



Fall 2011
Community Report
*Supporting Families & Helping
Children Thrive*

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to keep our community and donors connected with our work on Santa Barbara's Westside. This report provides our community with highlights from last year, information on our progress and challenges of the new school year, and all the exciting news we can expect from our partners in Spring 2012.

THRIVE Westside is a partnership between Harding University Partnership School, McKinley Elementary School, La Cumbre Junior High, and San Marcos High School—to ensure coordinated resources for children and families living in Santa Barbara's Westside neighborhood. The goal of the project is to ensure that all children are healthy and safe, prepared to excel in kindergarten through high school graduation, and on to college and career.

The aim of THRIVE Westside is to **promote the success of all children** with an emphasis on significantly changing the trajectory of children who have not typically been afforded opportunities that result in school readiness, academic and career success by providing them with a clear pathway to achieving these goals. Such an endeavor can be accomplished successfully by schools collaborating with key partners such as parents and caregivers, non-profits and community agencies, and local businesses and government—to pair education with wraparound services. Key coordinated services include school-based activities aligned with health and safety programs, family support, and social services.

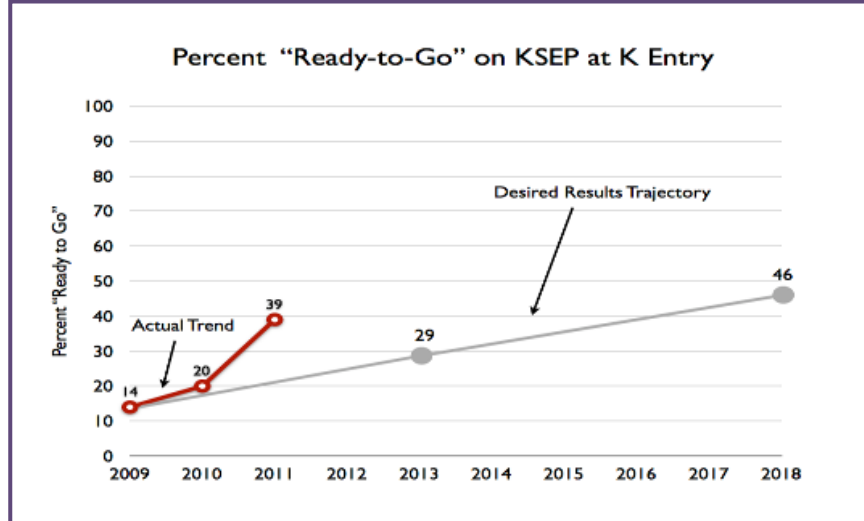
In the last year (2010-2011), THRIVE Westside has made many leaps forward, but as any new project would experience—there have also been opportunities for lessons learned along this journey.

Academic achievement in the last year has improved on the Westside. All four partner schools experienced gains on California Standards Test scores (CST).

McKinley demonstrated historic gains in meeting and exceeding State education standards and is one of only two schools in Santa Barbara County to exit “program improvement” status. **Harding** improved their Academic Performance Index (API) score by 57 points and met the State target. **La Cumbre Jr. High** is experiencing a record breaking 85% of their students scoring at or above proficient in Algebra for 2 consecutive years. Over 95% of the students enrolled in the **San Marcos High School** AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program have completed 4-year college entrance requirements. This achievement distinguishes San Marcos and exceeds California state standards.

At McKinley and Harding schools, there is an understanding that **early learning and development begins at birth** and that school has a role to play in encouraging and supporting families. THRIVE seeks to ensure that incoming kindergarten students are ready to learn and succeed in elementary school and beyond. Identifying a child’s readiness at school entry and intervening appropriately facilitates positive academic outcomes. The Kindergarten Student Entrance Profile (KSEP) is administered to all entering **kindergarten** students to measure their levels of readiness. Figure 1 is an example of the percentage increase of Harding students scoring proficient on the KSEP in the last 2 years.

Figure 1



THRIVE believes that **parents are their child’s first and most important teacher**. Last year introduced the first cohorts at Harding Early Years Program and McKinley Elementary School for two parent education programs—nationally recognized AVANCE and Padres Adelante. AVANCE is a 9 month parent-child education program designed for families with children ages 0-3 to increase parental knowledge in child development and promote school readiness as a value within the family unit. Padres Adelante helps parents develop leadership skills and acquire knowledge of the school system, including planning for success in school, college, and career. A total of 125 parents graduated from these two programs.

Adolescents and teen students are also served by THRIVE. **La Cumbre Jr. High** and **San Marcos High School** have joined to provide coordinated inter-school services towards college readiness for first generation college-bound students. La Cumbre has identified 8th graders **on track for college** and grouped them into cohorts

(see Posse Project page 7). These students take English, Social Studies, and Math classes together and receive advising and mentoring from high school students at San Marcos. The current pilot year of the Posse Project involves 40 students.

As our community continues to experience economic downturn and instability more families are looking to schools as a resource for support. In Santa Barbara's Westside neighborhood it is not unusual to find two or more families living in a small apartment. Economic instability negatively affects student performance. Additionally, State and Federal funding for public education continues to be insufficient. Across all school sites there is a need for additional funding to support the students and families and to meet THRIVE Westside cradle to career goals.

