UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Trying to Bend the Bars of the Iron Cage:

A Case Study of a K-16 Partnership

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Communication

by

Lisa Marie Tripp

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Professor Mike Cole, Chair
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Professor Carol Padden
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2002

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The dissertation of Lisa Marie Tripp is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm:

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Chair

University of California, San Diego

2002

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, father, and grandparents, for the opportunities to learn about the world that they made possible and for the absolutely dedicated and tireless love and support they have given me, and to all of the young people and adults that are engaged in the challenging work of trying to improve our schools and make them more socially just places in which all young people can thrive.

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Abstract of the Dissertation

Trying to Bend the Bars of the Iron Cage:

A Case Study of a K-16 Partnership

by

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Doctor of Philosophy in Communication

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Professor Mike Cole, Chair

This study examines a set of after-school, computer-integrated activities that were part of a University of California-K-14 partnership effort, known as the South Bay (SBAY) Project. The project was initiated and designed by UCSD's Center for Research in Educational Equity, Assessment, and Teaching Excellence (CREATE) as part of UCSD's effort to meet the challenge of developing a diverse student body in the absence of affirmative action.

The SBAY Project involved the collaboration of school and community institutions, including a community college, middle school, and elementary school. CREATE's goals for the project included providing K-12 students in low performing schools with academic enrichment opportunities, improving community college students' academic preparation and potential for successfully transferring to a UC, and where

possible, contributing to the broader goals of K-12 school improvement and equity-minded school reform.

This study traces the first two years of SBAY project program implementation at the participating middle school—a school serving predominantly low-income, Mexican-origin students. Using participant observation and action research methods, the study documents the tension between theory and practice in the development and evolution of the program.

In theory, CREATE envisioned applying a successful model for after-school computer-mediated activities originally developed in community-based settings, known as the 5th Dimension. This model involved combining play with academically rigorous learning activities in a low-surveillance, collaborative learning environment.

In practice, the program that developed was heavily influenced by school norms that discouraged play and collaborative learning, emphasized more remedial learning activities, and promoted hierarchical and disciplinarian relationships. A year and a half after the program's inception, CREATE researchers, including the author of this study, began working more intensively with school personnel in a renewed effort to realize CREATE's goals for the program.

This study contributes to our understanding of practical and ideological challenges that must be overcome to achieve school-university collaboration and to affect cultural change in the school setting. It also demonstrates that school-university partnerships have the potential to contribute to equity-minded school reform efforts, but that these efforts should be understood as necessarily long-term and dependent on a great deal of human effort and material resources.

Chapter I.
Introduction

In the broadest sense, this study is about trying to change the course of history in which educational institutions typically function to maintain, and often produce, racial and class-based inequities. The project that I studied, the South Bay Project, attempted to get educational institutions to use their resources to help correct these kinds of inequities. Specifically, the project was a school-university partnership that involved multiple institutions collaborating to try to improve the access to higher education of students that have been historically under-represented in higher education. My research involved documenting this project, but also trying to improve it. I was a participant observer and also a change agent. This position gave me unique access into seeing close-up the details of what it takes to try and do an educational intervention like this, what kinds of barriers and challenges are involved, and what kind of potential and possibilities exist for using this kind of model intervention for equity-minded school reform.

In many respects, this study involves multiple contexts of trying to bend the bars of the iron cage,[1] of trying to change some of the traditional patterns and norms of various educational institutions that perpetuate inequity. In the context of the University of California, this study involves trying to change how poor, working-class, and "under-represented minority" students have been disproportionately excluded from a UC education and the all too passive role that the university has historically played in addressing this social problem. In the context of a community college, this study involves

[1] Here, I reference Weber's (1996, 1930) metaphor for the role that bureaucracy and institutions have come to play in modern capitalist society.

trying to change how for students that come from high poverty, high minority schools, the community college system often does *not* prepare students for successful transfer to a four-year university. In the context of a high poverty, high minority, "low achieving" middle school, this study involves trying to change how these kinds of schools typically do not have the resources to meet the needs of their students, and especially, how the norms and practices of these schools often perpetuate (and even help produce) unequal educational outcomes. Finally, in the context of an after-school program that was intended to be a model educational activity, this study involves trying to change the ways in which the program had been heavily influenced by the routine practices and culture of the school such that it wasn't living up to its intended model. In what follows, I examine the multiple ways in which these change efforts unfolded.

It is well known that poor, working-class students, and students of African American, Latino, and American Indian heritage have higher rates of school failure and lower rates of going on to college than students of other socioeconomic and ethnic groups. Unfortunately, there is ample research to suggest that many of the practices and policies of the schools are not only unsuccessful at interrupting these disturbing trends, but often work to exacerbate them—albeit unintentionally (Fine, 1991; Haycock, 1997; Mehan, 1986; Mehan and Grimes, 1999; Oakes, 1992). My research is aimed directly at an experiment at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) that seeks to collaborate with local educational institutions to learn how to work together to correct such entrenched problems and further the goals of educational equity and access.

Between the Summer of 2000 and the Fall of 2001 I conducted participant observation and action research in a dynamic, multi-institutional, educational intervention

affiliated with UCSD's Center for Research in Educational Equity, Assessment, and Teaching Excellence (CREATE). CREATE was established in 1997 as part of UCSD's effort to meet the challenge of developing a diverse student body in the absence of affirmative action. CREATE works with a variety of partner schools throughout San Diego—schools whose students are by and large very poor and who come from backgrounds that are underrepresented in the University of California system—to help prepare these students to be able to go to college, and, optimally, be eligible to attend the UC. CREATE also has a deeper purpose in these partnerships: to help improve the culture of learning in their partner schools and to transform the beliefs and practices of educators in both the schools and the university to make these sites more academically rich, inviting, and socially just (Mehan et al., 2000).

My research centers on a set of partnership-related activities at one of these "partner schools"—a middle school in the South Bay region of San Diego, Border City Middle School (BCMS). This set of activities involves the intensive efforts of a unique cluster of collaborating educational institutions: UCSD, La Frontera Community College (LFC), BCMS, Seaside Elementary School, and the Familia Center.[2]

The project is set up at BCMS as an after-school, computer-integrated, academic enrichment activity open to any middle school students that wish to participate, space permitting. A teacher and staff member from the school work with CREATE researchers to design, oversee, and staff the program. Several community college students participate

[2] The names of the various educational institutions affiliated with the South Bay Project, except for UCSD, have been changed to protect the anonymity of the participants. The names of individuals participating in the project, except for UCSD faculty and CREATE Partnership Coordinators, have also been changed. This includes, for example, LFC faculty and students and BCMS teachers, staff, administrators, and students, as well as many CREATE staff and researchers.

as active tutors and mentors to the middle school students, and as learners themselves, studying child development principles and field research techniques.

The community college students that participate are part of an unusual course at LFC, "Practicum in Learning and Development," in which an LFC professor teaches a small, seminar-style course in collaboration with a UCSD professor. The LFC professor is the primary instructor, teaches most classes and grades student work. The UCSD professor contributes by commenting on student work via email and by facilitating several discussion sections throughout the semester via a video conferencing connection.

As a part of this course, students are placed in a variety of CREATE-affiliated computer-integrated, academic enrichment programs in the South Bay of San Diego, including in two school-sites, BCMS and Seaside Elementary, and in one community center, the Familia Center. At the various sites, LFC students interact with children as mentors, tutors, and "more capable peers." The LFC students in turn are responsible for writing ethnographic field notes, as well as research and reflection papers, about their experiences at the schools and with the children. For many LFC students, it is their first experience in a writing-intensive course and their first experience in a course emphasizing critical reading and discussion. The project as a whole is referred to as the "South Bay Project." UCSD also has a partnership relationship with the high school that BCMS feeds, and CREATE has made some steps towards incorporating the high school into South Bay Project activities. Figure 1 (below) demonstrates the institutional relationships involved in the project.

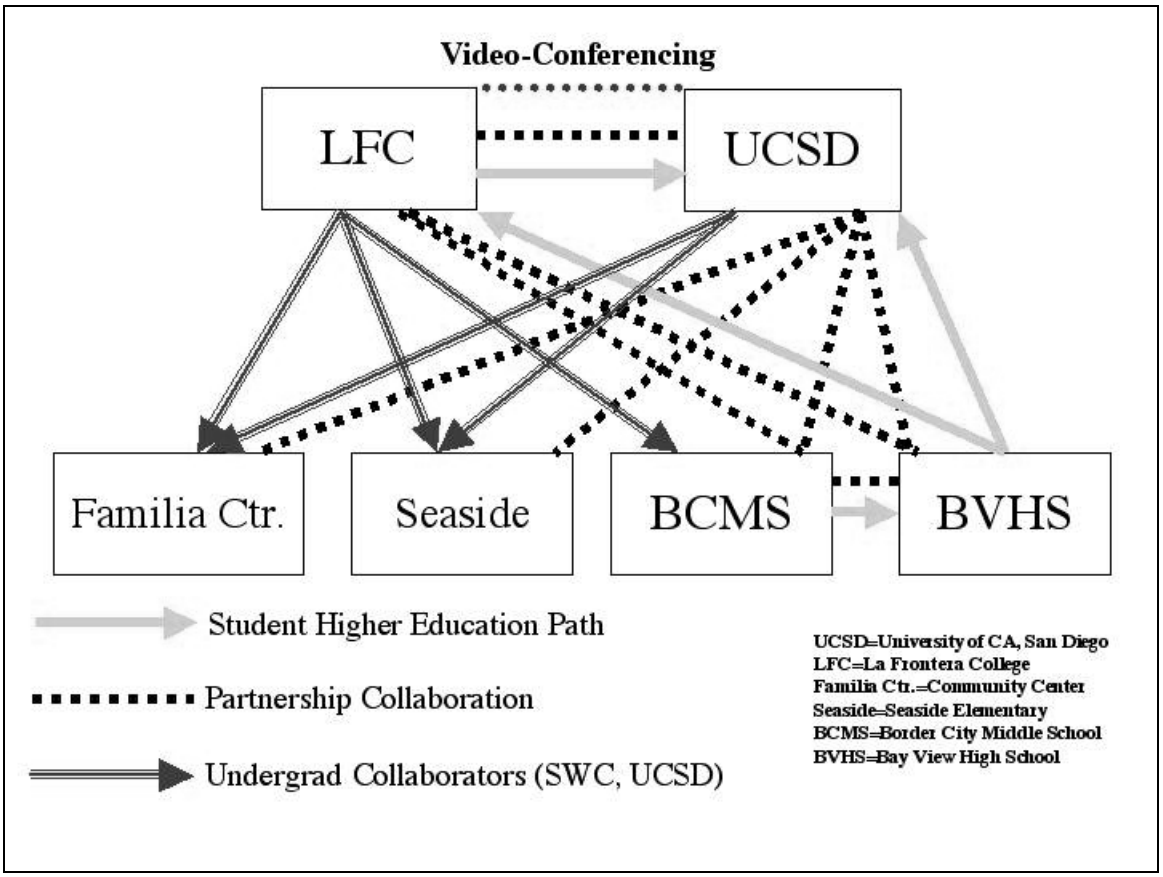

Figure 1. South Bay Project Organizational Chart [3]

The South Bay area of San Diego borders Mexico and has a large population of Latino residents—including a large number of both recent immigrants and long-term residents of Mexican-descent. The various schools collaborating with UCSD on this project are all located in this border region and their student bodies reflect this population. The elementary and middle school students who participate are predominantly of Mexican origin, and come from low-income homes in which Spanish is typically the primary language spoken. The schools they attend are considered "low performing" and tend to produce few students that will eventually go to college or be eligible to attend the UC. Many of the community college students who participate in the

[3] This chart was prepared by Rick Smith.

program come from similar circumstances and, although they are attending college, they are often either ill prepared for transfer to a four-year university, or are not considering the possibility at all.

In this study, I trace the tension between theory and practice in the implementation and development of South Bay Project activities as they relate to Border City Middle School. In *theory*, the project is designed to provide rich learning experiences and needed academic supports for underrepresented students at various stages of their educational careers, and to help enable multiple pathways for college eligibility and access. Its goals include increasing the number of underrepresented community college students who transfer to UCSD, providing academic enrichment opportunities for students in low performing schools, and strengthening institutional ties and collaborative relationships between UCSD and the partnering schools.

In *practice*, however, the project faces enormous obstacles to being effective. Challenges range from the logistics and practice of achieving the needed inter-segmental coordination and collaboration, to the details of reconciling ideological and pedagogical differences of participants from the different institutions, to the specifics of how to create truly effective, voluntary-yet-academically enriching activities for children in settings outside the typical classroom—especially when these children have a variety of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds and resources, academic abilities, and interests.

This dissertation documents the details of the "South Bay Project" activities that unfolded at BCMS after school on Tuesdays and Thursdays—alternately referred to as "the 5th Dimension" or "Computer Skills and Projects" class. Through close examination of the project in this setting—and the changing patterns of activities, relationships, and

communication that evolved—the study reveals the possibilities and limitations of such an effort.

At the inception of the project, CREATE had envisioned applying an already existing successful model for after-school computer mediated activities that had been developed in community-based, club settings. Research connected with that project had shown the benefits of combining play with academic learning in a low-surveillance, collaborative learning environment (Cole, 1996), characteristics which are often absent in school settings, especially in those schools serving poor and working class students (Haycock, 1988; Oakes, 1985).

In the initial adaptation of the model to this setting by BCMS staff, however, many counterproductive aspects of the in-school culture were duplicated. Teachers typically attempted to control student activities, movement, and noise levels similar to how they might in a classroom, using authoritarian and disciplinary tactics. They also tended to design a curriculum that was more remedial in nature than intellectually expanding—reflecting the kinds of typical (and often damaging) decisions made about what kind of curriculum poor, working class, and underrepresented minority students should receive (Anyon, 1980; Oakes, Gamoran and Page, 1992).

What I documented when I arrived at BCMS was an after-school activity that was uneven and only loosely resembled the model program upon which it had been based. On the one hand, students seemed to enjoy having a place to go after school that was less structured than their in-school hours. On the other hand, the activity fell short of its potential and seemed to perpetuate students' general sense of academic disengagement and quiet subversion of teacher authority and school rules. In many ways, the resulting

"learning culture" actually discouraged students' ability to collaborate with each other and with the college students around pro-academic activities.

My dissertation documents how I and other CREATE researchers began working more intensively with teachers and community college students to attempt to change the structure of activities and the learning culture in the after-school program. Through discussions and collaborative efforts to try out new ideas, the culture and tone of the after-school program gradually shifted, becoming less authoritarian, looser in structure, as well as more project-based and intellectually challenging. In the process, the interactions between students, teachers, and undergraduates became richer, often incorporating playfulness and a higher level of engagement. The patterns of communication and the overall quality of relationships between the various participants also shifted—moving the after-school activity in the direction of a more flexible, less school-like culture.

At the same time, there were limitations in what the program could achieve and the extent to which its achievements could be sustained. Frequently, despite all of our best efforts to create something different, the more school-like patterns of activity, behavior, and relationships that I witnessed early on would reassert themselves. By examining the details and contradictions in this process, my dissertation documents the kinds of barriers and constraints that limit educational change, even in the after-school context, as well as the kinds of opportunities for change that do exist and can be mobilized.

Underlying this research, I am centrally concerned with the potential for change that comes from a variety of institutions attempting to work together to align their

resources to benefit underrepresented minority students. I am interested in the messy details of how such diverse partners work to negotiate and overcome barriers to change as they engage in collaborative work and newly shared goals and activities. I believe that in these details lie important lessons that can inform the efforts of UC outreach initiatives as well as other educational interventions.

A. CONFRONTING DISPARITIES IN EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Disparities in educational achievement along racial and social class lines have been well documented. While I will not be reviewing these disparities in detail, trends are worth mentioning because they highlight the gravity of the problem. Using data from the National Center for Education Statistics, Katie Haycock (2001) reports that in 1999, by the end of high school:

> • Only 1 in 50 Latinos and 1 in 100 African American 17-year olds can read and gain information from specialized text—such as the science section in the newspaper (compared to about 1 in 12 whites), and
>
> • Fewer than one-quarter of Latinos and one-fifth of African Americans can read the complicated but less specialized text that more than half of white students can read.
>
> • About 1 in 30 Latinos and 1 in 100 African Americans can comfortably do multi-step problem solving and elementary algebra, compared to about 1 in 10 white students.
>
> • Only 3 in 10 African American and 4 in 10 Latino 17-year-olds have mastered the usage and computation of fractions, commonly used percents, and averages, compared to 7 in 10 white students.

Differences also persist in the rates at which different groups of students complete high school and in their postsecondary education experiences. Haycock (2001) reports:

> • In the 18- to 24-year-old group, about 90 percent of whites and 94 percent of Asians have either completed high school or earned a GED. Among African Americans, the rate drops to 81 percent; among Latinos, 63 percent.
>
> • Young African Americans are only about half as likely as white students to earn a bachelor's degree by age 29; young Latinos are only one-third as likely as whites to earn a college degree.

One of the crudest indicators of unequal educational outcomes is high school dropout rates. Michelle Fine (1991) reports that approximately 25 percent of students in the United States drop out of school before graduating from high school. In many urban areas this rate reaches a staggering 60 to 70 percent. Researchers using data from an ambitious study that tracked a 1980 cohort of thirty thousand high school sophomores across six years determined that social class was the finest predictor of who dropped out of high school, with 22 percent of the lowest income quartile and 8.9 percent of the highest income quartile dropping out. Ethnicity was also a strong predictor. Native Americans dropped out more often (22.7 percent) than Hispanics (18.7 percent), who dropped out more often than African Americans (16.8 percent), who dropped out more than whites (12.2 percent), who dropped out more often than Asians (4.8 percent).[4]

In a study of disparities in the San Diego Unified school district (a neighbor of the schools involved in the South Bay Project), Mehan and Grimes (1997) report similar trends. For example, over 15 percent of students who attend high-poverty high schools in the district will drop out over the course of four years, while less than 3 percent will drop out who attend low-poverty high schools. The rate at which students from different ethnic groups within these schools drop out is even more significant. In the district's highest

[4] This study was reported in Fine (1991).

poverty schools, for example, nearly 17 percent of African-American and over 23 percent of Latino students will drop out over a four-year time period, compared with 9.7 percent of white students.

The educational intervention documented in this study, referred to as the South Bay Project, responds broadly to the problem of racial and class-based disparities in educational outcomes that are reflected in these statistics. The goals of the intervention are directly related to helping correct such inequities. I will return to discuss the project in detail and the particular way that it attempts to address the problems at hand. Here, I draw from existing research to examine some compelling explanations of why these dramatic disparities exist and that imply different strategies for intervention. This provides a useful background from which to locate and discuss the current study.

To fully do justice to this topic would include a deeper discussion of the variety of ways in which poverty, classism, and racism impact families, young people, and entire neighborhoods than what I provide below. For the purposes of this study, however, I focus on the processes that occur in and around schools that contribute to unequal educational outcomes. This is useful because it highlights the fact that *what happens in schools matters*, which provides a necessary counterpoint to arguments that suggest that nothing we can do will make a difference.

1. Structural Inequality in Schools

Research has consistently demonstrated broad, class and race-based inequities in the education that students of poor, working class, and minority backgrounds typically receive. Of particular importance, the research suggests that we are giving students with

the greatest needs the least resources in terms of teacher quality, rigorous curriculum and high standards, and the supports they need to succeed. These patterns are routinely perpetuated by institutional policies and practices, and often implemented by well-meaning individuals. This can be understood as one of the many ways in which racism and classism have become institutionalized in the school system.

a. The Unequal Distribution of Good Teachers

The unequal distribution of qualified teachers provides a very clear indication of structural race and class-based inequities in schooling. Mehan and Grimes (1999) found that in the San Diego Unified school district, for example, poor, underrepresented minority, and limited English proficient students are concentrated in schools where teachers have fewer years of experience. What's more, teachers with relatively lower levels of academic preparation are teaching the students who have the greatest scholastic needs.

This pattern is reproduced throughout the country. In Haycock's (2001) review of studies that examine the distribution of qualified teachers in the nation, she summarizes that, in every subject area, students in high-poverty schools are more likely than other students to be taught by teachers without even a minor in the subjects they teach. In predominantly minority high schools, these differences are even greater. For example, only about half the teachers in schools with 90 percent or greater minority enrollments meet even their states' minimum requirements to teach those subjects—far fewer than in predominantly white schools.

There is mounting evidence that suggests that the quality of teaching is the most important determinant of student success (Haycock, 1997).[5] The results of several dramatic studies demonstrating the impact of teacher quality on student learning gains has led Haycock (1998: 4) to conclude that:

> If we but took the simple step of assuring that poor and minority children had teachers of the same quality as other children, about half of the achievement gap would disappear. If we went further and assigned our best teachers to the students who most need them…there's persuasive evidence to suggest we could entirely close the gap.

Instead, however, institutional practices such as emergency hiring, assignment of teachers outside their fields of preparation, and high teacher turnover in under-funded, high poverty schools "conspire to produce a situation in which many poor and minority students are taught throughout their entire school careers by a steady stream of the least qualified and experienced teachers" (1995 report from the National Governors Association, reported in Haycock, 1998). Clearly, significant areas for educational intervention include developing policies to help reverse these trends and ensure that poor and minority children have access to highly qualified and effective teachers, as well as systems for helping existing teachers develop greater content knowledge in their fields and become more skilled at teaching.

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[5] For example, one extensive study of Tennessee teachers that has tracked teacher effectiveness in producing student learning gains has found that previously low achieving students can make significant and dramatic gains with the most effective teachers (an average of 53 percentile points in a single year), and very few gains with the least effective (an average of 14 percentile points in a single year) (reported in Haycock, 1998). High achieving students similarly gain very little with the least effective teachers (an average of only 2 points), whereas they have much higher gains with the most effective (an average of 25 points). Additional research (reported in Haycock, 1998) suggests that the cumulative effects of having an effective or ineffective teacher can be even more dramatic. A recent study in Texas, for example, compared students who began with similar scores in reading and math and who had three consecutive years of very effective teachers with those who had very ineffective teachers. By the end of three years, students who had the most effective teachers were separated by an average of 35 percentile points in reading and 50 percentile points in math above those who had the least effective teachers.

b. Class and Race-bias in the Culture and Content of Instruction

A variety of scholars, such as Bowles and Gintis (1976), DeMarrais and LeCompte (1990), and Anyon (1981), have argued that general differences exist in how students of different class backgrounds are instructed, such that students are prepared differentially for the labor force. The general argument is that teachers tend to use a more remedial and "practical" curriculum (emphasizing manual skills and clerical knowledge) for working-class students and reward them for classroom behaviors, such as docility and obedience, which correspond to personality traits allegedly rewarded in working-class jobs. With students from more advantaged social groups, teachers use a more academically rigorous curriculum (emphasizing knowledge and skills leading to social power and regard), and reward students for initiative and personal assertiveness such as is rewarded in managerial and more elite jobs (Anyon, 1981). While these kinds of arguments are sometimes overly deterministic in their claims, research supports that the broad tendencies they describe are a common reality.

Anyon (1981) provides tentative empirical support for these arguments in her ethnographic study of five elementary schools in contrasting social class communities. In the two working-class schools, she found that student work involved "following the steps of the procedure." These procedures were usually mechanical, involved rote behavior and very little decision-making or choice. Teachers rarely explained why the work was being assigned, how it might connect to other assignments, or what the idea was that lay behind the procedure or gave it coherence, meaning, or significance. Most of the rules regarding work were designations of what the children were to do, and the rules involved following steps. Children were then typically evaluated for whether or not they followed the right

steps. Teachers typically emphasized classroom control and made decisions without consulting children or explaining their decisions. They typically interacted with children by giving them orders. Teachers also made every effort to control the movement of the children, often shouting, "Why are you out of your seat?!"

The other schools in Anyon's study, which she classified as a middle-class school, an affluent or professional school, and an executive elite school, were quite different. These schools emphasized greater (but still varying) levels of initiative, creativity, decision-making, self-expression, problem-solving, and intellectual inquiry in student work. As the schools became progressively more elite, teachers also made less effort to overtly control student movement and behavior and students were expected to exercise greater levels of self discipline and control instead of teacher control (Anyon, 1981).

While Anyon's study is limited to five schools and her findings are perhaps too generalized to represent the kinds of variations that exist in schools, other empirical research supports the tendencies she describes. In particular, the differential distribution of students to ability groups and tracks has been well documented (Oakes et al., 1992). Curriculum differentiation is a common school practice that typically functions to deny poor and minority students' access to quality learning opportunities. In a broad review of research concerning tracking practices in elementary and secondary schools, Jeannie Oakes et al. (1992) report that disproportionate percentages of poor and minority students (predominantly African American and Latino) are found in curricula designed for low-ability or non-college bound students, and that these same students are underrepresented in programs for the gifted and talented.

While there are significant debates about whether or not ability grouping and tracking help or hurt students, there are consequences typically associated with curriculum differentiation that are quite concrete and damaging to students. Lower-tracked curriculum, for example, tends to be more remedial, involve more decoding activities, and more greatly emphasize classroom control; higher-tracked curriculum tends to be more academically rigorous, involve more difficult thinking and problem solving tasks, and more greatly emphasize educative processes (Oakes et al., 1992). The research also shows that tracking practices tend to exacerbate initial differences between high and low achievers, and in this way, "tracking's most consistent effects are in directing students toward differentiated future educational and occupational careers" (Oakes et al., 1992: 594). Haycock (1998: 3) summarizes that the research shows a "clear relationship between low standards, low-level curriculum…and poor results."

Underlying these broad tendencies are race and social class-based assumptions about what poor, working-class, and underrepresented minority students are capable of achieving. For example, Oakes et al. (1992: 577) find that especially at the secondary level, "family background characteristics" are important in students' track placements. Students, they found, "are often given different types of information, advice, and counselor attention and social, class-based placements are produced in the advising process." In addition, some studies have shown that students with comparable abilities are sometimes placed differently in low and high ability classes. Students who are white and come from middle or higher income families are more likely to be placed in higher ability classes than students that are not white and from lower income families, even when these students have comparable past achievement. In addition, some case study

work reports that Asian students are far more likely to be placed in advanced classes than Latinos with equivalent achievement test scores. While these findings do not necessarily imply the malicious intent of school gatekeepers, such as counselors, they do imply the operation of (often unconscious) race and class-biased criteria by which gatekeepers make decisions.

Mehan (1986) examines how students' educational biographies are constructed as teachers, educators, counselors and other school personnel differentially interpret student skills and behavior. He explains that:

> Tokens of students' behavior are interpreted to count as instances of educationally relevant categories, from a correct or incorrect response in a lesson or test to designations, such as normal, gifted, or educationally handicapped student (Mehan, 1992: 16).

It is this type of interpretive work, he argues, which sorts students into educational programs—such as different ability groups and educational tracks—that provide differential educational opportunities to students. These different placements become key determinants in students' educational career paths, which "lead to different biographies and identities for students" (Mehan, 1992: 13). In this way, unequal access to a challenging curriculum (and good teaching) is not so much *determined* by a students' social class or ethnicity, but rather is *actively produced* in these various institutional and social processes.

Regardless of the intentions of the school agents involved in these processes, the consequences are damaging for the young people who are interpreted as being "low ability" students. Haycock (2001: 8) summarizes that after six years of observing high-poverty classrooms, staff at the Education Trust have come away "stunned." So little is

expected of students in high-poverty schools, she explains, that students get very few assignments, the assignments they do get are extremely low level (such as coloring assignments at the middle school level instead of writing or mathematics assignments), and students receive an A for work that would earn a C or D anywhere else.

An emerging and significant body of research (Haycock, 2001; Mehan et al., 1992; Mehan et al., 1996) suggests that all students can benefit from a "higher tracked" curriculum if given extra supports (such as additional practice, time on instruction, and help). Mehan et al. (1996), for example, found achievement gains in traditionally low-achieving students when these students were placed in rigorous, academic classes and provided with additional institutional support. Untracking strategies such as these, that have proven to be successful, provide additional evidence that practices of curriculum differentiation are negatively contributing to the extreme variability in students' educational careers. These strategies also suggest an important area for educational intervention and change.

To accomplish significant changes in this area is not easy, however, for it implies challenging entrenched institutional norms and well-accepted practices, as well as deeply held beliefs about how and why to educate different groups of children. In a qualitative study of two high schools serving students of contrasting social classes, for example, Warschauer (2000) found that despite the high poverty school's implementation of a variety of surface level reforms towards collaborative apprenticeship learning, student-centered project work, and restructured classrooms, it was still "producing workers," whereas the school serving elite students was producing scholars. In the school's use of computers for science, for example, the high poverty school had students collaboratively

produce a regular newsletter about their personal experiences, whereas the elite school apprenticed students as junior scientists. This exemplified tendencies in the schools, Warschauer argued, towards students being prepared for different positions within *new capitalism*. Students at the high poverty school were learning to be respectful members of a "team" and to cooperate, skills now valued in workers by companies in the new economy. Interviews with teachers at the high poverty school clearly demonstrated that they were trying to help their students develop skills that would help them get jobs. Students at the elite school, however, were learning the mastery of disciplinary knowledge and the management of complex systems, tools needed for becoming the "symbolic analysts" of the new economy. Studies like this suggest that some of the traditional ways that "dumbed down" curriculum has looked might be changing, but that the tendencies in which certain groups of students receive limited-content, academically unchallenging learning environments continue to operate. Studies like this also reflect the partial and often uneven implementation and effectiveness of most school reforms (Mehan et al., 1996; Tyack and Cuban, 1995).

