

High School Support Classes for Language Arts and Math in 2013-14

In the Fall of 2010 our District was notified that it is a **Program Improvement (PI) District** under the rules of **No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**. Although we continue to make great gains and have much to be proud of, we missed some of the federal targets again this year and continued as a PI District. Our District's PI-response plan for improving student achievement, with substantial input from staff and the community, was approved by our Board of Education and the California Department of Education (CDE). Since that time, as required, we have expeditiously implemented our new plan. With this plan came some K-12 program changes that we were excited to implement, and below is information for families about the program.

Most significantly, we have been implementing a during-the-day **English Language Arts (ELA) and Math intervention program** for students who are significantly below grade level. The program is appropriate for below grade level students who are entering the **9th-10th grade** in the fall. These courses are part of our continual efforts to meet the needs of all students while focusing on giving extra support to students potentially at risk of not passing the CAHSEE or not graduating from high school. Many districts that have had these intervention programs in place for several years are showing **significant** improvement in student skills, test scores and graduation rates. The goal is to accelerate achievement so that next year these students can make much more than one year's growth and be successful in high school and beyond. Here are the answers to some common questions:

What is this intervention program for eligible students? This Intervention Program---known formally as "Tiered Intervention"---has three tiers. Tier 1 is the main, core class only.

Tier 2 (students approximately at the 6th-7th grade level in Language Arts or Math) requires enrolling eligible students in **both** a core, grade level Math or Language Arts course **AND** a second Math or Language Arts support course called a "Companion Course." The goal of the Companion Course is for the teacher to propel the students towards a passing grade in the main, core class so that the student does not need the Companion Course any more. Without this support the student is likely to fall further behind each year.

Tier 3 (students who are below 6th grade level standards in Language Arts) requires enrolling eligible students in a two-period class in-lieu of the core class for English Language Art only (not available for Math). A task force of teachers selected new, state-of-the-art programs to help propel these students high enough to move on to the Tier 2 level as soon as possible. We have developed criteria to make sure that placements are adjusted at the beginning of the year based on STAR data and that some will have an opportunity to exit to the next level midyear. Note that some students eligible for these programs may not be in them due to staffing and other considerations

How will students be assigned to these new courses? Eligibility for enrollment in these classes would be made only after careful consideration of grades, test scores and the recommendation of the current teacher. That is happening this Spring at each school site. Some students would be in only the two periods of Language Arts, some would be in only the two periods of Math, and others may be in both (Language Arts Core and Companion Class PLUS Math Core and Companion Class).

How will schedules be affected for students who are recommended for the extra period of support in Language Arts or Math? In a six period day, enrollment in this necessary extra support class means that the student will have one less other period available in his/her schedule. This may mean that the student is not enrolled in an elective until they are exited from the Companion Class. Again, this is a necessary, short-term intervention to ensure success in all academic classes.

When will I know if my student is in need of the support classes? By the end of the year, a letter will be sent out to parents of students who have been identified as benefitting from these new courses.

For more information please contact your site principal. Thank you.