Our goal is not to sustain a program—but to sustain results and **maximize outcomes for children and families**. We continue to move forward with a positive outlook for our community.

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Breaking News: What's Working Well with THRIVE on the Westside? Supported Families + Committed Neighbors = Great Student Outcomes

Students are reaching new heights

We are aware that not all children start with opportunity and that the playing field is not always equal. At THRIVE Westside we strive to close that gap and tackle the socio-economic factors affecting our schools by building on our students' strengths. Poverty is not a learning disability—all children can thrive under the right conditions, and as educators, it is our responsibility to put those learning conditions in place. "It's making schools a place that kids want to go to...it's a culture of ensuring our kids know that we believe in them and will not let them fail," commented Emilio Handall, Principal, McKinley Elementary School.

Academic achievement has improved on the Westside. All four partner schools experienced gains on California Standards Test scores (CST). McKinley was only one out of two schools in the history of Santa Barbara County schools to exit program improvement. Harding improved their score by 57 points and La Cumbre met the State target with an API (Academic Performance Index) of 800. La Cumbre has been ranked a "10" by State Department of Education standards and is the only school in the Santa Barbara Unified School District with this honor. San Marcos students continue to do well on college preparation courses and there seems to be a "buzz" and increased interest by La Cumbre 8th graders in taking part in the Posse Program and peer mentoring.

Education is a journey, and our partner schools have taken several steps forward, knowing that there is still much work to get done. At Harding, Principal Kingston has ensured that all preschoolers are in full-day classrooms and have the opportunity to take part in enrichment classes such as art, Spanish, inquiry, and music, are involved in school-wide activities and that their curriculum aligns with the Kindergarten-6th grade International Baccalaureate program (IB). For preschool age children who do not have the opportunity to attend preschool, Harding offers these students and their parents a hybrid home preschool program that focuses on instructing parents on how to teach their children at home. They offer a weekly session onsite with a parent educator, library access, lab time, and reading intervention support.



On the road to college- McKinley & Harding Elementary Schools

At both McKinley and Harding, parent education programs and parent leadership opportunities are part of the school culture. There is a focus on college readiness at both campuses, through opportunities for critical thinking, higher learning, and experiential learning. College readiness is evident as one steps foot on both campuses, with “**college starts here**” banners and pendants at the entryway at McKinley and posters and tee shirts that read “I’m going to college”—that Harding students and teachers wear weekly. Principal Handall and Principal Kingston do whatever it takes to support their students. At both schools, all children are ensured a healthy meal at no cost to their family. Knowing that early detection of health ailments is important and that approximately 36% of our young children in Santa Barbara County suffer from tooth decay—**health screenings**, including vision, hearing, and oral health are offered to all preschoolers and kindergartners at both schools. School family advocates follow-up and refer families for any concerns found during the screenings. These health services are provided in collaboration with community partners.



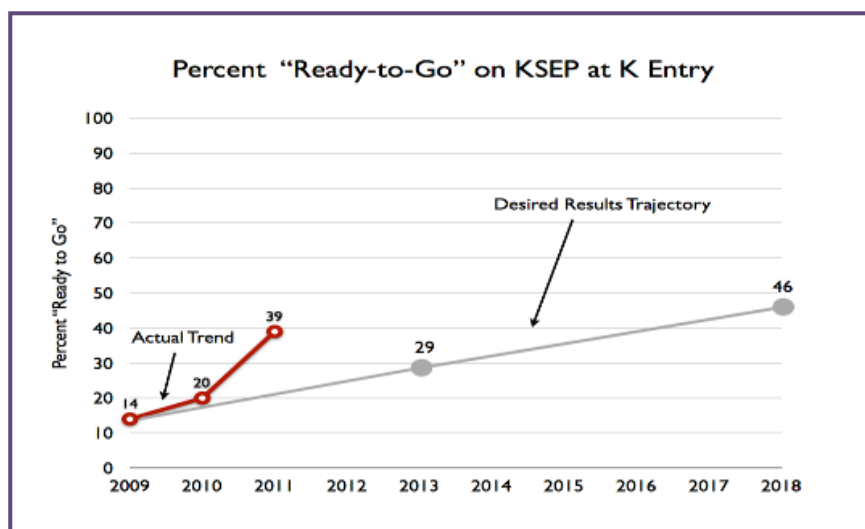
Preschool Health Screenings

At McKinley and Harding schools, there is an understanding that **early learning and development begins at birth** and that school has a role to play in encouraging and supporting families. One of the goals of the early childhood programs at these schools is to ensure that incoming kindergarten students are ready to learn and set up to succeed in elementary school and beyond. The transition into kindergarten is important because it sets the foundation for future academic achievement. Identifying a child’s readiness at school entry and intervening appropriately facilitates positive academic outcomes. As part of a THRIVE Santa Barbara County assessment, the Kindergarten Student Entrance Profile (KSEP) is administered to all entering kindergarten students to measure their levels of readiness. Through the KSEP instrument, teachers can evaluate some of the following items as indicators of Kindergarten readiness: a child recognizes their own name; demonstrates expressive verbal abilities; understands that numbers represent quantities; color and shape recognition; a child seeks adult help when appropriate; exhibits impulse control and self-regulation; and maintains attention to tasks.