2. Cultural Mismatch vs. Cultural Congruence

As the anthropology of education became a distinct field in the 1960s, the salient model among professional educators for explaining the educational under-achievement of youth of low socioeconomic status and minority ethnic and cultural backgrounds was that these youth came from culturally deprived, or deficient backgrounds that did not provide them with a cognitively stimulating environment (see Erickson, 1987 for discussion and references). Members of the emerging field of the anthropology of education opposed the

cultural bias and ethnocentrism of this "cultural deficit" model, and by the late 1960s, socio-linguistically oriented anthropologists identified cultural difference in communication styles between teachers and their students as playing an important role in the under-achievement of minority students (Erickson, 1987).

The work following this approach is ample and varied and it has been summarized and reviewed elsewhere (Erickson, 1987; Foley, 1991; Mehan, 1992). According to Frederick Erickson (1987), the main argument is that students and teachers of different cultural backgrounds learn different verbal and nonverbal communication styles. They develop culturally distinctive ways of speaking and have different assumptions about how to communicate such things as "irony, sincerity, approval and positive concern, rapt attention, disinterest, disapproval, and the like" (337). Poor and minority children come to school differentially prepared from dominant culture children for the language uses demanded in the classroom, and when cultural differences in ways of speaking and listening exist between child and teacher, systematic and recurrent miscommunication can occur in the classroom, with damaging consequences for student educational achievement (Heath, 1982; Michaels, 1981). Another trend in the research following the "cultural difference" approach is to argue the significance of cultural mismatch by showing how teaching strategies that are culturally congruent can greatly improve the performance of minorities in school settings (Au and Jordan, 1981; Vogt, Jordan and Tharp, 1987). In general, this work demonstrates the educational benefits of capitalizing on the pre-existing cognitive and linguistic abilities of children.

The results of this body of research call our attention to the significant role that school officials' responses to students' cultural difference can play in contributing to the

educational under-achievement of groups of children whose cultural and linguistic backgrounds differ from the culture of the classroom. These studies also highlight the importance of schools and teachers developing institutional arrangements and curricular strategies that take into consideration cultural diversity and that enable students to use their cultural and linguistic backgrounds as resources in the learning process.

To develop new curriculum and pedagogy that is genuinely and meaningfully appropriate for diverse students requires fundamentally new ways of organizing the practices of teachers and schools. Too often, for example, "culture-sensitive curriculum" is reduced to incorporating folkloric displays into the classroom, such as storytelling, arts, crafts, and dance performance (Moll et al., 1992), and "multicultural curriculum" makes culture synonymous with race and ethnicity and promotes static notions of culture that minimize the tremendous diversity within groups who share linguistic and sociocultural histories (Gutiérrez, 2000).

The innovative research and programmatic development efforts of scholars such as Luis Moll (Moll and Díaz, 1987; Moll et al., 1992) and Olga Vásquez (2002) suggest that effective models of culturally responsible curriculum and pedagogy require ongoing and thoughtful development and adaptation to the local context (and are often labor and resource-intensive efforts). Moll et al. (1992) demonstrate, for example, that teachers can practice qualitative research methods (such as interviews with students' parents and observations of students' homes) to learn about the knowledge and skills found in the households of the students they teach. Teachers can then capitalize on these "funds of knowledge," or household and community resources, in the lessons they design for the classroom. This approach also attempts to incorporate a broad understanding of the social

and historical context in which students are living. In the case of the Moll et al. (1992: 133) study, for example, the approach involved "understanding the history of the border region between Mexico and the United States and other aspects of the sociopolitical and economic context of the households." To help teachers make use of what they learned about student backgrounds and funds of knowledge, the project also involved developing after-school settings where anthropologists and teachers could meet to analyze their classrooms, discuss household observations, and develop innovations in the teaching of literacy.

While it is clearly unrealistic to expect teachers to attempt ongoing, in depth qualitative research of all of their students' households, this type of research and innovative practice suggests the importance (and the level of work involved) in teachers learning to recognize and draw on students' multiple cultural and linguistic resources. Gutiérrez (2000: 293) offers a general argument (and suggestion) that for teachers to develop and maintain effective learning communities "will require fundamental changes in the ways teachers organize learning and, thus, dramatic changes in their basic understandings of learning, of who can learn, and the role of culture in learning." What's more, for teachers to develop these learning communities such that "all the sociocultural resources of all the participants are utilized," they will need to develop "reflective and situated practice—practice that shapes and is shaped by the local context." To accomplish these goals, she argues, teachers will need to be theoretically equipped and have opportunities to engage in ongoing reflective practice.

Vásquez (2002) worked closely with a team of university staff, researchers, students, and community members to develop a culturally relevant model educational

activity, *La Clase Mágica* (LCM), in an after-school, community-based setting. LCM is an adaptation of the 5th Dimension model educational activity (described later in this chapter) designed to meet the specific needs of bilingual/bicultural, Mexican origin children. (LCM is also one of the institutional partners in the South Bay Project described in this study).

The approach that Vásquez (2002) takes to the concept of cultural and linguistic relevance contains important lessons about what the concept would optimally include. One aspect of her project included adapting an English-language curriculum that primarily referenced U.S. and Euro-American culture to incorporate Spanish words and phrases and to reference Mexican history and culture. This helped children who were participating in LCM more effectively and freely draw on their multiple cultural and linguistic resources and abilities while engaged in learning activities and problem solving processes (encouraging children to move between Spanish and English as they chose, for example). Her approach to developing a culturally relevant educational program moved beyond curricular and pedagogical innovation, however, to incorporate training adults from the community to work with the children as well as involving parents in developing and (eventually) running and managing the program. At the center of these efforts was a commitment to using an "inclusive, collaborative, and flexible approach" that continuously attempted to "address the local sociolinguistic context" and "remain open to a broad range of educational possibilities" (43). The result was a program that treated learners' home language, culture, and community as valuable intellectual resources and, in the process, "qualitatively improved the learning experiences of participating children and adult representatives of the community and university" (43).

The approach to diversity and cultural difference promoted here contrasts sharply with common perceptions that working class and minority communities are culturally deficient and a threat to mainstream culture and values. The approach also contrasts with current trends in educational reforms that are characterized by what Gutiérrez et al. (2001) term "backlash pedagogy." This pedagogy, they explain, "does not harness diversity and difference as resources for learning; instead, it is characterized by its reductive notions of learning, particularly literacy and language learning, that define diversity and difference as problems to be eliminated or remediated" (5). Movements to eliminate bilingual education and require English-only instruction (in California, proposition 227), for example, exemplify backlash pedagogy. By immersing Latino, Spanish-dominant children in English-only educational settings, these children are necessarily prohibited from using their "complete linguistic, sociocultural, and academic repertoire in the service of learning" (Gutiérrez et al., 2001). This process limits the Spanish-speaking child and privileges the English-dominant child in the learning environment. That there has been such widespread support for such backlash policies implies that efforts to develop more culturally responsive learning environments in our schools will no doubt face political hostility and challenge in the years ahead.

3. Cultural and Social Capital and Institutionalized Exclusion

French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu has made significant contributions to our understanding of the educational failure of those not of the "dominant culture" in his work on the role of schools in reproducing the established social order. He argues that through socialization in the home, youth develop a primary "habitus"—an enduring

"system of schemes of thought, perception, appreciation and action" (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, 1990: 40)—which forms the basis of their reception and assimilation of the classroom message. His argument hinges on the idea that different social classes socialize children differently through this "early education," developing in them logical dispositions which are "more or less complex, more or less elaborated," a process which unequally prepares children for the symbolic decoding activities required in school (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, 1990: 43).

According to Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, 1990) differences between social classes in habitus manifest, for example, in differently constituted dispositions to language. Whereas the bourgeois "relation to language" is characterized by a "tendency to abstraction, formalism, intellectualism and euphemistic moderation," that of the working-class is characterized by "expressiveness" and a tendency to "move from particular case to particular case…" through "banter, rudeness and ribaldry..." (116).[6] Because the former "relation to language," that inculcated in bourgeois homes, is that used in and required by schools, Bourdieu considers it "educationally profitable linguistic capital" (116). It is this linguistic capital, along with other forms of what Bourdieu calls

[6] Bourdieu and Passeron (1977, 1990) draw similarities with their arguments about language and that of Bernstein, yet critique Bernstein's reduction to intrinsic characteristics of language differences which are really part of different types of "relation to language" (134). According to Bernstein (1964; 1996), different language practices are generated from particular forms of social relationships, often bound to children's social class circumstances, in ways that unequally prepare them for the demands of school. Different social structures generate distinct speech systems or linguistic codes, such that members of the middle-class tend to have access to "elaborated" codes whereas members of the working-class tend to be limited to "restricted" codes. While his description of what features differentiate these codes has changed somewhat over the years, the principle idea he has retained is that they each have distinct "orientations to meaning" (Bernstein 1996: 94-98). Restricted codes, according to his theory, are said to demonstrate particularistic, local, context-dependent meanings, whereas elaborated codes demonstrate universalistic, less local, more context-independent meanings. Because the codes of education consist of elaborated orientations to meaning, Bernstein argues, children of the "marginal classes" might not be able to recognize what kind of communication is considered legitimate or be able to realize such "legitimate" communication while in school (Bernstein 1996: 30-33). In this way, according to Bernstein's analysis, students' access to different language codes could largely influence their educational careers.

"cultural capital"—such as "high status" formal knowledge, general attitudes about school, manners, personal style and taste (Lamant and Lareau, 1988)—that in large part determine student educational success. As this capital is unequally distributed along social class lines, so too, is educational success and failure.

Bourdieu's theory shares some similarities with sociolinguists and anthropologists (described above) who argue that children are differentially prepared for school because of their cultural backgrounds and socialization in such things as language use and perceptions of the value of schooling. In fact, the work of these theorists can provide some ethnographic examples of how such things as "habitus" formation and "cultural capital" operate at the level of daily social practice—something Bourdieu does not attempt to do (Mehan, 1992). Bourdieu differs from these theorists, however, for he centers his argument on a critique of the institution of schooling.

A key function of the schools, Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, 1990) argues, is to differentially select and exclude students for educational achievement largely on the basis of their class background, while appearing to do so on the basis of meritocratic principle. These mechanisms of exclusion operate without mal-intent through the unequal social class distribution of cultural and social capital. The mechanisms include such things as the use of traditional academic language in the classroom and the implicit high-status cultural or academic knowledge required for some academic tasks. Other mechanisms of exclusion might include such things as grading and evaluating students, for these are often class-biased processes. In addition to difficulties that students may have accomplishing educational tasks because of such bias, teachers are armed with "unconscious criteria of social perception on total persons, whose moral

and intellectual qualities are grasped through the infinitesimals of style or manners, accent or elocution, posture or mimicry, even clothing and cosmetics..." (162). To Bourdieu, these are exclusionary mechanisms precisely because the school system does not "give what it demands," for it demands that students have a "relation to language and culture exclusively produced by a particular mode of inculcation," such that it gives training and information which can be "fully received only by those who have had the training it does not give" (128).

Because poor, working-class, and underrepresented minority students often do not have the linguistic and cultural capital that is recognized as legitimate in educational institutions, they might fail out of school or be relegated to or "self-select" less desirable or demanding educational careers. This entire process can occur without any malevolent intent on the part of agents in the institution, for merely letting the system function as it is is enough to perpetuate the problem. Bourdieu's concept of "cultural capital" comes to mean more than just the high or low status cultural patterns which people develop, which, depending on their socialization, may differ from the patterns used in the schools. Imbedded in the concept is a concern for how these socialization patterns come to be used in processes of social and cultural exclusion (Lamant and Lareau, 1988).

Stanton-Salazar (1995) draws on and extends Bourdieu's work in important ways, providing a more developed theory of the types of knowledge that schools implicitly require of students in order for them to be successful. In addition to being able to perform well on academic tasks, he argues that school success requires knowing how to "decode the system," knowing the rules of the institution, how to present oneself, how to use language, how to build supportive relationships with institutional agents, and, among

other things, how to problem solve in institutional contexts (13). These decoding skills are important because they enable students to act in ways that engender institutional support from agents of the school system (educators, personnel, counselors, etc.). This support can come in a variety of ways, including such things as providing academic or bureaucratic knowledge, emotional support, and educational guidance, acting as a bridge to other resources and social networks, or advocating on behalf of a student.

When students develop social relationships with institutional agents who posses potentially transferable resources, and when these relationships are characterized by the trust and agent commitment that increase the likelihood of agent support, the relationships comprise what Stanton-Salazar (1995) terms "social capital." The socialization of "dominant culture" children (typically white and middle-class) prepares them to succeed in school in large part by teaching them how to behave and how to present themselves in institutional settings. Similar to Bourdieu, he argues that these children's use of language is "sanctioned as competent" and "labeled as intellectual or scholastic ability," for they are often seen as bright merely based on their familiarity with the ways of the dominant culture (13). Given their socialization, dominant culture children come to school prepared to construct valuable social capital; they are likely to behave in ways that facilitate building trusting relationships with institutional agents. Similarly, these children often have middle-class advocates from the home and community that can facilitate student relationships with institutional agents and who are otherwise knowledgeable about how to behave and problem solve in institutional settings so as to get what they want and mobilize institutional resources to their benefit.

Contrary to the experience of dominant culture students, the access that working-class and ethnic minority students have to social capital is problematic. As discussed above, they often exhibit linguistic and cultural resources different from what is termed "normal" by the institution. In fact, their abilities and knowledge bases are often seen as "deficient" and as *not* demonstrating a potential for school success (Stanton-Salazar, 1995: 17). In addition, their social networks and life experiences do not usually socialize them in the "rules of institutional culture," and once in school they are rarely provided the "necessary training for effective decoding" (Stanton-Salazar 1995: 14). Given their historical experiences of poverty and racism, they have often developed social-psychological orientations, such as feelings of distrust, fear, and anxiety when interacting with institutional agents, that further constrain their ability to develop effective "help seeking" orientations (Salazar, 2001).

This means that working-class and ethnic minority students often do not "act in the right ways" to build trusting relationships with institutional agents and, as a result, few "low status" youth are targeted for institutional support.[7] This is extremely detrimental to their success because their families and friends often lack socialization into the ways of mainstream institutional culture and are not in a good position to advocate on their behalf (Fine, 1991; Stanton-Salazar, 2001). In these ways, working-class and minority youth are simultaneously highly dependent on institutional agents and resources to be able to gain needed institutional resources and succeed in the school, and unlikely to be able to mobilize or obtain such resources.

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[7] Organizational and cultural features of schools that serve to minimize opportunities for students and teachers to get to know each other well further exacerbate these tendencies (Fine, 1991; Stanton-Salzar, 2001).

The unequal distribution of "educationally legitimate" cultural and social capital among different social groups has significant implications for our efforts to eliminate educational inequities. These implications echo the findings of studies reviewed above. On the one hand, it is necessary to challenge commonplace, often class-biased and racist conceptions about what constitutes legitimate cultural and social capital. At stake are how institutional agents determine such things as students' intellectual ability and readiness to learn, and what kinds of cultural knowledge and language practices they deem valuable or appropriate for the classroom. On the other hand, it is also necessary to challenge an educational system that so disproportionately allocates institutional resources to benefit the most privileged students. Given that poor and minority communities often lack the school-based knowledge, academic language, and "institutional know-how" that school success requires, students from these backgrounds are more dependent on school resources and institutional agents than students of more high status backgrounds. In this way, there is a greater need for the resources of the institution to be *organized* to target poor, working-class, and minority youth with quality learning opportunities and the support they need to succeed.

4. Student Responses to Race and Class Oppression

Many scholars of education (see for example, Gibson, 1987; Ogbu, 1996; and, Suarez-Orozco, 1987) have asked why different minorities "adjust and perform differently in school in spite of cultural and language differences," and why and how "the problems created by cultural and language differences seem to persist among some minority groups but not among others" (Ogbu, 1996: 85-86). In a well-known argument,

Ogbu (1996) argues that what differentiates minority groups is the nature of their history, subordination, and exploitation, *and* the nature of their instrumental and expressive responses to their treatment. These responses enter into the processes of schooling in such a way that "school performance is not due only to what is done to or for the minorities; it is also due to the fact that the nature of the minorities' interpretations and responses makes them more or less accomplices to their own school success or failure" (Ogbu, 1996: 88).

According to Ogbu (1996: 99), some groups of minority students (those he refers to as "voluntary minorities," such as immigrants from Asia, India, Central and South America) are able to perceive their social identity as primarily *different* from the social identity of white Americans and are able to develop strategies in the schools of "accommodating without assimilation," or in other words, adapting to teachers' expectations without it threatening their sense of identity. Other groups of minority students (those he refers to as "involuntary minorities," such as African Americans, Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, Mexican-Americans, and Puerto Ricans in the U.S.) often perceive language and cultural differences as "markers of identity to be maintained" (101), and develop an oppositional cultural frame of reference and identity that makes it more difficult for them to overcome the cultural and linguistic differences they have with the school culture. This oppositional stance is often encouraged, he argues, by peer, family, and community attitudes that either explicitly or implicitly express hostility or ambivalence to the school culture and its rules. In this way, some groups of minorities develop attitudes and behaviors that exacerbate their difficulties in school.

While Ogbu's argument fails to capture the complexity of the history of different minority groups in the U.S. and the variation that exists in the school experiences of different minority groups (Erickson, 1987; Foley, 1991; MacLeod, 1987), his argument is useful in that it highlights students' responses to race and class oppression as significant factors influencing school achievement. Indeed, many empirical, qualitative studies have documented a correlation between students' experiences of race and class oppression, their attitudes about schooling and oppositional or compliant behavior in school, and how well they do in school (see for example, Fine 1991; Foley, 1991; MacLeod, 1987; Willis, 1977). These studies demonstrate that poor, working-class, and minority students often exhibit "resistance" to teacher and school authority and attitudes of "educational refusal" that contribute to their educational failure (Fine 1991; Foley, 1991; MacLeod, 1987; Willis, 1977).

Erickson (1987) offers a useful explanation of this phenomenon. Educational success, he argues, typically involves assent to learn and trust in the legitimacy and good intentions of school authority figures. Educational failure often involves mistrust and "resistance," or the "withholding of assent" (345). Cultural difference can become a "risk factor" in student assent to learn when that difference becomes a conflict in the school setting and what could be considered a neutral "border" becomes a contested "boundary." When such miscommunication develops across time, it can become an "entrenched, emotionally intense conflict between teacher and student" (348). As students become increasingly alienated from school and experience repeated failure and negative encounters with teachers, "they develop oppositional cultural patterns as a symbol of their disaffiliation with what they experience (not necessarily within full reflective

awareness) as an illegitimate and oppressive system" (348). In this process, they often become actively resistant, expressing hostile and disruptive opposition to school. Other times, they become passively resistant, "fading into the woodwork as an anonymous, well-behaved, low-achieving student" (348).

Many of theories described here represent aspects of what some have called "resistance theory" (Giroux, 1983; Erickson, 1987). Resistance theory calls our attention to the significant role that students' attitudes and behaviors, influenced by history and social context, play in their educational careers. For several of the authors, this approach comes as an effort to inject considerations of human agency into overly deterministic models of the role that schools play in the economic, social, and cultural reproduction of the social order.[8] While these theories are useful for understanding some of the ways that youth contribute to their own educational failure, it is important not to overemphasize student "resistance" to school authority as an explanation for the widespread achievement disparities that exist. As many studies have found, to some extent all children resist school, exhibit a variety of oppositional attitudes towards school authority, and develop strategies to try to adapt or regulate the task structure of the school to their own advantage (D'Amato, 1987; Everhart, 1983). Clearly, the consequences of "resistant" or "oppositional" attitudes and behaviors are different for students of different social class and racial backgrounds. What's more, these theories often overlook the common tendency for "disengaged students" to behave well in school and attend class (Newmann, 1992). Finally, highlighting student attitudes and behaviors risks obscuring the

[8] Giroux (1983) and Lave et al. (1992) elaborate on how much of the work by "resistance theorists" is responding to overly deterministic models in this way. See, for example, the work of Bowles and Gintis (1976) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1977, 1990) for examples of the type of work blamed for being overly deterministic.

widespread structural inequities and institutional mechanisms (described above) that typically restrict the educational success and agency of poor, working-class, and minority youth.

What is clear from this line of research, however, is that to adequately address the circumstances and needs of "low status" youth, we will need to be concerned with both structural and institutionalized inequality, as well student responses to these conditions. As argued by Ricardo Stanton-Salazar (2001: 5), "…the structural effects of class, race, and gender can be articulated not only in terms of the objective ecological conditions within which low-status youth live (e.g. poverty, racial segregation, resource-strapped schools), but also in terms of the coping patterns that develop in response to these conditions." Often, these coping patterns reflect attitudes of emotional detachment, alienation, isolation, and rage, as well as the types of educational disengagement and refusal described above, which youth have internalized in response to the dehumanizing messages and experiences associated with poverty and racism (Jackins, 2002; Lipsky, 1987; Stanton-Salazar, 2001). Developing effective learning environments and educational opportunities for poor, working-class, and minority youth will thus require contending with and developing strategies to address these (often emotionally distressed) coping patterns and attitudes.

5. Implications for the Current Study

In this discussion, I have provided an overview of some of the more compelling explanations of how race and class-based inequities in educational outcomes are perpetuated by institutional, social, and cultural processes in our schools. Where possible,

I have also suggested insights from these explanations and related empirical research about what kinds of changes (and interventions) in the educational system might make a difference.

This provides useful background information for understanding the *motivations and theory* informing the South Bay Project, described in this study. As will be discussed in greater detail below, the South Bay Project grew out of a social and historical moment in the state of California in which the elimination of affirmative action led to increased pressure on the University of California (as well as new resources) to address racial and social class disparities in educational achievement and access to higher education. The South Bay Project emerged as a product of one of the new institutions that developed in this context, UCSD's office of CREATE, initiating a multi-institutional, inter-segmental collaborative effort to improve the educational experiences of underrepresented minority students in both K-12 and community college settings.

As will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 2, for CREATE, the South Bay Project represented a multifaceted, long-term strategy to address disparities in the educational outcomes of underrepresented minority students. This strategy included creating academic enrichment activities that were geared towards extending students' time on academic tasks and providing them with a change in the culture and content of instruction than what they typically experienced in their schools. Broadly, these activities were informed by theories (mentioned above) suggesting the potential benefits of providing traditionally "low achieving" and culturally diverse students with academically rigorous and culturally relevant and meaningful learning opportunities, as well as by providing these students with the additional support needed to succeed.

At the same time, CREATE's strategy included implementing these activities in the context of building partnership relationships with high poverty schools. CREATE's long-term goals for these partnerships included being able to contribute to deeper changes and improvements in the schools. Here, CREATE's efforts were informed by a critique of structural inequalities and exclusionary practices in schools (such as those described above) that produce disparities in underrepresented minority students' access to quality learning opportunities and access to institutional resources. What's more, these efforts were guided by the goal that building trusting relationships and working closely with school agents in high poverty schools could eventually contribute to structural and cultural changes in these schools.

Also, at its core, the South Bay Project represented a strategy for addressing educational inequities by creating new and (ideally) sustainable mechanisms for realigning (and redistributing) the resources of multiple institutions to better meet the educational needs of underrepresented minority students and address the problems of high poverty, high minority schools. In this way, the project can be understood as part of a broad effort to recognize and respond to the complex and multifaceted nature of the problems at hand and create change in multiple school settings or, in other words, to "bend the bars of the iron cage" of several institutions at once.[9]

Explanations of achievement disparities and inequality in schools (above) also provide important background for understanding how the South Bay Project developed and evolved *in practice*. In particular, this discussion provides a context for

[9] Here, I reference Weber's (1996, 1930) metaphor for the role that bureaucracy and institutions have come to play in modern capitalist society.

understanding the middle school, teachers, staff, and students that are at the center of this study, as well as the kinds barriers and challenges that constrained and limited the development and effectiveness of the program (as measured by CREATE's goals for the program). I will return to address these issues in the following chapters. First, it is important to provide additional examination of the social and historical context in which the South Bay Project evolved.

B. SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT MOTIVATING RESEARCH PROBLEM

1. Regent's Resolution SP-1 and Proposition 209

In July 1995, the UC Regents moved to eliminate the use of affirmative action in University admissions policies by adopting Regent's Resolution SP-1. SP-1 specifically prohibited the use of "race, religion, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin as criteria for admission to the University or to any program of study." Soon after the Regent's adoption of SP-1, California voters approved Proposition 209, amending the State Constitution to incorporate SP-1's ban on the use of race or ethnicity in University admissions. While the Regents rescinded SP-1 in May 2001, through Proposition 209, the prohibition on using race-based preferences in admissions continues.

Regent's Resolution SP-1 also dealt with other aspects of UC admissions policy by putting strict, system-wide constraints on what factors individual UC campuses could use when reviewing student applications and selecting a student body. The resolution formalized a "two-tiered" selection process for evaluating and admitting UC-eligible

students.[10] It mandated that each UC campus select the top 50-75 % of its incoming class solely on the basis of specific "academic" criteria, such as grades and test scores, and left only the balance of the incoming class to be selected on the basis of a combination of academic and supplemental criteria.[11]

SP-1 thus significantly limited the flexibility that campuses could exercise when determining which UC-eligible students to admit. It also represented a move away from using more holistic, comprehensive criteria in the admissions process that could take into consideration such factors as academic accomplishment in the face of difficult circumstances and educational disadvantage—criteria especially important for evaluating the applications of students from "underrepresented" backgrounds, such as African American, Chicano and Latino, and American Indian students, who historically and disproportionately have been excluded from the benefits of educational and social privilege. In this way, the new admissions policy was, in effect, a set up for exacerbating already entrenched patterns of differential and unequal access to a UC education along racial lines.

SP-1 and Proposition 209 had a direct and immediate impact on the ethnic composition of the UC. Although the new admissions policies were not implemented until the fall of 1998, there was an immediate decline in *applications* from African American, Chicano and Latino, and American Indian students—in large part due to the

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[10] As per the State of California Master Plan for Higher Education, adopted in 1960, high school graduating seniors are designated "UC-eligible" if they are in the top 12.5 % of the statewide graduating class (based on traditional academic criteria such as grades and test scores).

[11] SP-1 was rescinded in May 2001, and this two-tiered admissions policy has been replaced with a plan to evaluate each applicant on the basis of more comprehensive criteria.

perception on the part of "underrepresented students" that the University had become less welcoming to students of color (Assembly Budget Subcommittee, 2001).

A decline in the *admission rate* of underrepresented students to the University also began immediately following passage of SP-1 and even before the policy change was implemented. In 1995, 21.3% of total UC admits were underrepresented students. Within three years, by 1998, this figure had fallen to 16.8%. Actual enrollments of underrepresented students also suffered, declining from 21% of total freshman enrollments in 1995 to 15.5% in 1998 (Assembly Budget Subcommittee, 2001). The declines were much more pronounced at the University's most selective campuses, Berkeley and UCLA.

These admission and enrollment statistics are indicative of deeper inequities in terms of which high school students were even *eligible* for admission to the UC. According to one study on the high school class of 1996, for example, only 2.8% of African American and 3.8% of Chicano and Latino students were eligible for UC, compared to 12.7% of White and 30.0% of Asian students. The study projected these trends over the next decade and found that if current population and eligibility trends continued, by 2008, Latinos and African Americans would make up nearly half of California's high school graduates, but only 17% of the UC eligibility pool.[12]

While differential and unequal access to the UC along racial lines was clearly a problem before Regent's Resolution SP-1 and Proposition 209 (and it was clearly a problem that went beyond UC admissions and selection criteria), the enactment of these

[12] The study was conducted by the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC), and quoted in Assembly Budget Subcommittee (2001); as well as in University of California, Educational Outreach (2001).

policies served to heighten public concern and debate about racial inequality in California, especially in terms of the state's educational system. At the UC-level, the Regents responded to and engaged with these concerns by setting up an "Outreach Task Force" to develop proposals for new directions and more funding for programs aimed at increasing the *college eligibility* of historically underrepresented students—specifically those "disadvantaged economically" or in terms of their "social environment" (SP-1). Out of this task force came recommendations for a new vision and role, and a significantly augmented budget, for UC Outreach. Within the next few years, many of these recommendations began to be implemented. The school site activities that became the focus of my dissertation research grew out of this set of circumstances and initiatives.

2. New Directions for UC Outreach in a Post SP-1/Prop 209 Context

As described above, in July, 1995, the UC Regents established the Outreach Task Force (OTF) to "identify ways in which outreach—programs to help make prospective students aware of, and prepared for, the educational opportunities of the University—could be employed to assure that the University remains accessible to students of diverse backgrounds" (Outreach Task Force, 1997). In a post-SP-1 context, this role for UC Outreach had a new level of importance. The OTF explained this importance as follows: "…by eliminating consideration of race, ethnicity and gender as 'plus factors' in admissions, SP-1 greatly magnified the role of outreach as the primary means for achieving a demographically diverse student body" (Outreach Task Force, 1997). The work of the OTF, and its summary report, are important for understanding how the University has developed and positioned "UC Outreach" to play this role.

The Outreach Task Force was set up with 35 members, including representatives from the UC Board of Regents; faculty, staff, and student representatives from all UC campuses; representatives from business and industry; representatives from the state's major educational sectors; and officials from various state of California educational agencies. The task force began its deliberations in February 1996. Their work included reviewing current outreach goals, strategies, programs, and activities, as well as collecting statewide and national data on student achievement and the effects of outreach programs. The following year, in July 1997, the OTF issued its report—and 5 year plan—for expanding the University's Outreach programs. The plan included a new institutional role for the UC—to work with school partners throughout the state in an effort to improve K-12 public education. Following the first two years of the plan's implementation, UC President, Richard Atkinson, asserted that these new initiatives and approaches had brought Outreach from the periphery of the University's vision and mission into the "academic core" of the University (University of California, Educational Outreach, 2001).

3. The OTF Report: Theorizing "Educational Disadvantage"

Examining the OTF report, as well as its first years of implementation, is thus a useful starting point for understanding recent changes in UC Outreach and the new K-12 initiatives that have been underway since its release. It is also a useful starting point for understanding the broader, more long-term ways that the university has come to conceptualize and approach its goal of achieving a diverse student body, representative of California's population.

