Sacramento City Unified School District:
Small Learning Communities Grant
Year 5 Evaluation Report
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Introduction

Education researchers over the past decade have advocated establishing Small Learning Communities (SLCs) in large comprehensive high schools in order to provide a more personalized and supportive learning environment for students, by providing smaller “schools within a school” (Cotton 2001; Bloom, Thompson & Unterman 2010). The idea is that when students and teachers are more connected and develop stronger relationships, students are less likely to “fall through the cracks” and teachers feel more able to develop relationships with their students and more effectively meet their individual needs. Sacramento City Unified received a grant to establish SLCs in five of its large high schools in 2008-09.

This report summarizes student and teacher perspectives on various aspects of these SLCs in the fifth and final year (2012-13) of the grant. As part of the evaluation, surveys were administered to teachers and students at five participating high schools in the spring of 2013. The teacher survey included questions related to SLC development, SLC impact on teacher and student culture, SLC-specific objectives, and teacher satisfaction (See Appendix A). A student survey mirroring many of these themes was also administered to permit both teacher and student viewpoints to be represented (See Appendix B). In addition, principals at the five high schools were invited to answer a series of brief questions about how the SLCs had impacted teachers, students, and the overall school climate. It is important to note that, over the course of the five year grant, the five participating high schools implemented SLCs differently and provided varying levels of support to developing and growing SLCs. During this five year period, California schools were deeply impacted by budget cuts which undoubtedly factored in to the ability of schools to fully implement and provide ongoing support to SLCs. Given this variation in implementation, it is challenging to draw consistent conclusions about the effectiveness of the SLC grant.

Teacher perspectives

In this evaluation study, we gathered information regarding the efficacy of Small Learning Communities by asking teachers about their connections with their students. For example, survey items covered the extent to which teachers know their students’ names and something about their personal lives, their expectations for their students to go to college, and the extent to which teachers communicate with students’ families (See Appendix A for a copy of the teacher survey). Students were asked a set of similar questions and their responses will be summarized following the teacher responses (See Appendix B for a copy of the student survey).

The web-based teacher survey was sent electronically to 426 teachers in May 2013 to email addresses provided by the Sacramento City Unified School District. The survey was sent to all teachers working at each of the five high schools. E-mail reminders to complete the survey were sent every week for two months. As an incentive, teachers were eligible to enter a raffle for a $25 Amazon.com gift card (2 per school) once they had completed the survey. A total of 139 surveys were returned for an overall response rate of 31% average – although response rates varied from school to school with a range from 15% to 53% (See Table 1 for number and percentage of teacher survey respondents by school).
Table 1. Number and Percentage of Teacher Respondents by School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% within school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burbank</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McClatchy</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennedy</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosemont</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total/Average</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The survey asked teachers to identify the grade levels and subjects that they teach. Teachers across all the grade levels (9-12) and multiple subject areas are represented. English, Science, and History/Social Studies are most frequently mentioned (Appendix C displays the detailed grade and subjects taught overall and for each school).

Teachers were asked to identify how long they had been teaching in general. The majority of teachers (67% overall) at four of the five schools responded that they had been teaching for six or more years. McClatchy High School had the highest proportion of teachers who had taught less than six years (61%). The responses for this item can be found in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. How long have you been teaching?

Teaching in an SLC/Pathway/Academy
The survey also asked teachers to identify the SLC that they were working in and how long they had been teaching in this SLC. In two of the high schools, Luther Burbank and Hiram Johnson, the majority (85%) of the teachers were able to identify the SLC they were currently working in,
while 65% at Rosemont identified their SLC. At both McClatchy and Kennedy, approximately 60% of the teachers responded that they were not part of an SLC/Pathway or Academy. Figures 2 and 3 below show the number of teachers identifying that they worked in an SLC and how long they had been working in an SLC. It is difficult to interpret differences between schools since the response rates and total number of teachers responding from each school varied widely. The extent to which the respondents are representative of their school is also uncertain.

**Figure 2. Percent of Teachers Identifying their SLC**

![Bar chart showing the percent of teachers identifying their SLC at different schools.](chart1)

**Figure 3. How long have you been teaching in an SLC?**

![Bar chart showing the duration of teaching in an SLC at different schools.](chart2)
Information regarding the number of teachers at each of the high schools who identified the SLC they worked in is presented in Appendix D. As noted above, responses from teachers at Hiram Johnson and Luther Burbank high schools did not include any “not applicable” or “none” items, however the three other high schools had a fairly large proportion of teachers responding “not applicable” to these items. For example, 64% of McClatchy High School teachers said they did not teach in an SLC, Pathway or Academy (See Figure 3).

Teachers were also asked how long the SLC or Pathway had been in place at their school. Given the fact that many teachers did not identify working in an SLC it is not surprising that many teachers either did not know the answer to this question or said it was “not applicable.” The majority (82%) of Burbank High School teachers responded that the SLC they work in had been in place for more than six years. Responses to this item are displayed in Figure 4 below.

**Figure 4. How long has this SLC been in place at your school?**

![Bar chart showing the distribution of responses on how long the SLC has been in place at each school.]

**Teachers’ Relationships with Students**
As mentioned, one of the primary goals of small learning communities in high schools is to create a community where teachers and students establish relationships and are more closely connected. In order to determine whether this was happening within the five participating high schools, teachers were asked a series of questions about how well they knew their students and how often they communicated with students’ families.
Teachers were asked, “For what proportion of all your students do you: (a) know their names, (b) know something about their home life/personal life, and (c) expect them to earn a college degree.” Teachers could check “all,” “about 75-100%,” “about 50-75%,” or “less than 50%.” The majority of teachers (87% overall) indicated they knew at least 75% or more of their students’ names across all five schools (See Figure 5).

**Figure 5. Teachers Responding that They Know Their Students' Names**

![Bar chart showing teachers' responses to knowing students' names across five schools.]

*Response rates for schools varied greatly. For example McClatchy High School had 14 total responses and Burbank had 56 teacher survey responses.*

Teachers were also asked to identify the proportion of their students for whom they knew something about their home life. As compared to knowing their students’ names, fewer teachers (40% overall) reported that they knew something about 75% or more of their students’ home/personal life (See Figure 6).
When asked if they expected their students to earn a college degree, even fewer teachers (23% overall) expected 75% or more of their students to earn a college degree. Teachers at Rosemont, Burbank, and Kennedy high schools responded that they expected 50-75% of their students to earn a college degree. At both McClatchy and Hiram Johnson High Schools approximately 43% of teachers responding to the survey expected less than 50% of their students to earn a college degree (See Figure 7).

Teachers were asked for what proportion of their students they call parents/guardians at least once a month to report something either positive or something that concerns them. Overall,
teachers were calling home once or twice a month to report something positive about their students (70% overall). However, a fairly high number of teachers at McClatchy (42%) reported that they never contacted parents to report something positive about their students. Figure 8 shows the responses to this item.