For Harding school, the Kindergarten students showed progress and significantly increased “**Kindergarten readiness**” going into the 2011-12 year. Figure 1 shows that in 2009-10, 14% of Kindergarten students at Harding scored proficient or “ready to

go/learn” on the KSEP. We witnessed a significant increase in students at Harding scoring proficiently in subsequent years—20% last year (2010-11), and an amazing 19% increase with a total of 39% of the students scoring proficient and “ready to go” for the current year. Such increase in scores demonstrates that the support and enrichment programs and strategies implemented at Harding are making a difference and preparing our students.

Figure 1. Percentage of **Harding** students scoring proficient at K entry on KSEP



Kindergarten teachers at both Harding and McKinley have shared that students who attended preschool are developmentally better prepared than students without any preschool experience. In a recent visit to Harding by THRIVE Santa Barbara County, Board Chair, a Kindergarten teacher shared that her students who attended preschool at Harding “enter Kindergarten with higher knowledge of alphabet sounds, colors, shapes, are counting at higher numbers, and the high level students are already writing”. The Kindergarten teachers at both schools have also commented that parents who were involved in the Padres Adelante parent education program have been very involved at school and are mentoring other parents. “One of the parents helped a mom in my class and gave her advise on what she learned in the Padres class...her son is doing a lot better now and mom is involved more,” as shared by a Kindergarten teacher.

Both Harding and La Cumbre offer their students and family **socio-emotional support** through counseling onsite. Harding has partnered with UCSB’s Positive Behavior Support counselors to work with students and collaborate with the preschool team and the family advocates through the Family Strengths Center onsite. The team works together to ensure that every student is supported and each week students learn social and emotional regulation skills based on a solution/strengths-based approach. According to a preschool teacher, her student showed improvement in following directions, which was a skill practiced during group counseling and supported in the classroom. At La Cumbre, 7th and 8th graders have access to 2 counselors in addition

to the school district provided counselor onsite dedicated to helping students work through social-emotional conflict.

Afterschool programs at all four schools are not viewed as “extra” services, but instead as an integrated extension of the students’ learning experience. La Cumbre is the only junior high school in Santa Barbara that offers comprehensive afterschool programs. At least 40% of the students at La Cumbre stay on campus until 5:30pm doing homework, attending tutoring, in theater arts program, playing sports, cooking, in the science or computer labs or assembling robots. La Cumbre was recently showcased as a school with exemplary after-school and enrichment activities for youth and was honored by Fight Crime—Invest in Kids California. The campus was visited by Assemblyman Das Williams, our local District Attorney and Probation Office, Sheriff Brown, and Santa Barbara Unified School District Board members. The advisory group learned how participation in after school programs keeps kids engaged and away from crime and prevents high school dropout.



After-school and tutoring programs at La Cumbre Jr. High

With the average annual income difference between college and non-college graduates at about \$25,000, a **college diploma** is important. If we diligently work to realize THRIVE’s vision our community will witness higher wage earners buying homes and patronizing local business. La Cumbre and San Marcos have joined to provide coordinated inter-school services towards college readiness for first generation college-bound students. The **Posse Project** is a collaboration with San Marcos, in which La Cumbre has identified graduating 8th graders on track for college. They are grouped into a cohort of 10 students who stay together in English, Social Studies, and Math classes, while receiving ongoing guidance and advising by a La Cumbre graduate in college. Weekly meetings at La Cumbre and regular advisor checks-ins with students are held at San Marcos. The current pilot year of the Posse Project involves 40 students.

The goal of **Project College Bound** at San Marcos High School is to prepare low income Latino Westside students for college—starting with the San Marcos High School graduating class of 2015 matriculating from La Cumbre. The target population includes 50-60 Students who (a) graduated from La Cumbre in 2011, (b) completed Algebra or Geometry, and (c) scored at or above grade level in English Language Arts. These target students are the first step in creating a system which will ensure success of La

Cumbre's target students to complete the UC/CSU requirements. This includes all the necessary course work, high GPA's, high SAT verbal and math scores that allow them to attend a college of their choice.

Believing that support for students needs to be part of their regularly scheduled day, all San Marcos Posse students are enrolled in a year-long Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) elective class. The class utilizes a research based curriculum that enhances the students' college and career readiness. All AVID teachers are carefully recruited and trained in effective strategies in writing, inquiry, collaboration, and reading (WICR). These strategies have been proven to be effective with first-generation college-bound and economically disadvantaged students. This increases academic and personal skills, access and success in the most rigorous courses on the San Marcos Campus (for more information on AVID, www.avidonline.org). The teachers at San Marcos travel with the students through their high school career creating a longstanding mentor relationship with a knowledgeable and caring adult. This continuity creates a trust that allows students to feel more comfortable in taking risks, thus challenging themselves beyond what they might undertake on their own. The AVID program at San Marcos has a high success rate. Over 95% of the students enrolled in the program complete four year college entrance requirements, which is higher than the school's and the state's average.



