work in given the logistical constraints of time and transportation. The number of surveys received from the two classes was 57.

**Figure 19: Student Map Samples**

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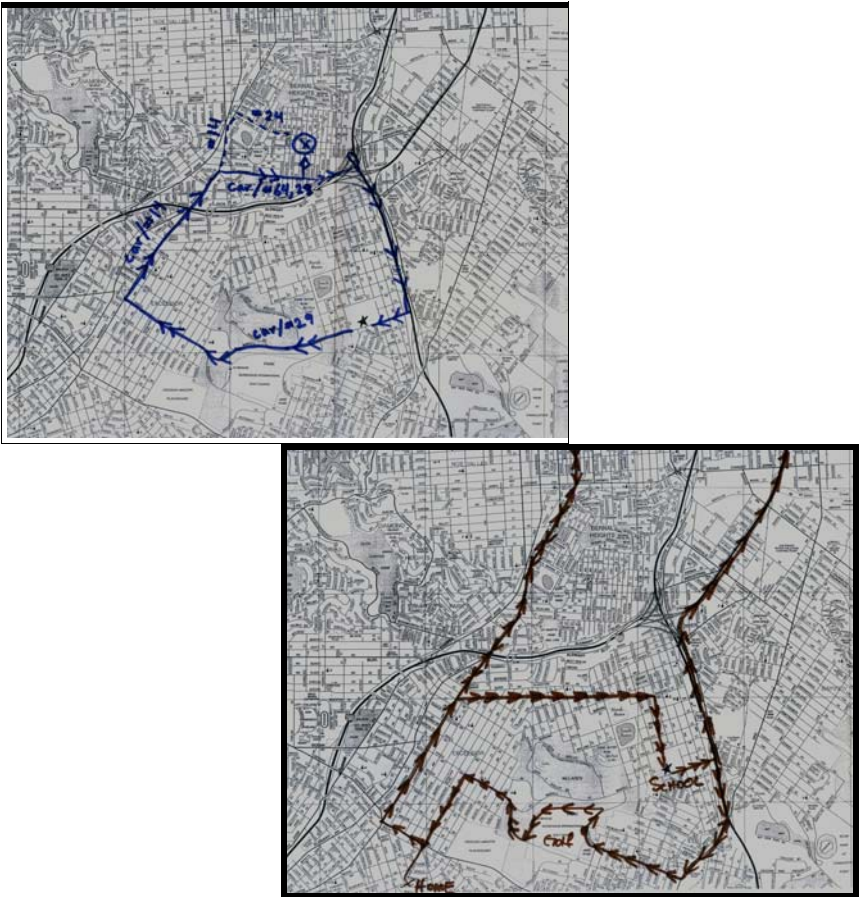
[23] See Appendix for survey instrument.

Neighborhood of Residence

The pie graph shows the distribution of students across nineteen different neighborhoods.[24] Included in the 'Other' category are three students who responded that they live in a city other than San Francisco. Nine different neighborhoods (or cities) are represented in the 'Other' category, with one respondent for each. As shown, the Academy students come from many parts of the city, and no single neighborhood is overwhelmingly dominant. However, about 45% of the total students reside in three of the Burton's closest neighborhoods (Excelsior, Visitation Valley, and Bayview/Hunters Point). Only 18% of the students reside with the 94134 zipcode. Figure 20 depicts student neighborhoods of residence

Figure 20: Finance Academy Student Neighborhoods of Residence
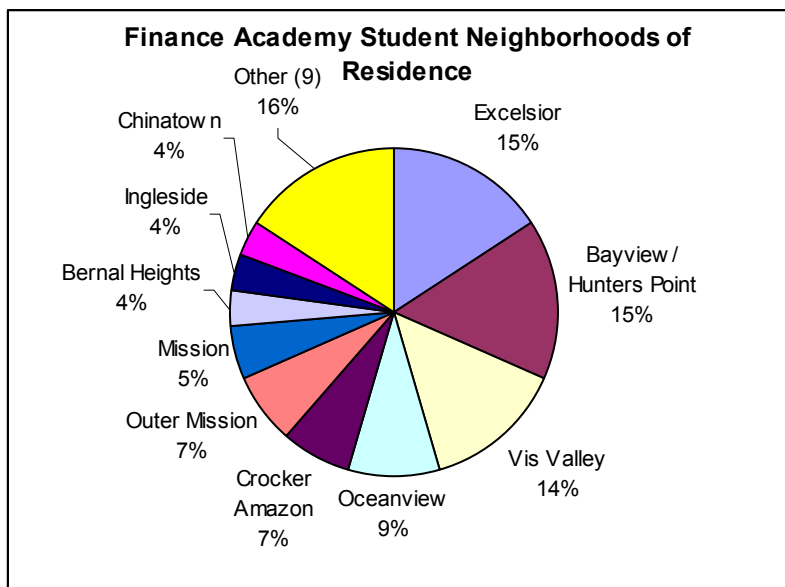

Employment Information

Only nine of the 57 students (16%) reported being currently employed. Of those nine, six claimed to work for a community organization or nonprofit, while the other three worked as a

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[24] These neighborhood names were self-written by the students, not chosen from a list.

clerk or cashier. When asked about summer, eight of the students planned to continue working at their current job during that time.