**Figure 8. How often in a given month do you contact parents to report something positive?**

Teachers were also asked how many times in a given month they contact their students’ parents to report a concern. Several examples were included in this item, including missing homework, behavior problems, and attendance. The majority of teachers (70% overall) at all five high schools reported that they contacted their students’ parents on average once or twice a month to report concerns (See Figure 9 below).

**Figure 9. How often in a given month do you contact parents to report a concern?**
Next, teachers were asked how often they discuss college/future careers with individual students and their classes as a whole. Overall, teachers from four of the five high schools most commonly responded that they talked to individual students about college and future careers “somewhat often” (48%) or “weekly” (26%). McClatchy teachers most often responded that they were talking to individual students about college or future careers “occasionally” (54%). Figure 10 shows the responses to this item.

**Figure 10. How often do you discuss college/future careers with individual students?**

In terms of talking to their whole class about college and future careers most teachers at Rosemont, Burbank, Johnson and Kennedy responded that they spoke with their whole class either “somewhat often” (42% overall) or “weekly” (28% overall). The majority of teachers (54%) at McClatchy said that they discuss college or future careers with their whole class “occasionally,” although a significant number (31%) also reported talking with their whole class about college “weekly.”
Figure 11. How often do you discuss college/future careers with your whole class?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Somewhat Often</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burbank</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosemont</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennedy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McClatchy</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School Environment
An additional characteristic of SLCs, theoretically, is their impact on school climate (Cotton 2001; Bloom, et al. 2010). The idea is that, as teachers work closely together within their SLC-based professional learning community, they develop mutual trust and respect and can share their ideas and experiences related to effective instruction. We gathered information regarding this aspect of SLCs by asking questions in the survey about trust, sharing concerns, respect for teacher leadership and for one another, shared vision, teacher voice, and freedom to innovate. We also asked about some of the more concrete activities expected in SLCs, such as frequency and nature of collaboration among teachers.

Teachers were asked to what extent they thought the following statements were true:

- Teachers in this school trust each other;
- It’s okay in this school to discuss feelings, worries, or frustrations with other teachers;
- Teachers respect other teachers who take the lead in school improvement efforts;
- Teachers at this school respect those colleagues who are expert at their craft.

For the first item regarding teachers trusting each other, the majority (58% average) of teachers from four of the five high schools said this was “somewhat true.” However, 55% of the Burbank teachers said this statement was “true.” Responses to this item are shown in Figure 12 below.
The majority of teachers at all five high schools responded that the statement “It is okay to discuss feelings, worries, or frustrations with other teachers” was either “true” or “somewhat true” (82%).

Similarly, most of the teachers at the five high schools responded that the statement “teachers respect other teachers who take the lead in school improvement efforts” was either “true” or
“somewhat true” (82%). This was especially the case at McClatchy (82%) and Burbank (72%), where the majority of teachers responded that this was “true.”

Figure 14. Teachers respect other teachers who take the lead in school improvement efforts

When asked to rate whether the statement “Teachers at this school respect those colleagues who are expert in their craft,” the majority of the teachers at the five high schools responded that this was either “true” or “somewhat true” (88% average). However, at Rosemont and Kennedy, approximately 20% of teachers rated this statement as “somewhat untrue” or “untrue.”

Figure 15. Teachers at this school respect those colleagues who are expert in their craft
Teachers were also asked to what extent each of the following statements was true, regarding their SLC/Pathway/Academy:

- Teachers have a collective/shared vision of outcomes they expect from their students;
- Teachers have freedom in how they deliver rigorous academic content to students;
- Teachers have opportunities to be innovative in programming that benefits students;
- Teachers have a voice to ensure appropriate pathway scheduling

On the first item, regarding a shared vision of expectations for students, respondents from the five schools rated this item as “true” (45% average) or “somewhat true” (40% average). All teachers at McClatchy (100%) rated this item as either “true” or “somewhat true.” The other high schools exhibited a range of responses to this item (See Figure 16 below).

Figure 16. Teachers have a collective/shared vision of outcomes we expect for our students

Respondents from four of the five schools rated the statement “teachers have freedom in how we deliver rigorous academic content to students” as “true” (62% average) or “somewhat true” (28% average). Teachers at Hiram Johnson showed a range of responses to this item: 17% rating it as “untrue,” 25% rating it as “somewhat untrue,” 33% saying it was “somewhat true,” and 25% rating it as “true.”
Figure 17. Teachers have freedom in how we deliver content to students

When asked to rate the statement “Teachers have opportunities to be innovative in programming that benefits students,” a large number of teachers at the five schools said this was “true” (46%) or “somewhat true” (31%). At Hiram Johnson, 26% of the teachers said this was “untrue” and 17% said it was “somewhat untrue.” At Rosemont, 43% of the teachers rated this statement as “untrue.” Responses to this item are shown in Figure 18 below.

Figure 18. Teachers have opportunities to be innovative in programming that benefits students
For the final question in this section, regarding having a voice in scheduling, teachers’ responses varied from school to school. For example, 57% of Burbank teachers said this statement was “true” while 50% of Rosemont teachers said this statement was “untrue.” The other schools showed a range of responses as can be seen in Figure 19 below. The majority of teachers at McClatchy (60%) rated this statement as true.

**Figure 19. Teachers have a voice to ensure appropriate scheduling**

Another important component of SLCs is that teachers and staff have adequate time and support to meet and regularly collaborate and discuss individual students. In order to determine how SLCs were operating in these areas, teachers were asked how often they did the following (Never, Occasionally, Somewhat Often, Often, or Weekly):

- Have grade-level meetings with other teachers;
- Have department-specific meetings;
- Have SLC/Pathway/Academy specific meetings;
- Discuss individual students’ academic progress with other teachers (formally, not just in passing);
- Confer with other teachers in their SLC/Pathway/Academy about individual students’ behavior or personal issues that impact school performance.

As depicted in Figure 20, the responses to the first item varied between the five high schools. Burbank was the only school where a substantial number of teachers (54%) responded that they met “weekly” or “often.” A large number of teachers at McClatchy (63%), Kennedy (68%), and Hiram Johnson (62%) said that they “never” or “occasionally” had grade level meetings.
Figure 20. How often do you have grade level meetings with other teachers?

When asked about department specific meetings, the responses were more consistent, with the majority of teachers at the five high schools saying that they met “often” (48%) or “somewhat often” (32%). None of the teachers responded that they “never” had department specific meetings.

Figure 21. How often do you have department specific meetings?

Not surprisingly, based on teacher responses to items related to working in a specific SLC or Pathway, many of the teachers responded that they did not have SLC-specific meetings. This was
most true at McClatchy and Kennedy, where 40% and 59% of teachers respectively said that they “never” had SLC meetings. Responses to this item are shown in Figure 22 below. However, at Burbank, where most teachers did identify their SLC, the majority of teachers said that they had SLC specific meetings “often” or “weekly.”