San Marcos High School, Project College Bound

As we continue to focus our efforts on preparing **all of our students** to be college and workforce ready, we also need our community, county and state to understand that our future as a community, is tied to what happens in those schools. Social security is not viable if we do not have enough young people who become productive and able workers and can take care of our fast growing number of retirees. We should not think about whether or not we have children in schools—but instead, what is at stake and good for our community.

Families are finding networks of support and resources at schools

As our community continues to experience economic downturn and instability, more families are looking to schools as a resource and for support. In Santa Barbara's

Westside neighborhood, it is not unusual to find two or more families living in a small apartment. According to Santa Barbara County Education Office, in the last year, nearly 600 families (of which 348 attend the four partner schools) in Santa Barbara's Unified School District are considered homeless. Approximately 508 are living "doubled-up" or in crowded conditions and 76 living in shelters or motels. These numbers have doubled in 2 years.

In a recent community session on **preventing homelessness**, held during La Cumbre Jr. High School's evening program, community agencies such as Casa Esperanza, Transition House and Catholic Charities informed Westside families of services offered. One parent asked how he and his son, a La Cumbre student, could receive help with paying their rent to avoid eviction next month. Both father and son live in a makeshift room without a kitchen and heat. Another single father of 2 young daughters, whose wife passed away a couple of years ago, was seeking assistance with rent because after paying his rent each month he is only left with \$300 dollars. He is not making ends meet on one job and can not afford child care in the evenings should he decide to work a double shift. According to Ofelia Cervantes, Family Advocate at La Cumbre Jr. High, "the community views the school as a place to find answers and get help".

Community schools are another strategy for integrating existing school and community resources to remove barriers to learning and ensure that more young people graduate from high school ready for college and a career. Community schools stay open after the bell rings and provide a range of services to students and their families—from afterschool programs and tutoring, to health services and adult education. A wide body of research shows that this strategy improves student achievement, increases graduation rates, promotes family involvement in schools, and maximizes scarce local resources. At THRIVE Westside partner schools family advocates are available onsite through the Family Resource Centers to provide guidance and assist families by connecting them to local resources such as health insurance, referrals, counseling, housing, and other resources. At La Cumbre the food Pantry Program distributes approximately 7,000 pounds of food to nearly 500 community members a month. McKinley Elementary School sponsors a clothing distribution at the beginning of each school year, this year serving at least 200 families.

La Cumbre Jr. High's evening program is known on the Westside as a safe family recreation and community center and at least 1,000 people use it each month. The campus vibrates with energy in the evenings as students, parents, and neighbors enjoy the recreational and support programs offered through 7:00pm. In the afterschool and evening program, students receive tutoring and have access to the computer lab and library (there is no library on the Westside). Adults can learn marketable skills such as carpentry, sewing, and healthy cooking. Products made from the carpentry class (usually 2 generations of families working together) are donated to local preschool programs. Additional programs for adults include English classes, computer and keyboarding, recreational activities and access to the fitness room—all while their young children are in childcare onsite. Since there is no gym on the Westside, the school keeps the weight room open and offers weight training by a trained instructor.



Evening Program at La Cumbre Jr. High School

Parent education programs help create partnerships between parents, students and educators to further students' academic success. These programs offer parents opportunities to learn how to foster a positive educational environment for their children both at home and at school. Parent education classes are offered at all four partner schools. At Harding University Partnership School and McKinley Elementary School, last year was the first year of the AVANCE and Padres Adelante parent education programs of which a total of 125 parents graduated. AVANCE is a 9 month parent-child education program designed for families with children ages 0-3 to increase parental knowledge in child development and promote school readiness as a value within the family unit. Padres Adelante consists of 16 three-hour sessions where parents develop leadership skills; acquire knowledge of the school system, including planning for success in school, college, and career, and increase confidence and involvement in the school and community.

Findings from both Padres Adelante cohorts at Harding and McKinley revealed that overall, participants felt more comfortable sharing the information they learned with other parents to help resolve problems in their school and/or community. Similarly, they noted feeling more comfortable working with other parents to improve their child's school. Gains were made in their collective understanding of what is expected of them as a parent to help their son/daughter be successful in school. Parents overwhelmingly noted that students should go to college after graduating from high school. Participants indicated an increased involvement in some educational courses and reflected growth in areas of home parental involvement in their child's education. For example, these included promoting educational television, movies or readings, helping prepare their child for test/quizzes, and reading information that comes from school. Since participating in the class, more parents have moved on to leadership positions at their schools. Rosario became involved with the Policy Council while her child was in Head Start and is now Co-Chairperson of Harding's ELAC (English Learner Advisory Committee) committee. Rosario motivates other parents to become more involved and shares with them that "*aprendi que desaprovechamos cuando no nos involucramos como padres...te invito a que estés en comunicación con la maestra porque estando unidos siempre va hacer mejor*" (I learned that we disregard [our child] when we are not involved as parents...I invite you to be more involved and in communication [with your child's] teacher, because by being united, it will always be better).