Not surprisingly, the Outreach Task Force (1997) report emphasizes and reaffirms the University' commitment to "outreach" and "diversity." It does this in part through providing some historical context that, at the very least, demonstrates that these issues have been important to the university, at least in rhetoric, for some time. The report explains:

> The University of California welcomes and seeks diversity. The University has long supported outreach programs designed to enhance opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds to enroll at the University. The importance of enrolling a student body that reflects the diversity of the state was recognized as early as 1868 in the Organic Act founding the University of California: "It shall be the duty of the Regents … to so apportion the representation of students, when necessary, that all portions of the State shall enjoy equal privilege therein." Over a century later in 1974, the California Legislature, in a statement of Legislative intent, extended this concept to include not only geographic but other dimensions of diversity: "Each segment of California public higher education shall strive to approximate…the general ethnic, sexual and economic composition of the recent high school graduates." In 1988, The Regents expanded this mandate still further to apply not only to the University as a whole, but to each campus of the University: "The University seeks to enroll, on each of its campuses, a student body that, beyond meeting the University's eligibility requirements, demonstrates high academic achievement or exceptional personal talent, and that encompasses the broad diversity of cultural, racial, geographic, and socio-economic backgrounds characteristic of California."

Despite this "commitment to diversity"—or perhaps more accurately put, this "mandate for diversity"—at the UC, achieving a genuinely diverse, representative student body has yet to occur. As described above, major disparities exist in terms of which social groups tend to have access to a UC education. According to the OTF, such disparities in college eligibility stem from "the gap between the high standard of academic preparation required for admission to the University of California, on the one hand, and the very different rates at which eligibility is achieved among high school

graduates from different social backgrounds, on the other" (Outreach Task Force, 1997). Examining the nature of this disparity in "eligibility"—and attempting to design an outreach strategy to address it—thus became the central project of the task force.

The concept of "educational disadvantage" features prominently in OTF findings. While the OTF acknowledges a variety of economic and social characteristics in students' lives that influence educational attainment—such as family income, educational values and support, individual achievement goals and motivation, and peer influences—it is the concept of *educational advantage and disadvantage* that the OTF emphasizes. Pivotal educational disadvantages can include, for example, such experiences as: attending a school with a limited college preparatory curriculum; being the first generation in one's family to attend college; residence in a community with low college-going rates; enrollment in a school with below-average SAT/ACT exam scores; and/or belonging to a group with below-average UC eligibility and enrollment rates. In this context, the concept of "educational disadvantage" moves toward encompassing not only the kinds of disadvantages that come from having a history of limited educational achievement in one's family, but also those that come from attending schools that don't offer the resources necessary for success.

Importantly, the OTF finds that these kinds of "educational disadvantages" are concentrated in particular schools following broad, structural patterns—they are most widespread in the schools that tend to serve social groups with historically low rates of UC eligibility and enrollment. One relevant study highlighted in the OTF Report compares California public high schools from the top and bottom quintiles, based on 1995 school-wide SAT scores. The data reveal that students from groups least

represented in higher education are concentrated in the state's lowest-performing schools. For example, the proportion of African American, American Indian, and Latino students at a school increases sharply from the top to the bottom-tier schools. These minority groups account for just 17% of enrollments among schools in the top quintile, but represent 79% (almost 4 out of 5 students) within the bottom quintile of California public high schools.[13]

According to the same study, California public high schools differ widely on a variety of other important indicators as well. Schools in the top quintile tend to be located in suburban areas, whereas schools in the bottom tend to be located in urban or rural areas. The bottom-tier schools also tend to have a much higher percentage of students receiving AFDC and classified as limited English proficient. The two groups of schools also differ fundamentally in terms of the proportion of fathers who possess a high school diploma or greater, a factor, according to the OTF report, which is "known to correlate strongly with college attendance for the next generation." Within the top quintile schools, 90% of students' fathers possess at least a high school degree, compared to only 36% in the bottom quintile. At the same time, there are substantial differences between the two groups of schools on such measures as 4-year completion rates, enrollment in "a-f" courses required for University admission, qualification for Advanced Placement credits at the college level, as well as both the rates of taking the SAT and the scores on those tests. Not surprisingly, then, whereas 15% of graduates from the top quintile of schools

[13] Statistics derived from College Board, California Department of Education, and UC Application Data; Figure 5, OTF (1997).

go on to attend the UC, only 4% from the bottom quintile follow such a path (Outreach Task Force, 1997).

From data like these, many could make the argument that such "low-performing" schools produce "low-achieving" students because of the background characteristics of those students—for instance, because of the "educational disadvantages" that come from experiences like being poor, having parents with little formal education, being Limited English Proficient, etc. Following this interpretation, one's educational disadvantages would likely become more severe by attending a school with a high concentration of students with similar backgrounds. Because the bulk of the students would be "low achievers", then, it would seem straightforward that the students would not be taking college preparatory courses or following a path to higher education, and that they would not contribute to building a very pro-academic learning environment at their schools.

An alternate interpretation of the data, which is well supported by research on structural inequality in schools (reviewed above), is that there are systematic ways in which the schools in question are failing to meet the needs of their students. In other words, despite the educational disadvantages that might come from a student's background and experiences, academic success is possible given the appropriate resources and techniques. The widespread educational underachievement and failure of major segments of the population is thus an indication that our *schools are failing* as public institutions—and that something can and should be done about it.

Ultimately, the conclusions of the OTF support this latter type of argument. The task force finds that while students' lives outside school play an important role in educational achievement patterns, "it is clear that the role of the schools is critical and

that *school improvement* provides the most effective single means by which the University can assist in providing equitable opportunities for UC access by all students" (italics added) (Outreach Task Force, 1997). In this way, while the OTF does not examine in detail what kinds of things are wrong with schools and what kinds of improvements might make a difference, the work of the task force sets the stage for a new approach to UC outreach that attempts to address these kinds of questions and experiment with model solutions.

4. The OTF Plan

Acknowledging that schools play a central role in contributing to achievement disparities and educational disadvantage, the Outreach Task Force (1997) argued that:

> …University outreach programs must develop a comprehensive, well integrated plan coordinated with schools if these programs are to continue to be a force for diversity within a post-SP-1 environment. Elements of this plan should address school culture broadly, including instruction, curriculum, advising, student engagement in learning, and parent involvement.

Ultimately, the plan the task force proposed would attempt this array of elements both by expanding existing programs and by developing new initiatives. The report called for an unparalleled level of funding, coordination, and direction for UC Outreach.

The OTF plan addressed two central goals: 1) to contribute to the academic enrichment of UC campuses through a diverse student body; and, 2) to improve opportunities for California students in disadvantaged circumstances to achieve eligibility and to enroll at UC campuses. To accomplish these goals, one aspect of the plan called for expanding the variety of "student-centered" programs that have formed the traditional

approach to UC Outreach. These programs have emphasized such strategies as providing underrepresented students with academic enrichment, tutoring, mentoring, and college information and advising services, and have included such programs as Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP), the Puente Project, and the Mathematics, Science, Engineering Achievement program (MESA). The OTF vision for expanding these programs included reaching greater numbers of students overall, as well as greater numbers of students both earlier and later in their academic careers than had regularly been achieved in the past, such as in the elementary, middle school, and Community College levels (Outreach Task Force, 1997).

At the same time, however, as mentioned above, the OTF plan also articulated an essentially new role for UC outreach: investing in the long-term improvement and educational capacity of K-12 schools more generally. Strategies to accomplish this latter goal centered on developing less familiar outreach initiatives like school-university partnerships and teacher professional development activities. These efforts would aim to increase educational resources and opportunities available to students by working to help improve entire schools, especially the lower performing schools in the state.

There were some successes to build on. The California Subject Matter Projects had already developed significant initiatives at UC campuses to provide teachers with additional training in a variety of core content areas. Throughout the UC, also, a variety of somewhat isolated school-university partnership activities were already in place. This would be the first time, however, that the UC would attempt such a systematic, coordinated, wide-scale effort to work with K-12 schools toward the goals of improving the academic achievement and UC eligibility of “underrepresented minority” and

"educationally disadvantaged" students. As the partnership activities that developed from this context are central to understanding the study and research discussed in this dissertation, I will return to address this component of the plan in greater detail.

Another feature of the OTF plan—albeit much less developed—addressed improving the transfer rates between California's community colleges and the UC. Because community colleges enroll the greatest number of students from backgrounds underrepresented in higher education, they could play a much greater role in helping improve access to the UC. To aid in this process, the OTF plan recommendations included a variety of initiatives designed to strengthen the links between UC's academic development programs, community college transfer programs, and UC's undergraduate campuses. This would provide better means for students participating in UC's current high school Outreach structure to enter a community college and eventually transfer to a UC as an upper division student (University of California, Educational Outreach, 2001).

Finally, and significantly, the OTF plan also called on the University to utilize its research expertise more systematically in identifying the root causes of educational disparity within California's school system and in evaluating and helping improve the University's outreach programs. The task force recommended having (and setting up where necessary) faculty-based research units to coordinate the research, development, and evaluation of UC outreach. Such research units would help to provide a new level of infrastructure, resources, direction, and coordination to outreach-related research efforts, and would also help ensure that the research potential of the university could be more effectively harnessed to improve programs and strategies. At the same time, the task force argued, the proposed research units could help shift how outreach is often perceived

as a peripheral, rather than a core, university function, and could help elevate the importance of outreach both within the faculty reward system and within the University as a whole (Outreach Task Force, 1997).

To coordinate these program and research efforts adequately would require new institutional arrangements at each of the UC campuses, however, including in many cases the development of entirely new organizations and centers. This set of circumstances contributed directly to the formation of UCSD's Center for Research in Educational Equity and Teaching Excellence (CREATE)—which became a central and guiding force in developing the intervention that is the focus of this study.

5. Improving K-12 Education through School-centered Partnerships

Underlying the OTF plan for school-centered partnerships is a perspective that recognizes the inadequacy of the university, acting alone, to improve patterns of educational attainment and college eligibility. In this context, the task force articulated a new vision and essentially, a mandate, for the University to take a leadership role in harnessing multi-institutional collaboration aimed at K-12 educational improvement. The Outreach Task Force (1997) argued that:

> Providing students in disadvantaged circumstances access to all the necessary tools to equip them not only for UC eligibility but for admission to the University's most selective programs and campuses, requires a fundamental reshaping of current patterns of educational opportunity. Such a task is daunting, and acting alone, the University cannot make a significant difference for any substantial part of California's K-12 population, nor is it charged with doing so. The University does, however, have a strong interest in, and capacity for, stimulating and contributing to improvement in the state's educational system. And the University *can* provide unparalleled educational expertise and considerable resources for such an effort. Most importantly, it also can act as a catalyst for

> mobilizing groups and institutions in California with whom the University shares common concerns on this issue: families, schools, postsecondary institutions, community groups, the business sector, and students themselves.

To these ends, the task force recommended that each UC campus establish a regional consortium of educational institutions, community organizations, and families to address the needs of a number of local K-12 partner schools. Schools would be selected "based on evidence of significant educational disadvantage," where college-going rates are low and where there is substantial potential for improvement and willingness to participate. In other words, the schools selected would likely be the kinds of "low performing" schools described earlier, that tend to have both the highest concentrations of underrepresented minority students as well as the highest concentration of the variety of "educational disadvantages" outlined by the OTF. "By focusing on areas of greatest educational disadvantage," the task force argued, "University outreach can contribute most to the broader goal of diversity at the same time" (Outreach Task Force, 1997).

According to the OTF (1997), the intent of the regional consortia would be to "leverage resources by connecting and concentrating multi-institutional efforts and directing them to a limited number of schools." The aim of these efforts would be to "effect changes in the academic culture within partner schools, creating and sustaining a school environment that promotes educational achievement and high academic standards." To achieve such whole-school changes, the task force recommended, "partnerships will need to provide a comprehensive array of resources and programs involving not only students, but families, teachers, counselors and administrators at each school site." These kinds of resources would include such traditional outreach programs

as EAOP and MESA, but would also incorporate teacher-centered and curriculum-based programs aimed at training and developing teachers and improving the academic curriculum within partner schools. Significantly, however, the plan was left somewhat open-ended about the particular resources and programs that should be developed at each site—leaving room for participating K-12 schools and UC campuses to determine their specific partnership activities based, to a large extent, on the context of the local conditions, needs, and resources of each institution.

6. Implementing the OTF Plan—Overview of First Two Years

In 1998, the UC Regents approved the OTF Report. The report established 5-year goals for outreach programs to increase UC eligibility rates among K-12 students and schools, with mandated numerical outcomes for both student-centered Academic Development Programs and UC/K-12 School-Centered Partnership Programs. For partner high schools, the mandated goals included: 1) to double the total number of UC-eligible graduates—or to increase the UC-eligibility rate by 4 percentage points, whichever is greater—within five years; and 2) within the same time frame, to double the number of UC-eligible *underrepresented minority* graduates—or to increase the UC-eligibility rate for underrepresented minority graduates by 2 percentage points.[14] For student-centered programs attempting to prepare UC eligible students, the mandated goals included doubling the number of program graduates over the same five-year period, and increasing

[14] The mandate also included the goal of increasing the numbers of *competitively eligible* underrepresented minority graduates from partner high schools within the five year time frame (by half the 1998-99 baseline or by 1%, whichever is greater).

by half the number of competitively eligible program graduates.[15] According to the OTF, these programs would be open to all students without regard to race and would thereby comply with SP-1 and Proposition 209. At the same time, the task force argued, to the extent possible under the law, the programs "should emphasize increases in minority participation in post-secondary education" (University of California, Educational Outreach, 2001).

Since 1997, state goals had also been agreed on to increase by 33% the number of students to transfer from a California Community College to a UC and to expand the diversity of the pool of transfer students. The 1998 OTF plan accepted and acknowledged this goal. In July, 2000, this goal was refined, however, when the University entered into a partnership agreement with Governor Davis to increase by 50% the number of students that transfer to UC from a Community College. The agreement also called for increases in UC course articulation as well as enhanced Outreach to students and training of community college counselors (University of California, Educational Outreach, 2001).

To implement the vision articulated in the OTF plan, and to work toward achieving the mandated numerical outcomes, would require substantial and unprecedented resources. To help accomplish this goal, by late 1998, the University received a State funding augmentation of $38.5 million—more than doubling the

[15] For each UC campus, these general goals were translated into specific numerical goals, using 1998-99 data for School-University Partnership (S/UP) programs as the baseline for calculating the goals. At UC San Diego (UCSD) in 1998-99, for example, there were 166 UC-eligible graduates from UCSD partner high schools and 65 of these were classified as underrepresented minority students. Eligibility rates were 11% and 6%, respectively. This means that the UC-mandated goal for UCSD was to increase the number of UC-eligible graduates from these schools to 332, or 15%, and to increase the number of UC-eligible *underrepresented minority students* to 130, or 10%.

previous State/UC budget for UC Outreach.[16] Since that time, additional augmentations and adjustments have continued to increase the overall budget. Within two budget cycles, by 2001-02, the total of State/UC funds for Outreach activities had risen to $177.4 million, with funding from other sources bringing the total funds available to $313.3 million. Of this total, the greatest share of the budget was now dedicated to the development of K-12 Professional Development Programs for Teachers and Staff—approximately 52%. The remaining share of the budget was dedicated to a variety of K-14 Outreach programs, including approximately 18% for K-12 Academic Development Programs, 13% for K-12 School and Community Partnerships, and 10% for Community College Outreach programs (University of California, Educational Outreach, 2001).

While this tremendous growth in funding for outreach programs has been unparalleled, it has also been stifled and challenged by the recent California budget crisis. In July 2001, for example, the governor vetoed the University's outreach budget, resulting in a $2 million reduction in the base budget for outreach, a $5 million reduction in K-12 Professional Development Programs, and an additional $5 million to be redirected from the School/University Partnership program to fund support for the new comprehensive review of UC applications during the admissions process. These reductions and the anticipation of potentially deeper cuts have destabilized a number of programs and continue to impact the continuity and effectiveness of UC Outreach. In many school and community settings where the University is working hard to establish

[16] By late 1998, the University received a State funding augmentation of $38.5 million to launch the initiatives proposed by the OTF, with a requirement that $31.5 million of these funds be matched on a one-to-one basis by K-12 schools. Previously, the total State/UC budget for all UC Outreach programs had been only $32.4 million, with an additional amount estimated around $29 million being received from other private and federal sources (University of California, Educational Outreach, 2001).

itself as a committed, long-term partner in change efforts, recent cutbacks have also threatened the perception and credibility of the university's commitment. In this context, the programs affected by these decreases have been doing their best to minimize the disruption to well-established efforts.

Despite this current, somewhat vulnerable and rocky period in UC Outreach, there have been important accomplishments from the first two years of implementing the OTF plan—accomplishments worth highlighting. Nearly 100,000 students now participate in UC-led student-centered programs; UC-school partnerships now extend to 256 low-performing schools in the state, with enrollments exceeding 165,000 students. At the same time, the California Professional Development Institutes and Subject Matter Projects serve more than 70,000 teachers (University of California, Educational Outreach, 2001). In the process, eligibility rates of students participating in school and student based programs have risen modestly, and appear on track to meet mandated goals. Similarly, there have been modest increases in the number of underrepresented minority students attending the University of California (University of California, Educational Outreach, 2001). In the years ahead, research and evaluation results will demonstrate the extent to which the University was able to meet its mandated outcomes. More importantly, however, research is needed to examine the broader successes and limitations of these efforts, particularly their ability to help bring about deeper changes in schools and in the lives of the students they serve. This study attempts to contribute to this latter effort.

7. Theorizing UC Outreach since the Ban on Affirmative Action

In a post-affirmative action context, it becomes illegal to direct public programs and institutional resources to particular racial and ethnic groups—at least on the *basis of race*. Racial quotas and preferences in UC admissions are banned, for example, and outreach programs must be open to all students, regardless of race. In this political and cultural climate, it becomes increasingly challenging for policy makers to make and to justify race-related policies. At the same time, policy makers cannot ignore—at least with any legitimacy—the glaring racial inequalities that exist and that demand political action to help solve. This presents a contradiction that both forces and enables new ways of talking about and addressing problems of racial inequality.

The official discourse surrounding University outreach, like that reviewed above, is fundamentally shaped by such contradictions. In the OTF report, for example, problems typically emphasized are those of the university "lacking diversity" and of certain social groups being "underrepresented." The key explanation offered is that these groups experience "educational disadvantages." University outreach solutions, or strategies, are specifically justified on the terms of addressing these kinds of problems. In other words, certain racial and ethnic groups are identified as belonging to a new category like "underrepresented minority," or in some cases, also "educationally disadvantaged"—and it is belonging to this *other* category that now justifies special consideration and resources.

Using this discourse, and perhaps also in spite of it, the OTF was able to make some important achievements. It was able to demonstrate strongly, for example, how problems like lack of "diversity," disparities in "eligibility" and "representation," and

experiences of "educational disadvantage" are problems with a strong racial component. As the university has moved to address these problems, then, it has been able to do so in a way that emphasizes outreach efforts to target and benefit, most directly, "underrepresented" ethnic and racial groups: African Americans, Chicanos and Latinos, and American Indians. This is significant because outreach efforts help channel and direct important institutional resources and policies, including reorganizing how admissions decisions are made to include more comprehensive criteria and undertaking ambitious efforts to improve "high poverty" schools. Many individuals, schools, and communities that have historically been on the "target" side of racial and class injustice have thus benefited from these efforts.

Framing the issues in these ways also enabled outreach efforts to identify and address other ways in which the university lacks diversity and fails to represent different social groups in the state—such as by background characteristics like one's income-level, parents' educational attainment, geographic region, and even varying access to good schools and other educational resources. This is significant because it encourages outreach efforts more directly to target the people and communities whose lives and opportunities have been most heavily limited by generations of poverty and educational disadvantage—which are still most often, but certainly not limited to, "underrepresented minorities."

It is also significant that the OTF highlights the role that "educational disadvantage" plays in perpetuating disparities in educational achievement. The task force demonstrates how these "disadvantages" are disproportionately concentrated among particular social groups and particular schools, and offers an explanation that highlights

the disparities *between* schools as a central causal factor. (There are also significant disparities *within* schools, however, that go virtually ignored in this discussion). The move to highlight the disparities between schools is important, from a theoretical perspective, because it supports and builds on explanations of student achievement, and lack of achievement, that emphasize structural inequalities instead of individual deficiencies, and because it highlights the effort to improve schools as an important lever for affecting broader changes in patterns of school achievement and college eligibility. This sets up a strong rationale and argument for directing new levels of institutional resources and support to work with the K-12 educational system generally, and with "low-performing" schools specifically.

At the same time, however, the OTF discussion surrounding this variety of problems—disparities in "diversity," "eligibility," "representation," and "educational disadvantage"—is fundamentally limited by its inability to locate these problems within a broader social and historical context. There is no discussion, for example, of the history of systematic oppression and exploitation that have produced generations of "educational disadvantage" and "under-representation" among particular social groups, or that might have contributed to such broad disparities between schools. There is no discussion of racism, no discussion of classism, no discussion of current social problems having a historical basis, or an explanation that acknowledges ongoing systems of oppression.

This is a conceptually dangerous flaw—with real implications. It is discursively very easy to refer to someone as "underrepresented" or "educationally disadvantaged," or to a school as "low-performing," as if it is somehow a quality of that individual or school that *just is*, and not a *socially produced* phenomenon. If we talk about these problems

without a broader frame, we risk contributing to a reactionary political climate and popular discourse about race that ignores ongoing forms of racism and racial injustice in our society and that blames individuals and particular social groups for their own "disadvantages" and "misfortunes." Unless the broader context for these problems is examined and identified, we risk perpetuating partial (and sometimes reactionary) understandings of what the problems are and focusing on "band aid" solutions that only address symptoms of the problems.

The university has a unique opportunity to contribute to goals of educational equity and access. The strategies for UC Outreach that have developed since affirmative action was eliminated hold some promise, not only toward the articulated goals of improving "diversity," "representation," and even K-12 education, but also toward the potential of helping correct unjust patterns in terms of who gets access to the educational resources they need to succeed academically. Successes in any of these directions make at least some contribution to the broader goals of eliminating some of the effects of racism, racial inequality, and social injustice, and should thus be recognized and appreciated for their achievements.

At the same time, outreach efforts can and should be guided by an ever-more-accurate understanding of the underlying problems that produce disparities in educational achievement and should be measured by their usefulness and success, at least in part, in their ability to contribute to long-term solutions to these problems. It is my hope that throughout the following discussion of this study, I can contribute to both a deeper understanding of these problems, as well as the potential and limitations of some model solutions.

C. ORGANIZATION OF THE EMPIRICAL SECTIONS OF THE DISSERTATION

For the purposes of explanation, discussion, and analysis of my research, I have distinguished three key phases in the development of the project—particularly differentiated by shifts in CREATE's role in guiding and developing the Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer activities at BCMS. Because, in reality, such a multifaceted activity is constantly evolving and changing, these "phases" should be viewed as somewhat arbitrary, and primarily useful for organizing and making sense of the activity and the data from my research. At the same time, I think the phases are useful for distinguishing some of the major turning points in the development of the project. A timeline of how these phases in the research correspond to the development of the South Bay Project is provided in Figure 2, at the end of this chapter.

The *first phase* of the study occurred between the summer of 1998 and the summer of 1999. It encompasses the formation of the initial partnership between CREATE, BCMS, and LFC, and the process by which these organizations worked together—under CREATE's leadership—to adapt a model educational activity and prepare for its implementation. The model activity that CREATE and its UCSD collaborators were interested in developing with LFC and BCMS was based on the "5th Dimension"—a computer mediated educational activity that had been developed in community-based, club settings in the northern part of San Diego County. A key feature of the 5th Dimension also involved undergraduate students from UCSD participating in a university course on learning and development and, as a part of the course requirements, acting as participant observers, helpers, and mentor/tutors to children in the after-school

activity. The UCSD-CREATE team of staff and faculty was interested in working with BCMS and LFC to adapt this model activity to the new contexts of the middle school and community college. Once the two partners had become interested in the project, the CREATE team then led the effort to familiarize each partner with the model activity and help prepare them to adapt and implement it in their settings. Given the local circumstances and constraints of the participating institutions, including CREATE and UCSD, however, the actual activity that developed was somewhat different from the model intervention envisioned by CREATE. As I examine this phase of the study, I thus trace the interplay between the model activity envisioned by CREATE and the practical circumstances that, together, shaped the activity that was eventually implemented. This phase of the study is discussed in Chapter 2.

The *second phase* of the study encompasses the first three semesters that the "5th Dimension" Tuesday/Thursday Computer activities were in place at BCMS, from Fall Semester, 1999, through Fall Semester, 2000. The South Bay Partnership also expanded during this phase to incorporate Seaside Elementary School and the Familia Center. The activity evolved and changed a great deal during this time. In reality, each of the semesters was unique and represented some kind of turning point in the evolution of the program. Viewed together, however, these first three semesters represent an initial stage of program implementation because they can each be characterized by CREATE playing a somewhat limited role in shaping the curriculum and pedagogy of the after-school activity. The result, however, was an after-school program that only loosely resembled the model educational activity that CREATE had envisioned. When I and the other CREATE researcher, Vanessa Baker, arrived and began documenting these activities as

participant observers, CREATE researchers and staff decided that CREATE should provide additional resources and support to the program and play a stronger role in its ongoing development. Toward the end of the third semester, we began to work with BCMS teachers and staff to develop ideas for how to improve the program and the nature of our collaboration. This phase of the study is discussed in Chapter 3.

The *third phase* of this study thus began in the fourth semester of Tuesday/Thursday activities at BCMS, Spring Semester, 2001—what now came to be called "Computer Skills and Projects" class. Beginning this semester, CREATE began playing a stronger role in shaping the curriculum and pedagogy of the after-school program, incorporating both participant observation and action research methods. While CREATE continues to play this role at the time of writing this dissertation, my research concluded during the summer of 2001. For the purposes of this study, then, my documentation of this third phase focuses on the fourth semester of BCMS activities, Spring 2001. During this time, I worked with other CREATE researchers and staff to develop ideas for what kinds of activities might improve the program and move the activity in the direction of the theoretical vision and goals originally intended by CREATE. At the same time, I engaged the BCMS teacher in charge of the after-school activity in these discussions, and we devised new assignments to try to create activities that would be more engaging, meaningful, and academically rewarding. My role in the program shifted to include assisting in planning, overseeing, and at times, instructing the course. Given that I was simultaneously documenting and researching the unfolding activities, I believe it is most accurate to characterize my role as both participant observer and action or change-based researcher during this period. As I examine this phase of the

study, I pay close attention to my role as a change agent—and the constraints, challenges, and possibilities for achieving change that I was able to document. This phase of the study is the subject of Chapter 4.

In Chapter 5, I conclude by examining the achievements, limitations, and insights of the study. I look at suggestions from the data about what kind of impact the South Bay Project has had on some of the participants and I examine the barriers and constraints that must be faced in attempting this kind of multi-institutional, inter-segmental collaboration.

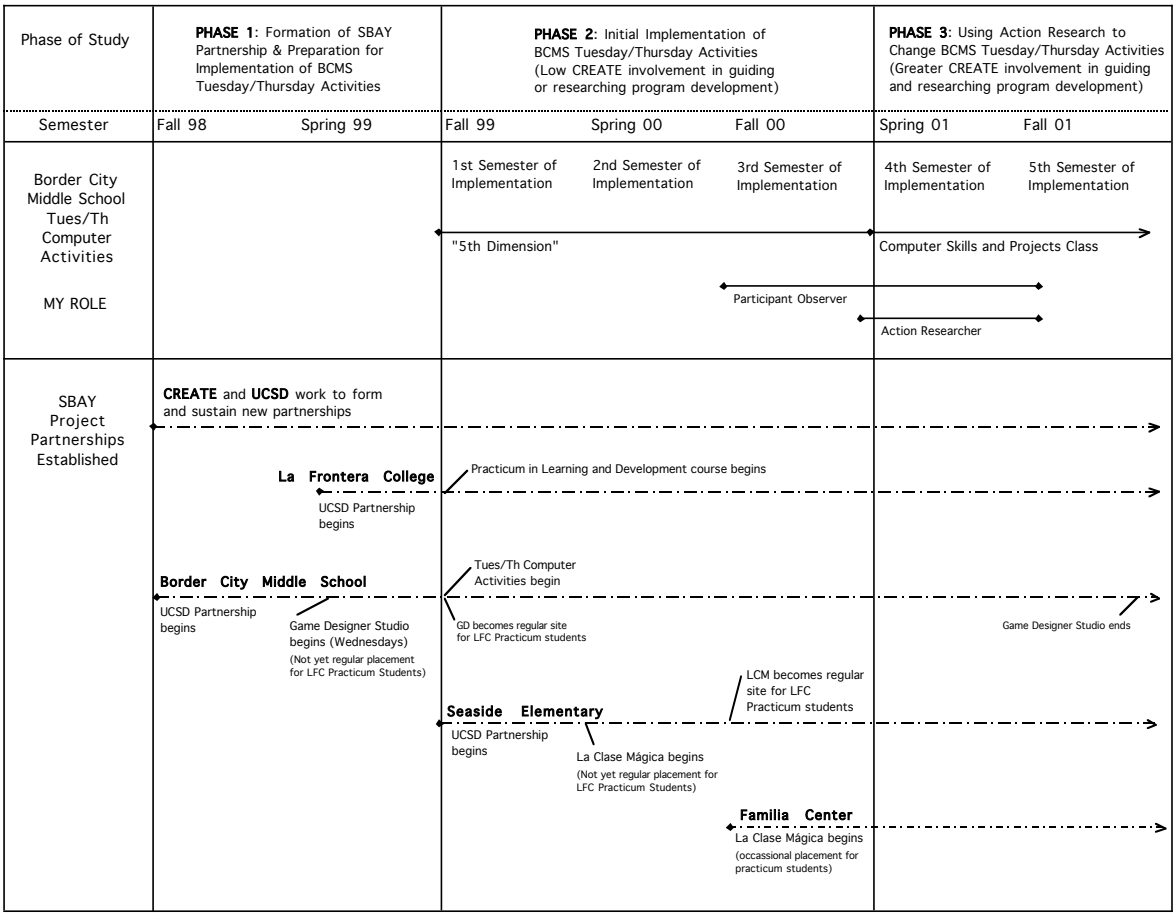

Figure 2. Phases of Research and South Bay Project Partnership Timeline

Chapter II.
Constructing the South Bay Project Partnership (Phase 1)

As described in Chapter 1, through developments since the ban on affirmative action in 1995, the UC is now engaged in school-university partnerships with 256 of California's lower performing K-12 schools. At the same time—while receiving less attention and state funding—the UC has been taking steps to strengthen its relationships with California Community Colleges to increase the number of underrepresented minority students that successfully transfer to the UC. The "South Bay Project" described in this study evolved in this historical context. It originally unfolded as a component of one of these school-university (S-U) partnership endeavors, but grew to incorporate a unique collaboration with a local community college and later, another partner school. The result was multiple institutions working together on a common project to create enriched learning environments for both children and community college students and, in the process, contribute to the broader goal of helping underrepresented minority students gain eligibility and access to higher education. To begin to understand the project that developed—its various and evolving phases and activities, the challenges and constraints it has faced, and what kind of meanings it has held for its multiple participants—requires, first, a deeper understanding of the local institutional and historical contexts that shaped the nature of the collaboration.