**Figure 22. How often do you have SLC/Pathway specific meetings?**

Overall, teachers responded that they met to discuss individual students’ academic progress “occasionally” (37%) and “somewhat often” (24%). Responses did vary between schools, with 40% of teachers at Burbank saying they met often to discuss individual students and 28% of teachers at Kennedy saying they never met to discuss individual students (See Figure 23 below).

**Figure 23. How often do you discuss individual students’ academic progress with other teachers?**
Responses with regard to meeting within their SLC/Pathway to discuss individual students varied between schools, with the majority (64%) of Burbank teachers responding that they met “often” or “weekly.” In contrast, the majority (63%) of teachers at Rosemont, Kennedy, and McClatchy said they either “never” or “occasionally” met within their SLC to discuss student progress.

Figure 24. How often do you confer with teachers in your SLC/Pathway about individual students' behavior or personal issues?

In summary, teachers responded that they were participating in these activities at different levels at the five high schools. Burbank High School teachers seemed to be doing activities related to their SLC/Pathways more often than teachers from the other schools. Note that the respondents from each school are not necessarily representative of all teachers at those schools and the response rates among the schools varied greatly.
The final three questions asked for teachers’ overall feedback about the impact of SLCs at their school. When asked, “To what extent is the following statement true: I feel having the organizational structure of the SLCs/Pathways/Academies positively impacts my relationship with my students,” most teachers from the five high schools rated this as “somewhat true” or “true” (75%). The majority (94%) of Burbank High School teachers said that this was “somewhat true/true.” Figure 25 Error! Reference source not found. shows teacher responses to this item.

**Figure 25. I feel having the organizational structure of the SLCs/Pathways positively impacts my relationships with my students**

Next, teachers were asked, “To what extent do you feel students are benefitting from the SLCs/Pathways/Academies?” both academically and socially. The large majority of Burbank High School teachers said that students were either moderately or very much benefitting from the SLCs/Pathways/Academies both academically (92%) and socially (90%). In the remaining four high schools, responses were spread out across the options with no clear consensus; however, no teachers at Burbank and Kennedy indicated that students were benefitting academically “not at all.” Responses are shown in Figure 26 and Figure 27 below.
When asked if there have been any changes at their SLCs/Pathways/Academies that have benefitted students, teachers said there were not any changes overall (64%). Rosemont was the only school where the majority of teachers said that there were changes that benefitted students academically (64%). Figure 28 shows the percentage of teachers reporting whether or not there have been changes that benefitted students.

Figure 26. To what extent do you feel students are benefitting academically from SLCs?

Figure 27. To what extent do you feel students are benefitting socially from SLCs?
Figure 28. Have there been any changes in your SLCs/Pathways/Academies at your school that have benefitted students?

![Graph showing the percentage of students at various schools who have benefitted from SLCs/Pathways/Academies.]

Teachers were also asked whether or not there have been changes that have benefitted teachers. The majority of teachers (70%) at all five schools responded that there were not any changes that had benefitted teachers, while 30% overall responded that there were beneficial changes. Figure 29 shows the percentage of teachers reporting whether or not there have been changes that have benefitted teachers.

Figure 29. Have there been any changes in your SLCs/Pathways/Academies at your school that have benefitted teachers?

![Graph showing the percentage of teachers at various schools who have benefitted from SLCs/Pathways/Academies.]

**Teacher Open-Ended Responses – General Feedback on SLCs**

The final two items on the survey asked teachers to provide their feedback on SLCs in an open-ended format. The first item asked teachers how the SLC had changed their experience as a teacher. There was noticeable variety in responses between schools. Teachers at Luther Burbank were overwhelmingly positive, with just three teachers out of thirty-three providing critical feedback. Teachers at other schools also provided positive feedback about working in an SLC, although the comments were fairly evenly divided between positive and negative. Most of the positive comments focused on the strength of relationships and collaboration with other teachers and getting to know students. Examples of positive feedback from teachers are listed below:

“It has constantly reminded me that I am never alone in this challenging profession. The collective and family like atmosphere it fosters literally has saved students and caught them before they fell too far. ..”

“Being part of a consistent, small group allows me to reach students more effectively and to plan intervention strategies for students at risk. Reduced class sizes along with SLC structure greatly benefit the students at our school.”

“It helps me communicate with my students’ other teachers. It also helps me to get to know my students better over the course of their four year high school career.”

“It has pushed me to be more collaborative with my colleagues. I can get to know students and their families on a deeper level throughout the four years.”

“Growing relationships with students. Students who I have had for more than one year seem to trust me more and are more willing to come to me for help, both in and out of school.”

As far as critical feedback, most of the comments were about not receiving adequate support and leadership to make SLCs successful. Several teachers also commented in this section that SLCs were not functioning at their school. Examples of critical feedback are listed below:

“I believe in pathways as a whole, however, it was a bit frustrating being a part of a pathway that was lauded by the district in its formation and then slowly dismantled over the last few years.”

“This is my second year in the SLC, prior to this year I would have had much higher praise for the SLC system. I think it really depends on the SLC. There needs to be a good leader who is able to lead the team of teachers with a clear vision. The team of teachers must be willing to share a common vision and work towards it.”

When teachers were asked if there was anything else they would like to comment on regarding SLCs, the majority of responses provided critical feedback, describing challenges and supports
needed in order to make SLCs successful, or describing the limitations of SLCs. However, this was not the case at Luther Burbank, where teachers were overwhelmingly positive in their responses to this item. Examples of both positive and critical feedback to this item are listed below:

“I think SLCs are vital to our schools improvement. It gives students a stronger sense of belonging and a better chance for buy in.”

“I really think the SLC system has improved our climate and our academic success for our students. There is no magic solution to the challenges our students face, but SLC structure, when done properly, is a step in the right direction.”

“Overall, I think SLCs are a bad idea, and have proven not to work. They either exceed their mandate or they turn in to de facto tracking, and serve as a way for parents to segregate their children from others at the academy level…”

“The goal of secondary education should be to expand the horizons of a child and not box them in to a future career.”

“We need much more vocational training in high school for those who don’t plan to go to a 4 year college. The idea that all kids need to qualify for UC is not only absurd, but harmful.”

“We need to be more supported by our admin team. Right now support is non-existent.”

**Summary of Teacher Survey Responses Regarding SLCs**

The information gathered from the teacher surveys provides a mixed picture of SLCs’ success in this sample of five high schools. As mentioned, the schools involved provided different levels of support during the implementation phase and ongoing process of building SLCs. Budget constraints and enrollment changes made full support difficult at most of the schools. This was reflected in teacher responses to the survey, where a third of the teachers in the sample said that they were not currently teaching in an SLC (See Figure 2).