The students were also asked what type of business or organization they would be interested in working/interning for. They were asked to list at least two types. The top three responses were bank, health care and government. Figure 21 shows the breakdown of all responses. These findings can be used by the Academy of Finance to target specific local and regional organizations that work in these sectors. Students were also asked if they would be willing to work even if they did not get paid. The responses were evenly split between 'yes' and 'no,' with five students responding with their own fill-in category of "depends" or "maybe." This finding is important for the Academy in seeking out various work-based learning opportunities for their students. While financial compensation is most likely highly preferred, it is clear that many students highly value the experience, even without pay. Thus, the Academy should not rule out opportunities simply because they do not financially compensate the student.

Figure 21: Academy Student Desired Employment Type
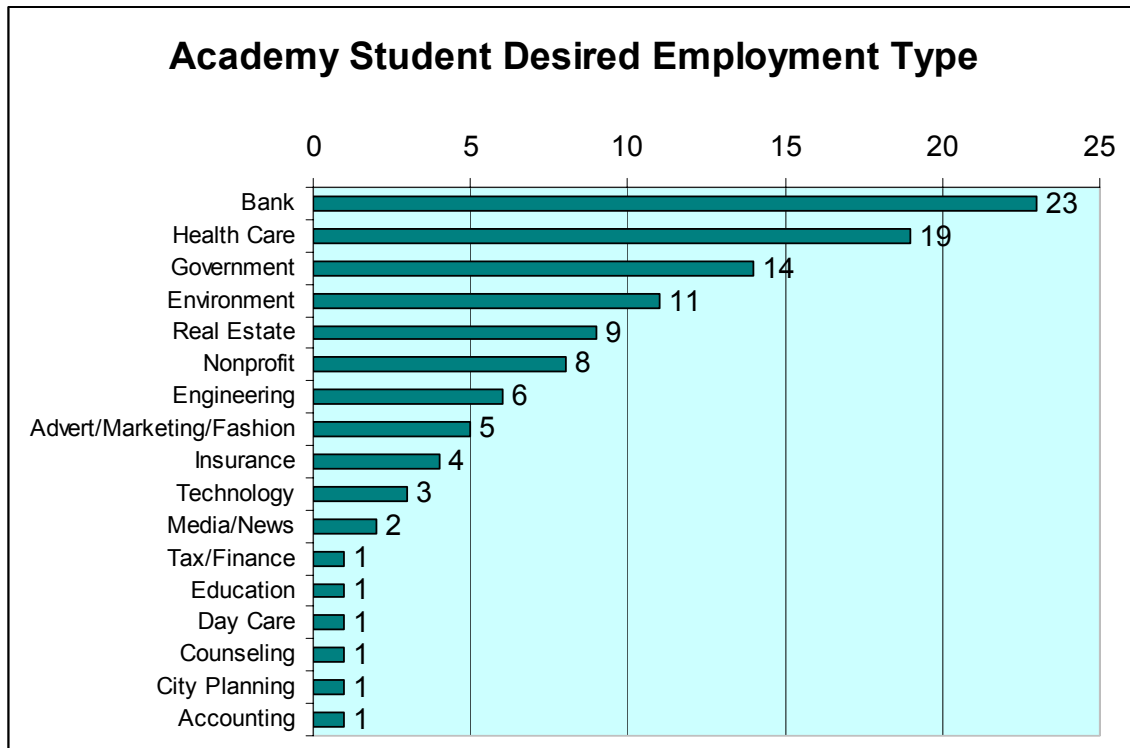
A major perceived barrier to internships and other work-based learning opportunities for the students lies in the logistical transportation issues of student accessibility. In order to better understand this barrier, using the map in Figure 22, students were asked to shade in the parts of San Francisco that they would be willing to go to for work-based learning opportunities, keeping in mind transportation and time constraints. There was a wide variety of responses to this question among the students. However, 63% of students claimed they would go the Downtown/Civic Center, while only 33% claimed they would go to the Financial District. These findings are important since these are two areas of the city that are known to have high concentrations of finance-related firms. One issue that the survey failed to address in relation to this question is whether students chose areas of town based on their perception of available opportunities or if they assumed there were opportunities in all areas. One indicator of this fact is that only 30% responded that they would travel to Visitation Valley, which is where Burton High School is located. Although, a greater percentage did select some of the other nearby neighborhoods, e.g.: Excelsior, Crocker Amazon, and the Outer Mission. The overall trend is toward areas that are south and central in the city, whereas the northwest areas of San Francisco received very small consideration.