Padres Adelante parent education class & AVANCE graduation

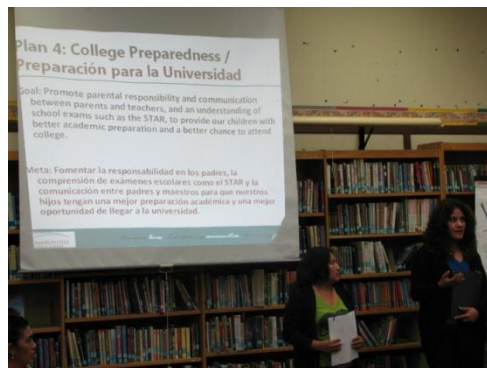
At Harding Early Years Program (HEYP), the Director has established bilingual monthly parent meetings for all preschool parents to attend and learn about kindergarten readiness, social-emotional health, nutrition, and a multitude of other early childhood topics. The meetings have been well attended with an average of 34 parents participating each month. HEYP has also recently established a comprehensive parent leadership and education plan. McKinley and La Cumbre are also doing their part in ensuring that opportunities for parent engagement are maximized. Both schools are taking part in a State-wide Father Involvement Initiative. Sites will be supported through developing work plans to engage fathers/males in their child's schooling. McKinley and La Cumbre are the only school-based programs involved in the project for Santa Barbara County and are therefore being highlighted for their work.

Over the last two years, McKinley partnered with Just Communities to implement the Family Dialogue Program—a 9-week program designed to build relationships between parents, help parents explore educational achievement data and issues, engage the parents in a process of action planning and leadership development, and connect them with other community resources and leaders who can support their goals. Program graduates at McKinley formed a new parent organization (previously, there was no parent organization) called PUEDE (Padres Unidos en el Desarrollo Educativo/Parents United in Educational Development). PUEDE Started a Room Parent Program which has established a Room Parent in every classroom who serves as a liaison between the teacher and the rest of the parents in the class. The room parent program has achieved the following:

- In 2009-10 there were an average of 0-2 parents per class. We witnessed an increase in 2011, with up to 15 involved parents per class.
- Room Parents meet regularly to receive information and discuss strategies to connect. Their role includes helping build leadership of parents in the class.
- Room parents conduct outreach for the school's ELAC meetings. Two years ago McKinley had an average of 5-10 parents at ELAC meetings. They now have an average of 40 parents.

PUEDE is currently in the process of arranging for presentations to all McKinley parents about navigating the school system and how parents of elementary school students can begin preparing their child on a college-bound track.

Both La Cumbre Jr. High and San Marcos High School offer parent education sessions that range from ESL classes, life experience, and learning how to prepare their child for college by understanding how grades are used for college entry and what requirements and classes are needed. At La Cumbre, the Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE) program has been well attended with a graduating class of 370 parents over the past 2 years. The PIQE program is a 9 week program that supports parents through creating a positive and lasting educational environment at home using a number of proven academic success tools. Graduates are guaranteed admission for their children to any of the Cal State Universities.



Parent Education Programs

In order to support parents' involvement on campus child care is provided at no cost at 3 partner schools. Based on a review last year, the child care rooms at both McKinley and Harding have experienced considerable quality improvement with an upgraded physical environment, staffing, and adult-child ratio. These child care centers are expected to continue in development and meet quality early childhood standards.

Parent education, counseling, resource centers, and afterschool programs should not be seen as “extra” services/programs on school campuses—but instead, these programs should be expected and made available to all children.

Neighbors are joining together to collaborate on community-based solutions

The dynamic between the Westside neighborhood and the rest of the City of Santa Barbara is similar to that of Harlem to Manhattan, where low-income families live within a short distance of multi-million dollar homes. One half of the THRIVE Westside neighborhood is primarily Latino, low income, and families live in high-density rental housing. Many struggle with unemployment, low job skills, and lack of medical and dental care. **Santa Barbara's Westside** is generally defined as the area West of the 101 Freeway, bounded to the north by Las Positas Road and to the South by Santa Barbara City College. The other half of the THRIVE Westside community is primarily white, middle to upper middle class, college educated professionals who live in single family homes ranging from \$600,000 to several million in value.

There are many unique qualities about the Westside neighborhood. One that stands out is that neighbors are very involved in and proud of their community. As expressed by a Westside resident, “It seems to have a real sense of community...I feel like I belong to an actual neighborhood.” Most recently, neighbors, parents, and members from different sectors of the community are volunteering their time to meet and work together to find community based solutions to community needs and build on existing strengths. In November and December 2011, through a partnership with a local organization—Just Communities, THRIVE Westside is sponsoring a series of **neighborhood dialogues** to engage Santa Barbara’s Westside and identify assets in the community, as well as to identify concrete community improvement strategies and initiatives in order to better inform the overall goals of THRIVE Westside and help strengthen the Westside community and schools.

