Description
Granada Hills Charter High School’s academic intervention program, *Academic Success for All*, is an interdepartmental intervention program that supports student achievement for all through early identification of struggling students, communication with stakeholders, the application of targeted services, and training for stakeholders.

The first component of the intervention program is the early identification of students needing intervention. This identification ensures that every struggling student makes contact with a faculty member on campus who serves as an advocate to help the student improve his/her grades. We started this program with the belief - and have confirmed this with our experiences - that in many cases, struggling students just need someone to talk to them. The second goal of identifying students early is to help students find a path to improve their grades before the course grade is committed to a student’s transcript at the end of each eighteen week semester.

A second key feature of the intervention program is extensive and immediate communication among all stakeholders who influence students’ success. When a student earns a D or F during a six week reporting period, the intervention team immediately initiates communication with the teachers, students, parents, and the student’s academic counselor. In addition to informing the stakeholders of the student’s performance, the communication seeks to find out the cause of the student’s low grade. Finding the cause of the low grade(s) allows the intervention team to plan and recommend the best course of action for the student.

Once the intervention team has identified factors that have influenced the student’s performance, the team begins to direct the appropriate resources to serve the student. For students who need help with academic content and classroom lessons, the school places instructional aides or academic mentors in the students’ classes. These aides and mentors support the student in daily classroom instruction, including note-taking, coursework, and provide other one on one support. For students identified as having several risk factors - such as attendance, grades, and behavior, the intervention team developed an out of classroom team that provides a comprehensive and holistic approach to creating intervention plans. The Coordination of Services Team (COST) meets every other week and is made up of GHC’s intervention coordinator, school social worker, special education coordinator, discipline and attendance deans, counselors, foster youth liaison and school nurse. Using the school’s tiered interventions as a guide, COST improves the delivery of support services and increases collaboration among different departments. This streamlines the intervention process and enables the team to provide support services quickly (i.e. parent meeting, weekly check-in, behavior support, SST, 504/IEP referral, mental health).

Finally, the intervention team holds numerous parent workshops throughout the year. The parents/guardians of students identified for intervention receive special invitations to workshops that are aimed at their student’s areas of need. Additionally, the intervention team works with the academic departments to develop professional development and training sessions designed to provide teachers with additional strategies to support struggling students.

Implementation and Monitoring
At the start of each school year, the intervention team uses prior year course grades and standardized test scores to identify students in need of supports beyond standard classroom instruction. Teachers are provided a detailed roster of all the students in their classes, along with detailed academic performance
history including grades, test scores, and teacher notes. Once the academic year begins, after each six week progress report, the intervention team identifies any student earning a D or F in one or more core classes. To provide the most beneficial intervention services, the intervention team analyzes this list and begins assigning each student an advocate. Students with one D or F are referred to the teacher of the class where the student earned the D or F - in these cases the student most often needs help with the specific subject area. Students with two Ds or Fs meet with a counseling intern. Students with three Ds or Fs meet with their academic counselor. Finally, the students with more than three Ds or Fs meet with an intervention coordinator. Once the students meet with their intervention advocate, notes are entered into the student information system, and the intervention team tracks the student’s performance using tiered system where students move between tiers or off the focus list. This focus list is updated every six weeks.

The intervention team also uses an early warning system to identify students at high risk of experiencing academic or social difficulties. The intervention team assigns each student a composite risk score composed of academic grades, attendance, and behavior/discipline incidents. Students identified as the highest risk are referred to COST team, which meets twice per month to identify appropriate academic, attendance, or behavioral interventions for these students. Students who are identified and discussed in COST are monitored for improvement by a designated COST member every grading period. Student grades, attendance, and behavior information is reviewed on an ongoing basis which dictates if changes or add additional interventions are needed.

Granada Hills Charter immediately notifies parents/guardians when a student earns a D or F on a six week progress report with a personalized email message. This message notifies the parent/guardian that a GHC faculty/staff member will be meeting with their student and includes information about academic resources available on or off campus. When students improve their grades, the intervention office sends a congratulatory message to the student and his/her parent/guardian.

