

# Hillhouse Student - Teacher - Resource

## Concerns

**Promise Chart** → Below is a comprehensive chart which details the various promises that were made during this transition at James Hillhouse High school. The green section are the promises that were made and the red section contains the actual resources that were provided to our school so that we could adequately attempt to support our students.

Date	Event	Promised	Realized
April 2014	Hillhouse Staff informed of Academy Change and Structure (physical)	Multiple entrances Support staff for all academies	Money to paint the trim in all academies
June 2014	Staff assigned to academies	Additional faculty hired to provide more individualized and specialized education and courses	No additional faculty Overloads in core courses and vacancies in many areas
August/2014	Mastery based learning Project based learning	Professional development for new initiatives and planning time for departments	Extremely limited training or development provided for pbl or mbl Presently no longer an MBL school Department agendas dictated
September 2014	Union Stewards meet with administration and director to present summation of concerns	None (see attached concerns)	
November 2014	Inconsistent application and understanding of mastery based learning concern with grade reporting (see attached letter to Garth Harries)	Consideration by Superintendent and director of current grading policy and accurate record keeping	February was announced to IDEA Not doing MBL, but we retained NRs. No announcement to LPSH CCR using traditional practice
June 2015	Union, superintendent,	Consideration of staff	point based system

	director meet with faculty	“reasonable” request for uniform grading policy and disciplinary policy	with no weighted categories. Not made clear to LPSH and CCR midyear 2016
May 2015 August 2015	Whole school meeting	Increased communication and unity	Campus website and handbook
March 2016	Planning for 2016/17 No vision and no direction communicated	April and May	

### **Student Needs – Emergencies – Issues**

1. **Class choice** limited electives or lack of consistence with student choice and interest (There are no electives in core courses, no journalism, creative writing, culinary not open to all, students in art or gym because they are only courses available)
2. **Literacy** is important however unlike during the Dr. Garris administration all students currently DO NOT have two English classes (during the Garris administration they had a primary English class and an enrichment or remediation class elective English course planned)  
Before current structure 9th and 10th graders had full year of English (80 minutes 5 days a week) and all enrolled and using empower 3000. No school-wide literacy initiative or plan currently exists. IDEA has one reading specialist teaching READ 180.  
Of dire importance as 85% of students entering read below grade level.
3. **Class time shortened** by the **schedule** which does not allow them to learn consistently (every other day they see different teacher) Inconsistent and disproportionate number of A and B days. Can sometimes be a week between class meetings. Infrequent class meetings make all absences (even those for field trips and other great opportunities) a huge disruption to the learning process.
4. **Courses** are not offered as much because teachers are shared or the only one in academy. Thus AP classes are few and there are large numbers of students. Honors courses do not exist for disciplines other than English.
5. **Inadequate resources for special education** students and ELLs. Both groups divided among academies and without necessary

supports. In 2003, Hillhouse had 10 Special education teacher( all with a caseload). Presently we have 9 special education teachers (only 7 have a caseload). We have more special education students with less teachers.

6. Extra classes like **Leadership Development and Seminar** are unstructured and take time away from primary class instruction.
7. Conflicting messages to students about achievement, responsibility and opportunity. Especially for upperclassmen. The application of nrs fails to inspire a sense of urgency and responsibility for work effort and achievement. This does not prepare students for college and career in their immediate future.
8. **Band** is an elective that all students cannot take as a class as they have in the past.
9. **School Newspaper** and Journalism class which was established in 1915 is no longer active or offered.
10. **Discipline and safety** consequences are not cohesive and safety issues have increased . Support staff assigned to academies but students have classes in all areas of the building. Stairwells and other areas not in designated academies and are unsafe. Academy staff familiar with students but they travel throughout the school and are often unknown to other administration and retention specialists. No clear protocol for disciplinary actions, no clear process for follow-up, no communication regarding process for In-school suspension and disciplinary issues. No central coordination for the process. Consequences inconsistent and/or non-existent. Environment increasingly permissive of inappropriate and dangerous behaviors. **Fights** between students from different academies. Students need to feel cohesion in the school and come together as one. **Further segmentation is negatively impacting our students.**
11. At risk population serviced by *odesseyware*, rise program and *youthstat* but no clear process or communication regarding these programs and services.
12. **Guidance counselor load** is increased because there is currently one counselor for all the students on various grade levels in the academy. Concern area for next year as the academies will each have seniors and the college prep work and graduation requirements and review will be necessary.
13. Only one college advisor at 19 hours for entire senior class.
14. **Class Rank and Senior Celebration** issues are a concern for Juniors who are thinking about their senior year. Class of 2017 is without an advisor and has not begun to fundraise or organize.
15. **Academic Support** is a time where students are supposed to be doing work (like a study hall) but it is unstructured and no one does work. Additionally everyday this time takes away from time that could be allotted for instruction.
16. **Laptops do not work** and there are **limited computer labs** so students can not practice their 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies in all content areas with regularity. (all working computer labs were removed and recreated upon

the change) We have an IT support position however our fulltime IT staff member was hired and transferred to central office after 1 year and mobile labs are not sufficiently maintained. To many people accessing the wifi.

## **Human Resource Staff Concerns**

1. lack of school governance committee means there is no way to present, discuss and address issues.
2. Information not communicated in a timely or accurate manner. Important dates for meetings, deadlines testing schedules etc...
3. Fewer students in each academy but there are also fewer resources and supports for teachers and our course loads just as large and increasing. Resulting in increased responsibilities outside of teaching and instruction.
4. **Professional development is disorganized and inconsistent.** Rarely run by outside authorities and/or aligned with vision or needs. New teachers of all disciplines trained with veterans. Not professional development, extended meeting times instead. Early dismissal should be used for collaboration, vertical teaming, lesson study etc but agenda is dictated.
5. **Evaluation** aligned with classroom protocols and practices as opposed to content and curriculum. Administration unfamiliar with Teval process and various content areas. Also not doing requisite observations and do not have the time because of increased responsibilities. IMs inexperience and lack of content knowledge makes them ill-equipped to offer support and make suggestions and they are not respectful of district initiatives and specialists.
6. **Large number of first and second year teachers not being mentored or supported** because veteran teachers are unfamiliar with current practices and systems.
7. **Push to increase graduation rates is forcing teachers to push students through the system without requisite skills.**
8. **Resources limited technology** so that we can meet the 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies. What we do have is not maintained. Shared and wasted spaces causing teachers to be reluctant to set up classrooms,

environments more conducive to learning. Space is poorly used throughout the building.

9. **Time to plan**, we never know what we are going to teach and it changes so planning becomes impossible. New courses for which we are not prepared are being assigned and without the benefit of collaboration and in some cases curriculum. (leadership/seminar, statistics, sociology) Without department heads or leads across campus we cannot plan for or order supplies (books, science equipment, math books, supplies) opportunities for field trips decrease or not communicated because there isn't a school contact person for each department. We used to visit the Shubert, Yale rep, participate in contests etc as departments. This has ceased.
10. **Data Team ineffective** because teachers who teach the same level and content are not provided with time to collaborate because they are in different Academies
11. **Teachers are threatened with the label of being “unprofessional” when they speak up about concerns even if they have solutions.** Not enough safe space to discuss concerns and hear ideas. Lack of buy-in because everything is dictated to us and then we are asked to plan and develop preconceived ideas. Our knowledge and experience not valued. We're told what to do, not asked for contributions but then expected to “buy-in” and accomplish whatever trend of the week or month is imposed.
12. **Intimidation of staff which cause staff to leave and be replaced by new staff who do not stay the duration of the school year.** (Number of teachers who transferred since the inception of the autonomous campus)