At the time of this report, at least 55 community members representing a diverse group of stakeholders, such as parents, community leaders, educators, and business owners had committed to participating in the dialogues which will each last 5 weeks and culminate in an all day summit in January 2012. Youth are also participating in the dialogues through each of the four THRIVE Westside partner schools. At least 60 students from grades 6-12 will engage in group dialogues with peers about what they think is working in their neighborhood and schools and what they need in order to be successful. The Neighborhood Initiative is also hosting bilingual public-engagement sessions, using an online platform designed to encourage broader community participation and available 24/7. Through Noozhawk’s web-based program, residents and other stakeholders are able to interact with the THRIVE Westside project and communicate with each other—creating, sharing and voting on long-range priorities, directions and solutions. As part of the initiative, neighborhood action teams will be formed and will have an opportunity to implement their plans and determine how \$10,000 in private funds will be used in their community.



Westside community & school dialogues

The Neighborhood Initiative also builds on a THRIVE Westside community forum held a year ago, where **80 community members** who live, work, and/or send their children to school on the Westside, shared their views about the **strengths and needs of the community**. The residents shared that there is a sense of history and community, and that it’s an asset to be able to walk to resources such as shops, the neighborhood clinic, restaurants, and schools. Neighbors also mentioned the local schools as resources and

especially mentioned the parent education classes, access to child care, and the Farmer's Market at Harding. Residents also pointed to the local non-profits and family owned businesses as assets of the Westside community.

Community members also shared areas that need improvement and attention in order to help build a more united and safer Westside neighborhood for children and families. The needs noted were: more attention to school improvement projects; more open public spaces such as parks; the need for a reduction in gangs & youth violence; a healing/bridging of racial, ethnic, and cultural divides; more accessible transportation; public safety; and fostering economic development. They were also clear that they wanted these issues addressed, but that they wanted to be partners in the effort as opposed to simply recipients of services: "We want you to do this with us, not to us."

THRIVE Westside's Neighborhood Initiative is an opportunity for neighbors to come together to build a community vision for the Westside. Principal Kingston of Harding University Partnership School believes that "by working together, there is tremendous opportunity for innovative and creative ideas to be put into action to make the Westside an even better place to live. As principal, I have had the opportunity to meet and work with hundreds of neighbors and hear about their great ideas for the neighborhood. Connecting families and harnessing the energy and ideas through the neighborhood dialogue process would provide a more unified voice and a structure for action for neighbors. I believe anything is possible and everyday I see hundreds of amazing possibilities for the neighborhood."

Community Life Thrives with Good Partnerships

Where we grow matters. It can determine if we have access to healthy food, safe places to play, quality education and access to medical care—and ultimately determine whether a child will truly thrive as they grow into an adult. Through THRIVE Westside—educators, parents, community members, local service agencies, and leaders are working together to support and build foundations for children and families and help make our community stronger.

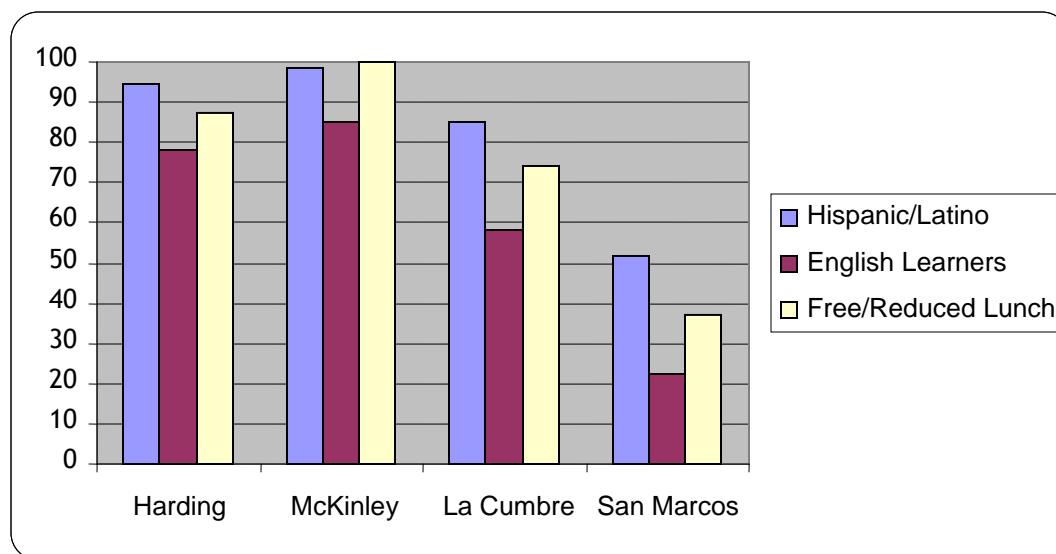
THRIVE Westside is a partnership between Harding University Partnership School, McKinley Elementary School, La Cumbre Junior High, and San Marcos High School—to ensure a coordinated effort of resources for children and families living in Santa Barbara's Westside neighborhood. The goal of the project is to ensure that all children are healthy and safe, prepared for kindergarten through high school graduation, and on to college and career. "After working for 24 years on the Westside, I'm excited for the community and the students to come together for the betterment of all groups...preparing students for college and careers in our community speaks to the rightful role of the Westside in the future of Santa Barbara," said Jo Ann Caines, Principal, La Cumbre Junior High School.

