

StudentLink
State of the Program 2006-2008

Goal #1: Create a school climate that promotes inclusion and an expectation of excellence.

- Expanded orientation for new and returning students at beginning of the school year from two weeks to a full month. A full month of orientation provided more support to students as they developed their written student learning plans for the year and created their various portfolios using the electronic portfolio program. Also fostered a sense of community as students spent time together on similar tasks.
- Piloted a more guided program for our struggling students involving added instruction and seat time in the StudentLink classroom. Select students were expected to be at StudentLink “daily” for up to 4 hours per day/4 days per week doing coursework. The additional supervision and support resulted in increased student success in completing credits.
- Conducted a year-end parent/student survey in the spring. Received response to our survey from 20% of parents and 40% of students. Parents and students alike appreciated the “tailoring of coursework to an individual’s interests”. Many students liked the online classes. A few students indicated that they would probably not still be in school were it not for StudentLink. Some students asked for more structure; some asked for less.
- We continued our “daily” program for students who are not ready to be independent learners in the fall of 2007.
- We also implemented a new policy that limits the number of classes that StudentLink students can take at VHS to one class per trimester. Previously, students could take two classes.

Goal #2: Provide appropriately challenging curriculum for all students.

- Initiated parent/student meetings at the beginning of each trimester in order to keep parents better informed about student learning and progress. Our student-led meetings, at the beginning of each trimester, improved parent awareness of their student's learning plan. As a team, student, parents and teacher discussed strategies and ways parents could support their student's learning.
- Thanks to a PIE grant, we were able to add books dealing with emotional intelligence, non-violent communication, and building healthy relationships, etc. to the health curriculum in our resource library. The choice of purchasing health curriculum with our PIE funds came directly from our students who had requested more materials dealing with emotional intelligence, communication and relationships. In addition to the books, we invited Stephanie Barbee from Vashon Youth & Family Services to lead a discussion about how to build and maintain healthy relationships. Fifty percent of our students participated in the discussion.
- We received VISD Board approval to begin using Apex Online Curriculum through the Digital Learning Commons. Ten of our seventeen students enrolled in online courses through Digital Learning Commons. This proved to be an especially good option for those students who needed more instruction and support in math and science. We received additional "thin client" computers so that we would have enough computer stations for our students.
- Redesigned and enhanced ELPH (electronic portfolio software), making it web-based. Making ELPH web-based allowed teacher Yve Susskind to monitor student progress remotely instead of having to wait for students to bring in a disk or thumb drive.
- Received funding from PTSA to purchase math curriculum. Purchased math curriculum from Prentice Hall (pre-algebra, algebra 1 & 2 and geometry) so that our curriculum aligned with that being used at VHS.
- Continue to hold StudentLink graduation celebration in the spring. We were pleased to graduate eight students in June 2007. Our on-time graduation rate rose from 57% to 76%. Our current extended graduation rate is 89%.
- Held two informational evenings for parents and students in preparation for the WASL. Plus worked one-on-one and in small groups with students to improve readiness. Provided resource materials and *Show What You Know* sample test questions.
- Developed intervention plans for 10th grade students who do not meet standard.
- Students did very well in writing and reading sections, some earning perfect scores in writing. A few of our students will retake the math test in the spring.
- We continue to use online courses through Digital Learning Commons.
- PTSA provided funding for textbooks and literature that supplement the online curriculum. PIE funded a variety of social studies DVDs that are shared with FamilyLink.
- We have initiated weekly progress reports and trimester updates to parents.
- Initiated weekly math labs this year to further support students.
- Six students will graduate in June.

Goal #3: Provide and enhance positive relationships with home and community.

- Teacher Yve Susskind participated in the Vashon Prevention/Intervention Team VPIT participation is another way of supporting students who face challenges to completing their education, like substance abuse or homelessness. Several SL: students participated in the VPIT/VYC co-sponsored Youth-Adult Dialogue, with one student co-facilitation.
- Some of our students participated in Vashon Youth Council. DOIT helped one of our StudentLink students conceptualize and fund a project. One student co-facilitated a Philosophy Club through the VYC and Vashon Parks District. This club hosted a discussion forum for young adults to explore various topics in philosophy. Other StudentLink students participated in the forum. One of our students also received a DOIT grant to build a passive solar garden.
- Continued to publicize StudentLink activities and achievements in the *LinkLetter* and on our website. We recognized students throughout the year in the Beachcomber's *Above and Beyond* articles. Articles increased awareness of StudentLink program and the unique opportunities it offers students.
- StudentLink staff met with Christine Millican and representative from the Vashon Homeless Coalition. The purpose of the meeting with the Homeless Coalition representative was to determine what resources are available to our homeless students and make them aware that some of our students need their services.
- We continue to build relationships with VHS teachers and counselors, and community organizations like Vashon Youth & Family Services.
- We solicited more student input in our newsletter and students submitted articles and artwork.
- Encourage more parent involvement and support of students through regular communication: phone calls, emails, progress reports and requesting their attendance at a year-end meeting where their student will present their accomplishments for the year.

Goal #4: Provide and promote effective instructional leadership.

- Yve Susskind co-chaired the contract learning committee of WALA. Yve Susskind presented a session on contract learning using StudentLink's ELPH software. Provided leadership for other contract learning programs and established StudentLink as a model program in state.
- She also attended Collection of Evidence training sponsored by OSPI. Yve Susskind participated in the Reading COE.
- Yve Susskind and administrative staff Julie Hanger visited Henderson Bay Alternative High School in the spring. Our visit to Henderson Bay provided ideas about how to provide the structure and support our struggling students need to become more independent learners.
- Classified staff Janet Chapman attended the Northwest Region ESP Issues Conference. Janet Chapman learned about autism, gang violence and homeless education issues at the ESP conference.
- Teacher Nan Hammett and administrative staff Julie Hanger attended the Washington Association for Learning Alternatives conference in the spring.
- Secretary Janet Chapman participated in the Gender Issues Training hosted by Sarah Wright, and also attended the "Asperger's Syndrome: What Educators Need to Know" workshop.