A key component of the intervention services is the student led Academic Mentor Program (AMP). Through a rigorous application and interview process, the intervention team selects a cohort of student mentors who work with targeted students in Algebra I, Biology, and English 9/10 classes. For the 2018-19 academic year, the program consisted of 138 student mentors in 39 different class periods. The Academic Mentor Program is a dual mentorship initiative that seeks to increase the success of freshman (mentees) by training juniors and seniors to assist them. These upperclassmen in turn are mentored by teachers who solidify their understanding of the academic content and help develop their interpersonal and leadership skills.

The program benefits both the mentee and Academic Mentor. Mentees are able to get immediate individualized help in class and participate in active learning. Mentees also benefit from modeling and positive peer interactions. Academic Mentors are able to reinforce their own academic skills in a particular subject, develop a sense of responsibility for helping others learn and build their leadership and interpersonal skills.

In addition to the Academic Mentor Program, the school has over thirty instructional aides who provide one on one support to students in the classroom. The school has also implemented a writing center and a math center for students who need additional help after school. Mentors also work in both of these centers, and are accessible to all students. In the math and writing center students receive individualized academic support from mentors familiar with teacher expectations. The Writing and Math Center are coordinated by teachers in their respective content area which ties the support that students received in the classroom to after school. Teachers collaborate with the centers’ coordinators to develop incentives that
promote student attendance. Modes of support include push in/summons out (with teacher consent), online support, opportunities for testing retakes, and specialized intervention workshops (EL support, targeted skills, creative writing). Every semester the writing center offers a mentor led specialized workshop for EL students. The EL coordinators works closely with English teachers to identify EL students who would benefit writing skills support. Targeted students and parents are notified of their recommendation and are monitored for improvement after the workshop.

All incoming ninth graders meet with counselors in the spring prior to their first semester to create a four year plan. During this meeting counselors also introduce families to the comprehensive intervention program which is available to all students. Incoming ninth graders identified as at risk in math using standardized test results and grade eight math course grades are enrolled in a specialized Algebra 1 class. These classes have a 25:1 student to teacher ratio, extended time, and curriculum designed for students with significant gaps. Teachers in these classes receive specialized professional development related to both curriculum and teaching students who have struggled in mathematics courses. Additionally, two or more mentor are placed in each class for supplemental academic support.

These programs are referenced in the GHC Local Control and Accountability Plan under State Priority #8 - Other Pupil Outcomes, specifically under Intervention.

Through classroom observations, teacher and student surveys, grade analysis, and conversations with students receiving services, the intervention team regularly evaluates program effectiveness. The quantitative and qualitative data gathered from these sources allows the school to continually refine the programs to meet student needs.

Results and Outcomes
Every year since the inception of the CAASPP in 2015, Granada Hills Charter has ranked in the top ten percent of all California High Schools in both English Language Arts and Mathematics, with 55% of students meeting or exceeding the standard in mathematics, and 75% of students meeting or exceeding the standard on the tests administered in 2018. The school significantly outperforms comparable high schools on all standardized tests and other accountability measures such as the College and Career Indicator of the California School Dashboard. Additionally, the school’s graduation rate of 94% is significantly greater than both the district (79.7%) and the state (82.7%). Over 80% of the class of 2018 completed the University of California A-G requirements, one of the highest completion rates in the state for comparable high schools.

Students identified as needing the supports provided in the Academic Success for All program have been very successful. At the end of the first grading period of the 2018-19 academic year, 33% of the students who earned a D or F at the end of the prior year were earning no Ds or Fs. Additionally, 38% of the students with three or more Ds or Fs had improved their grades in at least one course while maintaining their other course grades. Results from earlier years of the program are equally impressive. In the 2017-18 academic year, 52% of students with Ds or Fs improved their grades by at least one letter grade while maintaining grades in other classes. 34% of the students with at least one D or F prior to the end of the second semester were able to improve their grades so that they earned no Ds or Fs by the end of the semester.

The intervention team also closely monitors students identified as the highest risk - students with three or more Ds or Fs each grading period. At the end of the first semester of the 2018-19 academic year, 96% of
the highest risk students had improved their grades at least one letter grade from the previous grading period.

Qualitative survey results from teachers and academic mentors further validate the strength of the intervention program. Nearly 95% of the student academic mentors indicated they have had a positive experience as a mentor and 87% feel they have made meaningful contributions to the students in the program. Over 90% of teachers who have academic mentors report that students receiving help have responded positively to the mentors and 91% of teachers have observed an improvement in the quality of students’ classwork and class participation as a result of working with the academic mentors.