Science Department Action Plan
January, 2009

GOAL A: DIVERSITY & CHOICE

To acknowledge and honor the diversity of the Gunn community and provide students with effective choices

TASK A-1: Explore introduction of new courses and programs based on student needs

- Explore the possibilities of developing additional non-AP elective courses that designed to meet the academic goals and interests of a wide variety of students
- Plan and implement new courses if the need is identified

TASK A-2: Provide support for students to be successful in existing and new programs

TASK A-3: Involve and educate parents of students needing support

- Improve student-teacher-home communication by expanding use of InClass, working toward a goal of all science teachers posting staff contact information, homework assignments and support materials for all science classes.

GOAL B: INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

To maintain and encourage instructional practices that ensure student success

TASK B-1: Encourage teacher collaboration and sharing of best practices

- Use Department Meeting time to share best practices
- Use Department Meeting time to meet in discipline groups in order to facilitate articulation and sharing of best practices.

TASK B-2: Increase variety of instructional techniques

- Examine and revise lab curriculum to the extent appropriate in all courses to reflect the importance of inquiry based learning, hands-on activities and real world data collection.

- Increase opportunities for students to develop communications skills through science course work

- Ensure that all members of the science department and support staff participate in lab and chemical safety training as needed

- Continue to support integration of technology into teacher presentations, student work and the science laboratory

GOAL C: COMMUNITY & COMMUNICATION

To maintain a sense of community by streamlining communications, facilitating transitions, and reaching out to those not yet connected

TASK C-1: Streamline communication with students, parents, faculty and community

- Improve student-teacher-home communication by expanding use of InClass where appropriate.

TASK C-2: Improve transitions from middle to high school, between grades in high school, and post high school.

- Continue conversations with middle schools regarding prerequisite skills and content knowledge needed for success in high school
- Continue conversations with middle school regarding 9th grade placement.
- Begin department wide conversations regarding articulation between courses that our students take as freshmen, as sophomores and as juniors/senior.

TASK C-3: Maintain a sense of community and connections for students, teachers and parents as we grow

- Build a cohesive sense of community with in the science department

TASK C-4: Improve delivery of counseling and college/career services

GOAL D: EXCELLENCE WITH GROWTH

To maintain academic excellence and a sense of community during a period of growth

TASK D-1: Work with DLM architects and DO to develop a site plan using bond money that will better meet Gunn's needs

- Plan for enrollment growth and an increasing interest in science among our student population

- Plan and implement the expansion of the biotechnology program to the two additional classrooms under construction in the IA building

- Participate in planning process for campus-wide expansion

- Continue to Identify and solicit funding to support the equipment, resources and support staff needed by the science department, particularly during expansion.

- Plan for and purchase equipment for new classrooms. Plan for capital replacement and maintenance of equipment

- Continue to acquire equipment for, assemble and organize kits for lab activities, especially in physics

TASK D-2: As we continue to grow, we will maintain a sense of community and connectedness

TASK D-3: Attract, retain and develop highly qualified staff to maintain academic excellence and support new and existing programs

GOAL E: STUDENT PERFORMANCE & ASSESSMENT

To use data to inform instruction and improve student performance

TASK E-1: Use data more effectively

- Learn to access relevant performance data by attending appropriate workshops

- Each year, as it becomes available, analyze student performance data when it becomes available and use this data to inform changes in content, structure and pedagogy of our science courses.

TASK E-2: Provide multiple pathways for students to demonstrate content mastery in all subjects and to reflect on their growth and progress as learners.

- Continue to develop and implement alternative assessment methods.