

**VISIONING THE NEW CENTURY GRADUATE**

**STEERING COMMITTEE FINAL REPORT  
TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**BOULDER VALLEY SCHOOLS**

**May 28, 2002**

## ***VISION STATEMENT***

The vision of the Boulder Valley School District is to graduate students in the New Century who have the knowledge, skills and personal characteristics that will prepare them for the challenges they will encounter as adults. In addition to skills and knowledge in reading, math, writing, and speaking, New Century Graduates will possess a multicultural and global perspective, including bilingual competencies. New Century Graduates' personal characteristics will include respect for others, initiative, creativity, ethical behavior and other characteristics that will enable them to become contributing members to society.

## ***METHODOLOGY***

The Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) initiated a project entitled "Visioning the New Century Graduate" in September 2001. The project was designed to seek input from all constituencies of the Boulder Valley School District with an emphasis on hearing the voices of all our citizens.

A diverse steering committee consisting of thirty-five members was established by invitation from the Superintendent. The committee was charged with identifying the skills, knowledge and personal characteristics of future BVSD graduates. After an organizational meeting with BVSD administrative staff, and the development of a data collection process, members of the Steering Committee were trained as facilitators of the data collection process. The Steering Committee hosted an Education Summit kick-off meeting on January 14, 2002 at Monarch High School.

The intent of the kick-off meeting was to gather a cross section of the Boulder Valley School District community to participate in a data collection process aimed at identifying the knowledge, skills, and personal characteristics that will be required of a graduate in the New Century. The kick-off meeting featured a presentation by Dr. George Garcia, Superintendent and a presentation by an economist, Dr. Richard Wobbekind (copies of presentations may be found in the appendix). The session was well attended with approximately two hundred participants, who were divided into small discussion groups to generate input for the steering committee.

An additional twelve community visioning sessions were held from January through March of 2002 (see schedule in appendix, which notes eleven of the twelve meetings). These sessions were held at locations throughout the district with broad media notification to potential participants. Participants at these sessions heard the same presentation by Dr. Garcia and were divided into discussion groups to participate in the same data collection process as the Education Summit participants. The total attendance of these twelve sessions exceeded two hundred participants.

Of the twelve sessions, four were targeted to solicit input from community groups whose voices might not otherwise be heard. These included two meetings for Spanish speaking families at Washington Bilingual Elementary School (forty participants) and Angevine Middle School (forty-five participants), one for Hmong speaking families at Lafayette Elementary (twenty-seven participants) and one meeting geared to all BVSD High School students at Boulder High School (twenty-nine participants). After the data was collected a Data Subcommittee of the larger steering committee convened to review, sort and organize the data. Subcommittee members spent approximately forty hours working together to review and analyze the data. The intent of the data analysis was to identify themes that “bubbled up” from the small group discussions. It was not the intent of the committee to generate a hierarchical list.

The steering committee met again to discuss findings, agreed on a format for the final report, and divided responsibility for producing the report.

The steering committee completed their activities and submitted a report to the BVSD Board for their consideration on May 28, 20002.

### ***Methodology of Data Gathering, Review and Refinement***

1. Individuals generated ideas and placed them into these categories: skills, knowledge or personal characteristics.
2. Similar ideas were grouped together by the participants.
3. These groupings represented the “key concepts” which the participants felt were essential to a New Century Graduate.
4. Under each “key concept,” a listing of the main supporting ideas underlying the concept was created.
5. The groups were then asked to prioritize the “key concepts.”
6. The Office of Planning and Assessment compiled the data from all of the visioning sessions, combined similar “key concepts,” and listed the main supporting ideas under each. A spreadsheet showing the data, in order of prioritization, was created for each of the three categories (skills, knowledge and personal characteristics).
7. The data subcommittee reviewed the data compiled by the Office of Planning and Assessment. First, they aligned the data within each category, so that the resultant list reflected all ideas under fewer “key concepts.” The final “key concepts” reflected recurring themes across the data, while maintaining their relative importance, as determined by the prioritization process. The next pass through the data served to cull duplicate ideas so that they only appeared once under each “key concept.” The process used by the data committee for the personal characteristics category was slightly different. The number of times an idea appeared under all of the “key concepts” was counted. The most frequently appearing ideas were

grouped as “key concepts”, incorporating all of the data. A comparison of these “key concepts” with the prioritization list showed a straight correlation between the two. The committee reviewed data, which came from the late sessions, separately. We determined that the “key concepts” and main ideas expressed by specialized audiences (e.g., Spanish speaking, Hmong and student input groups) were aligned with the priorities in the general data. All ideas which were not reflected in the main data set were listed by individual sub-group in a separate document.

8. The final “key concepts” under knowledge and skill were substantially similar. It made sense to combine these, with their main supporting ideas, into one category. Participants did not necessarily distinguish between the two categories, nor did they always agree that a certain idea belonged under a particular category. This was particularly true across the groups.