THRIVE Westside began as a community-based/place-based approach to early intervention and prevention, in Santa Barbara’s Westside community.

- In **2009**, the J.S. Bower Foundation funded the development of a place-based, birth to age 5 initiative—the Harding Early Years Program (HEYF), which was modeled after the Harlem Children’s Zone and the local Carpinteria Children’s Project at Main/THRIVE Carpinteria. The HEYP framework includes four comprehensive components: High-quality learning, Social-emotional competence, Health and wellbeing, and Family support/strengthening.
- The HEYP comprehensive components and programs were launched in **2010-2011**, while at the same time McKinley Elementary School launched the AVANCE Parent Education Program and La Cumbre Junior High School initiated it’s Westside Evening Program to include onsite family education and workforce development programs.
- In the **current year**, San Marcos High School has joined THRIVE Westside as a partner to help complete the PreK-12 continuum. San Marcos is piloting Project College Bound/college readiness program this year.

As described in Figure 3, the four participating schools serve a high number of students who are Hispanic/Latino, learning English as a Second Language, and receive free or reduced lunch.

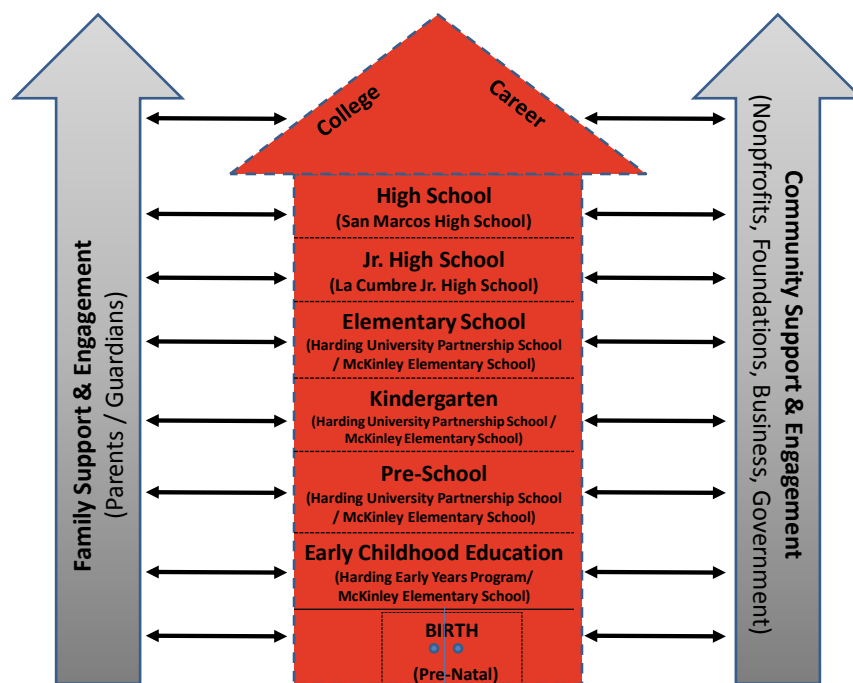
Figure 3. Student Demographics (%) by Participating Schools



The aim of THRIVE Westside is to **promote the success of all children** with an emphasis on significantly changing the trajectory of children who have not typically been afforded opportunities that result in school readiness, academic and career success by providing them with a clear pathway to achieving these goals. Such an endeavor can

be accomplished more successfully by schools collaborating with key partners such as parents and caregivers, non-profits and community agencies, and local businesses and government—to pair education with wraparound services. Key coordinated services include school-based activities aligned with health and safety programs, family support, and social services. Figure 4 is an illustration of the relationship between the four schools on the continuum and the partnership structure with key partners. The entry into the schools is through the early childhood focus.

Figure 4. Partnership Structure



The **continuum of services** provides children and families with a seamless series of no cost, coordinated, best practice programs. The focus is on the needs of children at every developmental stage with specific programs addressing pre-natal care, infants and toddlers, preschoolers, elementary school, middle school, adolescents, and college readiness. The goal is to foster strong links across programs to smooth transitions and guarantee that programs are continuous.

THRIVE Westside will continue to be committed to significantly increase the percentage of students from Santa Barbara's Westside who are ready for school, graduate from high school, enroll in a post-secondary education and become ready to enter our workforce. As echoed by Anita Perez Ferguson, Executive Director of THRIVE Santa Barbara County—"When the kids succeed, the community succeeds...it makes sense for all of us to work together to make that happen."

Bumps in the Road Ahead: Challenges We Need to Overcome

At THRIVE Westside, we have experienced our share of challenges and lessons learned that have helped us look to and plan for the year ahead.

Last year we continued to experience a challenge with limited space at both **McKinley and Harding schools**. There are more parents and children that can be served through the parent education programs if both schools were equipped with additional rooms to deliver child care services. There are preschool age children who are not being served because of lack of available slots. At Harding at least 25- three and four year old children are on the waitlist. It is estimated that nearly 100 Westside preschool age children are not currently in preschool. At both schools there is a need for sustainable health interventions for the early childhood programs.