This chapter examines the local contexts that shaped the development of the South Bay Project during the first phase of the study—between the summer of 1998 and the summer of 1999. It encompasses the formation of the initial partnership between CREATE, BCMS, and LFC, and the process by which these organizations worked

together—under CREATE's leadership—to adapt a model educational activity and prepare for its implementation at the middle school and community college.

I begin by providing a brief portrait of the South Bay region of San Diego and of the institutions that formed the initial partnership: UCSD/CREATE, LFC, and BCMS. Then, turning attention to the formation of the partnership, I discuss in greater detail the relevant history and theoretical principles that shaped CREATE's interest in and approach to working with K-12 partners. This provides useful background information for examining how CREATE went about establishing a partnership with BCMS and LFC and, in the process, decided to work with these institutions to adapt the 5th Dimension model activity to the new contexts. Finally, I examine the practical circumstances and realities of how the various players and institutions involved prepared to implement the activities in their settings. This phase is crucial for understanding how the project soon took shape, and the ways in which it was both able and not able to live up to the model originally intended.

A. SOUTH BAY PROJECT INSTITUTIONS AND SETTINGS

1. UCSD

The University of California, San Diego (UCSD) consistently ranks among the nation's top ten universities receiving Federal Research and Development funding, as well being recently designated as the country's seventh best public university (South Bay ENLACE Collaborative, 1999). The campus is situated in an affluent neighborhood in the northern region of San Diego, somewhat insulated from San Diego's poorer neighborhoods to the south. The demographics of its undergraduate student population

reflect broader trends of racial disparities in access to higher education (described in Chapter 1). In 2001, for example, Latinos and Mexican Americans made up only 10% of the total undergraduate population, African Americans 1%, and American Indians less than 1%.[17] I will return to discuss how the university has been trying to improve the diversity of its student body and help increase the access that underrepresented minority students have to the university. At this point, I will turn to discuss San Diego's South County and the other educational institutions that *initially* formed the South Bay Project. This overview is important for understanding the local contexts in which the project developed.

2. San Diego's South County, or "South Bay" region

Approximately 20 miles south of UCSD is San Diego's southern-most urbanized region, commonly referred to as the "South Bay." Some 380,000 persons reside in this region and their communities represent some of the state's poorest areas. Over 44% of this population is Latino, 11.8% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 5.4% African-American. The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) identifies this area's residents as significantly less educated and possessing less earning power than the majority of county residents. Additionally, the area's poverty rate is 15% greater than is the county's overall. Specifically, only 72% of the residents over age 25 have completed high school vs. a county average of 85%; only 17% have a baccalaureate degree while the county average is 36%; and, only 27% are employed in relatively well-paying executive, professional, or technical occupations vs. 34% for San Diego County overall, while 42% hold lower-

[17] According to UCSD Office of Admissions and Relations With Schools.

paying clerical or service jobs vs. an average county rate of 27% employment in such positions (South Bay ENLACE Collaborative, 1999).

3. La Frontera College

La Frontera College (LFC) is one of California's leading public community colleges, as well as the only such college serving the South Bay region. La Frontera is located south of San Diego and just north of the U.S.-Mexico International Border at the southwestern-most corner of the United States. In Fall 1998, LFC's total enrollment exceeded 16,000, with an average student age of 27. Over half of all LFC students must work full or part time in order to attend the college. About 79% of the students are ethnic minorities with Latinos comprising 59% of all students (South Bay ENLACE Collaborative, 1999). I will return to discuss other features of Soutwestern College as they become relevant to the study.

4. Border City Middle School

Because so much of this study is centered on the South Bay Project activities that evolved at BCMS, I will be putting a greater emphasis on my discussion of this particular institutional context for the study than I have on the other institutions that participated in the project. Border City Middle School (BCMS) is a year-round middle school serving approximately 900 seventh and eighth graders. The school population and the surrounding community are largely Latino and low income. The school is located in the center of urban Border City, an eight square mile community of 55,000 people south of San Diego and just north of Tijuana, Mexico. It is one of two middle/junior high schools

in the city, both of which are served by the same local high school. The city is among the poorest cities (per capita income) in both California and the rest of the country.[18]

BCMS is a part of the Bay View Union School District—one of California's largest secondary districts and also one of its most culturally diverse.[19] Bay View serves more than 33,000 students in grades seven through twelve, over 83% of whom are ethnic minorities. Latino students comprise nearly 65% of the district's entire enrollment. One in five district students is an English Language Learner, more than half come from homes where English is a secondary language, and approximately one in five families receives public assistance (South Bay ENLACE Collaborative, 1999).

Nearly half of Bay View's students qualify for the free or reduced-price meal program. BCMS follows similar district trends in terms of the background of its students—but these trends are even more pronounced in terms of the percentage of students that come from high poverty backgrounds and Latino, Spanish dominant homes. Here, 87% of the student population is Latino, 6% Filipino, 3% Anglo, and 3% African American. 40 % of the students are classified as English Learners and 68% speak Spanish as their primary language. Over 87% of students receive free or reduced lunches and over 23 % of the students' families receive CalWORKS payments (formerly AFDC). 97.6% of students at BCMS are participating in the federal Title I and/or the state EIA/SCE program.

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[18] Border City Middle School, 2001-2002 Comprehensive Site Plan, referring to a San Diego Union Tribune article from April, 1992, which placed Border City as the third poorest city in California and thirteenth poorest in the country.

[19] Like many other institutions described in the study, the name of the district has been changed to protect the confidentiality of the study participants.

Over 70% percent of Border City's inhabitants are renters; consequently, the city's mobility rate hovers around fifty percent. Despite the high mobility rate, many students at BCMS have parents and grandparents who attended the school. Other parents, however, are new to the city and to the U.S. Thus, while the school is largely low income and Mexican-origin, it is hardly a homogeneous population. Students come from a variety of backgrounds in terms of how many generations, years, or months their families have been in the United States and/or Border City, how much prior experience they have in the US school system, how much they use English and Spanish in their lives and with their families, and what kinds of experiences in the U.S. and Mexico have shaped their identities and perspectives.

Overall, the school culture at BCMS seems to support its strong Latino and Spanish-language presence—at least more than many schools in the state. Of 40 teachers, approximately 35% are classified as Hispanic (about 57% are Anglo and 8% are other ethnicities). The principal and one of the assistant principals are Latino, as well as are almost all the school's staff. Spanish is almost always used when school personnel interact with parents, send letters home, etc. Often at meetings or parent assemblies, Spanish is the first language spoken, with English translation provided. The school also has a strong Spanish bilingual program that parents can select to provide students with Spanish-language and sheltered-English instruction in a set of core subjects.

The BCMS administration reports that its parents "place a particular value on education: many of their children will be the first in the family to graduate from high

school."[20] Based on students' answers on a school survey, 41% of BCMS parents are not high school graduates, 25% are high school graduates, 17% completed some college, 14% are college graduates, and 3% attended graduate school.[21] The administration identifies as one of its challenges helping parents feel empowered to take an active role in campus activities and monitor their child's academic program. To meet this challenge, the school offers parenting classes, adult ESL, computer classes, and a parent literacy institute, to help encourage parents "to feel comfortable at the school."[22] The Title I and English Learner Parent Committees along with the School Site Council and GATE parent group are also involved in helping parents come to and play a more active role in the school.

According to BCMS, most of the school's students need to continue developing knowledge and skills to compete with their peers at other middle schools in the district (about 25% enter with standardized test scores below the 36th percentile). The school administration states that one of its goals is to bring its students up to the academic level for them to be competitive in this way.[23] To help accomplish this, the school features intensive programs for English Learners and for math and science (the school is a district magnet), a Seventh Grade Academy serving 125 academically at-risk youth and an Eighth Grade Academy serving 50 at-risk students, and a school wide focus on literacy in language arts and core academic subject areas. Because of these various programs implemented over the past five years, the school has received a number of awards, including being named a California Distinguished School.

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[20] Border City Middle School, 2001-2002 Comprehensive Site Plan.
[21] UC Nexus report on BCMS, prepared by CREATE staff, 2002.
[22] Border City Middle School, 2001-2002 Comprehensive Site Plan.
[23] Ibid.

Still, BCMS is one of California's lower performing schools. Many students are entering the middle school with second and third grade skills (CREATE, 2002), and the average BCMS student reads at a fourth grade level.[24] These trends are reflected in students' test scores. The school's Base Academic Performance Index (API)[25] for 2000 was 510, placing it within the 2nd lowest statewide rank overall, and 4th lowest when compared with similar schools. This was an improvement from 1999, in which the school's Base API was 471. The school's STAR[26] test results for 2000 placed English Learner Students in the 14th national percentile rank in Reading, 25th in Math, 20th in Language, and 13th in Spelling. Non-English Learner Students performed closer to the national average (50th percentile): 39th in Reading, 46th in Math, 52nd in Language, and 45th in Spelling. Despite recent improvements in test scores, the reality is that without significant intervention to disrupt current trends, students are still often far below grade level and will have little hope of succeeding academically as they proceed in school.

According to 1997-98 figures from the California Department of Education, the statewide high school graduation rate for Latino students is 55% compared to the general population's level of 67%. In the Bay View District, however, the comparable high school graduation rate for Latinos is just 40%. Few students go on from the school district to succeed in college. Only some 20% of the district's graduating Latino students complete enough college preparatory courses to qualify for either University of

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[24] Interview with Tim Ignacio, school vice principal, 12/03/01.

[25] According to the Public Schools Accountability Act, the API should include multiple indicators. Currently, however, the only indicator that meets the technical requirements for being included in the API is the mandated statewide test, Standford-9.

[26] The Standford-9 is one of three tests given as part of the STAR (Standardized Testing and Reporting) program. The other two tests, Standards-based Augmentation and Spanish Assessment of Basic Education, Second Edition, are not part of the API calculation.

California (UC) or California State University (CSU) campuses, and fewer than 14% actually enroll. While approximately 33% of all seniors graduating from the district attend La Frontera College, nearly 30% are placed on academic probation during their first college year. Demonstrating the results of this trend, a recent LFC Latino student retention study indicated that only 6% to 8% of first-time, entering Latino students subsequently earned an award, degree, or certificate within four years (South Bay ENLACE Collaborative, 1999).

Evidently, BCMS, like other schools in the district, is failing to prepare students to be able to go to college. A question of great importance in the context of this study is what role the norms and practices of the school might be playing to contribute to this problem. We know from the research, described in Chapter 1, that in "low performing" schools serving high percentages of underrepresented minority students, students are likely to receive a "lower-tracked" curriculum that is more remedial in nature, involve more decoding activities, and more greatly emphasize classroom control and discipline (Anyon, 1980; Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Cazden, 1988; Haycock, 1997; Oakes et al., 1992). Students often react to this lower tracked curriculum and disciplinary emphasis by resisting school norms and teacher authority—typically perpetuating a cycle of being treated with disrespect and low expectations.

While it is beyond the scope of this study to document in detail how these tendencies were exhibited at BCMS, I found strong indications that the tendencies did exist and formed a part of the routine practices and general culture of the school. BCMS teacher Robert Winslow offers a useful description of how these tendencies manifest at the school and how they are perpetuated:

> Here's one thing that happens at our school. It probably happens at all inner-city schools, there's a pathology that happens. By pathology I mean like an overwhelming response. You have so many kids on the detention list, so many kids in the Saturday school, so many kids don't turn in their homework, so many parents don't show up for conferences, so many tardies, that all the systems, the usual social ways of dealing with that are overwhelmed. So, we're all overwhelmed, and we're struggling with all these problems, so many, many times the academic focus is lost.[27]

During the course of this study at BCMS, there was a strong emphasis from the administration on aligning the curriculum to state standards and improving students' standardized test scores. There were also a number of reforms that placed an emphasis on improving students' basic literacy and "numeracy" skills. Probably in part due to these reforms, the school's academic performance index had risen markedly.

Still, the academic level of most students at BCMS was very low, and most teachers did not have the expertise or additional resources needed to be able to involve them in more rigorous or innovative academic learning activities. The majority of the school's population, for example, was enrolled in the school's "middle track."[28] For the most part, these classes did not offer students an academically advanced or "college prep curriculum." The classes were large (approximately 31 students per class) and featured students with a wide variety of English levels and literacy skills. Robert Winslow, the teacher mentioned above, was one of the more veteran and more acclaimed teachers at the school. He had been teaching this "middle track" of students for years. In an interview, he discussed what he experienced in these "regular" classes:

> There are so many distractions in a regular class…Kids do not want to work, there are so many problems, and the teacher just slows down the

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[27] Interview with Robert Winslow, 12/5/01.

[28] BCMS provided the highest and lowest performing students at the school with access to smaller classes and the most experienced and acclaimed teachers (in the form of an "honors" program and a special "Academy").

> curriculum unbelievably slow…See, I think in a way it's like, OK. I have fifteen kids in my class reading three years below grade level. So that puts a big demand on me. If there were one kid, or two, then I could go in the back and say, "All you kids read page 23. OK, Johnny, I'm going to sit down and read this with you, and I'll point out the words and have you do this." But here I am with fifteen, and I'm running around putting out fifteen fires. And it's like, this kid's on the second grade. This kid's on the third, this kid's on the fourth. He didn't do his homework. He doesn't have his book. I'm overwhelmed by all these other problems, discipline, the poor level of the students…It's hard to bring coherence to your class and focus to your lesson. And so that becomes the norm. A kid sits in a regular class and the norm is like, the teacher deals with all these problems, and if you're like an average kid, you can sit there and get lost.[29]

Mr. Winslow felt that with the available resources, the best he could hope for was to help get students interested in learning and able to be good citizens. He had little hope that more than a few of his students would be able to go to college. Still, he went through unusual efforts to try to make his curriculum more "hands on" and engaging to students (such as connecting a lesson on local history with a fieldtrip to a nearby cemetery and using primary documents to solve old "mysteries" from the cemetery).

Many teachers did not seem to be trying this hard to reach their students. According to Mr. Chavez,[30] a new teacher who had just finished observing several BCMS teachers (as a student teacher), many of the teachers at the school had "very low expectations" of BCMS students and didn't try to challenge them or make the curriculum interesting. Their classes, he explained, involved a lot of "bookwork," where the "teacher was just like, 'let's read the chapter, we are going to do the section review, we are going to the key terms, we are going to have a multiple-choice test and we are going to continue to do that.'" Many of these same teachers, he explained, also took a "very authoritarian

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[29] Interview with Robert Winslow, 12/05/01.
[30] Interview with Diego Chavez, 6/11/01.

view" of their role with students and spoke to them "in a very condescending way." If you "hang out in the teacher's lounge," he told me, "you hear a lot of bad mouthing of the students." Many of my interactions with teachers and observations of them teaching and interacting with students bore out this teacher's observations. While there were definitely teachers at the school that were making a strong effort to help students improve academically (such as the example described above or helping students participate in the science fair), many other teachers seemed complacent with using curriculum and teaching methods that for the most part, were not helping students achieve academically or get more interested in school learning activities.

In general, adults at the school also played strong authority roles with students and placed an emphasis on maintaining a disciplined and controlled environment.[31] Students had to wear uniforms to school and the school's dress code was strictly enforced. At school assemblies I visited, students were told to sit still and be quiet, and teachers and administrators usually watched students closely and threatened those that spoke or misbehaved with detention. In classes, it was common for teachers to make "troublesome" students wait outside the class or get detention. A visit to the school's main office typically found several of these "referred" students waiting for their talk with the one of the vice principals.

In discussing these observations, it is important to clarify that I *do not* mean to imply that there was not a lot of variation in how adults interacted with young people at BCMS or how they taught students. School adults were definitely not always

[31] These observations come primarily from spending time at BCMS during the regular school day, meeting with teachers or administrators, walking through the hallways or around the campus, hanging out with teachers and students during breaks, visiting special school assemblies, as well as visiting a few classes.

"disciplinarian" or "stern" with young people. Teachers were not always "dumbing down" the curriculum. I often saw adults being playful with young people. I also heard from many young people about particular teachers that they trusted, respected, and even turned to for advice.[32] I also saw evidence of many teachers working very hard to teach to high standards and help their students succeed. This is to say, however, that the cycle that research has shown exists at low-performing schools—of students receiving a lower tracked curriculum, of adults putting a strong emphasis on the controlling and disciplining of students, and of students "acting up" and misbehaving, or "resisting"—was alive at BCMS. These features of the school had important implications for what transpired in the South Bay Project activities in the BCMS after-school context that I will discuss further in Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

5. CREATE

In the summer of 1997, UCSD formed the Center for Research in Educational Equity and Teaching Excellence (CREATE), both to develop and coordinate its K-14 school-university partnership initiatives as well as to help oversee the direction and integration of its other outreach programs. As of Spring 2002, CREATE was partnered with 18 San Diego County schools—4 high schools, 4 of their "feeder" middle, and 10 of their feeder elementary schools. All of the schools meet UC Outreach Task Force requirements in that they are all "low performing" as defined by their below-40-percent state standardized test scores and all serve a majority of low income students. The 18

[32] BCMS students talked to me about their teachers in the context of casual conversations and small discussion groups (that I led in June, 2001, with students that had participated in the CREATE sponsored after-school programs described in this study).

schools are "urban" with eight located in the largest district in San Diego and the other 10 located across three other districts in the county. Collectively, they enroll a total of 19,762 students K-12. BCMS, described above, is one of these schools.

I will return to examine how these various institutions interact as a part of the "South Bay Project" partnership and will examine each of these institutions in greater detail as such details become necessary for providing adequate context for the study I will be discussing. Before doing this, however, it is important to understand the relevant history and theoretical principles that shaped CREATE's interest in and approach to working with its K-14 partners, including LFC and BCMS.

B. UCSD RESPONDS TO THE BAN ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: CREATE

The impetus, direction, and support to develop CREATE came from a unique convergence of interests at both the statewide UC-level and the local UC campus (UCSD). In many ways, the formation of the organization can be seen as a culminating moment in the university's effort to face the challenge and controversy surrounding the elimination of affirmative action. At the same time, it can be seen as a transitional moment. The formation of CREATE marks an important shift in the kinds of initiatives and resources the university brings to the project of "outreach," a shift that facilitates the kinds of opportunities for multi-institutional collaboration described in this study.

At the statewide UC-level, as described in Chapter 1, in July of 1997, the Outreach Task Force (OTF) called for the expansion of an array of outreach programs and initiatives. To coordinate this variety of Outreach efforts adequately required new institutional arrangements at each of the UC campuses. Existing programs, like EAOP

and the California Subject Matter Projects, for example, provided a foundation for expanding Outreach activities. These programs, however, had traditionally operated from different, non-academic divisions of the campus organization and often with different histories, missions, and personnel. At the same time, the goal of building well-coordinated school-university partnerships had no historical precedent or organizational structure in place to implement it. In response, the UC developed educational partnership centers on each campus to make the school-level partnership arrangements, coordinate program staff, sponsor faculty research, and support program evaluators (University of California, Educational Outreach. 2001). In an effort to align these various efforts and achieve some convergence of perspectives and resources, and even just to make it possible for the different programs to be aware of each other's activities, most campuses thus also established an "umbrella" or "hub" organizational structure to oversee, support, and develop UC outreach. In this context, CREATE—established to act as the university's educational partnership center *as well as* its general coordinating body for Outreach—can be seen as an outgrowth of the university's effort to implement the OTF plan.

At the same time, however, the initiative and support to develop CREATE at UCSD grew in large part out of conditions surrounding the *local, campus-wide* efforts that had emerged in response to the challenge of creating a diverse, "representative" student body without affirmative action as a tool (Rosen and Mehan, 2002). In the spring of 1996, UCSD Provost Cecil Lytle and a coalition of university administrators, faculty, and individuals representing San Diego's African American and Latino communities had proposed developing an on-campus Charter School for disadvantaged and historically

disenfranchised students. The goal, they argued, would be to build a model school that would prepare these students for admission to the UC system without benefit of "racial preferences." According to Rosen and Mehan (2002:2), the "proposal generated both considerable support and tremendous controversy; it was rejected, though, when it failed to win the full support of either the faculty of UCSD or its new chancellor, Robert Dynes."

The chancellor's rejection of the proposed Charter School was met locally with hostility, public outcry, and negative publicity. UCSD did not have a strong history of supporting San Diego's poorer, minority communities—and the rejection of the Charter school exacerbated these already tenuous relationships. While the university had sponsored a variety of independent outreach activities for students from poorer neighborhoods over the years, these activities had not been well coordinated or well funded. Traditional outreach programs of financial aid counseling, parent presentations, summer camps, and classroom presentations had been insufficient. Many charged the university with being an elitist, insular community, and not caring about the well-being of "folks south of 8" (the interstate dividing the city's affluent beach communities from the poorer communities to the south) (Rosen and Mehan, 2002). In this context, the University's lack of support for the Charter School fueled the public perception, especially among San Diego's African American and Latino communities, that the university wasn't serious about finding viable ways to make the university accessible to historically disenfranchised students (Rosen and Mehan, 2002).

UCSD Chancellor Dynes received pressure to reconsider the Charter School initiative, both from the local university community that had supported it, the surrounding

San Diego community, and importantly, the UC Regents. Even Regent Ward Connerly, who had been the spokesperson for both Proposition 209 and the Regents' decision to eliminate affirmative action in the UC system, publicly challenged UCSD's rejection of the Charter School and professed his support for such initiatives as a way to help underrepresented students qualify for the UC system (Rosen and Mehan, 2002). By the summer of 1997, around the time that the UC OTF issued its report, Chancellor Dynes assembled UCSD's own Outreach Task Force, led by two distinguished faculty members and composed of well-respected faculty, administrators, and students. He made it clear that he was now fully behind a comprehensive, integrated approach to outreach. He explained that he objected to the original Charter School proposal because, as it was developed outside the mainstream of UCSD, it would be unlikely to garner broad support. Also, he saw the lack of coordination between the university's existing "outreach" programs as a serious problem, and anticipated that the charter school would conflict with these programs and be "just another one of these unrelated things" (qtd. in Rosen and Mehan, 2002: 24).

The task force dealt with these criticisms and devised a multi-faceted, more comprehensive plan for outreach. A key component of the plan included the formation of a research center—the Center for Research on Educational Equity, Assessment and Teaching Excellence (CREATE). According to this plan, CREATE would be charged with coordinating the university's multiple outreach efforts, establishing and implementing the university's K-12 partnerships, and monitoring the new on-campus college preparatory model school—the Preuss School—serving low-income students, grades 6 through 12, who show promise and whose parents never completed a four-year

degree. CREATE would also be responsible for evaluating the success of these efforts and promoting more general research to assess K-12 educational practices. CREATE would be placed squarely within the University's traditional table of organization and would report directly to the Chancellor through his Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. In September of 1997, Chancellor Dynes announced his pleasure at the work of the UCSD Outreach Task Force and appointed a "Planning Action Team" to start planning the implementation of the various recommendations. In November of 1997, the Academic Senate approved the plan, and work began to staff CREATE and do the ground work to open the Preuss School (the model charter school) by the Fall of 1999.

The formation of the Preuss School and of CREATE marked an important turning point in the university defining research and intervention in K-12 public education as a significant institutional priority, now part of the university's mission (Rosen and Mehan, 2002). These initiatives now had much wider support in the university, which helped give CREATE an important level of institutional legitimacy to begin its work. The director selected to oversee CREATE, Hugh Mehan, was a senior faculty member in Sociology with a great deal of experience in university-level teaching and research concerning K-12 schools and educational equity. He also had experience directing UCSD's Teacher Education Program and had been closely involved with efforts to establish UCSD's charter school, so he was already familiar with the individuals and various organizational bodies on campus concerned with K-12 education and outreach, as well as familiar with the practices and politics of working with the university administration. With this foundation, as well as a multimillion dollar budget, CREATE was thus poised to provide a new level of focus, leadership, and resource to the goal of improving the academic

achievement and increasing the UC eligibility rates of underrepresented minority students.

C. CREATE: DEVELOPING A MODEL OF K-16 PARTNERSHIPS

1. Organizational Context

CREATE's initial months as a new organization were "a scramble" (Mehan et al., 2000: 1). On the one hand, CREATE was charged with coordinating programs, activities, and initiatives scattered in different parts of the UCSD table of organization. At the same time, none of the people from these different programs "worked for" CREATE. CREATE could appeal to them to participate in partnership schools or to modify their efforts or approaches, but CREATE had little formal recourse to make this happen. In some cases, relationships with these different outreach programs were somewhat strained. According to Mehan et al. (1999: 39), programs focusing on student-centered outreach, such as EAOP and CHUM, "had labored in the outreach vineyard for years without significant public recognition." With CREATE in the limelight, fears concerning the loss of funding and a shift to a new outreach paradigm (school-centered outreach) heightened anxiety and made establishing new working relationships between CREATE and many campus organizations more tense. Other campus organizations were more eager to form collaborative ventures with CREATE, such as the teacher professional development "Subject Matter Projects" in writing, history/social sciences, and science. In sum, a central component of CREATE's initial efforts involved establishing working relationships with existing campus organizations and to some extent, negotiating "turf battles" in the process. In some cases, these early efforts also included helping shape the

activities of the other campus programs to contribute to the goal of school-wide change at partner schools (Mehan et al., 2000).

At the same time, CREATE was engaged in forming new activities and programs to bring to their partner schools. These included an elementary math and science initiative, a professional development activity for algebra teachers, a high school tutoring program, and after-school computer-based instructional activities (that this study addresses). To develop these initiatives, CREATE was again engaged in working to mobilize existing campus resources (such as faculty with experience and research interests in professional development or educational programs)—but in this case CREATE was playing more the role of program developer. According to Mehan et al. (2000), this work to form new initiatives had advantages because the people involved did not have the same attachment to previous patterns of behavior and standard operating procedures that pre-existing activities might have; they were thus easier to discuss "theories of action" with and move in the direction of CREATE's goals. The new initiatives had disadvantages, however, because the activities had to be created fresh, often with big time lags between when ideas were formulated and when they could be implemented—delays which sometimes caused tension at school sites that needed assistance sooner than CREATE could provide it (Mehan et al., 2000).

Much of the initial work of CREATE thus involved mobilizing and developing university resources to bring to its new partner schools. The other central aspect of CREATE's work was, of course, doing the actual work of establishing and developing the partnership relationships with the school's themselves. CREATE hired one "partnership coordinator" to begin this work, Susan Yonezawa. Susan had a PhD from

UCLA and was experienced at working with schools and conducting basic research on reform and organizational processes. Over the course of the 1998-1999 academic year, led by Susan's efforts, UCSD formed official partnerships with the San Diego City Schools, the Bay View Unified School District, and the Border City School District. This required CREATE to negotiate formal district-level agreements as well as on-the-ground relationships at each partner school, and then design tailor-made strategies for developing partnership activities with each school. To help guide these efforts, CREATE developed a "model framework" and "theory of action" (described below). Before looking at the realities and challenges of implementing the partnership activities that were the focus of this research, however, it is important to examine in greater detail the underlying models, beliefs, and theories informing CREATE's approach.

2. A Model Framework to Guide Partnerships

According to Mehan et al. (1999: 5), speaking on behalf of CREATE, "UCSD adopts a partnership approach to improving public education because the *history of school reform is strewn with failures of 'top down,' that is imposed, reforms*." Educational reforms succeed, they argue, when the circumstances at the local school site are taken into account and the participants at the local level, which include teachers and parents, participate in the reform process. To help focus the university's interactions with K-12 schools and to present a basic understanding of its initiatives, CREATE developed a comprehensive "partnership framework." The components of this framework are community health, parent involvement, teacher professional development, motivation and information, and academic enrichment. Yonezawa et al. (2002: 3) explain:

> Although the framework was initiated by CREATE, it is deliberately broad enough to include schools' goals and does not proscribe a set plan. Schools work collaboratively with CREATE to decide how best to improve student and family health services, increase parent involvement, enhance teacher development, motivate and inform students and families about post-secondary options, and provide students with additional academic services (e.g. tutoring, Saturday Academics, SAT prep, etc.).