## ***SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS***

### ***PROFILE OF THE NEW CENTURY GRADUATE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS***

**Task:** The Boulder Valley School District community was asked to identify the knowledge and skills that would be required of future graduates. From a series of focus group discussions emerged a list of knowledge and skills that a future graduate should possess.

**Profile:** The findings in the area of Knowledge and Skills of the New Century Graduate of the Boulder Valley School District are as follows:

- Life Competencies
- Communication: Speaking and Writing
- Multicultural/Global Perspective
- Literacy: Reading
- Mathematics
- Thinking and Reasoning
- Technology
- Interpersonal Competency
- Government and Civics
- History
- Science
- Arts

***PROFILE OF THE NEW CENTURY GRADUATE  
KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS***

***Life Competencies***

Understands money management: budgeting, balancing a checkbook, debt management, and record keeping.

Leads a balanced life: exhibits physical fitness, knows good nutrition rules, stays safe and drug free, knows how to have fun and relax, manages anger and stress, exhibits self-sufficiency and self confidence, and finishes tasks.

Demonstrates time management skills and a broad base of knowledge in practical skills such as cooking, sewing, driving, and map reading.

Knows how to search for a job and knows where to go to find answers.

***Communication: Speaking and Writing***

Writes and speaks thoughtfully and articulately to inform, to express one's thinking and creativity, and to communicate to diverse audiences.

Uses correct grammar, spelling, and mechanics; organizes for effectiveness.

Uses technology for effective communication.

***Multicultural/Global Perspective***

Understands global customs, economics, literature, history, politics, religions, geography, and demographics.

Understands the contributions of different cultures to our society.

Demonstrates proficiency in a language other than English.

***Literacy: Reading***

Reads critically, fluently, and with comprehension.

Reads for information, research, pleasure and knowledge of literature.

***PROFILE OF THE NEW CENTURY GRADUATE  
KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS  
(continued)***

***Mathematics***

Demonstrates basic math computational skills and understands higher-level mathematical concepts and reasoning.

***Thinking and Reasoning***

Practices and is skillful at critical thinking: evaluation, extrapolation, analysis, synthesis, and determining relevancy.

Creativity and Innovation

***Technology***

Exhibits proficiency in the many uses of computers and understands the ethical aspects of technology.

Recognizes that technology extends well beyond computers.

***Interpersonal Competency***

Works well with a variety of people.

Exhibits leadership, delegation, adaptability, tact, and the ability to compromise.

Demonstrates good listening and problem solving skills.

***Government and Civics***

Understands the organization of the U.S. government, the role of rules and laws, and the Bill of Rights.

Engages in the democratic process through volunteerism, promoting justice, and recognizing the ethical dimensions of politics, science and war.

Understands conservation and resource management.

***PROFILE OF THE NEW CENTURY GRADUATE  
KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS  
(continued)***

***History***

Possesses knowledge of American and World Histories and their influence upon the present and the future.

Employs literature as a tool for learning about history across cultures.

***Science***

Demonstrates basic science knowledge and understands high-level scientific systems, including environmental systems.

Knows how to apply the scientific method to real situations

***Arts***

Experiences and appreciates music, visual arts, dance and theater.

***PROFILE OF THE NEW CENTURY GRADUATE  
PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS***

**Task:** The Boulder Valley School District Community was asked to identify the personal characteristics of future graduates. A list of qualities and characteristics essential for the development of the whole person emerged from a series of focus group discussion.

**Profile:** The New Century Graduate of the Boulder Valley School District will possess and value (in him/herself and others) the following characteristics and qualities:

- Respect for Others
- Initiative and Courage
- Citizenship
- Responsibility
- Ethical Behavior
- Flexibility and Open Mindedness
- Self-Respect

***PROFILE OF A NEW CENTURY GRADUATE:  
PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS***

***Respect for Others (Values Others)***

Understands and values differences including: cultural, religious, ethnic, gender, age and ability.

Cares for others as demonstrated by: empathy, compassion, kindness, respect, generosity, inclusion, tolerance and manners.

***Initiative and Courage***

Exhibits self-motivation, self-discipline, persistence, independence, confidence, curiosity and willingness to take risks, without being afraid to fail.

***Citizenship***

Understands his or her role and responsibilities and contributes to the community, nation and world.

***Responsibility***

Takes responsibility for own thoughts and actions, accepting the consequences.

***Ethical Behavior***

Exhibits personal integrity through honesty, fairness, sincerity, and a sense of justice.

***Flexibility and Open Mindedness***

Demonstrates flexibility, open-mindedness, adaptability, resiliency, and openness to change.

***Self-Respect***

Possesses self-respect and confidence, while recognizing one's own limitations.

### ***STEERING COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS AND INSIGHTS***

The process of developing a vision of the New Century Graduate revealed insights that went beyond the charge of the Steering Committee. Rather than exclude this valuable information the Steering Committee offers this addendum to the report. The Steering Committee recognized that visioning is a dynamic process. Our outreach efforts provided us with a "snapshot" of many community perceptions in 2002. We believe that this process should be ongoing, growing as a "living document" with the passing of time.