Figure 22: Map used in survey to identify areas of SF students would be willing to work
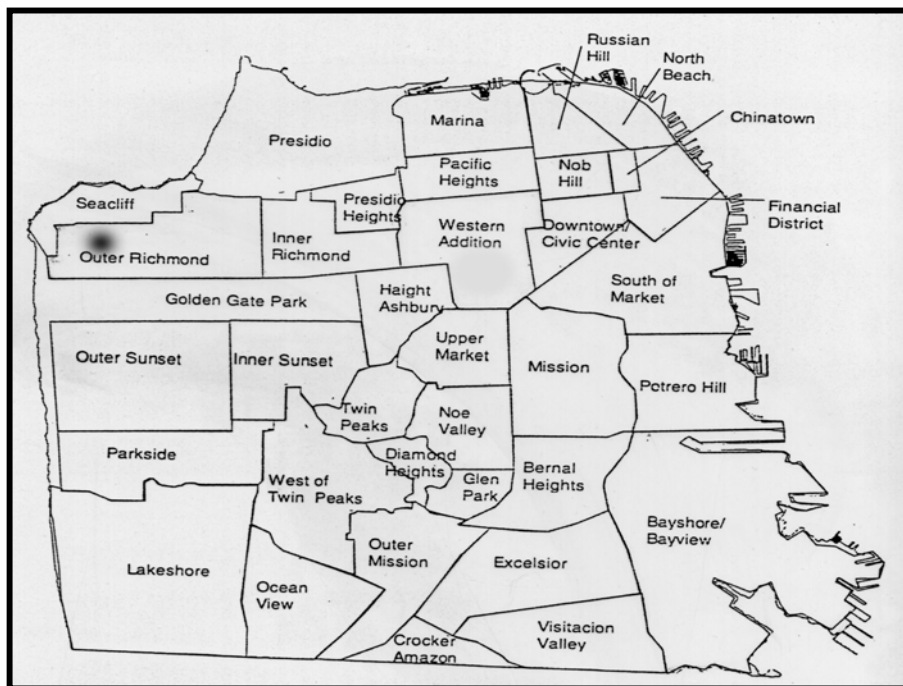
c. Description and Analysis of Student Conversation Groups

Subsequent to the administration of the surveys, we conducted follow-up conversation groups in each of the Academy classes to allow us to further explore the questions the students responded to in the surveys and to pose some additional questions.[25] We felt the conversation groups would be necessary to gain a richer understanding of student needs and interests. While the surveys targeted basic background information from the students regarding how they travel to and from school, where and how they would be willing to travel to a job, and specifically what types of internship opportunities they were most interested in, the purpose of the conversation groups was to probe more deeply into these questions through the voices of the students. The conversation groups were focused on two main themes: 1) Community; and 2) Burton High School Academy of Finance. Community discussions were framed around exploring opinions and perceptions of the Burton school community both internally and externally. The Academy discussion centered on types of School-to-Career opportunities desired, "comfort zones," and difficulties and obstacles in pursing these opportunities.

Six conversation groups were conducted during periods two and three on Friday, November 14th, 2003. Each class was divided up into groups of five to seven students, and each group was given the task of reflecting on and responding to a series of questions relating to issues of community and work interests. Questions included:

1) How would you define your community?
2) How is that definition the same or different from how you would define the school community?
3) What does the idea of schools and communities working together mean to you?
4) What do you think the benefits of schools and communities working in partnership are?
5) How did you determine which areas of the city you are willing to travel to for work?
6) What are the biggest obstacles that might come up for you personally in terms of honoring a work or volunteer commitment?
7) How could your teachers or employers help you to honor your commitments?

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[25] See Appendix for conversation group protocol

8) What do you most want to get out of a job or internship?

9) Do you consider jobs and/or volunteer opportunities that you have now as helpful in determining what career you might want to pursue in the future? Why or why not?

10) If you were a teacher, how would you go about helping your students to make connections between what they learn in the classroom and the jobs they do in the "real world"?

A number of themes emerged from the small group discussions that focused on the above questions. As the survey data revealed, many Academy students do not live in the neighborhood immediately surrounding the school. Because of this, we were especially interested in how students define their own communities, and how those conceptions of community either differ or are similar to how they define "school community." Additionally, we were interested in how their conceptions of community and their zones of comfort affected where and in what types of positions they were interested in working.

Generally what we found was that most students' conceptions of community were formulated around residence. Few of the students who participated mentioned that they were part of multiple communities. In general, only after the idea that people are often members of different communities was introduced, did the students mention schools as potential community-defining entities.

Typical student perceptions of "school community" centered around the neighborhoods surrounding the school. Students generally held that services within the neighborhoods surrounding Burton are geared toward older people; for instance, they noted there are few shops and restaurants that cater to, or even welcome high school students. For many of the students, the Visitation Valley and Portola neighborhoods that surround Burton are relatively unknown, and are perceived as fairly isolated from the rest of San Francisco. "I come here for school and leave--that's it," remarked one student. "I don't know anything about this neighborhood." Most said they do not hang out in the neighborhood before or after school. Instead, they tend to catch the bus and go to other to other areas of the city, such as Mission Street.