CREATE thus works to customize its partnerships to meet the particular characteristics and needs of the schools it works with. Mehan et al. (1999: 12) explains how this strategy unfolded during CREATE's first year of operation, leading to a wide variation in partnership activities:

> After the initial partnership agreements were struck between "CREATE Central" and district administrators, discussion shifted to the educators "on the ground." Susan Yonezawa, Partnership Coordinator, invited educators at each school to express their needs within the context of CREATE's goals of increasing the college eligibility of underrepresented students. This process varied from school to school. In some cases, this dialog occurred largely with principals; in other cases, this dialog occurred with department chairs or complete departments. Not surprisingly, different schools expressed different needs and requested different resources from UCSD. As a result of the differences in schools' expressed needs, we have natural variation in the organization of our health, parent education, academic enrichment, and professional development components of our partnership framework.

To build and maintain these customized partnerships requires ongoing dialog and communication, flexibility, and negotiation. The "Partnership Coordinator" position was developed precisely to lead in this effort. The coordinator's role is designed to serve as a mediator between partnership schools and CREATE's programs and to be responsible for insuring that activities are coordinated in the same schools to support the common goals of academic enrichment and increased college eligibility among underrepresented students. This work is extremely labor intensive. Only through daily interactions with teachers, principals, counselors, students, parents and CREATE's program personnel

could Partnership Coordinators help determine educational needs, provide assistance, and gauge effectiveness of CREATE's efforts, as well as continue the ongoing communication and relationship building needed to maintain an effective partnership (Mehan et al., 1999).

3. Research and Principles Informing K-12 Partnerships

While CREATE's "Partnership Framework" gives a useful overview of how CREATE categorizes its range of potential activities and areas of intervention in partner schools, the framework—by itself—doesn't provide a great deal of insight into the deeper *theoretical* framework that CREATE operates with as it actually develops its programs and activities and negotiates its relationships with its partner schools. To better understand how these partnerships actually develop in practice, and how CREATE attempts to address educational equity goals in the process, it is important to examine some of the central beliefs and theoretical principles that inform and guide and CREATE's endeavors.

To begin with, those associated with CREATE tend to operate from a shared set of beliefs about educational equity. According to Jones et al. (2002: 4), the principles they share are:

> First, equitable educational outcomes are achieved through an equitable process—one grounded in collaboration and mutual respect. Second, a diverse student body can be achieved by collaborating with K-12 schools to better prepare URMs (under-represented minority students) for college eligibility. Better academic preparation, in turn, implies removing structural and cultural barriers in schools so that all students are highly engaged in classrooms that incorporate students' ethnically and linguistically diverse backgrounds in the curriculum, and where interactions among teachers and students are personalized. An equitable

> process, leads to equitable outcomes such as 1) increased numbers of URMs eligible for college, 2) increased numbers of URMs in college preparatory courses, 3) higher percentages of eligible URM s admitted to four-year universities, and 4) improved life chances and options after high school.

This "shared set of beliefs" that guide CREATE's work are theoretically informed by a wide body of research in the kinds of structural and cultural barriers in schools that typically hinder the academic success of underrepresented students, as well as research in the kinds of interventions and support mechanisms that can help make more equitable outcomes possible. Central to the research that CREATE draws on is a critique of typical constraints that limit the K-12 system's ability to offer underrepresented minority students quality educational opportunities—constraints such as academic tracking practices, inadequately trained teachers, low teaching standards, and teachers' race-based assumptions about students (Jones et al., 2000).[33] At the same time, CREATE is guided by research into what can make a positive difference to low-income and underrepresented minority students' educational success. This research emphasizes providing students with the variety of academic and social supports needed for academic success, including access to information-rich networks to help students prepare for and navigate the college-going process, access to high academic standards, rigorous college-prep courses, and rich learning environments, as well as access to the additional services and resources needed to make success possible in these contexts (Jones et al., 2000).[34]

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[33] Here CREATE references: Oakes, 1985; Mehan and Grimes, 1999; Jones, 2000; MacLeod, 1987; Oakes, Wells, Datnow, and Jones, 1997; and, Valenzuela, 1999.

[34] Examples of the research CREATE draws on here include: Lareau, 1989; Oakes, 1985; Stanton-Salazar, 1987; Stanton-Salazar et al., 1999; and, Yonezawa, 1999. In addition, CREATE's own director, Hugh Mehan, had been a principal investigator in a study on successfully "untracking" traditionally "low achieving" students (Mehan et al., 1996).

CREATE's theoretical perspective about how structural inequality is re-produced in schools, and what should be done about it, is also fundamentally shaped by Bourdieu's conceptualization of cultural and social capital (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). Speaking to CREATE's use of these concepts, Yonezawa et al. (2002) draw on Lamont and Lareau's (1988: 156) definition of cultural capital as those "institutionalized, i.e., widely shared, high status cultural signals (attitudes, preferences, formal knowledge, behaviors, goods and credentials) used for social and cultural exclusion." Social capital, on the other hand, refers to the participation in networks of affiliation, such as strong relationships with "institutional agents," that facilitate access to cultural capital. That low income and underrepresented minority students frequently lack access to institutionally "legitimate" and sanctioned forms of social and cultural capital thus contributes to an educational situation in which students are set up to do poorly, be perceived negatively, and, in addition, be denied access to the institutional resources and opportunities that might be able to help them succeed. At the same time, however, Yonezawa et al. (2000: 6) argue, "cultural capital can also be used for inclusion by providing students in disadvantaged schools access to institutional and cultural tools." From this perspective, it is clear one of the goals of equity-minded school reform includes schools and educators reconsidering what counts as "legitimate" cultural capital, and then working to redistribute the social and cultural capital they hold (Yonezawa et al.: 7).

4. A "Theory of Action"

As we have seen, CREATE's "shared set of beliefs" thus encompasses both a theory of the problems that perpetuate structural inequality in schools, as well as a theory

of what kinds of changes are needed to achieve equity. To translate this understanding into a useful "theory of action," CREATE's director and partnership coordinators considered how theories of educational change and social interaction could inform their practice. Drawing principally from research by Oakes (1992; cf. Oakes et al., 1999), they recognized that school change efforts, especially those with an equity focus, needed to consider the technical, normative (or what CREATE calls cultural) and political dimensions of the change process. They explain (Jones et al., 2002: 6) how CREATE's efforts are shaped by, and must address, these multiple dimensions:

> The technical dimension of change includes resources such as labs, equipment, curriculum, teachers, and the ways in which students are organized for instruction. The cultural dimension of change refers to values, beliefs, and norms about such super-charged topics as the role of schooling, the nature of intelligence and its distribution across race, ethnicity, class, and gender in schooling practices. Oakes (1992, p. 13) describes the political dimension of change as the "struggle among individuals for comparative advantage in the distribution of resources, opportunities, and credentials" which often encompass "highly charged issues of race and social class stratification." The political dimension is manifest in daily actions and institutional practices such as the organization of instruction, placement of teachers, and the grouping of students. As we see it, these technical, cultural, and political dimensions are not only contexts impacting school reform efforts, but they are also interactive dimensions within which equitable actions can occur. In other words, within and across these overlapping dimensions, a particular act can potentially disrupt schooling patterns that disadvantage and marginalize underrepresented students. Therefore, the technical, cultural, and political dimensions of equitable school reform shape the contexts that impact the partnership work, and the partnership…works within these dimensions to shape those contexts in equity-minded ways.

The work to engage schools in these various dimensions of change is, perhaps as could be anticipated, anything but straightforward. Even when CREATE is able to successfully mobilize university resources, it faces tremendous constraints in working with schools. Yonezawa et al. (2002) explain that, as a starting point, CREATE has had

to work hard to convince local educators that the university is serious about educational improvement, and that it will sustain the effort for a long time. As described above, UCSD has a reputation in the local area as being an elite institution, disinterested in K-12 education and San Diego's low-income communities. In addition, university researchers often run the risk of being perceived by school personnel as outsiders whose ideas lack an appreciation for the practical realities of school. Partnership coordinators have thus faced the skepticism and distrust of K-12 educators and have had to work slowly toward the goal of establishing close, long-term, and trusting relationships with schools and their students, parents, teaches, and administrators (Yonezawa et al., 2002).

The schools that CREATE works with also have their own agendas and circumstances that often constrain partnership efforts. As "low-performing" schools, they have typically been the target of a wide array of often disconnected reform efforts. In some cases, these efforts conflict pedagogically with the kinds of partnership activities that CREATE would like to see in place. In other cases, the sheer number of reforms can make CREATE's initiatives get lost in the shuffle and can breed skepticism about the usefulness of additional, new initiatives. At the same time, districts are frantically responding to state-mandated accountability schemes, including SAT9 testing and "academic performance indexes" (Mehan et al., 2000). Partner schools face tremendous pressure to raise test scores and increase the amount of time they spend on test preparation. In this context, some teachers and administrators view the preparation of students for college as an unrealistic distraction from learning "the basics." Even when school personnel don't see a conflict between CREATE's and the school's goals,

CREATE's Partnership Coordinators and Program personnel must still attempt to navigate this complicated terrain.

Finally, many of CREATE's equity-related goals run counter to the institutional norms and regularly-accepted practices of how these schools operate. How resources are distributed in a school, the way course offerings and student placement are decided, or how teachers interact with their students and decide what the students are capable of learning, all represent the kinds of arenas where change is needed. Yet these norms and practices are typically firmly entrenched and resistant to change. For CREATE to engage in this work is thus a slow, challenging, and incremental process, with potential for controversy and political volatility at nearly every stage. To be successful requires that CREATE not be seen as antagonistic, elitist, subversive, etc., but rather a respected partner that schools engage with to address the problems they face *collaboratively* (Yonezawa et al., 2002).

To begin to develop these kinds of relationships with schools, CREATE has been deliberate in how it has engaged in partnership activities. Partnership coordinators have emphasized building trusting relationships with school agents over time. Typically their initial work with a new partner school has involved providing the school with "tangible 'goods' and services" that respond to local needs articulated by the school—services such as tutoring programs, enrichment activities, professional development opportunities, and college counseling. These kinds of services are important because they help bring additional, needed resources to high poverty schools and facilitate underrepresented students gaining access to the cultural and social capital necessary for school success (Yonezawa et al., 2002).

At the same time, however, these "tangible 'goods' and services"—or "technical considerations"—often act as an entry point for cultural and political engagement with the schools (Yonezawa et al., 2002). As CREATE and school personnel do the work of negotiating the details, arrangements, financing, goals, etc. for these types of tangible services, they have an opportunity to build rapport and establish a common sense of working together toward mutual interests and shared goals. Yonezawa et al. (2002) explain that these social interactions and exchanges have emergent properties. They enable CREATE to develop the strong, trusting institutional and inter-personal relationships that form the basis of social capital. CREATE's partnership coordinators and program personnel can then "exchange" this capital in other settings with teachers, administrators, staff, etc., to address the more deep-seated cultural beliefs and structural conditions that perpetuate educational disparities (Mehan et al., 2000). In other words, once relationships built on a genuine sense of collaboration and trust are established, CREATE can more effectively begin to address the variety of often culturally and politically charged topics related to achieving educational equity.

The actual practice of engaging in this work, however, is much less straightforward or fluid then CREATE's "model framework" or "theory of action" imply. In fact, in practice, CREATE describes its partnerships as fragile, constantly changing, and always in danger of toppling (Yonezawa et al., 2002). The local contexts and circumstances of partnership schools present CREATE with enormous constraints and challenges at achieving success, sometimes at even seemingly simple initiatives. To examine the details of the variety of partnerships that CREATE has established and what

they have actually looked like in practice is beyond the scope of this study.[35] However, these details are relevant in the case of CREATE's partnership with Border City Middle School because they form an important part of the context in which the "South Bay Project" emerged and took shape.

D. FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE: THE SOUTH BAY PROJECT

1. Initial Steps Toward the Partnership: CREATE and BCMS

Susan Yonezawa, CREATE partnership coordinator, began working with Border City Middle School (BCMS) in July 1998 to develop what CREATE's partnership with the school would mean *in practice*. Initially, she met with the principal of BCMS at the time, Cyndy Jordan, to explain what kinds of resources CREATE could offer. At that meeting, Susan vividly recalls the principal explaining that the school "did not need" more "professional development." This was probably because the school had been the target of a number of different school reform and professional development programs within the past few years. Nonetheless, it surprised Susan because it demonstrated that the principal did not view ongoing staff learning and development as one of the goals of the school.[36]

For a principal to respond this way was unusual in Susan's experience of working with CREATE's partner schools. It signaled to her that she would have to focus on other avenues of developing the partnership, such as focusing on academic enrichment programs. Also in July of 1998, the principal assigned one of her administrative staff,

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[35] For some discussion of these details, see for example, Yonezawa et al. (2002) and Jones et al. (2002).
[36] Interview with Susan Yonezawa, 11/19/01.

Christopher Lord, to be Susan's primary contact when working with the school. This was also unlike other schools that Susan had worked with in that she would not have a "direct line" to the school principal. Together, these factors suggested that it would be challenging to develop a meaningful school-university partnership with BCMS.

From these initial meetings and school visits, the school identified computer technology as an area in which the school wanted and needed help. The school had a fully wired, Macintosh-based computer lab in two adjoining rooms, with over 60 computers. It also had a science lab with several PC modular workstations, referred to as the "tech lab." Science teacher Olivia Diaz had recently taken over running the tech lab and, according to Susan, "was drowning." The previous teachers who had written the grant for the workstations and had developed the curriculum for the class had recently left the school, with no instructions or guidance on running the lab. Ms. Diaz had been left to figure out everything on her own, and with little related experience, was finding it very difficult. She, as well as others at BCMS, hoped that UCSD could offer some help in this area.

"Technology" thus became the first tangible area in which the school could see itself getting help from and benefiting from a relationship with the university. At the same time, Susan was impressed with the school's computer resources, both in the computer lab and the tech lab, and saw potential for developing stronger academic activities in these contexts. For CREATE to offer assistance in this area, she hoped, could be a good first step in building a strong partnership with the school. It could demonstrate UCSD's commitment to making good on the promise and potential of a "partnership" and it could facilitate CREATE building relationships at the school that could enable further

partnership activities down the road. What's more, CREATE could use this opportunity to work toward improving students' access to quality educational resources, such as pro-academic computer-integrated curriculum and school supports. For these reasons, Susan began exploring possible ways that CREATE could help.

By the close of 1998, Yonezawa had begun having conversations with several UCSD faculty working in areas related to computer technology and education, and was exploring ways to connect them with BCMS. Two UCSD connections emerged that would play a large role in the developing partnership. Teacher Education Professor Jerry Balzano visited BCMS with Yonezawa and, although didn't see a way to tie his work to Olivia Diaz' tech lab as Yonezawa had hoped, still wanted to participate. He became very interested in developing an after-school activity, "Game Designers' Studio," in which students would use simulation software to make simple computer games and, in the process, learn basic programming skills.

Around the same time, Susan Yonezawa visited UCSD's Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition (LCHC) and began learning about a model computer-integrated educational activity known as the "5th Dimension" (5thD). The 5thD was set up as an after-school activity in community-based, club settings in which children participated voluntarily. Undergraduate students enrolled in a practicum in child development course at the university and participated in the after-school activities as helpers and "older siblings" to the children. Modeled loosely after the Dungeons and Dragons fantasy world, the program was set up to have children progress through a maze by completing different educational computer games and additional reading and writing tasks (such as reading special instructions developed for each game or writing, via on line

chat, to an "electronic entity" known as "the Wizard"). As children advanced through the different levels on the games and completed the various tasks, they worked collaboratively with the undergraduate students. These interactions typically incorporated play, fun, and imaginary activity (such as talking about wizards), as well as more traditional "academic" learning and cognitive development activities (such as developing reading and math strategies).

Communication professor Mike Cole and colleagues at LCHC designed the 5thD in the mid 1980s as part of an effort to create sustainable model activity systems built on the principles of cultural-historical psychology (Cole, 1996). These principles emphasize the central role of joint, mediated activity in children's cognitive development, contending that it is in this kind of activity that social and cultural knowledge is gradually internalized and higher order thinking evolves (Vygotsky, 1978). These principles also recognize and value the importance of the variety and often changing nature of the "leading" activities important to an individual's development, such as play, formal learning, work, peer activity, or affiliation with others (Griffin and Cole, 1984). According to Griffin and Cole (1984: 51), as a new leading activity appears, it provides for the reorganization and internalization of prior stages by transforming them into the everyday in contrast to the new leading activity.

Following these principles, the 5th Dimension attempted to provide children with a mixed activity system in which school and play learning, along with other activities (affiliation, study, peer interaction, theorizing), were deliberately mixed so as to respond to and nurture children's various and evolving needs. The goal was to create a context which could promote collaborative learning and with which children themselves would

be motivated to progress step-by-step, so that they were actively involved in their own development (Nicolopoulou and Cole, 1993).

Finally, the undergraduates were there to guide and facilitate children's development, and not to act as authoritarian figures or simply serve as sources of information (Nicolopoulou and Cole, 1993). Usually this worked and the undergraduates were able to act more like partners with the children than superiors or disciplinarians. Often, the children had more knowledge about the computers, games, and norms of the 5thD than the undergraduates, for example, which helped to reorder the typical power relations and the usual division of labor between children and adults around learning activities (Cole, 1996). What's more, as the rules in the 5thD are mostly embedded in the structure of the maze and the computer games, discipline and authority rest less on individuals and more on shared and voluntarily accepted rules. According to Nicolopoulou and Cole (1993), these rules constitute the play situation itself, and derive their force from the child's enjoyment of the shared activity of the play-world.

By the time Yonezawa began learning about the 5th Dimension, the program had been in existence for over a decade and was well regarded as an innovative and successful educational activity. It had served as an inspiration and model for numerous learning activities in a variety of different countries and throughout California, and had demonstrated that its fundamental principles could be adapted to new institutional contexts to meet the specific linguistic and cultural resources and circumstances of diverse communities of learners. Vásquez (2002), for example, spearheaded efforts to create a bilingual/bicultural adaptation of the 5th Dimension that was culturally relevant to the local Mexican-origin community. Her work demonstrated that while the process of

appropriate adaptation was labor and resource-intensive, it could lead to highly successful (and voluntary) after-school activities for poor, working-class Latino youth, as well as help channel university resources to a traditionally underserved (and underrepresented in higher education) population.

When Yonezawa met with Mike Cole, he expressed an interest in collaborating with La Frontera College to adapt this model to new settings in San Diego's South County. Over recent years, Cole had been involved in developing a 5th Dimension-related collaboration between LCHC, San Diego City College (another community college) and Mercado Apartments (a community-based housing center). He was interested in the possibility of this kind of collaboration being more fully developed and institutionalized at LFC. Specifically, he thought that an activity like the 5th Dimension could work at BCMS or other South County sites if La Frontera College provided college students to act as tutors/mentors/peers in the activity. These college students would also be enrolled in a course that would include field research techniques and extensive writing activities—important skills for academic success. With the additional institutional supports now available to LFC students through a new outreach program, UniversityLink,[37] Cole hoped that this kind of kind of partnership would help the participating LFC students successfully transfer to a four-year university. In this way, the partnership would ideally

[37] UniversityLink offers individual counseling and other services to facilitate a timely and smooth transfer from high school to community college to UCSD. UniversityLink is sponsored by UCSD and geared to high school seniors who plan to attend community college and then transfer to the campus. During the senior year of high school or the first semester at the community college, UniversityLink students sign contracts that guarantee admission to UCSD after successful completion of 60 transferable credits at participating community colleges. The students, who must maintain a minimum 2.8 grade point average while in community college, receive ongoing academic counseling and guidance from community college and UCSD staff. Scholarship aid is sometimes available.

support underrepresented minority students at both educational institutions to improve their academic skills and potential for success in higher education.

With these two UCSD professors interested in proceeding, possibilities were thus emerging for partnership and collaboration between not only UCSD and BCMS, but also LFC. In January of 1999, Luke Kennedy began working as Community Liaison for CREATE, and became a key force in helping develop and grow these possibilities. Luke had worked on 5th Dimension-related activities with LCHC for a number of years, and was thus in an unusual position to help coordinate and develop the emerging partnership. Throughout the rest of that academic year, Luke Kennedy and Susan Yonezawa would help facilitate communication between key actors at UCSD, BCMS, and LFC, and help coordinate the institutions working together—such that an integrated program could begin in the Fall of 1999. A small number of key moments and events stand out in terms of how the partnership evolved with each institution during this time.

2. The Introduction of a New Partner: La Frontera College

The idea of developing innovative partnership activities with La Frontera College fit well with CREATE's goals of strengthening ties to local community colleges and improving their students' successful transfer to the UC. A new university outreach program at LFC, UniversityLink, was also available to provide LFC students with college orientation information and academic counseling, and guarantee them a spot at UCSD upon completing the necessary prerequisites. This program thus gave CREATE a natural partner to collaborate and coordinate activities with at LFC.

At UCSD, Mike Cole had played a leading role in developing a successful course, "Practicum in Leaning and Development," as part of the cluster of 5th Dimension-related activities. The course combined in-class reading and discussion with field-based research and participation in after-school, 5th Dimension sites. For the emerging team at CREATE, the idea of working with LFC to develop a similar kind of model course seemed like a good way to meet multiple goals. Ideally, college students would have a rich learning experience, gain academic preparation and transferable credit for the university, and would become more familiar with UCSD in particular. At the same time, BCMS and potentially other UCSD partner schools would benefit from the additional resources. This would give CREATE the opportunity to help implement richer and more challenging activities at BCMS than what it could accomplish with school resources alone.

Beginning in January of 1999, the CREATE team consisting of Susan Yonezawa, Luke Kennedy, Mike Cole, and CREATE director, Bud Mehan, began working with contacts at LFC to find individuals interested in developing a collaboratively taught course modeled after UCSD's Practicum in Leaning and Development. Early on, a professor from the Psychology Department, Susan Buckley, expressed interest in the collaboration. She soon became the main LFC contact for developing the project and preparing for its implementation.

Professor Buckley recalls that she had a certain amount of paranoia when she first heard that UCSD was interested in working with LFC. Her Dean, with a similar skepticism, had asked her to meet with "the people from UCSD" and "find out what they want because UCSD never does anything without wanting something." Upon meeting with the CREATE team, however, she became convinced that UCSD was genuinely

interested in helping LFC students successfully transfer to the UC. She was also intrigued with the model program and activities that CREATE described. On the one hand Buckley had for years been concerned about community college students not getting enough practice or support in developing the writing and analytical skills in their classes that they needed to do well upon transferring to a four-year university. Because community college teaching demands are so heavy, professors have little resources or support to assign or give much attention to student writing. Buckley thus liked the idea of being able to have these activities be central components of a community college course with the emotional, cognitive, and financial backing of UCSD. At the same time, years earlier Buckley also had done some research into the educational aspirations of underrepresented minority students in the South County. She explains that she had cared about how to help these students prepare for college "for years and years." In this way, the goal of helping BCMS students gain access to additional academic resources and supports was thus also immediately appealing to her. For these reasons, the partnership seemed like a win-win opportunity and she decided to be a part of it.[38]

Working together, the new CREATE-LFC team decided to implement a new Practicum in Leaning and Development/5th-Dimension-like course the following semester, less than six months away. The team agreed that Susan Buckley would teach the course through the Psychology Department, in collaboration with UCSD. Until the course could be institutionalized as its own, dedicated course, students interested in participating would enroll in a special section of an introductory psychology course, Psych 101, as well as an independent study. Later, once the course was approved,

[38] Interview with Susan Buckley, 12/10/01.

students would enroll directly in the "Practicum" course, which would be offered for credit in either Psychology or Sociology. Students who participated would ideally be drawn from, or join, the UniversityLink program (indicating an interest in transferring to UCSD). As a part of the course (or at first, Psych 101 plus the independent study), students would then attend community or school sites, such as Border City Middle School and, possibly, the nearby Park Villas Apartments or Boys and Girls Club, where they would work with children and learn field research methods. Mike Cole and others from CREATE would play a role in helping Susan Buckley design the course to integrate key theoretical readings and concepts underlying the 5th Dimension model. Also, a UCSD professor (beginning with Cole) would provide additional resource and support by teaching a number of the class sessions via video conferencing and by helping respond to student field note writing via email. Luke Kennedy, CREATE Community Liaison, would help problem solve and provide logistical and coordination support, especially between the LFC class and the school and community sites.

To put this plan into action would take a great deal of work and coordination between diverse individuals and multiple institutions. CREATE Community Liaison, Luke Kennedy, had the unique job of doing just that. Many people would come to refer to him as a "spider;" for he was responsible for continuously building and maintaining the web that kept everyone aligned and working together on a common project. Others would refer to him as the glue that kept the partnership from falling apart. At LFC during this time, Luke worked to help arrange such diverse details as how to get the class approved for transfer credit, how to target students for the course that would be likely to transfer to UCSD, and how to set up facilities and staffing for video conferencing sessions.

Importantly, he also met with Buckley to share readings and other background information about the practicum course and the 5th Dimension.

Significantly, the broader UCSD-LFC team also continued to work together to make the necessary arrangements. In April 1999, Buckley got first-hand experience with the 5th Dimension model by visiting the practicum course at UCSD and the well-established after-school sites in San Diego's North County. In May, she also met again with Mike Cole and Luke Kennedy to discuss the course curriculum and how to modify it to the LFC context. These activities were crucial to the successful adaptation of the model to the community college. Going into the project, Buckley had been supportive of CREATE's general goals but was unfamiliar with the 5th Dimension. When the CREATE team first described the model to her, she recalls that it seemed ambiguous and confusing and made her think, "I have no clue what this is a all about, but philosophically it sounds wonderful."[39] Through the variety of efforts that the team made to work together during this time, however, Buckley was able to share in a theoretical understanding of the 5th Dimension model and the proposed activities. At the same time, it is important to note that neither Buckley nor Cole had much practical knowledge of or involvement in the specific South County sites that were being developed. The implications of this will be discussed below.

Nevertheless, by the end of the semester, Buckley was familiar with the central theoretical underpinnings of the 5th Dimension model and its associated Practicum in Leaning and Development course. As described above, to actually implement the course CREATE planned to provide a variety of additional supports. Still, for Buckley to teach

[39] Ibid.

an unfamiliar, labor intensive course like this would be very demanding. To help offset her increased workload, CREATE arranged to "buy out" one of her courses, thereby reducing the number of classes she would be required to teach. In this way, in the case of working with LFC, CREATE was able to help provide the resources, theoretical guidance, and human support necessary to adapt and implement the practicum course in a way that was reasonably consistent with the model that it was based on. This would not turn out to be the case, however, in the situation that developed at Border City Middle School.

3. Preparing for Project Implementation at BCMS

At the same time that the UCSD team was setting up the practicum course with LFC, they continued to be involved in developing partnership activities with Border City Middle School (BCMS). Susan Yonezawa hoped to get some kind of CREATE-sponsored activity underway at the school as soon as possible, in part to be able to show some tangible evidence that CREATE was following through with their side of the partnership. To this end, she was working with Professor Jerry Balzano and the school to set up the after school activity he was interested in teaching, "Game Designers' Studio" (described earlier). Also, she was still trying to find a way to get some extra help for Olivia Diaz' tech lab.

Meanwhile, Luke was interested in setting up school and community sites to place LFC practicum students for the next semester—ideally sites modeled after the 5th Dimension. By February, he began visiting BCMS staff to start discussing and developing these activities. He also began exploring possible community-based sites at a

nearby housing project, Park Villa Apartments, and a Boys and Girls Club. Possibilities at these sites never fully materialized, however, and Luke focused his attention on BCMS.

An important turning point in the developing partnership came when a crew of key people from BCMS visited UCSD. On March 1st, 1999, Susan Yonezawa organized a meeting to discuss partnership possibilities surrounding technology. The Assistant Principal of BCMS, Andrea Valdez, came to UCSD for the meeting along with site demonstration coordinator, Christopher Lord, BCMS computer lab tech, Noah Garza, and science teacher, Olivia Diaz. The UCSD team that had been working on developing the partnership was all present—Bud Mehan, Mike Cole, Susan Yonezawa, Luke Kennedy, and Jerry Balzano—as well as other potential UCSD partners, Physics faculty member, Noah Finkelstein, and Co-director of UCSD School of Medicine's CHUM Program, Jose Jones.

Yonezawa had originally thought that organizing this kind of meeting on a monthly basis would be a good way for everyone to share their ideas and experiences related to technology and education. After the event, however, she decided that this kind of monthly meeting wouldn't be a practical or efficient use of everyone's time. Nonetheless, the meeting served as a starting point for BCMS to become more familiar with the 5th Dimension model that the UCSD team envisioned. The team explained some aspects of the model and talked about the possibility of bringing LFC students to BCMS. At this meeting, the others from UCSD also talked about potential ways to connect their work with academic enrichment activities at BCMS.

After this meeting, the work to get partnership activities off the ground intensified. Luke Kennedy and Susan Yonezawa began working more closely with BCMS computer lab technician, Noah Garza, and science teacher, Olivia Diaz, to arrange necessary details. By the beginning of UCSD's Spring quarter, they were able to implement some initial activities. Jerry Balzano began teaching Game Designers' Studio in the computer lab, every Wednesday after school, and Noah Finkelstein began sending some of his UCSD Physics Education students to work with Olivia Diaz' classes in the modular tech lab. These activities were successful at giving CREATE a short but necessary track record at BCMS—one that they could refer to and build on. Game Designers' Studio regularly attracted a small core group of dedicated participants that seemed to be benefiting from the activity. Many people were impressed with the story of one student, well known for previous discipline problems, who was excelling in the new after school setting.

Throughout the same time period, Luke Kennedy visited the computer labs during and after school, including when the UCSD-related activities were taking place. He held additional meetings with Noah Garza and Olivia Diaz, and began discussing ways they might develop a 5th Dimension site at BCMS. At the time, the most promising ideas to Luke and the BCMS team revolved around creating multi-media activities and projects, such as *PowerPoint* presentations and simple web pages. The school had a stated goal, promoted by Christopher Lord and printed on the door of the computer rooms, of students using computers to make electronic portfolios of their academic work. Luke thought the BCMS 5th Dimension could build on this goal and potentially tie in after school multi media activities with what students were doing in their academic classes.