When teachers were asked about their connections with their students, a majority of teachers said that they knew over 75% of their students’ names. However, a much small proportion (40%) responded that they knew something about the home life of 75% or more of their students. One of the most striking findings from the teacher survey was that just 23% of teachers (overall) said that they expected 75% or more of their students to earn a college degree. When asked about contact with students’ families, the majority of teachers responded that they had contact once or twice a month with families to communicate both positive behavior and areas of concern. Teachers’ responses to how often they talked to either individual students or their whole class about college and future careers showed that most teachers were talking with students “somewhat often” (45%) or “weekly” (72%).
Teachers’ responses regarding the professional environment at their school were overwhelmingly positive. The majority (78% overall) of teachers responded that they trusted their fellow teachers, that they felt comfortable discussing feelings and issues with colleagues, and that leadership and expertise were respected in their school community. When asked about having a collective vision, having freedom in delivering academic content, and having opportunities to be innovative the majority of teachers (84% overall) said that these statements were “true” or “somewhat true.” The one item in this section that showed the most variety between the schools in terms of responses was whether teachers felt they had a voice in scheduling issues with 60% of teachers (overall) saying this was “true” or “somewhat true.” The majority of teachers at two of the schools said this was “untrue” or “somewhat untrue” (See Figure 19).

The evaluation team examined whether responses to these survey items varied significantly based on whether or not the majority of teachers at the school said they were part of an SLC, and this was not the case, with the exception of specific questions about having SLC-specific meetings, or meeting to discuss individual students. These items were rated more highly by Luther Burbank High School teachers, where the majority identified working in an SLC. This was also the case when teachers were asked how students were benefitting from SLCs. The majority of teachers at Luther Burbank responded that students were benefitting “very much,” both academically and socially from the SLC. However, in the other high schools the majority of teachers also rated that students were benefitting either “very much” or “moderately” from SLCs. It seems that, where SLCs are functioning successfully, they are seen as very beneficial. However, when they are not supported and teachers are not provided adequate resources to be successful, SLCs end up losing teacher support and becoming an additional burden for teachers.
Professional Development

In the second section of the survey, teachers were asked what professional development activities they participated in during the 2012-2013 academic year. Overall, 52% of teachers reported participating in content-specific professional development provided by one of the California Subject Matter Projects as part of the SCUSD Cohort 8 Grant from UC Davis, 36% reported participating in content-specific professional development provided by a different provider (such as County Office of Education, a professional conference, etc.), and 20% reported not participating in any content-specific professional development. (See Figure 30 for the level of teacher participation in content-specific professional development during the 2012-2013 school year).

**Figure 30. Content-Specific Professional Development**

![Content-Specific Professional Development Chart]

If they had attended one of the California Subject Matter (CSMP) trainings, teachers were asked which they had attended. There was a range of responses across schools and no one content area appeared to be attended more often than others. However, since only a little more than half of all respondents answered this question (N=74), there were relatively few teachers reporting attending all of the specific CSMP content trainings. Attendance in the content trainings did not show a consistent pattern across schools (See Figure 31).
Teachers were asked to rate their satisfaction with the CSMP trainings, and overall 68% of teachers were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the trainings they attended. Figure 32 shows the breakdown by school.

**Figure 32. California Subject Matter Program Satisfaction Ratings**

Teachers were also asked whether or not the trainings they had participated in during the 2012-2013 year had helped them or their school meet the goal of improving students’ academic outcomes. The majority of teachers (63%) responded “yes” that the trainings had helped their school meet the goal of improving students’ academic outcomes. Figure 33 illustrates the breakdown by school on this item.
Teachers were asked the extent to which the professional development they participated in during the 2012-13 school year increased their ability to support their students in a variety of ways. The specific items touch on various instructional strategies that are common among the CMSPs. Figure 34 shows the overall responses, as, due to the small and uneven numbers of respondents across the school sites, variation among the schools in responses is not very meaningful.

**Figure 34. Impact of Professional Development on Teachers’ Abilities to:**

- Provide my students with opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of concepts and practice their skills.
- Encourage my students to learn from each other (through debate, discussion and problem-solving).
- Support my students with a variety of strategies and tools that scaffold student learning.
- Engage my students in activities that allow them to deepen their understanding of key concepts and content.
- Provide my students with opportunities to think and reason about key concepts and content.
Student Survey Results

The evaluation procedure called for administration of pencil and paper surveys to 9th – 11th grade students in the spring semester during their English class. On average, 37% of the eligible students responded to the survey (see Table 2). Response rate variation among the schools suggests that the survey was not administered to some English classes, possibly introducing some response bias, particularly at McClatchy and Rosemont. See Table 2 for response rates by school and grade.

Table 2. Number of Student Respondents by School, Response Rate within School, and Percentage of Overall Responses (2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% within school</th>
<th>% overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burbank</td>
<td>728</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McClatchy</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennedy</td>
<td>1016</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosemont</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The distribution of student respondents was fairly even across all three grades in three out of the five schools (See Table 3). McClatchy and Rosemont are the notable exceptions with almost no student representation for 9th and 10th grade classes at McClatchy and fewer student respondents for Rosemont’s 10th grade classes.

Table 3. Percentage of Students, by School, in Each Grade (2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade (%)</th>
<th>Burbank</th>
<th>McClatchy</th>
<th>Johnson</th>
<th>Kennedy</th>
<th>Rosemont</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>728</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>1016</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>2415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>99.3</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students were asked if at least one of their teachers contacted their parents/guardians directly during this past school year. Overall, 38% students said that their teachers have contacted their parents/guardians directly, while 39% said their teachers have not contacted their parents/guardians directly. Lastly, 22% said they were not sure (see Figure 35).

Figure 35. Teacher has Contacted Parents/Guardians Directly, Percentage of Students, by School (2013)

Students were then asked, “Why did your teacher contact your parents/guardians?” Generally, more students responded that their teacher contacted their parents/guardians to report something positive than to report something negative. Overall, 35% of students said that a teacher contacted their parents/guardians to report something positive, while 23% said that a teacher contacted their parents/guardians to report something negative.
Figure 36. Percent of Students Who Answered “Yes” their Parents/Guardian had been Contacted Indicating a Positive or Negative Report* (2013)

*Note: percentages do not add up to 100% because not all students responded to each question and this figure summarizes two different questions.

Next, students were asked if the following statements related to college and career preparation were true (Yes, No, Not sure):

- A teacher has discussed what I need to do to prepare for college with me, personally;
- A teacher has discussed what I need to do to prepare for a career in one of my classes;
- A counselor has discussed what I need to do to prepare for college with me, personally;
- A counselor has discussed what I need to do to prepare for a career in one of my classes;
- My parents/guardians/family expect(s) me to go to college;
- My parents/guardians/family expect(s) me to graduate from college;
- I am planning on going to college;
- I have a detailed plan on how to complete the UC a-g requirements;
- I am on track, in terms of credits, to graduate at the end of my senior year;
- I know what classes I need to take to prepare for my college or other career plan;
- If you were to go to college, would you be the first person in your generation to go to college?