With respect to how they thought the neighborhood residents perceived them, students made remarks like, "They don't like us!" and "They would probably describe us as hoodlums!" In general, students did not feel that they have much of a stake in the neighborhood; both because most of them do not live in the immediate area and because of the way they believe they are perceived by residents and the local business community.

When asked about the potential benefits of school-community partnerships, students generally responded with some optimism. They felt that schools and communities working together could foster positive results, such as creating awareness within communities of the challenges that schools face. Generally, students stated that community members should help to make communities better and safer, in part by raising money for schools. Many also held that community members and organizations should give support to schools not just by donating money, but by promoting projects and other activities, such as neighborhood fairs. When asked whose responsibility it should be to build school-community partnerships, a number of students stated that community organizations should take the initiative to look for students to participate in activities, rather than expecting students to come to them.

When the conversations turned to internships, transportation, mentorship, and comfort zones were all key themes. We first asked students how they chose the parts of the city they would like to work in (as indicated on their surveys). Convenience, proximity to home, safety, and accessibility to transportation were all major factors for students in terms of why they chose the areas they did.

During the conversation groups, words like "convenient" and "near home" were used often. Among females in particular, safety was a big concern. Familiarity was also noted as a reason why students would or would not take advantage of work opportunities. For example, one student noted that she had indicated the financial district because she frequents the area and feels relatively comfortable there. Whereas, she did not indicate an interest in working in other areas with which she was not as familiar.

Other obstacles to students successfully honoring their internship commitments included schoolwork, family/home responsibilities, after-school activities, mood, and prior commitments. Some students felt that if they were being paid, they were more likely to find ways to overcome such obstacles. Some students also stated that transportation assistance from their employers, as well as advice from peers who had experience working in certain settings and locations, would be helpful.

Students had a wide range of interests in terms of the types of industries they said they would like to work in – everything from health care to banking. But there were some common themes related to what they would hope to get out of their internships. In general, students want their internships to be fun, worthwhile, educational, and hands-on. They also generally seemed to consider it very important to have the opportunity to work for people who enjoy their work, and who are interested in mentoring students. Most of the students saw great value in doing internships as a way of gaining work experience, learning about careers which they are potentially interested in pursuing, finding mentors, and making connections in the "real world."

Many students were very interested in working on community-based projects that would allow them to both make connections to community events and projects, and to gain practical skills. Many commented that they would be interested in working on community-based projects such as the Visitation Valley Greenway Project either in groups or as part of a class. More than one student suggested that having a designated person at the school to help identify potential community-based opportunities for students would be beneficial. In addition, numerous students noted the importance of this person being present in the school so that they could have frequent face-to-face contact to develop a personal relationship with the community coordinator and draw on him/her as a resource.

Students also mentioned several ways that they could help themselves, with some assistance from their teachers, to locate and secure internships. One idea was to have field trips to different businesses that offer internships. Some students noted that they did have a scavenger hunt that took them to many downtown business for the purposes of experiencing the office atmosphere and making personal contacts. However, a number of the students in one of the conversation

groups noted that while this was an interesting experience, they made very few contacts and did not get many business cards upon request. The students noted that many of the employees stated they were too busy to speak with them. This points to the necessity of making sure that these kinds of exposure activities are set up in a manner that truly defines the responsibilities of both the school and the business partners. In addition, critical evaluation and reflection on the experience is necessary to understand its overall benefit and quality for the students.

Lastly, there were several steps the students thought the administration could take in order to increase the chances of students finding internships and creating successful school-community partnerships. Among their ideas was the notion that communication between the administration and the teachers and students should be improved, so that students can be made aware, through their teachers, of opportunities available to them. The administrators, they said, had the responsibility to sort out and present opportunities, while it should be up to the students to take advantage of such opportunities. Generally, the students felt strongly that it was the charge of teachers and administrators to provide a hopeful environment for students, which to many of them meant improving school-community relations, with the ultimate goal of benefiting individual students and the school-community as a whole.

VIII.   Recommendations

1.   <u>Transportation-Oriented Placement</u>

**Goal: Target work-based learning opportunities based on student transportation routes.**

This recommendation involves a transit-oriented strategy that the School-To-Career Partnership could adopt in order to pinpoint areas of the city that would be feasible for students to hold employment opportunities. As noted, Burton High School's relative geographic isolation and distance from other parts of San Francisco emerged as a key issue. Therefore, issues of transportation were recurring points made by both students and teachers. These included convenience, time, transit availability, parking, and safety.

Strategies:
1.   Map student transportation corridors
2.   Identify businesses and organizations along corridors

These strategies describe the methodology we used in this report that could be utilized by the Academy of Finance in finding feasible work-based learning opportunities for students. By targeting highly-traveled student transportation corridors, many issues of logistics and transportation can be addressed to better enable students to access these opportunities. MUNI bus route #29 will most likely remain a highly utilized method of student transportation to and from school and should be further considered when implementing this recommendation. Figure 23 highlights the targeted corridors in relation to Burton High School and MUNI bus route #29.