To make these possibilities into an actual working, sustainable 5th Dimension, however, would take BCMS uptake of the program and initiative—for Luke was busy working as CREATE's Community Liaison, and was not really in a position to develop, implement, or run a new after school program. Similarly, both Professors Cole and Buckley were most involved in developing the quality of the LFC course and had little time or interest in developing activities at the BCMS site. What's more, the CREATE team was interested in a model of institutional collaboration in which the participating institutions would share in the long-term development and maintenance of the program. This was important for the sustainability of the project, but also, they theorized, for the opportunity to build a genuine sense of collaboration in the partnership and for the project to have a greater impact on the school as a whole. In this way, the CREATE team did not have the resources or the interest to just "bring" the 5th Dimension to BCMS. Rather, they hoped the school would become interested in collaborating to adapt the model to the middle school context.

Toward this end, in May of 1999, Luke brought Noah Garza and Olivia Diaz to visit the well established 5th Dimension sites in San Diego's North County. According to Luke, after the visit, they both seemed "even more enthusiastic" about possibilities at BCMS.[40] Then, in mid June, during the last week of school, several members of the UCSD and BCMS teams met at BCMS to review the state of their partnership activities. Notes from the meeting provide a small window into the vision that the school had developed for what should happen next. Andrea Valdez, Christopher Lord, Noah Garza, and Olivia Diaz all expressed a desire to not only continue Game Designers' Studio one

[40] Email correspondence from Luke Kennedy, 5/27/99.

day a week, but also develop 5th Dimension-like activities on two additional days after school. In line with the ideas Luke had been developing, they also seemed to agree that the 5th Dimension middle school model should be based around students developing "electronic" or "multi-media" portfolios that were integrated with other school curriculum, such as science, art, and reading.[41]

What was less clear at that point was who would take the lead in developing these activities. Olivia Diaz and Noah Garza were the two people at the school who had learned the most about the 5th Dimension and had the strongest connection to computer-integrated education at the school. The CREATE team believed their participation would be central to the evolving activities. By the end of the school year, Ms. Diaz and Mr. Garza seemed on board with the project and ready to proceed. They agreed to meet with Luke over the 3-week summer intersession break and when school resumed in July, to discuss how to develop the 5th Dimension at BCMS, particularly, the kinds of multi-media activities that would be involved and how "task cards" would explain the goals and steps of different assignments, etc. The partnership seemed to be evolving on track.

Challenges typical to working with schools—especially low performing schools—quickly emerged, however, that dramatically limited the school's ability to follow through with this commitment or to build on the work they had done to prepare for the 5th Dimension activities. When BCMS started up again in July, there were major staffing changes at the school. A new principal, Luis Gomez, was assigned to the school. At the same time, both Christopher Lord and Noah Garza were moved out of the school to district-level positions. Neither of them was able to continue working on developing

[41] Email correspondence from Luke Kennedy, 6/11/99.

partnership activities. At the same time, Ms. Diaz received new teaching assignments with increased demands, and had to focus on developing curriculum for her own classrooms. She was now unable, or uninterested, in taking on an after-school teaching assignment.

A problem resulting from these changes was that no one at the school had the necessary resources or understanding to take the lead in developing 5th Dimension-type activities—least of all to work in a deliberate way at adapting the successes of prior models to the new context. Very few people from the original team that CREATE had worked with throughout the previous school year were even left at the school. With all of the changes, the UCSD-CREATE team had to work quickly at establishing new relationships with both the new administration and with potential collaborators in the after-school activities. At the same time, they had to do the practical work to get the activities up and running.

Fortunately, the school was at least able to find a math teacher, Jose Gonzalez, who agreed to be the site coordinator for the Tuesday/Thursday partnership activities. He was new to the school, and just beginning his first year of teaching. He was interested in technology and enthusiastic about working with the after school program. He was also eager to pick up extra jobs at the school to earn needed extra money. At the same time, however, he didn't have any specific training or experience in developing computer-based educational activities, or much free time to figure out doing so. Nor did he have much information about the 5th Dimension model and the ideas it was based on. Nevertheless, by the beginning of the Fall semester he began overseeing, coordinating,

and developing the after school class—albeit with the crucial and integral involvement and help of CREATE Community Liaison, Luke Kennedy.

With Noah Garza's absence, the school also needed to hire a new computer lab technician. Martin Quinto, a new member of the BCMS staff, was hired on for this job. He quickly became a regular figure in 5th Dimension activities because his "office" and workstation was in the center of the computer lab where the activities were held, and because it was his job to maintain the equipment and oversee the use of the lab. Similar to Mr. Gonzalez, he had little knowledge about the 5th Dimension. He had never visited a 5th Dimension site and was not familiar with its informing theories and ideas. While Luke had provided both Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto with some explanations of the model, they had no concrete experience to connect to these explanations.

The BCMS 5th Dimension site was, in this way, set up without clear leadership or direction. It didn't have any one person or group of people with the resources or dedication to develop a coherent or meaningful curriculum. As will be discussed in greater detail in Chapters 3 and 4, this left the after school activity susceptible to developing in a piecemeal way in which the activities that evolved were typically those that were most easily available or already in use, or that involved little preparation. What's more, the site didn't have a team of people behind it that agreed on similar guiding theoretical or pedagogical principles. CREATE and 5th Dimension goals emphasized the benefits of mixing learning and play, of nurturing a culture of collaboration and non-hierarchical relationships, and of creating academically challenging learning activities, relevant to students' life experience. The school, on the other hand, typically emphasized the control and discipline of students and the

importance of the traditional school curriculum. As will be discussed in the following chapters, these factors contributed to ongoing tensions in the development of the after school activity and left the program particularly susceptible to reproducing typical school-like curriculum, pedagogy, and relationships.

Chapter III:
The Initial Implementation of the BCMS "5th Dimension" (Phase 2)

This chapter traces the *second phase* of the study, encompassing the first three semesters that the "5th Dimension" Tuesday/Thursday after-school program was in place at BCMS (from Fall, 1999 through the end of Fall, 2000). The after-school program evolved and changed a great deal during this time. In reality, each of the semesters was unique and represented some kind of turning point in the evolution of the program. However, they can also be viewed together in that they represent a particular stage in the partnership relationship between CREATE and BCMS in terms of the nature of how the two institutions collaborated in running and developing the after school activities.

During these semesters, CREATE paid for BCMS teacher Jose Gonzalez to be in charge of the after school computer program.[42] Gonzalez had the primary responsibility for instructing the class and guiding its development. He was essentially "the man in charge." Yet he started playing this role when new to the partnership and with little exposure to 5th Dimension-model sites, activities, or theoretical concepts. Given that he had a variety of other work-related responsibilities and commitments, he also had little time to devote to gaining this exposure or even to developing the after-school curriculum.

What Gonzalez did learn about the 5th Dimension, he learned mostly through interactions and conversations while working with CREATE's Community Liaison, Luke Kennedy. Throughout these three semesters, Kennedy attended the after-school classes at BCMS, helped manage the site, and was frequently involved in finding computer-based

[42] Throughout the year, CREATE funding for BCMS activities was augmented with funds from GEAR UP (described in greater detail, below); some of the money to hire this teacher came from this source.

activities and projects to try out in the after-school program. At the same time, Kennedy had a limited amount of time to devote to these endeavors because his job with CREATE emphasized the coordination-related tasks required to keep the whole South Bay Project on-track at each institution, and not just the curriculum and pedagogical development at BCMS.

The BCMS site was, in this way, set up without a person, or group of people, who had the time, resources, or dedication to adapt the 5th Dimension model to the middle school context or, in many respects, even just to develop a coherent curriculum. As will be discussed later in this chapter, the result was an after-school program that only loosely resembled the model educational activity that CREATE had originally envisioned, and that was actually, in many ways, in conflict with components of this model.

I arrived with another CREATE researcher, Vanessa Baker, during the third semester that "5th Dimension" activities had been implemented at BCMS (toward the end of the second phase of the study). By that time, based on information from field notes provided by Luke Kennedy and the SWC students, CREATE staff were deeply concerned about the nature of the activities. Together, Baker and I began documenting site activities as participant observers and sharing our findings, concerns, and ideas with the broader CREATE research team. Through this process, the CREATE team decided to start providing additional attention, resources and support to the program and play a stronger role in its ongoing development. Toward the end of the third semester, we thus began to work with BCMS teachers and staff to develop ideas for how to improve the program and the nature of our collaboration. These developments set the stage for a new phase in the partnership between CREATE and BCMS (phase 3), one characterized by a much greater

degree of involvement from CREATE in attempting to shape, guide, and help develop the after school activities. I played a central role in these efforts and I was directly involved in implementing changes to the program over the following semester. In the process, my role as a participant observer began to incorporate an action research component. This third phase of the study will be the topic of the fourth chapter.

A. FIRST YEAR OF "5TH DIMENSION" IMPLEMENTATION (SEMESTERS 1 AND 2)

1. CREATE-BCMS Partnership Context

Math teacher Jose Gonzalez remembers being approached by the BCMS administration and asked if he could work with CREATE's after-school Tuesday/Thursday computer program. It was his first year of teaching and he had never taught using computers before, or during after-school. In an interview I conducted with Mr. Gonzalez roughly two years after his involvement in the program began, he recalled that: "at the beginning, I was a little bit hesitant because I hadn't taught it before, so I didn't know what to do, or what the kids expected, or what to expect from the kids."[43] This was understandable, as he had not received much explanation about the program or what would be expected of him. He recalls that the administration told him that all they wanted was "somebody to be there so the kids could be there after school, and then learn how to use the computers."[44]

Gonzalez knew from the start that CREATE would be involved, but as can be inferred above, no one gave him very much information about CREATE's purpose or

[43] Interview with Jose Gonzalez, Fall 2001.
[44] Ibid.

theoretical vision for a model after-school activity. Gonzalez explains that he knew that he would be paid for teaching after school and that "CREATE was going to take care of the money." He also knew that CREATE was going to "help him out" by getting La Frontera College students into the classroom to be tutors and mentors. Beyond that, Gonzalez remembers Luke Kennedy giving him some articles to read about the Fifth Dimension and explaining some of CREATE's research interests, but he doesn't remember much about the content of those articles or discussions. He does remember, however, that Luke Kennedy talked about the goal of mixing learning with play and that, to help facilitate this goal, the after school class would be using educational software, or computer games.[45]

Gonzalez remembers hoping that as students chose to participate in this kind of activity after school voluntarily, they would get a sense that the school was a bigger part of their lives than just somewhere they had to be from 7 in the morning until 3 in the afternoon. He hoped it would "give them a sense of belonging." At the same time, he remembers hoping that students would learn "some of the basic skills of computing, so they can have basic knowledge of what they need to do in order to turn in an essay, or if they've got a program that they can use at home, they actually know how to access it and do stuff like that." Finally, he hoped that the inclusion of college students in the program would give the middle school students access to positive role models that would help them see that they, also, could go to college and "make it."[46]

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[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.

It is important to note here that Gonzalez shared CREATE's interest in students learning computer skills and being inspired to go to college. At the same time, his goals for the program did not place the kind of theoretical emphasis that CREATE would place on creating learning activities that were academically rigorous or college preparatory, or that the 5th Dimension model would place on deliberately scaffolding the cognitive and social development of students through activities that were simultaneously playful and educational. Gonzalez had not had the preparation or training that would lead him to identify these goals or take deliberate steps to realize them—and CREATE did not provide him with this preparation or training.

CREATE researchers and staff were far too busy building and managing other partnership activities. The Partnership Coordinator for BCMS, Susan Yonezawa, was occupied and spread thin at multiple school sites throughout the county. At BCMS, both the school principal and Yonezawa's main contact at the school, Christopher Lord, had now moved on to other positions in the district. Yonezawa was faced with building relationships with a new administration. The new principal, Luis Gomez, assigned one of his assistant principals, Andrea Valdez, to be CREATE's contact at the school. According to Yonezawa,[47] the principal "didn't have a problem with CREATE," but at that point he didn't have much to do with CREATE either. Working with Valdez, the assistant principal, gave Yonezawa greater access to the ear of the administration and guidance counselors than she had the previous year, however, and as the year progressed the school was gradually "warming up" to CREATE and viewing it more as an asset of collaborators and problem-solvers in addressing challenges facing the school.

[47] Interview with Susan Yonezawa, 11/19/01.

However, these gains in the partnership relationship were being tested and threatened by confusion at the school about other programs affiliated with UCSD and CREATE, namely GEAR UP.[48] The GEAR UP program was meant to bring additional resources to aid in the college preparation of the school's seventh grade class, and then follow this one class of students with a variety of extra resources and supports through high school graduation. It was part of a statewide initiative targeting a variety of seventh-grade cohorts at low performing schools around the state. The program had faced organizational challenges and had no director at the time, however, and according to Susan Yonezawa[49], the program was "a mess" at both the state and local levels. Because the BCMS administration and staff were still not very familiar with CREATE, and especially how it was distinct from GEAR UP, they frequently confused the various programs and their personnel. With GEAR UP being developed in a chaotic and confusing way, a large part of Yonezawa's time was spent smoothing over their blunders with the school and, in many ways, "just trying to keep us and GEAR UP from getting kicked out of the school."

At the same time, Luke Kennedy was busy with a host of tasks related to coordinating details with each partner in the South Bay Project. At LFC his activities involved such tasks as helping develop and organize the course syllabus and reader,

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[48] The mission of GEAR UP is to significantly increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. Enacted in 1998, GEAR UP funds partnerships of high-poverty middle schools, colleges and universities, community organizations, and business to work with entire grade levels of students. The partnerships provide a range of services that include tutoring, mentoring, information on college preparation and financial aid, an emphasis on core academic preparation and, in some cases, scholarships. GEAR UP works with a particular cohort of students, starting in 7th grade or earlier and following them through high school graduation. BCMS was officially a "GEAR UP school" between Fall, 1999 and Spring, 2001 (although GEAR UP was not very active at the school until Fall, 2000). GEAR UP was also affiliated with UCSD and eventually worked to coordinate its programs at BCMS with CREATE.

[49] Interview with Susan Yonezawa, 11/19/01.

going around to programs and classes to talk about and recruit students for the Practicum Course, scheduling and setting up arrangements for video conferencing sessions, training students in field note and email methods and procedures for the course, and of course, helping schedule, train, and monitor student participation in site activities. As a part of meeting these responsibilities, Kennedy was a frequent visitor and participant in the LFC class as well, where he would address course logistics and student concerns. At BCMS, Kennedy was busy helping set up site arrangements and activities and gradually becoming more acquainted with school circumstances and personnel and exploring ways of strengthening CREATE's partnership with the school. Back at UCSD, Kennedy coordinated the CREATE portion of these partnership activities and worked, via extensive emails and meetings, to keep the CREATE team up to date on what he was doing and keep them aware of problems and new developments. Simultaneously, he was also taking steps to explore potential collaborations with other institutions and programs at UCSD and in Border City, as well pursuing a handful of other CREATE projects.

Needless to say, neither Kennedy nor other CREATE staff had the time or resources to head up a special effort to develop the BCMS after-school computer-based curriculum. And in many respects, this was okay with CREATE for the time being. BCMS appreciated the efforts CREATE was making to set up special after-school activities and bring in college students to mentor and tutor their middle school students. The particulars of this activity or the extent to which it embodied CREATE's or the 5th Dimension's theoretical principles were less important to the school, perhaps largely irrelevant. Just the act of CREATE making good on its promises to set up the program was helping CREATE build a stronger relationship with the school. By the end of the

school year, this relationship was improving to the point of CREATE and BCMS beginning to collaborate on other ventures more integral to the functioning of the school, such as working together to plan professional development activities and strategies for addressing the needs of the school's lowest performing students.

2. CREATE Sponsored After-School Activities at BCMS

CREATE's Tuesday/Thursday after-school program began at BCMS in the Fall of 1999. It was set up as a voluntary, drop-in class, open to any middle school student who wanted to participate. The class was called the "5th Dimension" (borrowing the name of the model program that CREATE had originally intended to implement at BCMS, in large part because the school had grown familiar with the idea of having the after-school activity by that name). At the same time, the other activity that CREATE had helped establish at the school the previous year, Game Designer Studio, continued on Wednesday's. Both activities were open from 2:45-4:45 in the school's computer lab, room 504.

At Game Designer Studio, students received hands-on instruction from a UCSD professor, Jerry Balzano, in how to make their own computer games. Luke Kennedy usually attended as well, particularly to help coordinate and oversee the involvement of the visiting LFC students. Typically, somewhere between 12 and 20 BCMS students showed up for the activity, and a small core group was consistently present throughout the year. To provide these students with additional motivation, CREATE and BCMS arranged the class so that students who completed 60 hours of Game Designer Studio could receive 1 credit, equivalent to an elective course at the school. Not all students who

attended the class worked on designing computer games (some did their homework, for example), but the class offered a clear focus and direction for the majority of students that attended.

The Tuesday/Thursday "5th Dimension" program was, by contrast, much more open-ended and largely unstructured. It functioned more like an open lab. Students were able to choose from a variety of computer-based activities, such as working on homework, doing research on the Internet, playing educational computer games, or, for a handful of students who also attended Wednesday's Game Designer Studio, getting extra time to work on designing their own computer games. In general, Luke Kennedy or Mr. Gonzalez would make suggestions about what students should work on if they came to class without a clear activity in mind, or if they seemed bored, distracted, or otherwise disengaged with academic tasks. But for the most part, student activities were largely self-directed and self-motivated.

Attendance on these days varied widely. Occasionally, Kennedy remembers the lab being full of students such that some had to work in the adjoining room (approximately 30-40 students would have been present on such a day). On a typical day, however, there were somewhere between 15-20 students. Most of the students who attended the 5th Dimension class were students of Mr. Gonzalez and found out about the program directly from him. Sometimes, Mr. Gonzalez would give his students extra credit to come to the after-school class and try out some math-based educational software. Many of these students would then keep coming back, often bringing their friends. Other students found out about the activities because they came to the computer lab to do homework for another class. Occasionally, still other students would come that

heard about the after school activities from other teachers, counselors, or school-wide announcements.

For a few months during that first semester of the 5th Dimension (Fall 1999), Luke Kennedy initiated a short-lived effort to make it possible for students with attendance and minor discipline problems—in the school's "O Class"—to participate in the 5th Dimension after-school program in lieu of Saturday school detention. According to Kennedy, students would complete one of the computer-based activities available and then write a few sentences about it. This, Kennedy argued, was better than the alternative of "doing nothing" during detention. The participation of O Class students faded, however, because it only worked when Kennedy was available to monitor the students. Neither BCMS teacher, Jose Gonzalez, nor BCMS computer lab technician, Martin Quinto, saw it as their role to oversee the students, and, what's more, the school wanted to see these "problem kids" in a more disciplined environment than the 5th Dimension program.[50] For these reasons, the formal participation of O Class students in the after school program was suspended.

BCMS Computer Lab Technician, Martin Quinto, gradually came to have an important role and presence in the after-school programs. His desk and work area were in the computer lab, and he frequently got involved in supervising how the equipment was being used (or misused, as he often pointed out) in addition to attempting to manage student behavior. Eventually, toward the middle of the year, CREATE hired Quinto to help staff the Game Designer Studio and act as the program's liaison between BCMS and CREATE. He was thus almost always present on Wednesday's but, because his work

[50] Interview with Luke Kennedy, 10/15/01.

often kept him after school anyway, he was often in and out of Tuesday/Thursday 5th Dimension activities as well.

An important side note in the development of the partnership is that about midway through the year, both Quinto and Gonzalez accepted jobs with the Border City Adult School to teach computer classes at night, two nights a week. They taught the class side by side in the adjoining rooms of the BCMS computer lab. Topics included basic keyboarding and word processing skills, as well as instruction in simple drawing programs and a range of other applications. In this context, Quinto and Gonzalez had more opportunities to get to know each other and build a stronger working relationship. At the same time, they were learning how to teach computer skills to adults that Luke Kennedy thought could be adapted to the 5th Dimension context. While a year later Quinto and Gonzalez would decide to work with Luke Kennedy and me to try out these kinds of activities with the middle school students, at the time they remained uninterested in such an effort.[51]

3. La Frontera College Context

Throughout the first year of site activities at BCMS, La Frontera College (LFC) students played an integral role. They began assisting and participating in the BCMS 5th Dimension and Game Designer Studio classes when these classes first started, during the Fall Semester, 1999. Fourteen LFC students enrolled in a special section of Psychology 101 and an independent study with Professor Susan Buckley.[52] They completed the

[51] Ibid.
[52] This number reflects how many LFC students remained active in the course throughout the semester. Typically, a few more students enrolled in the course than actually participated.

regular requirements for the introductory psychology class, as well as supplemental readings and assignments for the independent study. As a part of their class activities, these LFC students visited BCMS once a week and participated in either the 5th Dimension or Game Designer Studio activities. In the first semester during the school's three-week intersession break,[53] Luke Kennedy made arrangements for the LFC students to work with a class at the middle school doing special computer projects using *HyperStudio* software. This way, LFC students didn't miss out on doing some kind of site-related activities during the school's three-week break. At the end of intersession, Kennedy tried briefly to get BCMS students in the 5th Dimension interested in doing *HyperStudio* projects. After attendance plummeted, however, the class resumed the regular, more open-ended selection of activities that students had grown to expect.

At BCMS, LFC students would select a student to work with (or Kennedy or Gonzalez would help them find a student) and they would work side-by-side with the student on the computer tasks at hand. Often, the LFC students acted as helpers or teachers, assisting BCMS students to problem solve and develop strategies for succeeding at their work. Other times, the BCMS students got to be more like "the experts," helping the LFC students get acquainted with unfamiliar software and class procedures. Back at the LFC course, students were learning about socio-cultural theories of child development and learning (Cole, 1996; Vygotsky, 1978). They were being encouraged to build strong rapport with BCMS students, initiate conversations and get to know them and, where possible, help scaffold their social and academic learning and development.

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[53] As BCMS is a year-round school, intersession refers to the three week periods between school terms in which most of the school is on vacation. Students who are doing poorly in key subjects, however, are required to attend minimum school days and take extra "intersession" courses.

Later in this chapter, when I discuss the second year of the project's implementation, I will be examining in greater detail the themes in the LFC course and the resulting interactions between LFC and BCMS students at site.

Already during this first semester, other key features of the LFC course were in place. The class was typically taught as a discussion seminar in which students talked about their experiences at their site placements and tried to relate key points from course readings to what they were learning in practice. At several points in the quarter, the class would meet in a special room with video conferencing capability for "distance learning" discussion sessions taught by UCSD faculty member, Mike Cole. Students were also responsible for writing ethnographic field notes about their site experiences and submitting these for comments via email to the LFC and UCSD professors and staff involved in the course. Finally, students were responsible for writing a research paper about some aspect of their experiences and observations at site.

During the second semester, Spring 2000, the LFC course was formalized as an approved class, "Practicum in Leaning and Development." Students were required to have already completed, or be concurrently enrolled in, an introductory psychology or sociology course as well. In other ways, the course was set up similar to the first semester. Thirteen LFC students participated in the course and attended either 5th Dimension or Game Designer Studio activities. This semester, however, during the BCMS 3-week intersession break, Luke Kennedy made arrangements for the LFC Practicum students to attend a new UCSD-CREATE sponsored activity at another school, "La Clase Mágica" at Seaside Elementary. As will be described in greater detail below, this was part of an effort to expand CREATE's South Bay Project to include new partners

and activities. The following semester (Fall 2000), with this expanded partnership now in place, LFC Practicum students would have the option of attending BCMS, Seaside Elementary, or another site, the Familia Center, as their site placement for the semester. This would substantially change the nature of the Practicum course and limit the number of LFC students available to attend BCMS.

4. South Bay Project Expansion: LCM Joins the Partnership

As described in Chapter 1, UCSD Professor Olga Vásquez had long been involved in helping develop and study optimal computer-integrated learning environments for Mexican-origin, bilingual children. The activity she developed in San Diego's North County was called La Clase Mágica (LCM). It served primarily younger children in an after-school, community based setting. By 1999, LCM had a well-trained staff and research team and was looking to expand and extend their successful program to new settings. At the same time, Vásquez was integrally involved with CREATE's activities. The previous year, she had accepted a position as CREATE's Associate Director and, for nearly a decade before that, she had worked as a colleague of Mike Cole and Bud Mehan toward educational equity goals. As CREATE was involved in developing new school-university partnership endeavors, Vásquez and the LCM staff and research team began collaborating toward the goal of adapting La Clase Mágica to one of CREATE's partner schools.

The CREATE team had pursued the idea of developing a South Bay LCM site at one of the elementary schools that feed BCMS, but had decided that it was more

important to put these resources toward a partnership cluster that was less well served. A UCSD partner elementary school in one such cluster, Seaside Elementary, was interested in the proposed activities and was able to proceed with the collaboration. The LCM team began to establish the activities at Seaside in 1999 and by Spring Semester, 2000, had activities up and running. By the Fall of 2000, the team had also set up LCM-type activities at a community center in a nearby community, the Familia Center.

From early in the development of these South County LCM sites, LFC students played an important role. As at BCMS, LFC students helped staff and assisted children in the activities. Yet the LFC course that supported LCM at Seaside and the Familia Center was different from the course that supported the BCMS activities. In the case of LCM, LFC student participation in the school and community sites was set up as a short-term arrangement by an LFC adjunct faculty member, and was not institutionalized within the LFC system to provide ongoing support. To work toward the long-term sustainability of the South County LCM activities, the LCM team thus began collaborating more closely with the CREATE-LFC-BCMS partnership with the specific goal of having a more consistent pool of LFC students participating in their site activities. It was at this time that the "South Bay Project" became the official title of this new multi-institutional collaboration, a collaboration that now officially encompassed CREATE (with a growing number of UCSD collaborators), LFC, BCMS, Seaside Elementary, and the Familia Center.

As mentioned above, by Spring Semester, 2000, LFC Practicum students began participating in LCM activities at Seaside Elementary for three weeks during the BCMS intersession break. By the following semester, Fall 2000 (Semester 3), LFC Practicum

students had the option of choosing to attend Seaside, The Familia Center, or BCMS. Now, LFC students would remain at their chosen site placement for most of the semester, except when their site was closed due to holiday, vacation, or intersession break, in which case they would attend an alternate site. This arrangement provided the college students with ongoing site activities as well as contrasting learning environments to participate in and study. Significantly, Professor Vásquez and the LCM staff and research team would now make a contribution to the LFC Practicum Course as well—by interacting and meeting with LFC students at the LCM sites, by visiting the LFC class from time to time, and for Vásquez, by leading Distance Learning video conferencing discussion sessions from UCSD.

The involvement of the new sites also presented the South Bay system of activities with new challenges. The LFC Practicum Course now had to address the site experiences of students in diverse institutional settings, engaged in a wider variety of computer-based activities, and working with young people in different developmental stages (ranging from younger childhood to early adolescence). This diversity presented important opportunities for LFC students to share with each other and learn from the differences between the sites, but it also increased the range of issues the class as a whole needed to address. Importantly, the LFC faculty in charge of the Practicum Course also now had new CREATE/UCSD partners with whom to build and manage working relationships, and new site activities to learn about and keep tabs on. For CREATE staff, the new partners meant even greater levels of coordination needed between a wider range of institutions around scheduling, personnel, procedures, etc. From the standpoint of activities at BCMS, however, the most striking impact and challenge of the expanded

partnership was to dramatically reduce the number of LFC Practicum students available to participate in the BCMS after-school activities.

B. SECOND YEAR OF "5TH DIMENSION" IMPLEMENTATION (SEMESTER 3)

1. My Entry into the South Bay Project and Role as a Participant Observer

I began working for CREATE as a Research Assistant toward the end of the summer, 2000, before the start of the Fall Semester (semester 3). I was hired to document and examine the South Bay Project, focusing on Tuesday/Thursday 5th Dimension activities at BCMS and, to some extent, the Practicum Course at LFC. I had learned about the project from Mike Cole, my dissertation advisor, and Bud Mehan, CREATE's Director and a member of my dissertation committee. I was already generally familiar with the background of the project and understood its theoretical goals and rationale. As a Graduate Student in UCSD's Communication Department, I had worked closely with Olga Vásquez and La Clase Mágica several years earlier, and had also become familiar with the 5th Dimension and a variety of its related endeavors. My research interests and studies had included efforts to create optimal learning environments for youth, especially Chicano and Latino youth, and efforts to change and improve our public educational system. More broadly, my studies were motivated by an interest in the role that the educational system has typically played in contributing to social inequality, and the potential for harnessing the system to help achieve the goals of social equity and justice.

Within this context, I had paid attention to UCSD's response to the ban on affirmative action and was well aware of, and supportive of, CREATE's efforts to improve K-12 education and diversity in higher education. My previous studies had given

me an appreciation for the challenges associated with trying to affect equity-minded educational changes, and I was somewhat skeptical about what CREATE might be able to achieve. At the same time, I was intrigued by the possibilities and potential of such an effort, and attracted to the idea getting more closely involved with a good team of people working toward important goals.

When I met with Bud Mehan to discuss the position, I received fairly open-ended instructions. We decided that I would act as a participant observer in the activities and help document how the project was working out in *practice*. The Tuesday/Thursday "5th Dimension" class at BCMS would be my focus, in large part because it had received few extra resources from CREATE in terms of research support or extra staffing (other than Luke Kennedy). At the same time, Mehan pointed out, there were anecdotes coming from the school about students that were succeeding in the after-school context beyond what they could typically accomplish in school or on their own. A possible research topic that we discussed involved looking at if and how these students might be translating this success back into their regular classroom activities and academic work, and how the program as a whole might be impacting the larger culture of the school (such as teacher practices, ways of interacting with students, etc.). I remember being intrigued with these questions. I liked the idea of documenting a program that modeled good pedagogy and curriculum, and I liked the idea of examining its effectiveness as an educational intervention.