Aside from the last question, of all the statements, the fewest students said that they had a detailed plan on how to complete the UC a-g requirements (39.4% overall), followed closely by “a counselor has discussed what I need to do to prepare for college (41.4% overall). See Figures 37 - 40 for percentage of students who answered “Yes” to the above statements.
Figure 37. Percentage of Students Who Answered "Yes" to the Following Statements (2013)

- A teacher has discussed what I need to do to prepare for college with me, personally.
  - Burbank: 36
  - McClatchy: 44
  - Johnson: 48
  - Kennedy: 51
  - Rosemont: 54
  - Overall: 57

- A teacher has discussed what I need to do to prepare for a career in one of my classes.
  - Burbank: 44
  - McClatchy: 44
  - Johnson: 43
  - Kennedy: 51
  - Rosemont: 58
  - Overall: 64

- A counselor has discussed what I need to do to prepare for college with me, personally.
  - Burbank: 37
  - McClatchy: 34
  - Johnson: 41
  - Kennedy: 43
  - Rosemont: 54
  - Overall: 57

- A counselor has discussed what I need to do to prepare for a career in one of my classes.
  - Burbank: 29
  - McClatchy: 35
  - Johnson: 44
  - Kennedy: 49
  - Rosemont: 49
  - Overall: 51

Figure 38. Percentage of Students Who Answered "Yes" to the Following Statements (2013)

- My parents/guardians/family expect(s) me to go to college.
  - Burbank: 87
  - McClatchy: 84
  - Johnson: 88
  - Kennedy: 92
  - Rosemont: 95
  - Overall: 95

- My parents/guardians/family expect(s) me to graduate from college.
  - Burbank: 84
  - McClatchy: 84
  - Johnson: 90
  - Kennedy: 89
  - Rosemont: 90
  - Overall: 90
Figure 39. Percentage of Students Who Answered "Yes" to the Following Statements (2013)

- I am planning on going to college.
- I have a detailed plan on how to complete the UC a-g requirements.
- I am on track, in terms of credits, to graduate at the end of my senior year.

Figure 40. Percentage of Students Who Answered "Yes" to the Following Statements (2013)

- I know what classes I need to take to prepare for my college or other career plan.
- If you were to go to college, would you be the first person in your family to go to college?
Lastly, students were asked to what extent the following statements were true:

- The teachers and administrators at this school care about all the students;
- My teachers expect me to be responsible for my own learning;
- I have a positive relationship with most, if not all, of my teachers;
- Most of my teachers have high expectations about my academic achievement;
- Most of my teachers expect me to earn a college degree;
- I feel comfortable expressing my opinion in most of my classes;
- I feel comfortable asking questions in most of my classes;
- I feel comfortable asking most of my teachers for individual help when I am having trouble understanding something;
- If I had a problem in my personal life, there is an adult at my school who I would feel comfortable talking about this issue;
- I know most of the other students in my classes fairly well – (i.e. I know their names and something about their interests and life, in general);
- I take most of the same classes as my closest friends.

Of all the above statements, “If I had a problem in my personal life, there is an adult at my school who I would feel comfortable talking about this issue” received the least agreement with 47% overall indicating that this was “somewhat true” or “true.” The statement with the most agreement was “My teachers expect me to be responsible for my own learning” with 90% agreement overall. See Figures 41 - 44 for percentage of students who thought each statement was “somewhat true” or “true.”
Figure 41. Percentage of Students Who Thought the Following Statements were Somewhat True/True (2013)

- The teachers and administrators at this school care about all the students.
- My teachers expect me to be responsible for my own learning.
- I have a positive relationship with most, if not all, of my teachers.

Figure 42. Percentage of Students Who Thought the Following Statements were Somewhat True/True (2013)

- Most of my teachers have high expectations about my academic achievement.
- Most of my teachers expect me to earn a college degree.
Figure 43. Percentage of Students Who Thought the Following Statements were Somewhat True/True (2013)

- I feel comfortable expressing my opinion in most of my classes.
- I feel comfortable asking questions in most of my classes.
- I feel comfortable asking most of my teachers for individual help when I am having trouble understanding something.
- If I had a problem in my personal life, there is an adult at my school who I would feel comfortable talking about this issue.

Figure 44. Percentage of Students Who Thought the Following Statements were Somewhat True/True (2013)

- I know most of the other students in my classes fairly well - (i.e. I know their names and something about their interests and life, in general.)
- I take most of the same classes as my closest friends.
Summary and Discussion of Survey Responses

All teachers and students at the five high schools where small learning communities are being implemented were invited to respond to end of year surveys. Response rates varied among the schools with 31% of the teachers and 37% of students responding overall (Figure 45). Response rates were lowest for both groups at McClatchy (14% and 10% respectively) and Rosemont (15% and 19% respectively). While this section compares some teacher and student responses note that there is no way of knowing how representative the responses are of the total school populations for either group, particularly at McClatchy and Rosemont. Consequently, interpretation of these comparisons is suggestive, not definitive.

Figure 45. Response Rates (Percent Responding to Surveys) (2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosemont</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennedy</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McClatchy</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burbank</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How do the SLCs appear to impact student and teacher relationships?

SLC proponents suggest that developing small schools within a large school contributes a sense of community among teachers and students. Survey responses illustrate that the vast majority of teachers (96% overall) report that they know at least 75% of their students’ names. Somewhat fewer say they know something about at least 75% of their students’ home or personal lives (63% overall). Most students (81% overall) report that teachers and administrators at their school care about students, and most also report having positive relationships with most of their teachers (85% overall). Additionally, they feel their teachers have high expectations about their achievement (86% overall), and most feel comfortable asking questions in class (74%) as well as
asking their teachers for individual help if they don’t understand something (77%). Meanwhile, most teachers (81%) report that the SLC structure has had a positive impact on their relationships with their students.

Figure 46 illustrates teachers’ and students’ views of their relationships, both overall and across the schools. Although these items are not directly comparable as they are framed differently, they do suggest that while students’ responses are fairly positive and uniform across schools, there is wider variation in terms of teachers’ perceptions among schools with regard to the impact of the SLC structure on their relationships with their students. Burbank teachers exhibit the most positive perception of SLCs’ impact (94%) while Rosemont teachers exhibit the least (64%).

**Figure 46. Perceptions of Teacher and Student Relationships (2013)**

![Bar chart showing perceptions of teacher and student relationships across different schools.]