Figure 23: Targeted Student Traveled Corridors
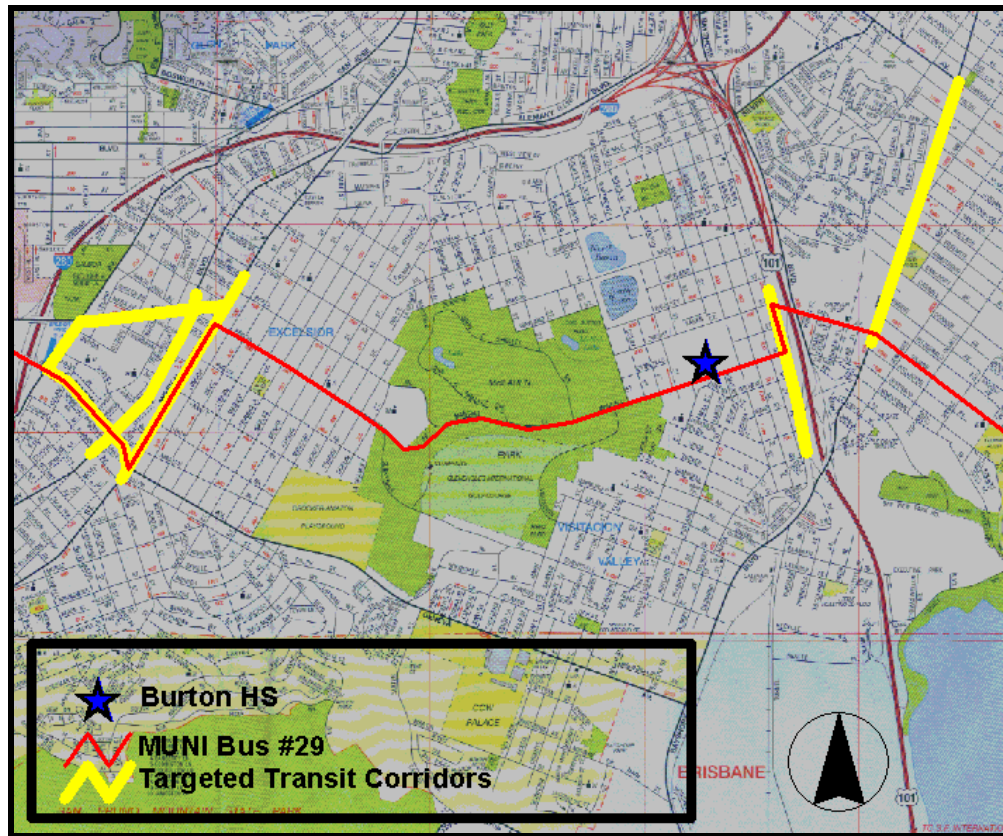
Challenges:

    a. Student transportation data relating to before and after school travel needs to be stay current. The corridors we have identified can continue to be used, but keeping up-to-date information on student transportation routes would be necessary to fully realize the benefits of this recommendation. Most likely these corridors will continue to be highly-traveled student routes, but with school placement and assignment being debated within the District, this data could change.

    b. Consideration must be given to the quality of educational experience students will be getting by taking part in these more locally-based opportunities. More specifically, the Academy should be critical about thinking of the long- term outcomes and/or benefits to students as opposed to what might be realized by choosing more distant opportunities. For example, is a student better off by having an experience in the Financial District with a larger and more nationally established firm as compared to a similar experience with a

small, local business? Is the possible tradeoff for convenience a good idea? Thus, evaluation and comparison of students who choose these different opportunities would be necessary.

c. Similar to the last point, a main challenge is to think regionally for student opportunities. For example, the Brisbane Baylands redevelopment site, slated to contain a significant number of research and development firms, is located relatively close to Burton High School, but is located outside the City of San Francisco. How will this municipal barrier impact any attempts to obtain student opportunities at this site when it is completed?

2. Engage in Community-Based Projects

Goal: Provide real-world, community-based experiences that are beneficial for both the students and the local community.

Recommendation number two urges Burton students and staff to actively engage in community-based projects. It is our belief, based on conversations with both students and representatives from local community-based organizations, that such engagement is mutually desirable, and has the potential to be mutually beneficial if constructed within the criteria of project-based learning.

Strategies:
1. Coordinate with community organizations for student participation in ongoing community-based projects.
2. Coordinate with community organizations to implement student-teacher initiated community-based projects.

These strategies suggest that possibilities exist for students to participate in community-based projects, whether they are initiated by local organizations or by the students themselves. For instance, many organizations have on-going projects on which they could use student assistance

in various capacities. Additionally, various community-based organizations are open and eager to receive student/teacher-generated proposals for community projects, for which they could offer guidance and assistance in a number of ways, such as providing overviews of local issues or guiding students and teachers through the process of project development and implementation.

Examples:

i. Literacy for Environmental Justice

Literacy for Environmental Justice (LEJ) is a non-profit youth empowerment and environmental justice education organization based in the Bayview Community of San Francisco. The organization's mission is to create and implement programs which foster an understanding of the principles of urban sustainability and environmental justice in youth in order to promote long-term health within the communities with which it is engaged. LEJ promotes two basic types of programs: educational programs and youth leadership programs.