La Cumbre Jr. High has been challenged with not having funding to support an afterschool evening program in the summer months. This Fall, parents and community members anxiously awaited the first day of the evening program, and have time and again inquired how the evening program can stay open year round. Westside community members have shared the need for a safe place, such as La Cumbre's evening program that offers fitness and recreational opportunities for both adults and children.

The pilot year for **Project College Bound at San Marcos High** has picked up momentum and has set very high standards and goals. In order to achieve these goals, data is being collected and analyzed to determine next steps in program implementation. We have seen particular challenges in Geometry and Physics and have begun discussions with math, science, and AVID teachers regarding curriculum strategies and assessments and how we can collaboratively support students in these courses. We are also working on a more effective communication tool for more immediate feedback on students' performance. This feedback will create a stronger catalyst for appropriate interventions. Discussions have also begun with La Cumbre regarding articulation of curriculum and strategies to create more of a transition for 9th grade students in order to build on the success of La Cumbre's programs and curriculum.

Additionally, the role of the Posse tutor/mentors is being refined. "We need to make sure any interventions needed are happening to assure student success plus discuss what percent of the students' grade is based on tests, in class work and homework and see where the students are struggling...then come up with a plan to address these areas of need," said Ed Behrens, Principal, San Marcos High School. In moving forward we believe we will face an additional challenge helping students keep their strong neighborhood connections when they connect to the San Marcos community. By expanding their community connections, students will discover additional opportunities to be involved. By being consistently involved in the San Marcos community they will deepen their academic resume and develop the leadership skills that colleges and universities look for when considering admission. We are interested in summer

programs and enrichment opportunities housed on the San Marcos campus to aid in creating these connections. However, we hope our students will keep the strong ties to their neighborhood. In addition, we will look to connect San Marcos High School with the community services already in place through THRIVE, such as health, parent education, and counseling programs.

Across all school sites there is a need for additional funding to support the students and families meet THRIVE Westside birth to college goals. In moving THRIVE Westside toward the birth to college pathway, there is a need for a data management system that can measure results and track interventions from early childhood through grade 12.

Ultimately, our goal is not to sustain a program—but to sustain results and maximize outcomes for children and families. We therefore continue to move forward with a keen and positive outlook for our community.

What will Bloom & Thrive in Spring 2012?

In the upcoming months, we can expect to find thriving schools and a continuously vibrant community on the Westside. The first phase of the Neighborhood Initiative will culminate in late January with a community action summit where the community will come together to share their ideas and determine which strategies and neighborhood improvement plans to pursue as a group.

Parent education classes at all four schools will be in full swing with nearly 75 parents and approximately 67 children in AVANCE at both Harding and McKinley focusing on learning more about early childhood development and nutrition. Parents at Harding will be immersed in learning about the K-12 school system and how to better prepare their children through the Padres Adelante curriculum. At McKinley parents who graduated from last year's Padres Adelante class will be receiving training on the curriculum and preparing to move into new leadership and mentoring roles as they teach the class to the new cohort of parents. At La Cumbre the PIQE parent engagement program is expected to grow. At San Marcos parents will continue to involve themselves through ongoing workshops and college readiness activities for their children.

At Harding the school library will be open at least one Saturday a month to the Westside community for family storytelling and activities, workshops for parents, and access to the lending library. Harding will team-up with First 5 Santa Barbara County experts to develop a state of the art Family Resource Center and the Early Years Program (HEYP) will develop the health and wellbeing component by providing a bilingual nurse and a child development specialist. There will be a continuous monitoring of the HEYP plan through the Thriving Children Report Card to **support progress toward results**.

At both McKinley and Harding the AVANCE **child care centers** will continue developing towards high quality improvement. We can look forward to McKinley and La Cumbre

putting their father engagement work plans into action and continuing their collaboration with the State-wide Father Involvement Initiative and with local participating sites.

At La Cumbre we can expect that as the news continues to spread throughout the neighborhood, the school will continue as a **community resource center**. In the upcoming months La Cumbre will partner with community agencies and with County departments to provide flu shots and health screenings on campus, as well as continue with the food pantry program and activities of the Westside evening program.

La Cumbre and San Marcos teachers and administrators will continue to support and engage students in Project College Bound and the Posse Program. We can expect a continued focus on **ensuring that these students are successful** from Term 2 and into Term 3 where students will be enrolled in new classes. San Marcos will support the Freshman Initiative which will include working with each Freshman student to draft their 10 year plan. As the pilot year continues to unfold, San Marcos will find methods to better serve students in the Project College Bound. Both La Cumbre and San Marcos will support student placements in summer jobs and internships for career development.

THRIVE Westside will continue to **focus on our mission** to nurture children's developmental potential, improve the community's access to quality resources, help parents and caregivers raise children in safe and positive environments, and ensure academic success for all children.

In closing, we are aware that nationally, as well as locally, there is an increased sense of urgency for improved outcomes for **all children**. Real change—the kind that results in positive measurable outcomes for children and families, takes time and funding. State and federal funding continue to be insufficient to create systems that produce substantive change in areas where our educational system is currently failing—namely for families in poverty. At the time of this report, Governor Brown announced a proposal that would make significant cuts to K-12 education in 2012-2013.