Despite being generally comfortable with their teachers, when students have a personal problem only 47% of them, overall, agree that there is a there is an adult at their school they would talk to about personal issues. Figure 47 illustrate teachers’ responses with regard to knowing about students’ personal lives and students’ comfort with confiding in adults at school. The results reflect both overall and between school variations. These patterns suggest that while students feel supported academically, they may be less confident that the adults at school will support or understand their personal lives.
Another aspect of teacher and student relationships is the extent to which teachers engage with the important adults in students’ home lives such as parents or guardians. Teachers were asked about the frequency of contacting students’ homes and the proportion of their students whose families/guardians they contact. Of the teachers who reported making calls to students’ homes on a weekly basis, 23% called to discuss concerns and 11% called to report something positive. Only about 10% of teachers report calling the parents/guardians of 75% or more of their students each month. Over a third (38%) of students reported that a teacher contacted their home at least once during the school year. Interestingly, while teachers reported calling to report concerns or problems somewhat more often than positive news, students were more likely to say that the teacher called their home to report something positive (35% overall compared to 23% saying the teacher called to report something negative). It is possible that students are more likely to remember a positive call home than a negative one. Again, the items on the two surveys are not directly comparable, with teachers reporting their average contacts with families/guardians per month and students reporting on any contact throughout the year. Figure 48 below illustrates, in a general way, how student and teacher perceptions about the frequency and nature of contacting families/guardians compare and vary overall and across schools.
How do SLCs support a student culture of community?

Small learning communities are thought to not only allow students and teachers to become more familiar with one another but also to encourage students to build a sense of community among themselves. When teachers were asked if they thought the SLC structure was beneficial to students’ sense of community, most (74%) agreed. This varied among the schools from 43% agreement at Rosemont to 90% at Burbank. Students report knowing most of the other students in their classes fairly well (80%), and a slight majority (60%) report that they take the same classes as their closest friends. Student surveys also asked about how comfortable students were asking questions in their classes (74% “true/somewhat true”) and how comfortable they feel about expressing their opinions in their classes (68% “true/somewhat true”) which may also reflect the extent to which they feel comfortable with their classmates.
Interestingly, while teachers’ perceptions of whether the SLC encouraged students’ sense of community varied widely among the schools, students’ responses on these items varied much less among schools. As Figure 49 shows, as an example of the way teacher and student opinions vary among the schools, students’ comfort in expressing their opinions in class does not vary much among the schools, nor in the same pattern as teachers’ opinions about SLCs’ impact on student culture. This is likely a reflection of the different structure of the questions to each group – teachers responded generally about “social benefits” and students responding more specifically about how comfortable they are expressing their opinions.

Figure 49. Indicators of Students' Sense of Community (2013)

However, given how divergent teachers’ opinions appear to be about the benefits of SLCs for student community, it is interesting that students’ experiences with their peers do not appear to vary widely among the schools.

How do SLCs encourage community among teachers?

In addition to promoting a positive culture between students and teachers, one of the primary goals of small learning communities is to build strong professional learning communities where teachers work closely together. Findings indicated fairly strong teacher communities across the schools, regardless of the extent to which teachers perceived themselves as part of a formal SLC. Teachers mostly reported high levels of mutual trust (with some variation among the schools), a shared vision, and freedom to deliver their subject area content to their students in the way they feel is appropriate. However, there was variation in the frequency and structures of teacher
meeting times, and in the frequency with which teachers in the different schools reported discussing individual students’ needs and progress with one another.

*How do teachers participate in and value professional development opportunities?*

More than half of the teachers working in small learning communities reported that they participated in content specific professional development (52%) provided by the California Subject Matter Projects (CSMPs) and most (two-thirds) reported satisfaction with those opportunities. A majority of teachers reported that the professional development they received through the CSMP had increased their ability to: provide students with opportunities to think and reason (78%); engage students in learning activities to deepen their understanding of concepts (80%); support students with differentiation and scaffolding (84%); and provide students with multiple opportunities to show understanding and practice skills (78%).

*How do schools with SLCs support a college/career ready culture?*

Small learning communities should ideally provide additional opportunities for teachers and students to discuss college planning and career pathways. While the vast majority of students (85% or more) expected to go to college, and reported that their families expected them to do so, a smaller proportion appear to be obtaining the credits and courses they need to do so (fewer than 61%). Only a little more than half of the students report having personal or classroom conversations with teachers or counselors about college and career readiness. Further, only 23% of the teachers said they expected most (over 75%) of their students to earn a college degree.

**Interviews with Principals**

In order to gather contextual information about the schools participating in the SLC program, principals from the five high schools were contacted and asked to answer a few questions related to how the program had been implemented at their school. Three of the five principals responded to the request and were interviewed. The questions asked were:

- How long have you been the principal at your school?
- What did you do before taking this position (*probes: what position and location*)?
- How would you describe the development and history of small learning communities (which may be called pathways or academies) in your school?

- How has having small learning communities in your school impacted the school culture among teachers? Among students? Between teachers and students?
- Do you think that having small learning communities at your school has been a positive experience overall?
- Do you think the original goals for establishing small learning communities have been addressed? If so how? If not, why not?
- Do you think you’ll continue to build and retain the small learning communities you have established at your school?

The three principals interviewed had all been working at their current school location for more than three years and one had been the principal for 9 years. All three had previously worked as principals at other schools. The principals all described the initial process of implementing SLCs as a district wide initiative that began over ten years ago. All three principals described the support for SLCs as changing over the past several years and mentioned that budget cuts had impacted the amount of time and resources available at their school to devote to building strong SLCs.

Only one of the principals described having built a solid SLC program that had been serving students and teachers in a way that was aligned with the original goals of the program. Survey results confirm this as this was the only high school where the majority of teachers reported that they were working in an SLC and that the SLC had been in place at their school for more than four years. The principal at this school also reported that their school has the highest percentage of students meeting A-G requirements in the district and that the graduation rate is equal to the top performing schools in the district. This principal felt that this was due largely to the presence of SLCs which allow teachers to monitor student progress closely. In addition, this school was able to fund one counselor for each SLC so students were receiving this additional support. This principal felt that teacher satisfaction was high, specifically in the areas of leadership, collegiality, and receiving administrative support. He mentioned that making SLCs work takes commitment and time from the entire teaching staff, administrators and students. When SLCs are not implemented school wide it becomes an equity issue because then only some students have access. The principal at this school was committed to continuing to grow the program.

All of the principals described common challenges in building their SLC programs. Time allocation was mentioned consistently as a challenge. All three principals saw weekly meetings for teachers within SLCs disappear over the past two years because of changes in district allocation of funds. The principals all spoke about the necessity of regular, consistent meetings in order for teachers to collaborate effectively. Budget was mentioned consistently as a challenge. For example, one principal said that budget cuts had resulted in teacher layoffs and losing a full-time SLC coordinator which impacted the ability of the program to continue. Another challenge to SLCs appeared to be changes in enrollment which varied from year to year and made program consistency difficult.

One of the principals said that it had taken years to build teachers content knowledge in the areas necessary to have true SLCs where teachers have the cross-disciplinary knowledge to work with...
a small group of students. This type of content rigor also required the development of standard assessments across disciplinary areas that had been challenging. Two of the principals described currently having one or two strong SLCs on their campus after originally starting with many more. For a variety of reasons these SLCs had continued to gain support and interest from both teachers and students. All three principals mentioned that having ‘buy in’ from the school community was a factor that appeared to impact whether SLCs were successful.