Before thinking seriously about potential research topics, however, it was necessary for me to get my feet wet in the project and see first hand what was actually going on. To this end, I began traveling around the South Bay with Luke Kennedy,

shadowing his activities at each of the partnering institutions. At LFC, we visited a gathering of students interested in UniversityLink to tell them about the Practicum course and encourage them to sign up for it. We also met with Professor Susan Buckley to discuss the course schedule and reader. We walked around the campus, and I was struck by the strong presence of Chicano and Latino students and the frequent sound of conversations in Spanish as I passed by small groups of students. This was a remarkable contrast from the UCSD campus, only 30 miles north of LFC.

At BCMS, I sat in on an afternoon partnership meeting with Luke Kennedy, Susan Yonezawa, Jose Gonzalez, Martin Quinto, and a few other teachers interested in collaborating with the project. There, the conversation centered on developing new activities for the 5th Dimension class and the possibilities of CREATE funding new software purchases. Susan Yonezawa proposed that CREATE pay for teachers to develop some assignments and curriculum around the new purchases. Conversations also involved how to better connect what students were doing in their classes with their after-school activities. Jose Gonzalez proposed to help set up a way for teachers to send their students to the 5th Dimension with a form filled out, giving instructions about what the student should work on. Gonzalez could then sign off that the student had been working on what the teacher wanted, and perhaps the students could receive extra credit for their work. I remember thinking at the time that everything at the meeting seemed rather straightforward and wouldn't be hard to implement.

When the Practicum course and site activities actually started up, I continued traveling around with Luke Kennedy. We visited the LFC class, talked about the project, helped students get email accounts and learn to use the template for writing field notes.

At BCMS, we helped LFC students find their way to the computer room and then begin working with the middle school students. As I continued to participate in the after-school activities, I got chances to both observe what was going on around me, and to get involved in the activities myself. Sometimes I would work one-on-one with a student over an extended period of time doing a computer game, homework, Game Designer Studio, or some other computer project. Other times I would walk around the room, observing how the BCMS and LFC students worked together and interacted, and being available to answer questions or help out as needed. Gradually, I became more familiar and at ease with the range of activities available and with the students who typically showed up. In the process, I started getting to know a lot of the BCMS students better and building a good, friendly rapport with them. I also continued doing other things with Luke Kennedy, like attending the school's back-to-school night and visiting the parent advisory committee meeting to talk about our program, occasionally meeting with BCMS teachers, staff, or administration to address a variety of issues, and continuing to go to the LFC class to participate in class discussions and distance learning sessions.

These first several weeks of working with, and learning about, the South Bay Project were very tiring. There was a lot of driving around, many different kinds of activities in which to participate, a lot of new information to keep track of, as well as new people and programs to get to know. It took a little more than a month before I began documenting my activities and observations through detailed field notes. Even then, I was simply involved in too many partnership-related activities on any given week to be able to document all of them closely. Because I knew that my primary research focus would

be the 5th Dimension activities at the middle school, I decided to focus my field notes on my involvement in this program and my related activities at the school.

In what follows, I examine the third semester of Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer activities at BCMS, drawing largely from the observations recorded in these field note data. I also use field notes written by LFC students as well as formal and informal interviews with various participants to provide a richer, more varied perspective. About a month into the semester, the CREATE team was joined by Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Vanessa Baker. Baker focused her time and research on the LFC Practicum course and, to some extent, Seaside Elementary. She also attended the 5th Dimension and Game Designer Studio activities at BCMS periodically, however, and wrote detailed field notes about several of these visits. Her field note data also contribute to the following discussion.

2. BCMS After-School Context

On a typical day, school lets out around 2:40 in the afternoon. The empty, quiet school grounds quickly fill with the commotion of students getting out of class. Groups of friends spill into the hallways and break into loud conversations. Other friends run to find each other, see each other from afar and begin yelling back and forth. Both Spanish and English filled the space of the school hallways and corridors with an equally strong presence. For the most part, all of this noise and activity traveled en masse toward the front doors of the school as students made their way off the school grounds. Anyone entering the school at this hour had to maneuver through this steady, excited stream of students, pouring out of the school.

Despite this sense of students being finished with school and "free" for the day, more restrictive features of the school culture were still present. Several school staff, typically including at least one of the school's vice principals, stood around the front steps to keep an eye on students and help control the getting-out-of-school mayhem. Similarly, the Border City police officer assigned to BCMS stood around after school, showing a consistent presence and often chatting with students and staff. According to several reports, the school was making an active effort to discourage nearby high school students from hanging around the middle school to recruit younger students for drug and gang activity (which had reportedly been a big problem in the past).

Back inside the school grounds, a number of BCMS students stayed behind to participate in a wide variety of after-school activities (about 15 % of the student body typically stayed after school). The activities included soccer and basketball, band and dancing, life skills, yearbook, chess club, and "girl power." They also included a wide range of academic enrichment and tutorial/remediation programs, such as an open homework lab in the library, a science fair club, a host of special tutorial sections with different teachers, and of course, CREATE's after-school computer activities. Funding for these programs (other than those sponsored by CREATE) came primarily from the "6 to 6"[54] initiative and, in the case of a handful of the academic enrichment and tutorial sessions, from the GEAR UP program (which now had a much stronger and more consistent presence at the school).

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[54] The "6 to 6" Extended School Day Program, funded by the City of San Diego and with various state and federal grants, offers children of working parents access to high quality, safe, affordable enrichment programs before and after school. The City of San Diego, in cooperation with area school districts, is committed to opening community schools before and after normal school hours to provide a safe place for elementary and middle school-aged children and youth. During the 2001-2002 school year, for example, the program will serve approximately 25,000 children at 202 schools within the City of San Diego.

A few minutes after school got out, the students staying for after-school programs typically scattered to their respective activities and the school would quiet down again. Chatter could still be heard, however, as small groups of students would take short breaks from whatever after-school activity they were doing. These students could be found running around, laughing and talking in small groups, or snacking on candy and soda they bought from the vending machines. Sometimes a few students would lean out of one of their classroom windows to call to a friend passing by. The atmosphere was clearly much more open and flexible than during the regular school day, and many students seemed to respond with enthusiasm and playfulness. These students seemed to like hanging around the school after hours.

The door to the computer lab would typically stay locked until Mr. Gonzalez was done tying up loose ends in his classroom and made his way over to the lab. Mr. Quinto was typically inside, working at his desk or examining different computers and, as he sometimes remarked, enjoying a moment of quiet before the activities began. Frequently, a teacher worked with a class of students in the lab for the last period of the day, so he would be busy going around after all the students left, making sure everything was in order before the after-school activities began. Luke Kennedy was often around as well, standing outside the classroom to greet arriving BCMS and LFC students, or working inside the lab with Mr. Quinto on a wide variety of potential tasks.

Outside the computer lab, BCMS students would begin to line up for the class. Many clamored to be near the front of the line in order to have their choice of computers (or in several cases, just to be able to say, "Ha, ha, I'm ahead of you," to their friends). As LFC students arrived, they would stand around too, sometimes talking to a few BCMS

students, but more typically standing in a group apart, talking with each other. If Mr. Gonzalez wasn't there to open the door soon after school got out, some students would start leaving their backpacks by the door and running off to find friends, hang out, get snacks, or check out other after-school activities. Usually the waiting group was impatient for things to get started. Students frequently clamored in both English and Spanish, "Why can't we go in yet?" and "Where is Mr. Gonzalez?" Sometimes a few students would run off to his classroom to see how much longer he would be. As students waited, a small handful would start hurling mild insults and put downs at each other. Occasionally, a couple of the boys would start arguing, kicking, or shoving each other, and one of the adults standing nearby would intervene and tell them to stop, settle down, wait patiently, etc. In other words, the tone outside the classroom was hardly calm and subdued.

When Mr. Gonzalez arrived and the doors opened, the students waiting outside would file in quickly, stop briefly to sign in on an attendance sheet, and hurry to put their stuff down by the computer of their choice. The handful of students who came to work on their Game Designer Studio activities had computers assigned to them already, so they would go sit down at their usual computers. Once the class got underway, other students who had been out running around the school and hanging out would come trickling back in and find a free computer to work at (or a computer that one of their friends had saved for them). Sometimes these students would run through the door, still talking loudly and carrying their drinks and snacks. In these cases, Mr. Quinto, Mr. Gonzalez, or Luke Kennedy would usually remind them to eat outside, and lower their voices once in the computer room.

3. BCMS "5th Dimension" Participants

Typically, somewhere between 15 and 20 BCMS students would participate in BCMS 5th Dimension Activities. Usually, about half of these were boys, half girls. Most of the students were, as in the previous year, students of Mr. Gonzalez who had heard about the activity in one of his math classes. Because several of his classes were bilingual classes, many of these "bilingual students" started finding out about and attending the 5th Dimension class, at least periodically. Most of these students were Spanish dominant and in some cases, just beginning to learn English. They were often more recent immigrants from Mexico (coming to the U.S. within the past few years). These "bilingual students" often hung out together at school and, in many respects, formed their own social group.

The other BCMS students who typically attended the 5th Dimension were Spanish-English bilingual as well, but their Spanish fluency levels varied and they tended to use English when interacting with teachers, friends, and site staff. They were typically of Mexican heritage also, but had grown up in the U.S. or lived here for longer periods of time than the "bilingual students." These students were usually from either Mr. Gonzalez' "regular" math classes or from Wednesday's Game Designer Studio. A few students also attended from a science class where the teacher had arranged with Luke Kennedy to give students extra credit for completing science-related worksheets to go along with some new software CREATE had purchased. This wide collection of students often arrived at the after-school activity in pairs of friends; as a whole, they didn't represent any particular or easily distinguishable social group at the school. Students came to the 5th Dimension from other classes as well, but they frequently dropped in only briefly, staying just long enough to finish a homework assignment.

While there were 12 LFC students enrolled in the Practicum course, now these students were spread between a greater number of sites; only seven of the students attended the BCMS site activities somewhat regularly throughout the semester. All but one of these students was of Chicano/Latino heritage and several were bilingual. They typically came once a week for two hours, on one of the three days that site activities were available (attending either the 5th Dimension or Game Designer Studio). Sometimes they missed a week, either because of a visit to one of the other site locations, or because of some other excused or unexcused absence (many students had busy work schedules and had difficulty getting a consistent afternoon schedule that would allow them to come to site). On the whole, over the course of the semester they attended the BCMS site somewhere between 4-8 times. While a couple of these students regularly attended Wednesday's Game Designer Studio, most attended Tuesday or Thursday's 5th Dimension class. This meant that on any given day at the 5th Dimension, there were usually 2-3 LFC students present. While the frequency and exact combinations of these visits varied, the LFC students still came to have a familiar presence at the site. The BCMS students that they had worked with would often recognize them and call them by name (or nickname), seem pleased to see them, and ask where they had been if they missed a session.

There were a handful of other people who were also involved in the Tuesday/Thursday sessions throughout the semester also. Mr. Gonzalez and Luke Kennedy typically moved around the room, sitting with students for brief periods of time to help them get started on an activity or get back on track when they ran into trouble. Sometimes, they would work on other projects, like looking over new software or making

a list of "high scores" to post on the wall. Other times, they would step out of the room for a few minutes. Mr. Gonzalez would need to handle some bit of school business, or Luke Kennedy would need to meet with other teachers, staff, or administrators to work on coordinating and further developing the school's collaborative activities with CREATE. Mr. Quinto was usually in and out of the room, doing other work-related activities. He would typically get pulled into dealing directly with the 5th Dimension class only when the activities got too loud or unruly and were distracting him from his work, or when he felt like the equipment was being mishandled or misused or there was another space or equipment-related issue that needed to be addressed.

Vanessa Baker and I were often present as well. Baker would typically be paired up with a BCMS student, playing the role of tutor/mentor (similar to the LFC students). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, I sometimes played this role of working one-on-one with a student, and sometimes played more of an observer role, walking around the room and helping students briefly when they needed it. As the semester progressed, sometimes Mr. Gonzalez or Luke Kennedy also asked me to keep an eye on things for a moment while they stepped outside, and I began to take on more of a supervisor role as well.

4. BCMS "5th Dimension" in Practice

As mentioned earlier, CREATE and 5th Dimension goals for the BCMS "5th Dimension" emphasized the benefits of mixing learning and play, of nurturing a culture of collaboration and non-hierarchical relationships, and of creating academically challenging learning activities, relevant to students' life experience. I was initially interested in documenting the program because I expected it to model good pedagogy and

curriculum, different from what students typically had available to them at school. I especially liked the idea of examining the program's effectiveness as an educational intervention and its ability to positively impact student learning and school practices.

Once I began visiting the BCMS 5th Dimension site, however, I realized that the program did not offer the kind of model educational intervention I had been hoping to study or that CREATE had wanted to help organize. In many ways, the after-school activity reproduced an atmosphere, or culture, similar to the traditional classroom, featuring discipline and control, hierarchical relationships between young people and adults, and even classroom rules that discouraged students from easily working together. The curriculum was also limited in its scope; it was typically remedial in nature and offered little in the way of activities that could both engage students and challenge them academically. What's more, the curriculum in itself was not set up to promote or enable students to collaborate or engage in joint activity. Finally, while LFC student participation showed some potential at helping counter these trends, this participation was mostly too limited in scope and underutilized to make a substantial contribution to the functioning of the program.

In what follows, I describe in greater detail how the BCMS 5th Dimension activity worked, in practice, related to these criticisms. This is especially significant because my observations and analysis of the shortcomings of the program led me to adopt new research questions and ultimately, contribute to efforts to change and improve the program. In the process, my methods as a researcher shifted from emphasizing participant observation to action research.

a. Learning Environment and Culture of the After-School Program

Early on in my visits to BCMS, I was struck by the ways in which the culture and "feel" of our 5th Dimension class more closely resembled a typical classroom than the model program that CREATE had intended (and that I had expected it to resemble). My prior experiences with 5th Dimension-related activities were in community-based settings in San Diego's North County. La Clase Mágica, where I had worked as a Research Assistant, was located in a small room on the grounds of a local Catholic church. There, computers were packed closely together on different sized tables throughout the room. Groups of children ran in and out of the facility, talking and playing loudly, while others gathered around computers to work with each other or with UCSD undergraduates on a wide range of computer games and tasks. Often these pairs and small groups were huddled closely together, sometimes sitting on each other's laps, talking excitedly and solving problems together. It was common to hear multiple conversations going on simultaneously, partially drowned out by all the computer bleeps, buzzes, and melodies going off throughout the room.

At the BCMS 5th Dimension site, space, movement, and sound was much more contained and controlled. About 40 computers were set up in rows on long tables around the perimeter of the room, and then also in a U-shape around the center of the room. Mr. Quinto, the computer lab technician, had his workstation on the inside of this U-shaped configuration. BCMS students sat scattered throughout the room, sometimes sitting next to a friend, sometimes sitting alone, and sometimes sitting with an LFC student. BCMS students would get up periodically to go talk with one of their friends, pick up something from the printer, or help out other students with their work. Others would get up to do

something mischievous, like print something they didn't have permission to print, turn on a computer where no one was sitting, tap another student on the back, or take someone's pen or disk. For the most part, however, BCMS students stayed sitting at their individual computers for the duration of the day's activities. When they did move around the room, Mr. Gonzalez and, in particular, Mr. Quinto, typically viewed their activity with some suspicion and told them to return to their seats and quiet down, or go outside. The result can be seen in an observation from one of my field notes of a typical day: "Overall, there was very little movement throughout the room, or between computers, once people were sitting down and working. For the most part, people stayed sitting at their own computers."[55]

The BCMS 5th Dimension site was also much more quiet than I expected. Each computer had headphones attached that students were supposed to use if their computer program made much noise. Otherwise, students kept the volume of their computers turned down low. Students were allowed to talk to each other, but if they got too loud or giddy, or too distracted from their work or otherwise "troublesome," Mr. Gonzalez or Mr. Quinto (and sometimes Luke Kennedy) would scold them or tell them to "settle down." In some cases, when a group of students was unable to quiet down, Mr. Gonzalez would separate them to opposite sides of the room or ask them to leave the class altogether. The mood of the after school program was thus relatively subdued. Neighbors sitting next to each other would still carry on conversations and enjoy brief fits of giggles, but they would tend to keep their voices low.

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[55] Personal field note for BCMS site, 10/26/00.

In these ways, the after-school program came to have a quality typical of school classrooms in which students both followed most of the rules and also tested the boundaries of what they could get away with, often engaging in subtle rule-breaking activities and mild forms of "resisting" teacher authority. Also like school, here students were under teacher surveillance and their activities were largely determined and dictated by adults. In this context, BCMS teachers and staff often played an authoritarian and disciplinarian role, telling students what they could and couldn't do with their time and attempting to maintain classroom order and control. Exacerbating these school-like disciplinary tendencies, on some occasions, Mr. Gonzalez even used the computer lab as a site to keep a few of his students after school for detention.

At the same time, the BCMS 5th Dimension provided students with a much greater degree of flexibility and freedom than what was available during their regular school day. Here, attendance was typically voluntary and students could come and go as they pleased. While adults largely determined the range of possible activities, students could engage in these activities without the typical pressures of school to be on task; they wouldn't be receiving any grades for their work and even the consequences of any mischief and misbehavior would be minimal. Also, the 5th Dimension rules and conventions, while somewhat strict, were much more lenient and flexible than what students were used to in the typical classroom. Mr. Gonzalez, for example, frequently attempted to joke around and be playful with students in ways that, according to him, he didn't usually do in his classroom.[56] Similarly, the presence of undergraduates also served to make the activity less like school. The LFC students were young adults, often recently out of high school,

[56] Personal Interview with Jose Gonzalez, Fall 2001.

and did not have the same authority figure-like presence of many of the older adults. Instead, they often added an element of liveliness into the after-school setting, making conversation and being playful with each other and with BCMS students.

With these important exceptions, however, the learning environment, or culture, of the after-school activity still seemed to reproduce some of the more restrictive aspects of a typical school or classroom culture. This feature of the BCMS 5th Dimension activity made it difficult to foster the kind of nurturing, collaborative learning culture CREATE had hoped for. Mixing learning with play was difficult because any BCMS students having "fun" and being "playful" had to keep this activity fairly quiet and contained or risk getting in trouble. Collaborative learning was difficult because BCMS teachers and staff discouraged student behavior that would typically facilitate joint activity, such as students talking with each other, moving around the room, and otherwise interacting with each other visibly, openly, or even loudly. Finally, non-hierarchical relationships between young people and adults were difficult to build because adults were typically positioned as strong authority figures and "enforcers of rules" instead of more friend-like peers.

b. BCMS Student Engagement in Site Activities

Also unlike 5th Dimension sites that I had prior experience with, at the BCMS site there was much less evidence of students engaged in obvious forms of "joint activity" or meaningful collaboration, especially around more academic tasks. As described above, on any given day, a glance around the room found most BCMS students sitting in front of a computer, working independently (often with the computer headphones on). Some students sat side-by-side each other, doing a similar game or activity as their neighbor,

talking quietly or helping each other out along the way. A few LFC undergrads sat paired up with BCMS students, scattered around the room. Sometimes, the pairs seemed jointly engaged in the activities, talking and working together. Often, however, the LFC students seemed more like passive, quiet observers, sitting slightly apart from, or even behind the BCMS students and unable to really join in the activity or engage in a sustained interaction. Sometimes, the LFC students spent time talking with each other, instead of trying to figure out how to talk with the students they were sitting next to. Often, this seemed to be occurring because the BCMS students acted like and said that they didn't need any help and were doing fine on their own. When the BCMS students behaved like this, the undergraduates typically didn't have the skills or know how to take the initiative to get involved in the activity in a more meaningful way.

At the same time, I noticed that when BCMS students were left alone they were rarely "doing fine" or actually succeeding at *academic tasks*. Not surprisingly, they needed some kind of encouragement or external motivation, and often some assistance, to try something new, challenging, or something that felt hard. As I moved around the room, I saw trends in how students tended to approach their work if left on their own.

Students doing Internet research for a homework assignment, for example, would typically find a web site loosely related to their topic and without even reading it, copy sections of it directly into their assignment or print it out to take home. If I or someone else worked more closely with them, it often became apparent that the student did not actually have the literacy skills needed to understand the text. Students working on *Math Blasters* or *Number Crunchers* would frequently choose a very low, simple level to play at and even then, would run through the motions of the game doing mostly guess work

and not actually trying to solve the math problems. Students working on a variety of science-related worksheets using the software, *The Way Things Work*, would try to skip through learning about scientific explanations of phenomena and just find the right answer to "fill in the blank." In other words, none of these activities were in themselves motivating a high level of student engagement. Students working on homework or "extra credit" activities would typically work as quickly as possible and then leave. Other students working on the math games, for example, seemed more interested in hanging out in the after-school space, but not particularly interested in building academic skills.

For the most part, the activities that students seemed to get deeply engaged in were of a different variety, less directly related to building academic skills or supporting in-school learning. The students regularly involved in Game Designer Studio would get deeply engrossed, for example, in drawing new characters and adding new features into their computer games. A handful of students were dedicated artists and loved to use a simple drawing program to make picture after picture. Another group of students often enjoyed using a word processing program in *AppleWorks* to write their names or other simple phrases and then change the font, color, size, and position of the text over and over again until they found the combination they liked best. Sometimes Mr. Gonzalez would decide that these drawing and simple writing activities weren't allowed and that students needed to do one of the educational computer games for a certain amount of time before being allowed "free time" on the computer. Even then, students would often "sneak back" to their drawing and simple text-based activities when the teacher wasn't looking.

Finally, one of the favorite activities for a lot of the students was to go on-line. Students from Game Designer Studio would go on the Internet, for example, to find characters and music to download into their games. Sometimes they would get so caught up in the Internet and downloading things that they would abandon working on their games for large chunks of time. Typically, Mr. Gonzalez and Luke Kennedy would tell other students that they couldn't go on-line until the last 20 minutes of class, and that they needed to write a few sentences about what they were going to do on-line and why. A number of students often seemed to be waiting around for this last part of the day. Some even spent most of their class time working on these few sentences—at a snail's pace—chatting quietly and enjoying each other's company until finally getting the approval to go on the Internet. Once on-line, they looked at their favorite "fan sites," typically musicians and movie stars. Mr. Gonzalez had told several students that he would let them print out a picture of one of their favorite stars before the end of the school term, and many had this in mind and were trying to decide which picture to choose. Some would also attempt to get into an Internet email program and check or send an email without Mr. Gonzalez or Mr. Quinto seeing them (as it was against school rules to use email).

In these ways, while students seemed to be using the after-school activity for a range of interesting and often rewarding purposes, they were rarely, on their own, figuring out how to engage directly in academically rigorous or challenging activities. In fact, the after-school program could perhaps be characterized as supporting a general culture of academic disengagement and a somewhat playful challenging of school rules and teacher authority. As will be described in greater detail below, however, there was

some indication that collaboration with older mentor/tutors, teachers, or other adults in the room was sometimes able to help shift this tendency. For some children, a comment by Mr. Gonzalez or another adult to "try a harder level" was enough to make them attempt and practice academic activities with which they were less comfortable. For others, an undergraduate student making a sustained effort to make a connection with them and assist them on the task at hand was needed to engage them in academic learning and development.

Still, in the BCMS 5th Dimension program it was not easy to create the conditions where collaboration and joint activity could lead to genuine scaffolding and development, especially around more traditional forms of academic learning. As discussed earlier, the more disciplinarian and controlling features of the after-school program tended to discourage collaborative activity. At the same time, the organization of the space and technology in the computer room facilitated the tendency for individuals to work independently at their own computers and the range of activities available did not typically offer students the possibility of working together toward a shared goal or project. What's more, the more "academic" activities that were available (such as math games, homework, and Internet research) were organized in such a way as to demand little of students beyond practicing remedial math and literacy skills. These activities were rarely demanding or interesting enough to students to get them genuinely engaged in learning or to motivate them to turn to others for assistance.

c. LFC Student Participation in Site Activities

As described above, there were never enough LFC students participating in the BCMS 5th Dimension activities for more than just a few BCMS students to be paired up with a college student at any given time. When the LFC students were able to work with BCMS students, the results varied. Given that the nature of the culture and range of available activities at the BCMS 5th Dimension site did little to encourage or facilitate BCMS and LFC student collaboration, it is understandable that it wasn't easy or straightforward for LFC students to engage BCMS students in working with them. Representative excerpts from a variety of LFC student field notes best illustrate the range of typical LFC-BCMS student interactions as well as the kind of role that LFC students were and were not able to play at the site.

In many instances, BCMS students reacted to LFC students with initial reluctance and disinterest. For many LFC students, this was intimidating, sometimes even paralyzing. Laurel, one of the LFC college students, wrote about one such interaction:

> I sat in the middle of Carlos and Eric…I asked them how their three-week vacation was and they were just like "whatever"… Eric looked like something had been bothering him. I asked him and he told me "nothing" so I was like "OK"…I'm going to be honest. I don't really want to work at the middle school cause I find it hard for me to work with them, that is why I want to go to another site.[57]

Often, the LFC students reacted to being "rejected" by pulling back and being more passive participants in the activity. Sometimes, one of the adults in the room would try to help coax them back into a stronger level of participation by finding a different BCMS student for them to work with. Jesus, an LFC student that had been struggling to interact

[57] Laurel Silva field note, 10/11/00.

with a group of middle school students that acted like they didn't want his help, retreated to the corner of the room for several minutes. He explained:

> I was kind of scared inside. I stood in the corner from in which I could see the room. I was looking for children that looked like they really needed help. Every so often Lisa would come by and suggest that I find someone to work with. Eventually it got to the point where she assigned me to Vanessa. She was working on *Mathblaster* and was almost finished with it. She didn't need much help at first. Eventually she finished the game and I convinced her to try it at a higher level.[58]

In this instance, while Jesus was still shy about working with Vanessa and mostly kept quiet, he was still able to encourage her to try something harder than she probably would have tried on her own.

In a few instances, however, some of the more outgoing and persistent LFC students were able to build rapport with BCMS students despite a difficult beginning. Jorge, one of the LFC students who was most consistently successful at facing this kind of challenge, explains one of these interactions:

> When I entered the classroom I was given a section or row. When I made my first attempt to communicate with these children, I felt right away their rejection. These kids had no time for me; they were too busy working and playing their games to even notice me or my initial questioning. So I stayed and asked as many questions as I could, all related to the games they were playing. Finally, after 10 or 15 minutes one of them started actually questioning me about the same game he was playing. I think that he was maybe testing me or seeing if I had any idea or clue on how the game itself worked. After Andres started talking, it was just a matter or time before the rest of the kids started talking as well. Our first conversation was related to the games they were playing. After 25 minutes or maybe even more, I started feeling that they were somewhat accepting me in… I actually became one of them, part of their group. Not a grown up looking over them, but simply just another kid just like them playing the same games they were playing.[59]

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[58] Jesus Leon field note, 12/5/00.
[59] Jorge Ríos field note, 8/29/00.

In this example, through taking initiative and not giving up when faced with students who were initially ignoring him, Jorge was able to find a way to get the BCMS students relaxed and even being playful with him. On this particular day, the level of rapport they achieved eventually led to the BCMS students asking Jorge questions about college life.

On many occasions, unlike the above examples, some BCMS students were more welcoming of the LFC students. Michelle, another LFC student, explains how she sat next to a young girl named Diana to help her with math. After Michelle "settled in" and "softly introduced" herself to Diana, the two waited for a math-related website to download. In the mean time, they began talking and getting to know each other. Michelle explains:

> She asked me what grade I was in. I smiled and told her I was in college. Then she asked me what I was studying and I told her nursing. She seemed really interested in what that was all about so I asked her what she wanted to be when she grew up and she said she didn't know yet but liked science. I told her that the medical profession required a lot of sciences and then she started asking me how old I was. When I asked her how old she was she said that she was 12. She thought I was 18. When I told her I was 22 she was so surprised. We started laughing then we began the math problems… The first couple questions were pretty easy and then they started to get difficult. That's when Diana wasn't able to answer the questions so easily so I began walking her through step by step…[60]

In this instance, the rapport achieved between the pair served as a good foundation for turning to work on math and they continued to enjoy working together while discussing strategies for solving algebra problems.

Often, as in the above example, once an undergraduate had done the work of establishing a decent level of rapport and connection with one of the BCMS students, the two were able to collaborate well on academic tasks. This gave the LFC students an

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[60] Michelle Brigenti field note, 10/26/00.

important opportunity to try to help scaffold the learning and development of the BCMS students using ideas from their Practicum in Leaning and Development class. In course readings, distance learning and class discussion sessions, and visits from CREATE personnel, the LFC students heard and talked about the potential of engaging in a joint activity with a "more capable peer" to help a person accomplish with assistance what he or she could not yet accomplish alone. The theory they learned came from a tradition of socio-cultural psychology rooted in the work of L. S. Vygotsky (see for example, Vygotsky, 1978); it was also a foundational concept and goal for the 5th Dimension model (Cole, 1996). According to this theory, as people work together on a shared task, a less skilled participant can, through practice in the joint activity, come to master, internalize, and be able to succeed alone at a level of achievement initially possible only through collaboration. To accomplish this kind of growth and development requires that the activities that a pair is engaged in not be too easy or too advanced. Instead, the activities should be within a person's "Zone of Proximal Development" (or ZOPED); harder than what the person can accomplish alone, but not too far beyond his or her "next stage" of development. At the same time, the "more capable peer" cannot do too much or too little of the work, but must find the right balance of assistance that enables the "less capable peer" to practice and learn within their ZOPED.

