

Values in Action – Draft Implementation Plan

May 15, 2006

Values – We believe:	Proposed Actions
<p>A safe and nurturing student-centered learning environment is essential</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve student council: more input from students in discussions with staff and administration/board meetings/activities • Solve stealing / vandalizing problem to create emotionally safe environment • Get counselors involved in knowing students and actively participating in problem solving and future planning (how do we get counselors more involved?) • Teacher training in communication • More oversight from teachers (in locker rooms / on campus in general) • Review discipline systems/actions; Make sure the punishment fits the crime • Improve the teacher evaluation system with an eye to student centered learning including input by students through evaluations of materials/instruction • Build capacity to ensure differentiated instruction in the classroom (how?) • Recognition/awards not only academic, but recognizing other types of contributions
<p>In the fundamental principles of democracy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage students to participate on the Board (by identifying an active representative) • Encourage faculty to participate on the Board (by identifying an active representative) • Encourage parents to participate on the Board (through a PTA representative) • Share summary Board meeting minutes broadly with students, faculty and parents following all Board meetings • Create mechanisms for students to share their ideas/priorities with the faculty and administration and define a process for problem-solving and decision-making • Generate a list of priority issues among students • Initiate a regular coffee hour which allows various segments of the ACS community to interact with the administration/Board and with each other • Prepare a document for broad distribution that describes the governance structures of the school so that all members of the ACS community know how they can effectively channel their input and receive feedback • Board/administration should conduct surveys and focus groups with parents and students to get systematic input
<p>In honesty, transparency and accountability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create strategies/programs to instill honesty throughout school; teach the value of honesty • Solve problem of stealing (not just punitive approach) • Either in advisory or in assemblies, review honesty standards • Encourage (require?) students to report stolen items (post stolen items on a bulletin board) • Grading of classwork/homework is standardized through rubrics or other methods whereby the students are quite clear on the grading standard/method used to assess their work (for individual assignments) • Clear guidelines for how teachers may interact with students in the classroom setting, including physical contact, verbal exchange, how work can be critiqued, mutual respect in action and words • Guidelines for how teachers interact with parents during Parent-Teacher Conferences • Guidelines for teachers' comments on student assessments, received by parents

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestions for how parents can participate more in the education of their children, including attending General Assembly meetings, board meetings, being involved in PTA activities, volunteering for CSP activities, home room parent, etc. This is part of the accountability factor. We can't keep the board/administration/staff accountable if we aren't willing to participate actively ourselves.
In ethical behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post rules and expectations for ethical behavior, as well as the consequences for misconduct when it occurs. • Conduct regular sessions on problem areas like bullying, plagiarism, theft, etc. • Use advisory groups and elementary homerooms to discuss and reinforce expectations for ethical behavior. • Develop a peer counseling program.
Modeling is the most effective way to teach core values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure everyone knows the ACS values: • Advisory groups: curriculum • PTA directory/student agenda • Character education program
The acquisition of life skills empowers individuals to make health and responsible decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for opportunities to tie current academic studies to current/national and international affairs
A broad based curriculum including local and international content better prepares individuals for success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentional research of different perspectives and points of view through the inclusion of articles and other research materials where issues of recognition and redistribution are discussed • Incorporate of Aymara or Quechua language learning into the curriculum • Devise training strategies for administrators and teachers to learn about local history, cultures, etc. • Train teachers to adapt materials taken from other places and systematize them so that the experience is handed down to new teachers.
Critical thinking and problem solving are essential skills	<p><i>Critical Thinking:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated curriculum—develop thematic instructional units involving several subject areas so students learn to see things from a variety of perspectives. • Use authentic assessment so students see the “real life” application of what they are learning in the classroom. • Apply the Socratic method where teachers question and challenge students to use critical thinking skills to address problems. • Use two-way feedback where students get involved in assessing the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction. <p><i>Problem Solving:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A problem-solving model will be established to address problems at all levels, from interpersonal conflicts to broader school-wide issues. • Teachers will use group exercises in the classroom to practice problem-solving skills. • ACS will identify the best existing practices for problem solving that currently exist within our community and seek to incorporate these practices school-wide. • The school will have a system to gather this input and review programs. • ACS will bring in people from the community who can run case studies and

<p>Success in education requires collaboration among students, parents and educators</p>	<p>simulations to help students and staff improve their problem solving skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide parents with the written curriculum • All parents and students should be invited to meet regularly (at least once per semester) with teachers (go beyond the annual open house and meetings with students on the D/F list) • Improve comments section on report cards (Administration/teachers with student and parental input) • Re-think advisory period with student and parental input. Involve parents in goal setting • Provide each elementary school student with a notebook for daily communication between parents and teachers. • Create spaces (such as coffees and workshops) for various segments of the school community to come together (students, parents, teachers and the administration/board) to discuss issues (Board/administration responsibility) • Create a forum for student debate (on global issues) and invite other members of the school community • Create a forum or speakers series for the school community focused on global issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is democracy? - What are the pro's and con's of competitiveness on campus (in academics and in sports)
<p>Respect for and celebration of cultural diversity enriches individuals and the educational community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise strategies of sensitivity/understanding “sensibilizacion” towards “others” • Organize “encuentros” where interaction between different schools (public and private) are intensified. Examples of these would be Ferias de Ciencias where diverse local knowledge is shared and appreciated. Sports and music encounters and interactions that already occur should be more regular and publicized. • Create classroom activities geared to “put yourself in their shoes” • Create school activities where the positive about other cultures is shown and enhanced in order to achieve understanding (fiestas religious, carnival, etc) • Train teachers and administrator on issues of cultural diversity and discrimination • Incorporate into the hiring process of a teacher profile that would include knowledge, method and attitude for dealing with issues of diversity and discrimination • Devise strategies for parents and students who do not want to break barriers and who do not want the kinds of understanding and “acercamientos” that are being proposed • Devise strategies on how to deal with prejudice that comes from the society at large in relation to ACS: Not all students in ACS are “gringos highlones”
<p>In fostering global awareness and that each individual has a responsibility to contribute to the larger community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan community service activities to facilitate the students seeing the benefits thereafter (even if it be the following year and even if they will no longer have an active role in this activity). • Go beyond “charity type” activities, the community service could also include ties to private sector businessmen and women or companies involved in advocating positive changes in civil society. Some forward thinking private business leaders have proposed a productive dialogue (eg. factory owner Jorge Soat) to address development issues in El Alto.