

Notes from breakout sessions at Wednesday Town Hall Meeting, 6/14/06

In AP classes, feeling of isolation, not welcome. No social experience.

2 days a week plan harder for students who also need to get community experience. Creates a logistical problem.

Community Partnerships Academy has to have the ability to grow with its students.

How will any AP plan be assessed, so we know which students are successful?

Need for education of parents and students on tracking.

Need to understand what colleges are looking for in applicants.

If Mrs. Chen is offering AP to mostly African American students, that seems like a good idea.

It is not a big deal to have separation of classes. We would all still be in CP Academy.

Colleges look for other things than AP

Separating students by interests is a bad idea.

100% of the staff teach at CP Academy because CP Academy doesn't track.

If you take all A.P. classes, that will not guarantee you college acceptance.

Feedback is important.

AP classes challenge us.

Excitement about taking AP.

Students being personal advocates.

Continue with regular English class but offer 2-day a week AP classes.

Not effective if smart kids are in one class, not smart in the other.

Study why African American students drop out of AP. –because they were not used to doing work in a group? Thinking its cheating to work in a group?

Ms. Bell isn't our teacher!

Junior parent: I like what Ms. Bell proposes, to expose all students to the AP curriculum and give the extra time to work with the students who are planning to take the AP test and need to do the extra work.

Junior parent: AP should be offered to students who want it, but the classes should not be broken up. It should be an optional choice, but within the same class.

05 Graduate: AP credit for extra work is a good option as long as students stay together. It takes more than AP classes to get into college. I didn't take AP classes, and I got into UC Berkeley. Students need the whole package, to be well-rounded. Writing, reading and vocabulary skills are also really important. Because CP Academy taught me those skills so well, I got an A in my freshman English class at UC Berkeley.

Freshman parent: My daughter is leaving CP Academy because she wants access to higher level

classes and more options, like dance.

Junior parent (who also teaches AP in the large school): The transition to teaching AP in the English classroom with differentiation should be easy because the teachers are so strong, and the students are so connected to the teachers. It would be good for all kids, because CP Academy teachers have the expectation that they can do it.

CP Acad teacher: CP Academy would have to add support for teachers and students for them to be able to do the amount of extra work involved.

Junior parent/teacher: The AVID program BHS used to have provided that kind of support, especially for students of color.

Sophomore student: We need to offer AP in a way so that we can stay as a community.

Freshman parent: AP is not the ultimate high school challenge. It's a bit of a racket, a set up.

Sophomore parent: AP isn't the whole thing. Students need a well-rounded experience.

'05 alum: The pressure to take AP is intense. Many took it but couldn't pass the test and got low grades in the classes. Ms. Bell could do it differently. But the focus has to stay strong on the community and the internships program. AP can't be at the expense of the other parts of the program.

Junior parent: Students affect each other, like in the sports analogy. Having a player like Michael Jordan on a team made the whole team better, pulled everyone up. The effect of students on each other has been really evident in my daughter's experience. She has blossomed!

CP Academy teacher: Both the research I have done and my own experience leads me to believe that grouping them into separate classes will negatively affect students who are not in the AP section.

CP Academy teacher: Those who don't choose to take AP often have really important and different experiences and insights that those who are motivated to take the AP class would miss out on as well – especially true for social studies classes.

Freshman parent: Putting AP classes as the ultimate goal is a problem. The college-level classes at Berkeley City College are a much more appropriate way to get students who are ready for it the college level academic curriculum. That is the place to put resources, not into more AP classes.

Parent#1: Staff should get together and figure out a solution to the AP English offering

Parent#2: Keep in mind CP Academy vision – do not separate CPA with respect regular English and AP English

Parent #3: Honors addition didn't work in math last year, why should AP English addition work this year?

Parent #1: Parents knew what they were choosing when they accepted the small school. Why are they now trying to bend it their way and not consider those who understood what CPA was about?

Administrative staff person: AP divides the community – collaboration is the key – option does not work.

Alumnus: We must move together as a group – no separation has proven to be very successful so far. I was accepted to 6 out of 7 famous colleges based on CPA's current model. The Internships are particularly important.

Parent #2: Moving together as a community is most important – a heterogeneous class is very important