Current educational programs at LEJ include the Educational Justice Education program, the Herons Head Wetland Park program, and The Living Classroom program. Projects are varied by student/teacher interest, but as a rule, the youth are the ones who are supposed to initiate the project plan. To support a proposed project, LEJ staff provides background lessons via classroom curriculum, and work with the teachers to implement projects out in the field.

Youth Leadership programs currently underway through LEJ include Youth Envision, Slough Youth, and Youth Promoting Green Energy (YPGE). LEJ also currently has plans to implement an enrichment program which would bring the youth working for all of these different programs together once a month to provide them with the opportunity to develop social networks and build on the skills they are being introduced to in their jobs.

Potential Opportunities for Burton Youth at LEJ:

- **Paid Positions**: Students can pursue paid opportunities at LEJ by submitting applications for any open position within the Youth Envision, Slough Youth, or YPGE programs.

- **Youth Opportunities Binder**: The Youth Opportunities Binder is available for use by anyone who visits the office. It contains listings for positions available at a host of different organizations in the area.

- **Youth-led Workshops/School-wide Events**: In the past, LEJ adults have partnered with youth to put on day-long conferences, held at a non-school site and attended by students from different schools. The conferences have covered a range of topics related to the environment and community activism. Youth that put on the conference are given the opportunity to learn about grant writing, event coordination, and workshop facilitation.

- **Volunteer Internships:** LEJ is open to accommodating the interests of youth within the context of the organization's work by offering volunteer internships. One potential project on which interested youth could volunteer to work is the proposed youth-run corner store. Another is in assisting in the development and presentation of curriculum around youth economy.

ii. Visitation Valley Planning Alliance and Visitation Valley Greenway Project

The Visitation Valley Planning Alliance and the Visitation Valley Greenway Project, both local community-based volunteer organizations, have expressed interest in working with Burton students. Possible collaborations could involve neighborhood improvement projects, grant writing, economic development research and land use planning research that could be done in the form of class or group projects, SEfLs, or individual student papers. Working with these two community-based groups could provide an avenue for expanding school and community relationships through the use of project-based learning centered partnerships.

The Planning Alliance is working on regional watershed planning issues and devising economic development plans for Leland Avenue, the local small retail commercial neighborhood street. Currently they are also heavily involved in land use planning around the Third Street Light Rail project, the redevelopment planning of the former Schlage Lock site, and the Brisbane Baylands redevelopment.

The Alliance's spin-off group, the Visitation Valley Greenway Project, is interested in getting Burton High School involved with its outdoor classroom partnership with the California Academy of Sciences on their greenway plots. Student work can involve many of the diverse stages of the Greenway Project's work from grant writing, to site design, to the actual hands-on construction and implementation efforts.

Potential opportunities for student work-based learning:

    a. Assistance with grant writing, budget formulation
    b. Research on attracting businesses to the Leland Avenue neighborhood commercial corridor
    c. Research on ways to better serve the needs of youth in the community (e.g.: work with local organizations to design after-school programs)
    d. Environmental design research and activity on the Greenway Project lots

iii. Visitation Valley Community Development Corporation

The Visitation Valley Community Development Corporation (VVCDC) has expressed interest in dialoguing about ways to work with Burton students. Community Development Corporations (CDCs) are nonprofit organizations that work at the local level to encourage various types of economic and social development projects, typically working in lower-income neighborhoods. Student project-based learning opportunities can be situated in the various administrative and analytic aspects of the VVCDC's project work.

Potential opportunities for student work-based learning:

- Research on local small business development
- Research and design of local affordable housing development
- Assistance with the home ownership program

iv. McLaren Park groups

Friends of McLaren Parks and the SF Neighborhood Parks Council are interested in discussing ways that Burton students can become involved in the groups' work on McLaren Park, which is only a few blocks from the school. The SF Neighborhood Parks Council presently coordinates projects in other parks and high schools within the city. They are also in the process of putting together a Neighborhood Parks Youth Council. As a city-wide nonprofit, they assist local park groups in local stewardship and planning efforts. Friends of McLaren Park is the local group working specifically with McLaren Park. Their mission is to increase use of the park and to conduct restoration work. The group's coordinator is very interested in finding ways that Burton students can become involved in their work.