During the visioning process we realized that we could not capture all the richness and depth of the conversations we had with the Boulder Valley community. This limitation is reflected in the visioning report. To capture and reflect all the ideas, desires, suggestions and work of the visioning sessions could require hundreds of pages of text and still not encompass all of the conversations. The process of reaching out to the Spanish speaking and Hmong communities should be more reflective of their cultural uniqueness. Our facilitators have many suggestions of how to improve these efforts.

We also recognized that the vision of the New Century Graduate encompasses skills, knowledge and characteristics that go beyond a school district's responsibility. The graduates we envision will be the shared responsibility of parents, schools, business and society. The Steering Committee is proud of their work and understands that this is just a beginning of a work in progress, the work of educating the New Century Graduate.

***VISIONING THE NEW CENTURY GRADUATE  
REPORT TO THE BVSD SCHOOL BOARD***

***EXHIBITS***

- Appendix A**            **Steering Committee**  
Letters of invitation  
List of Members  
Data Subcommittee Members  
Final Report Subcommittee Members  
Project Timeline
- Appendix B**            **Education Summit**  
Letter of Invitation  
Press Release  
Agenda  
List of Facilitators  
Dr. Garcia Presentation  
Dr. Wobbekind Presentation  
Facilitation Process Document  
Thank you letter  
Evaluation
- Appendix C**            **Community Visioning Groups**  
Schedules (English, Spanish, Hmong)  
Press Release  
Agendas (English, Spanish, Hmong)  
Dr. Garcia Presentation (Spanish)  
Dr. Wobbekind Presentation (Spanish)  
Evaluation (Spanish, Hmong)  
Student Invitation letter  
Thank you letter
- Appendix D**            **Data Themes**  
Spanish Speaking Data Themes  
Hmong Data Themes  
Student Data Themes

***DATA SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS***

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## ***VISIONING THE NEW CENTURY GRADUATE PROJECT TIMELINE***

### **September-November 2001**

- Formation of the Steering committee: Member selection, Identification of Tri Chairs  
40 members of Steering committee representing many BVSD communities.
- Steering Committee meetings: October 17 all day; November 6<sup>th</sup> half day Facilitation  
Training session for all steering committee members: 4 hours

### **January – April 2002**

- Community Summit – January 14<sup>th</sup> 4:00-9:00
  - 23 Steering committee members participate as facilitators
  - Approx. 200 community attendees
- Community Visioning Sessions
  - Facilitation of 12 community-visioning sessions by steering committee members & Tri-Chairs. (Two Spanish sessions; One Hmong session; One student session)
- Development of Final Report Recommendations
  - Steering committee all day meeting March 15<sup>th</sup>; April 16<sup>th</sup>; April 26<sup>th</sup>
  - Steering committee Data Subcommittee – 7 meetings (March-April)
  - Steering committee Final report task force – 3 meetings (March-April)

### **May 2002**

- Finalizing the Vision
  - Steering Committee Final Report & Recommendations to School Board –  
May 28 2002

In an attempt to hear all of the voices of our community, four sessions were held for specialized audiences (Spanish speaking, Hmong, and students). Input from these sessions was merged into the body of the data. The specialized groups clearly emphasized the academics that were included in the main body of this report. Some unique themes were emphasized in the specialized sessions, however, that did not resonate in the body of the data. In order to give resonance to these voices, the following pages illuminate themes that were raised in these specialized sessions. The steering committee felt it was necessary to list those themes, so that they would not be overlooked.

***Data Summary: Spanish Speaking Community Visioning Groups***

The New Century Graduate should:

- Know both Spanish and English
- Respect others and self, and be respected when dealing with the majority community
- Have good manners
- Be expected and able to graduate, have a career and give back to the community
- Have dreams for a better future, which does include graduation, going to college, and having a good job.
- Say NO – to drugs, sex and violent and dishonest behavior.
  - Violence was a concern of this community, including school violence, gangs, resolving conflicts and knowing how to defend one's self.
- Possess strong math, computer and bilingual academic skills
- Have and use their voice
- Realize that change is possible
- Know basic first aid

***Data Summary: Hmong Community Visioning Group***

The New Century Graduate should:

- Know English well, including spoken and written communication
- Possess good math skills
- Want, be prepared, and be able to go to college
- Have good job skills, know technology, and know how to use the computer
- Respect others, especially parents, and be kind to others
- Possess good study/homework skills
- Learn life and job skills and keep away from drugs and alcohol
- Know how to be humble and show love to others
- Know how to adapt to the lifestyle around you

***Data Summary: Student Community Visioning Group***

The New Century Graduate should:

- Possess real life and practical skills (which were emphasized), with correspondingly less emphasis on academic skills
- Demonstrate multiculturalism, tolerance and respect for diversity
- Exhibit debating skills and the ability to advocate for one's beliefs and self

Student feedback also suggested that student learning would be better served if academics are effectively connected with historical, current, and future events.