Overall, all three principals described having SLCs at their schools as a positive experience which allowed teachers to focus on student needs and increase student engagement. Principals also described benefits to teachers related to increased collaboration, rigor in content knowledge and use of data to track student progress. Unfortunately, district budget cuts impacted levels of support for the program and only one principal described having implemented SLCs in a way that was school wide and sustainable.

In terms of future plans, all three principals interviewed planned to continue building their SLC or Pathway programs and described the district’s new linked learning initiative. What seems clear from speaking with these three principals is that the district will continue to support SLCs in one form or another and that there is continued support from administrators to develop these types of “school within a school” models.

Talking with the principals provided valuable information in order to interpret findings from the teacher and student surveys. For example, the majority of Burbank teachers who responded to the teacher survey identified being part of an SLC. This mirrored what the principal at this site said about being able to provide the necessary supports for an SLC to function successfully.

**Overall Summary**

Survey results suggest that, in general, students in these five comprehensive high schools feel supported by and comfortable with their teachers. Due to variation in both responses and response rates among teachers across the schools, it is difficult to determine the extent to which the SLC structure does or does not contribute to students’ sense of community and support. Student responses are fairly consistent in most items across the schools while teachers’ responses often vary widely. One area that student responses suggest might be an opportunity to improve supports is in preparing students for college and careers. While the vast majority of students indicated they expect to go to college, a much smaller proportion indicate having a detailed plan to do so or that their teachers or guidance counselors have discussed this with them.

The impact of the SLC structure on teachers is less clear. Teachers’ opinions vary widely both between and within the schools. While teachers tend to report high levels of collaboration and flexibility in delivering curriculum, issues of having a voice in scheduling pathways and having weekly scheduled collaboration time varied and were generally less positive. Teachers who have
participated in the CMSP professional development tend to respond positively about its impact on their ability to support their students, although only a small majority are confident that the professional development (from any source) they participated in resulted in higher student achievement. Interpreting this discrepancy is difficult – open ended responses suggest that at least some teachers were “reserving judgment” until end of year test scores were available (survey implementation preceded end of year exams and release of CST scores).

It is also apparent, both from survey responses and interviews with the principals that not all teachers and schools have the same conceptualization of what a small learning community is and whether it exists at their school. Further, budget constraints and competing initiatives over the past five years have made consistent schoolwide implementation of SLCs in all five schools challenging. Burbank, the one school where teachers and their principal report that they have established and maintained the SLCs, in spite of the challenges, seems to have realized many of the benefits expected from this approach.

References


Appendix A
Teacher Survey

Hello XXX High School Teachers!

Please complete this survey regarding your experiences with and opinions of Small Learning Communities/Pathways/Academies at your school. The survey should take no more than 20 minutes, and is part of the external evaluation of the Small Learning Communities Grant.

Your individual responses are completely confidential and will only be seen by the project evaluation staff at UC Davis. Only grouped summaries of all of responses will be shared with SCUSD staff and included in our evaluation report. No individually identifiable information will be released to anyone at anytime. Feel free to contact either of the following if you have any questions.

Lisa Sullivan, Evaluation Analyst
Center for Education and Evaluation Services
CRESSS Center, School of Education
1 Shields Ave.
University of California, Davis 95616-8729
lsullivan@ucdavis.edu
Office: 530-752-2609

Theresa (Terry) Westover, Director
Center for Education and Evaluation Services
CRESSS, School of Education
1 Shields Ave.
University of California, Davis 95616-8729
twestover@ucdavis.edu
Office: 530-754-9523
## Background Information

1. **What grade(s) are you currently teaching?**
   - [ ] 9th
   - [ ] 10th
   - [ ] 11th
   - [ ] 12th

2. **What subject area(s) are you currently teaching?**
   - [ ] English
   - [ ] Mathematics
   - [ ] Science
   - [ ] History/Social Sciences
   - [ ] Computer Science
   - [ ] Special Education
   - [ ] Fine Arts
   - [ ] Foreign Language
   - [ ] Physical Education
   - [ ] Career/Technical Education
   - Other (please specify):

3. **How long have you been teaching at Burbank?**
   - [ ] 1 year or less
   - [ ] 2-3 years
   - [ ] 4-5 years
   - [ ] 6 or more years
4. Which SLC/Pathway/Academy are you in?

- Law & Social Justice
- Information Technology
- Medicine & Health Services
- International & Environmental Studies
- Visual Performing Arts
- Construction & Design
- None
- Not sure

Other (please specify)

5. How long have you been a member of this SLC/Pathway/Academy?

- 1 year or less
- 2-3 years
- 4-5 years
- 6 years or more
- Not applicable

6. How long has this SLC/Pathway/Academy been in place at your school?

- 1 year or less
- 2-3 years
- 4-5 years
- 6 or more years
- Do not know
- Not applicable
### Your students

**7. For what proportion of all your students do you:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All</th>
<th>about 75-100%</th>
<th>about 50-75%</th>
<th>less than 50%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Know their names?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know something about their home life/personal life?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expect them to earn a college degree?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional comments

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**8. How often in a given month, on average, do you contact any individual students’ parents/guardians to report something:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive about their student (e.g. good grades or attendance, behavior improvement, awards)?</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>once or twice</th>
<th>weekly</th>
<th>more than weekly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That concerns you about their student (e.g. missing homework, behavior problems, class cutting)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional comments

---

**9. What proportion of your students’ parents do you contact at least once a month for the following reasons: to report something**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive about their student (e.g. good grades or attendance, behavior improvement, awards)?</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>about 75-100%</th>
<th>about 50-75%</th>
<th>less than 50%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That concerns you about their student (e.g. missing homework, behavior problems, class cutting)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional comments

---

**10. How often do you discuss college/future careers with:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual students?</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Somewhat Often</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your classes, as a whole?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional comments
### School Environment

**11. How true are the following statements?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Untrue</th>
<th>Somewhat Untrue</th>
<th>Somewhat True</th>
<th>True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers in this school trust each other.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s okay in this school to discuss feelings, worries, or frustrations with other teachers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers respect other teachers who take the lead in school improvement efforts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers at this school respect those colleagues who are expert at their craft.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional comments

**12. To what extent are the following statements true: In my SLC/Pathway/Academy, teachers have:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Untrue</th>
<th>Somewhat Untrue</th>
<th>Somewhat True</th>
<th>True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A collective/shared vision of outcomes we expect for our students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom in how we deliver rigorous academic content to students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to be innovative in programming that benefits students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A voice to ensure appropriate pathway scheduling.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional comments
13. How often do you do the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Somewhat Often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have grade-level meetings with other teachers.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☒</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have department specific meetings (e.g., English or math department).</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have SLC/Pathway/Academy specific meetings.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss individual students’ academic progress with other teachers (formally, not just in passing).</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confer with other teachers in your SLC/Pathway/Academy about individual students’ behavior or personal issues that impact their school performance.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional comments

14. To what extent is the following statement true: I feel having the organizational structure of the SLCs/Pathways/Academies positively impacts my relationship with my students.