Potential opportunities for student work-based learning:

- Grant writing
- Park master plan creation and update
- Analysis on whether the golf course should be changed to another use
- Research on how to leverage the amphitheater for use as a revenue source
- Planning for Gravity Games event
- Ecological restoration research and planning

Challenges:

For real benefits to come out of building partnerships with community organizations, several challenges must be addressed:

a. Students must take the commitments they make to community partners seriously. This means showing up and showing up on time when they have made a work commitment with an organization. Of course, many things can get in the way of a student's ability to keep his/her commitments--family obligations, school work, transportation challenges. However, student accountability must be built into the partnership. Obstacles will best be overcome if teachers, students, parents and community partners can all work together to

arrange the partnership guidelines and also communicate openly to facilitate solutions in the event of problems.

b. Teachers may find that their time for establishing and maintaining such partnerships is limited. Support from school administration and flexibility on the part of community partners are two keys to address this challenge.

c. Teachers, administrators, or students themselves may become dissatisfied with the role that students are taking on in working with community partners. Teachers or administrators may be unclear as to what students are getting out of the experience, while students may feel disinterested or unchallenged by their work. A key challenge here is to tie the partnership work to explicit learning in the classroom and/or Academy. Clear and frequent communication between all parties is necessary. In addition, frequent structured spaces for reflection are necessary. This can be in the form of devoted class time or other allotted school time to allow students to reflect on their experiences with their teachers and with other students.

3. <u>Reflection and Evaluation: Creating New Comfort Zones for Students</u>

Goal: Encourage student acceptance of and retention in internships

This recommendation is a direct outgrowth of interests and concerns expressed by both teachers and students we had contact with at Burton High School. The Academy teachers expressed a desire for students to gain exposure to the business world in their internship placements. This exposure relates to the larger goal of the School-to-Career program, which is to make learning more meaningful and relevant through the integration of academic curriculum and career exploration. In thinking about internship placement, however, the teachers mentioned student comfort levels as posing possible challenges to both interest in and retention of internships. One teacher stated that several students had been provided internship opportunities, but had not taken advantage of these positions. She was unsure as to whether this was due to transportation issues, or to feelings of intimidation regarding the placement site. In our student surveys and conversation groups, we discovered that the internship serves as the first work opportunity for many students. Many felt that they were unprepared to enter the "culture" of the working world, and raised concerns about traveling far away from their communities and areas of familiarity. This lack of previous exposure to the business world, as well as the fact that a large number of the placements are outside of students' "comfort zones," could possibly deter students from taking full advantage of internship opportunities.

Based upon the concerns voiced by both the academy teachers and the students, we propose a strategy that would address the issue of student comfort zones. Providing students with opportunities for preparation, reflection, and evaluation as part of the normal academy curriculum would help to promote both participation in and retention of internship placements.

Strategies:

1. **Preparation**

   a. Teacher-to-Student: Teachers can use several class periods to prepare students for their internship experiences in the world of work. Simple lessons on work etiquette, coupled with role playing, could help to allay student fears and anxiety around work experiences.

   b. Student-to-Student: In addition to the academy teachers, students who have completed an internship could serve as valuable resources and mentors to those who are about to embark on their first internship and/or work experience. Although teachers are great sources of support, students often look to their peers for guidance and validation. Twelfth grade students who have done internships in the past could communicate with eleventh grade students as a way to generate interest in particular field placements, as well as share information about particular sites.

   c. Community-to-Student: The Academy teachers expressed an interest in bringing in representatives from the business and nonprofit world to speak to students. Individuals from area community organizations and businesses could help to provide students with background knowledge about particular fields, as well as generate student interest in various fields of work. "In-the-field" experiences, such as job shadowing at local businesses and organizations, would also serve to increase students' comfort levels with possible internship placements.

2. **Reflection**

   a. Internship Journals or Weblog: Another way in which to address concerns that students might have throughout the course of their internships is to have students regularly reflect on their experiences through the use of a journal or weblog. Students can record their questions, thoughts, concerns, and/or accomplishments on a weekly basis, and they can use their reflections as a basis for discussion within a larger class debriefing session. This not only helps students to critically reflect on their experiences,

but it also serves as a way to further integrate career exploration with the academic curriculum through the integration of writing.

b. Weekly Debriefing Sessions or Mini-lessons: Teachers could devote one class period each week (or bi-monthly) to a discussion of internship experiences and/or career exploration. This time could be used to discuss issues that arise out of individual internship sites, or to bring in speakers or teach mini-lessons on career/work choices. The more background knowledge and exposure students have to various careers and fields of work, the more likely they are to feel comfortable with the idea of internship placements and work sites.

3. **Evaluation**

   a. Student Evaluations: After completing their internships, students could fill out an evaluation form that would be used to provide more information to incoming academy students on specific placements.[26] Students could get a better sense of a particular internship, and learn from the experiences of their peers. The evaluation form would also assist teachers and the School-to-Career district office in identifying those sites in which students feel the most comfortable and had the most productive experience.

   b. Employer Evaluations: Employers could also complete an evaluation form where they provide feedback on their particular intern(s) as well as more general descriptions of the internship experience. The data generated from these evaluations could be used to strengthen future employer/academy relations and maintain consistency of placement sites from year-to-year.

Challenges:

Successful implementation of the strategies outlined above means that several potential challenges must be addressed:

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[26] See Appendix for sample evaluation form

a. Initial Teacher Preparation: Several of the strategies listed above require some preliminary preparation. Teachers must set up and teach students how to use the weblog for discussion; however, if this particular use of technology is not feasible, student reflection journals would also work. Weekly or bimonthly debriefing sessions/mini-lessons might require some additional planning and preparation time in the beginning, but as they become more routine the time needed for preparation should decrease significantly. Similarly, the scheduling of community speakers or student panels will take some time, but their presentations will also take the place of the regular lesson planning that teachers would otherwise do for that specified day. It is our hope that the list of community contacts will assist teachers in scheduling speakers and events.

b. Coordination: Ensuring that students complete and utilize evaluation forms would require some coordination between the career academy teachers. Creating a binder where completed internship evaluation forms are organized based upon field (i.e. one section for banking internships, one for nonprofit, one for accounting, etc.) would provide students with an easy reference in their search for possible internships based upon their interest.

IX. Conclusion

Our task as researchers began with the over-arching question of how local communities can help to support SFUSD's career academies. However, in order to produce a report that would have particular relevance and meaning to our research site, we tailored our work to address the specific challenges voiced by both Burton teachers and students. Using the results of the teacher interviews, student survey, and student conversation groups as a directive, we developed recommendations that could be feasibly implemented within the classroom and district given the present context. Several key questions must be addressed, however, in future efforts to strengthen the relationship between SFUSD schools and the communities that surround them.

- How can Academy teachers and the district office work together to maintain quality internship opportunities and enriching community-based project experiences for students?
- What are the mechanisms needed to create and sustain successful school/community partnerships?
- What set of criteria should we use to evaluate school/community partnerships?
- How can community-based opportunities be made available to *all* students?

In producing this final report, it is our hope that our research and recommendations can be used to facilitate a stronger connection between Burton High School's Academy of Finance students and the surrounding community. Building strong and sustainable community/school partnerships is no easy task; however, we have provided this report in order to assist the district, teachers, and administrators in moving one step closer to that goal.

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Appendix

Student Survey

Burton High School Career Academy

Fall 2003

We are conducting this survey to improve the Career Academy's ability to find career-related opportunities for its students (such as internships, job shadowing and employer site visits). The research is being conducted by a partnership between the Career Academy teachers and graduate students at UC Berkeley in Education and City Planning.

This survey is entirely confidential. Do not put your name on it.

Tell us about yourself:

1. What neighborhood do you live in?_____

2. What grade are you in?_____

3.　　Do you work now?　　Yes　　No

4. If so, what type of job?_____

5. Hours and time of week?_____

6. Do you anticipate working at this position in the summer?　　Yes　　No

7. What type of business or organization would you be interested in working/interning for? Please list at least two (for example: real estate, bank, insurance, health care, non-profit, environmental, government, etc).

　I.　　_____

　II.　　_____

8. How many hours a week could you devote to one of these jobs or internships:

During the school year_____

During the summer_____

9. Would you be willing to work even if you did not get paid?　　Yes　　No

10. Considering transportation and time constraints, which parts of the city would you realistically be willing to go to for one of these positions? (Shade in the areas on the map at left) How would you get there? (ie: bus, car, etc)_____

Conversation Groups Protocol
Burton High School Academy of Finance
Nov 13, 2003

<u>**Community**</u>

1. Do you live in the neighborhood immediately surrounding Burton?

2. How do you perceive the school neighborhood/neighbors?

3. How do you think they perceive you, as a Burton student?

4. How do you define community? What do you see as your community/communities?

5. How is that definition the same or different from how you would define the school community?

6. As a student, do you feel that your community is linked to your school? Vice versa? How could Burton strengthen this connection? What would the connection look like?

7. What does the idea of schools and communities working together mean to you?

8. What can Burton and its students do to improve the local community?

9. What do you think the benefits and challenges of schools and communities working in partnership are?

<u>**Academy**</u>

1. How did you determine which areas of the City you are willing to travel to for work?

2. What are the benefits of doing internships?

3. What do you want to get out of your internship experience?

4. What are the biggest obstacles that might come up for you personally in terms of honoring a work or volunteer commitment? (time, transportation, etc)

5. How would you go about overcoming these obstacles?

6. How could your teachers or employers help you to honor your commitments?

7. Do you consider jobs and/or volunteer opportunities that you have now as helpful in determining what career you might want to pursue in the future? Why or why not?

8. If you were a teacher, how would you go about helping your students to make connections between what they learn in the classroom and the jobs they do in the "real world"?

9. Do you feel like you get enough exposure in school to potential careers?

10. What are the most exciting things you've learned about so far this year in your Finance Academy class?

<u>Student Internship Evaluation</u>

Internship Site:_____

Internship Location:_____

Your job
responsibilities:_____

On a scale of one to five (with five being the best), how would you rate your internship?

Score_____
Why?_____

_____

What specific skills do you feel you learned at your internship?_____

_____

What was the most valuable thing you learned?_____

_____

Did you encounter any challenges at your internship site? If so, what were they?_____

_____

Are there any ways in which your teachers or your employers could have made your experience more enjoyable? If so, please provide specific examples:

_____

_____

Would you suggest working at this internship to other career academy students? Why or why not?_____

_____

_____

_____

What advice would you give to students who are about to start an internship for the first time?_____

_____

_____