- ☐ Untrue
- ☐ Somewhat Untrue
- ☐ Somewhat True
- ☐ True

Why why not?

15. To what extent do you feel students are benefiting from the SLCs/Pathways/Academies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>somewhat</th>
<th>moderately</th>
<th>very much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academically?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socially, in terms of building a sense of community and belonging?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Why why not?
16. Have there been any changes this year in your SLCs/Pathways/Academies at your school that benefitted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If yes, what was the most significant change?

17. How has the SLC/Pathway/Academy you participate in changed your experiences as a teacher?


18. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about SLCs/Pathways/Academies at your school?
Professional Development

19. Which mostly closely applies to you:

☐ I participated in the content-specific professional development during the 2012-13 academic year, provided by one of the California Subject Matter Projects (History/Reading-Lit, Math, Science, Writing) as part of the SCUSD Cohort 8 Grant (including monthly and/or quarterly meetings and/or a summer institute) from UC Davis.

☐ I participated in content-specific professional development during the 2012-2013 academic year, including summer, provided by a different provider (such as County Office of Education, a professional conference, etc.).

☐ I did NOT participate in any content-specific professional development during the 2012-2013 academic year, including summer 2011.
20. Which CSMP professional development did you attend?

☐ Science
☐ Math
☐ Social studies/history
☐ English

21. If you attended any CSMP professional development, to what extent were you satisfied with the professional development you received?

☐ Not satisfied at all
☐ Somewhat Satisfied
☐ Satisfied
☐ Very Satisfied

Additional comments

22. Has the professional development you participated in during the 2012-2013 academic year helped you/your school meet its goal of improving students’ academic outcomes?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Not sure

Additional comments
### 23. To what extent do you agree with the following: The professional development I participated in during this academic year has increased my ability to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide my students with regular opportunities to think and reason about key concepts and content in the subject area(s) I teach.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage my students in learning activities that allow them to deepen their understanding of key concepts and subject matter content.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support my students with a variety of strategies and tools that scaffold student learning (such as revisiting guiding concepts, use of different problem-solving strategies, use of models).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage my students to learn from each other (through regular participation in debates, discussion and problem-solving experiences in pairs, small groups, and as a whole class).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide my students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of concepts, as well as to practice their skills/competencies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional comments**

---

**SCUSD SLC Report, Year 5**

Page 56
Thank you very much for your time! If you would like your name to be entered in a raffle for a $25 gift certificate as a thank you for completing this survey, please copy and paste this link to your browser and complete the survey:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SLCTeacherRaffle

Please note that your raffle entry is completely separate from your survey responses.

Please click "Done" to submit your survey responses.
Appendix B
Student Survey

Please answer the following questions. If you don’t know or are unsure of an answer, select “Not sure.”

1. What grade are you in?
   ○ 9th
   ○ 10th
   ○ 11th

2. Where did you attend middle school?
   ○ Albert Einstein
   ○ California
   ○ Fern Bacon
   ○ John Still
   ○ Kit Carson
   ○ Rosa Parks
   ○ Sam Brannan
   ○ Sutter
   ○ Will C. Wood
   ○ Alice Birney Waldorf-Inspired Methods
   ○ Caleb Greenwood
   ○ Genevieve F. Didion
   ○ John Morse Therapeutic Center
   ○ Leonardo da Vinci
   ○ Martin Luther King, Jr.
   ○ Other ______________________

3. Which SLC/Pathway/Academy are you in? (If you don’t know, select “Not sure”)
   ○ Health & Medical Science Academy
   ○ Corporate & Business Academy
   ○ School of the Arts
   ○ Human & Legal Services Academy
   ○ Education Leadership Academy
   ○ Not sure

4. At least one of my teachers has talked to my parents/guardians directly during this past school year.
   ○ Yes
   ○ No
   ○ Not sure

5. Why did your teacher contact your parents/guardians (check all that apply)?
   ○ To report something negative (e.g. missing homework, tardiness, class cutting, etc.)
   ○ To report something positive (e.g. good grades, good participation in class, awards, etc.)
Please answer if the following statements are true:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A teacher has discussed what I need to do to prepare for college with me, personally.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A teacher has discussed what I need to do to prepare for a career in one of my classes.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A counselor has discussed what I need to do to prepare for college with me, personally.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A counselor has discussed what I need to do to prepare for a career in one of my classes.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My parents/guardians/family expect(s) me to go to college.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My parents/guardians/family expect(s) me to graduate from college.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am planning on going to college.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a detailed plan on how to complete the UC a-g requirements.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am on track, in terms of credits, to graduate at the end of my senior year.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what classes I need to take to prepare for my college or other career plan.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you were to go to college, would you be the first person in your family to go to college?</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To what extent are the following true:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Untrue</th>
<th>Somewhat Untrue</th>
<th>Somewhat True</th>
<th>True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teachers and administrators at this school care about all the students.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teachers expect me to be responsible for my own learning.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a positive relationship with most, if not all, of my teachers.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of my teachers have high expectations about my academic achievement.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of my teachers expect me to earn a college degree.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel comfortable expressing my opinion in most of my classes.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel comfortable asking questions in most of my classes.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel comfortable asking most of my teachers for individual help when I am having trouble understanding something.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If I had a problem in my personal life, there is an adult at my school who I would feel comfortable talking about this issue.

I know most of the other students in my classes fairly well – (i.e. I know their names and something about their interests and life, in general).

I take most of the same classes as my closest friends.
Appendix C

Percent of teacher survey respondents per grade and subject, by school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Burbank</th>
<th>McClatchy</th>
<th>Johnson</th>
<th>Kennedy</th>
<th>Rosemont</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Taught (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>86.7</td>
<td>69.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th</td>
<td>69.6</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>76.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>73.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th</td>
<td>69.6</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>67.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Taught (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History/Social Science</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Ed</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech Ed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix D

#### Percent of teachers in each SLC/Pathway/Academy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>SLC/Pathway/Academy</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% within school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burbank</td>
<td>Law &amp; Social Justice</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medicine &amp; Health Services</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International &amp; Environmental Studies</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visual Performing Arts</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Construction &amp; Design</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McClatchy</td>
<td>Law &amp; Public Policy Academy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Justice Academy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humanities &amp; International Studies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None – N/A</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>64.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td>Science, Technology Engineering, Medicine</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corporate &amp; Business Academy</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School of the Arts</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human &amp; Legal Services</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education Leadership Academy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennedy</td>
<td>Design and Manufacturing Academy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Program in American and California Exploration</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Law and Equity</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None – N/A</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>59.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosemont</td>
<td>Engineering Pathway</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Green Academy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Digital Media Pathway</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None – N/A</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>