Many LFC students attending BCMS thus tried to figure out how to help teach and assist BCMS students within the ZOPED. For example, LFC student Jorge responded to this issue one day, reflecting that Mr. Gonzalez was helping students "too much" when they got stuck while playing *Museum Madness*. Instead of encouraging students to read the clues, he was just giving them the answers. Jorge commented:

> I feel that Mr. Gonzalez helps them too much. I am not saying that it is wrong but most of the children are sometimes too lazy to read instructions, follow the rules and solve their own problems. They rely too much on Mr. Gonzalez for help because they know he will give them the answers they are looking for. Helping children with their problems is one of our goals there. We are there to help them the best way we can. So not helping them as much as we usually do is another way of helping these children…[61]

With this in mind, Jorge's strategy for that day involved telling the student he was working with, Mayra, that they could not call on Mr. Gonzalez for help. Despite her insistence that they get the teacher, Jorge explained:

> …I simply told her to keep on reading the clues till she figured out what was needed to be done to solve the game. She did not like my idea at all, but she listened to me. Eventually we figured out a way of solving the problems as they would arise, without asking for help.[62]

Michelle, another LFC student, also demonstrated in one of her field notes how she thought her work with a middle school student related to the ZOPED concept. She wrote about how in working with BCMS student, Carlos, the two were each able to contribute their expertise to solving the problems in the game and thereby learn from each other. She explains:

> The object of the game was to match the tune of the song from hearing it, to matching it with the correct visual musical keys. This game was designed even for those who did not have any previous musical background or knowledge in music because the main focus was using your memory skill. You needed to remember the specific sound and match it with the specific key. After playing the first two songs, I was amazed at Carlos' progress. I asked him if he was musically inclined and he had mentioned that he played the saxophone. Luckily we had something in common. Having played the piano for many years, Carlos and I were able to complete and share the task of finishing the songs given to us… I really found this experience with Carlos to be influential. Carlos and I helped one another out… There was definitely a feeling of proximal learning

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[61] Jorge Ríos field note, 10/9/00.
[62] Ibid.

> between us. We both learned different aspects of the game from each other and we trusted one another to get the right answers.[63]

In this example it isn't clear the extent to which either partner helped the other develop a deeper comprehension or understanding of the subject matter through the course of the game. Still, Michelle is able to illustrate here how an older and younger student, working together, can each be more or less experienced in different aspects of the activity and can potentially serve as a "more capable peer" to aid in the other's development. What Michelle articulates in this example was something experienced by other LFC students as well, especially when new to the site and a more experienced BCMS student helped orient them to the activities or showed them how to play a particular computer game. In general, when younger students could at least occasionally play the role of "expert," it helped to make the relationship less hierarchical and more peer-like. Often, this facilitated a sense of camaraderie and collaboration between the pair. As seen in other examples above, successful interactions would sometimes begin with LFC students asking questions of and trying to learn something from the middle school students.

These examples are a testament to the fact that most undergraduates were taking their role at BCMS seriously and trying to figure out how to contribute meaningfully to the students they worked with; and that they at least sometimes attempted to do this by reflecting on and utilizing concepts they were learning in the LFC Practicum course. At the same time, it is difficult to assess the extent to which the LFC students were actually able to help facilitate BCMS student learning and development. Often an LFC student field note would report "helping" BCMS students at different tasks, ranging from using

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[63] Michelle Brigenti field note, 10/12/00.

spell check and printing their homework to practicing reading and devising strategies for solving math problems. These field notes rarely specified, however, the details of the interactions in terms of how the two partners shared in the work and what if any changes occurred over time in the BCMS student's ability to take over completing the tasks without assistance.

What was much clearer was that, as described above, when BCMS students worked alone they rarely attempted to challenge themselves to do things they weren't reasonably comfortable doing alone, especially things involving school-like academic tasks. When BCMS students did work collaboratively with LFC students, however, there were many instances of BCMS students succeeding at higher levels of different computer games or attempting to practice and improve their reading, writing, or mathematics skills. In this way, while it is hard to determine the ultimate impact or success of these interactions in raising BCMS students' academic competence or ability, it is clear that LFC and BCMS students figuring out how to work well together created important opportunities for BCMS student growth and development that otherwise wouldn't have existed.

At the same time, it is important to note the limitations of the role that the undergraduates were able to play. As discussed earlier, on any given day there were very few LFC students present and most BCMS students worked without their assistance. What's more, quite often the LFC students had difficulty joining in the activities with the BCMS students in such a way that meaningful collaboration and joint activity could actually develop. This was understandable given the constraints and challenges of the classroom rules, activities, and overall culture, and the limited experience and training of

the LFC students that might enable them to more easily confront such challenges. Nonetheless, sometimes LFC students were still able to establish a good rapport with a young person and use it toward working together and collaborating on an academic task. Despite the special and important interactions between BCMS and LFC students that were sometimes occurring, however, as the quarter progressed I became increasingly convinced that, in general, the LFC students were being underutilized in the BCMS 5th Dimension and that their potential contribution was not being realized.

C. DEFINING A NEW ROLE FOR CREATE (AND FOR MY RESEARCH) AT BCMS

Faced with the variety of ways in which the after-school program was not living up to CREATE and 5th Dimension goals, I was forced to rethink my role in the program and the goals of my research. This process began early in the semester. I was uncomfortable with the idea of putting my time, skills, and attention into just documenting and examining the existing program. As was becoming of increasing concern to the entire CREATE team, the nature of the learning culture, activities, and LFC student participation did not seem rich or interesting enough to have a significant impact on student academic achievement or the culture of the school. For these reasons, my mentors and I decided that the BCMS 5th Dimension as it currently existed did not offer a model of educational intervention worthy of close examination and analysis and that CREATE should play a much greater role in shaping and guiding its development.

Within the first semester of beginning my job as a Research Assistant, my interests and focus thus started to move toward trying to help improve the BCMS 5th

Dimension activity. At site, I had a few informal talks with Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto about what might be done. None of these discussions led to any immediate changes at the site, but they did help me begin to understand the school's perspective and approach to the program. With CREATE's "South Bay" research team, I used my field notes and our staff meetings to share my observations and growing concerns. Shortly, Vanessa Baker joined the team as a Postdoctoral Fellow and began making similar observations and criticisms of the BCMS activities. The research team was, in general, already aware of and concerned about some of the program's shortcomings and not terribly surprised by our findings. As mentioned earlier, given the amount of work it took to maintain the various partnership activities in the South Bay Project, the CREATE team had not had the resources or personnel to put much time or effort into designing or helping implement a stronger curriculum. Still, the research team was very interested in helping think through and discuss how the program could potentially be improved and what role CREATE might be able to play in the process.

Over the course of the semester I began to deepen my level of activity at BCMS, in large part so that I would be in a position to help our program be more effective. On the one hand, I wanted to better understand the context of the school, particularly the constraints and obstacles to designing and implementing a model educational intervention more aligned with CREATE and 5th Dimension goals. On the other hand, I wanted to help figure out ways that our program could more directly connect with and support students' in-school learning and overall school experience.

I thus began spending more time at the middle school, participating in a range of activities in addition to the BCMS 5th Dimension. CREATE was in the process of

sponsoring and organizing a variety of "Departmental Meetings" where teachers from each subject matter could meet to discuss their core curriculum and how to align what they were teaching to the state standards. I sat in on these meetings and became more acquainted with many teachers in the school and with many of the school's initiatives, priorities, and concerns. I also visited several classrooms as a participant observer and "helper" to the class, and began to piece together a better picture of what school was like for students and teachers during a regular school day. Finally, I spent time walking around the school during lunch recess, speaking informally with teachers, staff, administrators, and students. In the process, I continued learning about the school and deepening my relationships with different members of the school community.

Throughout the semester, neither I nor the other CREATE staff and researchers came up with any definitive plans for how to change the BCMS 5th Dimension program. This was in large part because anything we wanted would have to be constructed in cooperation with the school and we were still figuring out what we might be able to advocate for and help make possible. Still, we looked for opportunities to work with the school to address these issues more directly. One such opportunity came at the end of the Fall semester (semester 3) when Luke Kennedy, Vanessa Baker and I met with Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto to review the past semester and discuss ideas for the upcoming Spring semester (semester 4). In the course of this meeting, we ended up deciding on making several changes in the Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer curriculum. As a part of these plans, we agreed that I would work with Mr. Gonzalez to help run the program and develop the new curriculum.

This meeting helped set the stage for a new phase in the partnership between BCMS and CREATE, one characterized by a much greater degree of involvement from CREATE in attempting to shape, guide, and help develop the after school activities. In the process, my role as a researcher shifted from a participant observer to an action researcher, in which I was not only involved in documenting the program, but actively trying to help change it. This third phase of the study will be the topic of the next chapter.

Chapter IV:
Using Action Research to Change the "5th Dimension" (Phase 3)

"To understand history, try to change it."—Karl Marx

This chapter traces the process by which CREATE began working more directly to affect change in BCMS Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer activities, primarily over the course of Spring semester, 2001 (semester 4). I played a central, multifaceted, and complicated role in this process. In addition, my position as both change agent and researcher enabled me to document the details of both the new after-school activity that unfolded and the processes by which changes occurred. The challenges and barriers we confronted in the process of trying to make these changes, and the overall limitations in what we were able to achieve, reveal important insights into the workings of both a "low performing" school and a K-16, School-University partnership.

The changes CREATE sought to promote were not terribly grand or ambitious, but they were definitely aimed at bringing the after-school program more in line with CREATE's theoretical vision of an optimal educational activity and to transform the partnership relationship with the school, to be based more on shared understandings and goals. The process of trying to achieve these changes in the program was not straightforward or easy, however. We confronted both practical and ideological barriers and constraints in working with the school and in coordinating various members of CREATE involved with the effort. These barriers and constraints included important differences in how CREATE and BCMS personnel understood and approached what should happen in the after-school program, how resources should be distributed and labor

divided within the partnership, and, more generally, how middle school students should be educated.

Over the course of this semester, the Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer program never became a "model educational intervention" as measured by CREATE or 5th Dimension standards. Still, significant changes were achieved that were in the direction that CREATE considered improvements. These changes can be seen in the nature of the computer-based activities that students worked on, the learning culture that developed, as well as the quality of BCMS and LFC student participation and engagement in the program. The changes can also be seen in the stronger partnership relationship that evolved between BCMS, LFC, and CREATE agents involved in the after-school activity, including greater degrees of collaboration, trust, and at times, shared perspective.

A. TRANSFORMING THE "5TH DIMENSION" INTO "COMPUTER SKILLS AND PROJECTS"

As described in Chapter 3, over the course of the Fall 2000 semester (semester 3) CREATE researchers and staff became increasingly uncomfortable and dissatisfied with the limitations of the BCMS Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer program. In face-to-face meetings and over email, CREATE's South Bay research team discussed the discrepancy between CREATE's goals and the realities of how the program was operating in practice. Our growing sense of frustration about the state of the BCMS activities was exemplified by our confusion about what to call the program. Mike Cole, for example, commented on several occasions to the rest of the CREATE team that he

felt uncomfortable calling what transpired at BCMS a "5th Dimension" because it failed to live up to so many of the basic principles of the intended model. CREATE's South Bay team, sharing this discomfort, gradually started using other phrases to refer to the program, such as "Tuesday/Thursday computer class," "Tuesday/Thursday activities at BCMS," or some other equally general phrase. At this point, the gradual change in what we were calling the activity was only internal to CREATE. The activities at BCMS remained the same and the school continued to refer to the activity as the "5th Dimension."

It is important to note that when members of the CREATE team were interacting with BCMS teachers and staff, we did not generally talk about our frustrations with the program or how it was not measuring up to CREATE's theoretical vision. In many ways, this gap in communication reflects the nature of the collaboration at that point. Before the after-school program began, CREATE and BCMS had not done the work of coming to a shared understanding or vision about what principles should guide the program's curriculum and pedagogy, or what the program should look like in practice (discussed in Chapter 2). With CREATE then playing a somewhat limited role in developing the BCMS "5th Dimension," the program that evolved was understandably heavily influenced by the culture of the school in general, as well as by the beliefs and norms of the specific BCMS teacher and staff who were carrying the major burden of running the activity, Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto. At the same time, amongst the CREATE team, there was a general sense of being "guests" in the school. Following CREATE's principles for developing school-university partnerships (discussed in Chapter 2), we hoped to build trusting relationships with school personnel as a basis for the process of working

collaboratively toward joint educational change goals. We did not want to criticize, offend, or alienate the people we were working with, but we did want to find ways of addressing with them the partnership and educational issues that mattered to us. For these reasons, we proceeded cautiously and carefully in how we raised our concerns about the program with BCMS teachers, administrators, and staff.

During most of the semester, there were also few structured opportunities for the BCMS and CREATE personnel involved in the after-school program to meet together to share their perspectives or concerns. Instead, opportunities for this kind of communication typically occurred in the context of informal conversations between a few people while the after-school activities were underway. On these occasions, CREATE and BCMS agents occasionally expressed concerns about the program to each other or their ideas about how to improve it, but very little came from these discussions in the way of deeper changes to the program.

Early on in the semester, for example, Mr. Gonzalez commented to me that students were getting bored with the limited range of computer activities currently available in our program and that he hoped the new software would come soon. I used the opportunity to mention that I thought it might be good for us to develop some interesting computer-based projects for students to work on, ideally ones in which they could collaborate in small groups. Mr. Gonzalez said he liked the idea, but wasn't sure that the BCMS students would be able to do collaborative work or that we had enough LFC student helpers to make it work. Still, he said he would be interested in thinking more about what kinds of computer-based projects we might develop or how the

undergraduates might help make it successful.[64] Mr. Gonzalez did not bring up the topic again, however, and since at that point I had not yet decided to play an active role in trying to shape and develop the curriculum, I didn't pursue the issue further (at least not at that time).

A more promising opportunity to make some changes in the program came at the end of the Fall semester when Luke Kennedy, Vanessa Baker and I met with Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto to review the past semester and discuss ideas for the upcoming Spring semester. By the end of this meeting, we decided to implement a new set of computer activities on Thursday afternoons, modeled after the adult school computer literacy classes that Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto were teaching in the evenings. In theory, the activities would include students learning about and practicing keyboarding skills, basic writing, drawing, spreadsheet applications, and Internet research skills. There was also some discussion and agreement that students would work on assignments and computer projects that could be incorporated into an end-of-the year portfolio. Mr. Gonzalez agreed to teach and lead these activities, and I agreed to play an active role in helping him. Luke Kennedy and Vanessa Baker also agreed to help when they had the time.

The decision to make these changes grew out of a now common sense of frustration among those from both CREATE and BCMS with the quality of the current set of computer activities in the BCMS 5th Dimension. We all agreed that students were bored with the range of software available. According to Mr. Quinto, "in the area of

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[64] Personal field note, 10/19/00

software," we were "lame." Our ideas about what to do about the problem differed, however, in ways that fell along the lines of our institutional affiliations.[65]

Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto favored purchasing new software. CREATE had had disappointing results with previous efforts to purchase software for use in the school's computer lab, however, and was thus reluctant to pursue this as an option. Some of the software CREATE had ordered over the summer got lost somewhere in the school district bureaucracy and never arrived. Even after numerous efforts to track the software down, it was still missing. Other software that CREATE had purchased either went unused by the teachers that had requested it or was integrated into the curriculum in poor and ineffective ways (such as in the case of the science software, *The Way Things Work*, discussed in Chapter 3). Given the high expense of software, especially when purchasing enough site licenses to make a program available to numerous students simultaneously, CREATE did not want to invest in more software without teachers having a good plan for how they would use it. At the meeting, Luke Kennedy explained these obstacles to purchasing new software and Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto said they understood.

Instead of advocating for new software to improve the after-school program, those of us from CREATE (Luke Kennedy, Vanessa Baker, and I) favored developing more "project-based" and "collaborative-encouraging" activities at the site, such as designing web pages or *PowerPoint* presentations linked to departmental themes or school-wide curriculum goals. Both Mr. Quinto and Mr. Gonzalez reacted to these ideas with hesitation and some concern. Mr. Quinto explained that while activities like the ones we suggested might be good for high school students, BCMS students weren't mature

[65] The discussion of this meeting is based on personal field notes from 12/12/00.

enough to do them. If the middle school students were encouraged to use the drawing program, for example, he feared that whenever they came to the computer room they would spend all their time drawing and goofing off, not working. These students, he explained, needed to spend more time focusing on "basic skills" and work for their classes. Mr. Gonzalez echoed some of these concerns but emphasized the problems he saw with "group work." If students were allowed to work together on projects, he believed, they would need someone working closely with them to help them out and keep them from getting distracted and off track. He also doubted that the LFC students had the skills to play this kind of role.

Luke Kennedy and I tried to alleviate some of their concerns. I explained that perhaps I could play a more active role in helping design, try out, and supervise some of these kinds of computer-based projects over the following semester, and also help oversee the LFC students in becoming more engaged, useful participants in the program. Luke Kennedy discussed a few examples of BCMS teachers who had been successful at teaching some simple web design and *HyperStudio* projects in their classes. Through the course of the discussion, Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto seemed more open to the idea of me "trying something out," but they did not whole-heartedly endorse the idea or seem invested in helping make it happen.

Toward the end of the meeting, however, the tone of the discussion changed. Vanessa Baker picked up a flyer advertising the adult school's computer literacy course that Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto were teaching at night. She asked why the school didn't have a course like that for the BCMS students and said she thought that we could be teaching some of those computer skills and software applications in the after-school

program. This was a suggestion that Luke Kennedy had brought up in previous discussions, but it had never caught on. This time, however, Mr. Quinto and Mr. Gonzalez started thinking about and discussing what kinds of things they had done with the adults that they might be able to do with the middle school students. As the discussion continued, they became more enthusiastic and began showing us examples of the portfolios their adult-school students had designed. The portfolios had sample work that included pretty pictures, essays, spreadsheets, business cards, resumes, calendars, and more. Luke Kennedy, Vanessa Baker, and I were all impressed and said we thought it would be great to do that kind of portfolio with the middle school students. Mr. Gonzalez said he would be willing and interested in teaching the students how to do these kinds of projects, and hence the decision was made. I agreed that I would be an extra resource to help Mr. Gonzalez design and implement the curriculum. We also talked about the possibility of students who completed 60 hours of the activity being able to get a course credit, and Luke Kennedy agreed to work with CREATE and the school administration to make the necessary arrangements.

At the meeting, we also decided to add a new "debriefing session" to the end of each day's site activities. The plan was to end the class 15 minutes early so that the adult helpers would have time to meet and discuss how the day went for them, and what they observed, thought about, were pleased with, worried about, etc. I proposed this idea as a way to help build a stronger sense of teamwork and collaboration among the people helping run and staff the after-school program. In particular, I explained, it was my hope that if Mr. Gonzalez and I met with the undergrads, we could play a stronger role in trying to increase their level of involvement and engagement in the program. Both Mr.

Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto had expressed frustrations about the poor level of LFC student participation in the activities over the previous semester and were quick to agree to this idea.

Luke Kennedy, Vanessa Baker, and I left the meeting generally pleased and optimistic. The new Thursday activities, we speculated, would be a strong addition to the curriculum: interesting, fun, and useful to the students. Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto appeared to be taking a new level of interest and initiative in the curriculum, which seemed like an important step for the long-term development and sustainability of the program. It also seemed like the new curriculum held greater potential for encouraging and facilitating collaboration and group work, as well as for being integrated into personally meaningful or academically rigorous computer projects. For me, the fact that everyone had agreed to my idea of having "debriefing" sessions at the end of each day also seemed like a good sign. I was happy that we would be having a more regular opportunity for discussing the program from our different perspectives and, in the process, I hoped, be building a stronger program and partnership.

At the same time, Luke Kennedy, Vanessa Baker, and I had reasons for concern. There were still significant differences between how those of us from CREATE and those from BCMS were approaching what the after-school program should look like in practice. During the meeting, for example, Mr. Quinto had repeatedly expressed his concerns that we try to help reduce the noise level and student movement in the computer room. What's more, he complained that he didn't want the undergraduates to act too "buddy, buddy" or playful with the BCMS students. Despite the efforts that Luke Kennedy, Vanessa Baker and I made to talk about some of the merits of mixing learning

with play and of the LFC students developing good rapport with the BCMS students, Mr. Quinto was unconvinced and continued to emphasize the need for a more quiet, controlled after-school program and a more authority-like role for the undergraduates. Vanessa Baker summarized some of these differences in perspective in her field notes immediately following the meeting:

> It was very clear that…to Gonzalez and Quinto the notion of learning in conjunction with any type of play (movement, talking, joking, etc.) is believed to be inappropriate and somehow a hindrance to academic learning/performance despite the fact it is occurring in an after-school context."[66]

Another area for CREATE's concern and apprehension was that despite how much of an improvement the new "computer literacy" activities would be to the general after-school curriculum, it seemed quite possible that these activities could end up being implemented in such a way as to reproduce many of the current problems with the curriculum. I wrote in my field notes about the meeting, for example:

> My guess is there are also some dangers of this becoming too much like a typical class, with even more school-like disciplining than the regular Tuesday/Thursday activities, or perhaps, assignments that are somewhat detached from school curricular themes or objectives, or assignments that aren't that connected to students' interests and lives.[67]

Given that neither Mr. Gonzalez nor Mr. Quinto had been very receptive to the idea of promoting more opportunities for project-based learning or collaborative work, it seemed unlikely that the new activities would in themselves enable a shift in the learning culture of the site. At the same time, it was unclear what kinds of assignments Mr. Gonzalez would be interested in developing for the new curriculum and the extent to which the new

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[66] Vanessa Baker field note, 12/12/00.
[67] Personal field note, 12/12/00.

activities might be able to capture students' interests while at the same time being academically useful and meaningful.

These concerns were quickly magnified when school resumed at the start of the Spring semester. At a meeting to discuss the plans for the new after-school program, I learned that BCMS principal, Luis Gomez, and the assistant principal in charge of after-school, Tim Ignacio, both liked the idea for the new computer skills activities we were planning for Thursdays, but thought the program should be turned into an official "Computer Skills" class, three days a week on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Mr. Gonzalez now also liked this idea, and thought that computer skills should be the main activity in our program. Mr. Ignacio proposed that students would receive credit for participating as they would a regular course and that Mr. Gonzalez would be paid more for the additional responsibilities of planning lessons, taking attendance, grading student work, etc. The additional funds wouldn't be a problem, according to Mr. Ignacio, because Mr. Gomez had already asked the director of GEAR UP if the program could pay for the new course and he had agreed.[68]

After learning of these proposed changes, Luke Kennedy and I worked with Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Ignacio to clarify what the new program would entail. We argued that the new computer skills course should be only two days a week so that it wouldn't interfere with Wednesday's Game Designer Studio and that it should not be set up as a regular, official class. We didn't want the program to lose the quality of a voluntary, after-school activity that was at least somewhat distinct from the typical norms and procedures of the regular school day. Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Ignacio agreed to these

[68] Personal field note, 1/11/01.

requests and we decided that the new "course" would be held two days a week and that students would be able to come voluntarily. Those that came consistently and completed 60 course hours, however, would still be eligible for an elective credit.[69]

This seemed like an adequate compromise. Still, there were good reasons for CREATE to be concerned. It appeared more and more that those involved in the program from BCMS were thinking of the new activity as a traditional class. Many of us from CREATE worried that the activity would become more and more "school-like", with a teacher giving a lecture, assignments, etc., and students having to follow even more rules than before. In this context, the goals of mixing learning and play might be harder to achieve. We also worried that the school was focusing on the goal of teaching computer skills as an end in itself, instead of the goal of helping students use computers as a tool in the learning process. In part to help address these concerns, Luke Kennedy and I suggested that the course be called "Computer Skills and Projects" instead of just "Computer Skills" as the school had planned. From this point on, school personnel gradually stopped referring to the activity as the "5th Dimension" and began referring to the activity as "Computer Skills class" or "Computer Skills and Projects class."

B. CHANGING PARTNERSHIP CONTEXT AND RESOURCES

Going into the new Spring semester (semester 4), there were a few notable developments within the South Bay partnership that significantly impacted the BCMS after-school computer programs. The LFC Practicum in Learning and Development course had a new team of instructors. From the LFC Sociology Department, professor

[69] Ibid.

Janet Wilder had agreed to be the principal instructor for the course.[70] She had sat in on several of the LFC class sessions over the previous semester, had read course material, and had participated in a variety of meetings with CREATE researchers and staff to discuss and develop how she would teach the course. Wilder had also visited the various South Bay project site placements and was generally familiar with CREATE's theoretical principles and the Practicum course materials. From UCSD and CREATE, postdoctoral fellow Vanessa Baker took over Mike Cole's job of assisting in the LFC course. This way, Mike Cole could be less involved in the details of helping run the South Bay project in order to focus on other commitments and interests. While he still participated in CREATE's South Bay project research meetings and occasionally responded to LFC student field notes over email, he no longer played an active role in helping develop or facilitate the LFC course.

Now, Vanessa Baker assisted Janet Wilder by working with her to choose course readings and by leading the distance learning discussions sessions via videoconference from UCSD. While the core themes and activities in the class remained the same, the new team incorporated additional readings related to the sociology of learning and education. A significant side effect of these developments was that Vanessa Baker now had less time to spend participating in site activities at BCMS, and gradually attended fewer and fewer sessions. This tendency was unfortunately aggravated by the fact that Baker had multiple teaching commitments (in addition to her Postdoctoral position with CREATE), such that her new schedule often conflicted with BCMS activities. One implication of this situation

[70] Beginning the previous semester, the LFC Practicum course had been cross-listed as both a psychology and sociology course, which meant that students could take the class and receive credit in either discipline. The departments had also agreed to share in the responsibility for teaching the course.

was that fewer resources were available to help with the development of the Computer Skills and Projects Class than CREATE had anticipated.

The LFC course continued to attract roughly the same number of students as in previous semesters. Thirteen LFC students were actively involved in the class and in site activities throughout the semester.[71] However, very few of these students signed up for BCMS Tuesday/Thursday activities, choosing instead to attend site activities at Seaside Elementary. While Luke Kennedy tried to convince some students to switch to BCMS, most were unable or uninterested in doing so. The result was that only one LFC student could participate on BCMS Tuesday activities, and only two could participate on Thursdays. Those of us from CREATE viewed this development as a serious problem, especially given the direction of the BCMS Tuesday/Thursday computer class toward more challenging activities that would require greater levels of LFC student assistance and participation.

In response to this problem, Luke Kennedy worked to find LFC students from other sources to help out in the after-school program. As a result, over the course of the semester a small handful of LFC students joined our after-school activities. One female student decided early in the semester to participate in site activities two days a week in order to do research for a class paper. In addition to coming to site, she also wrote field notes about her experiences and shared these with our research team.

Another two LFC students were hired to help out with the after-school course through the GEAR UP program. GEAR UP was in the process of organizing several

[71] As in previous semesters, a greater number of students initially enrolled in the course and then dropped out, often citing scheduling conflicts and workload challenges because of the unusual nature of the course. The 13 students reported here reflects the number that of students that "actively participated," meaning those that generally attended class and site and that wrote field notes about their experiences.

after-school tutoring and academic enrichment activities at BCMS and had funding to hire a number of LFC students to help out in these efforts. About a month into the semester, one of these students was assigned to work in our after-school program two days a week. Much later in the semester, Luke Kennedy worked with GEAR UP to hire another one of these students to work with us two days a week. This student had been a very successful participant in the LFC practicum course the previous semester and Luke Kennedy had made special arrangements with GEAR UP to hire him especially to work with us in the computer class. As a result of these efforts, the BCMS site eventually had an average of 3 to 4 LFC students helping out on any given day. Occasionally, additional LFC practicum students would also come to help out at BCMS on Tuesdays and Thursdays because their site activities had been canceled or were on break.

Other significant changes in the partnership context related to CREATE's involvement with BCMS. Notably, Lisa Ballesteros took over Susan Yonezawa's position as the Partnership Coordinator responsible for working with BCMS. Ballesteros had worked with Yonezawa throughout the previous semester to smooth the transition, so there weren't any sudden changes in the thrust of CREATE's activities with the school.

I also played a more active role this semester in helping CREATE with a variety of their initiatives at BCMS. For example, CREATE continued funding and helping facilitate professional development activities at the school in which faculty from each department would meet to work on better aligning their curriculum with state standards. I was able to continue attending many of these meetings, both to learn more about the school, establish relationships with teachers, and also to look for possible ways to connect the Tuesday/Thursday computer activities with themes and projects from

students' classes. Unfortunately, these efforts did not result in any specific changes to the after-school curriculum. While a number of teachers had ideas for potential projects and were interested in supporting our efforts by sending us their students, neither they nor Mr. Gonzalez had sufficient time or interest to work with me on actually developing or implementing any "joint-venture" projects. Still, the process of meeting with the faculty from various departments and discussing these issues was important for both me, as a researcher, building stronger rapport with teachers at the school and for our program, in terms of teachers becoming more familiar with and interested in CREATE's activities at the school.

Also relevant to the development of the South Bay project and to my research, CREATE offered to assist BCMS in evaluating the school's new after-school "mandatory tutoring" program. The program required students to go to special "tutoring" activities after school if they were failing one of their classes. I offered to help the school design and implement a survey to learn more about the students referred for tutoring and what they thought about the program. Toward the end of the year, I also helped facilitate student discussion groups to learn more about their experiences in tutoring. Through the process, I worked closely with the school personnel overseeing BCMS after-school programs, Assistant Principal Tim Ignacio and science teacher Jacob Mendez. Over the same period of time, both Mr. Ignacio and Mr. Mendez began playing a more active role in the CREATE-sponsored after-school activities at BCMS. For example, they visited the Tuesday/Thursday class periodically, helped make arrangements for the school to fund occasional snacks and an end-of-the year "pizza party" for the class, and in general seemed more interested in the class. When I would run into them around the school, they

often stopped what they were doing to ask me what kinds of things we were doing in the class and how it was going. Toward the end of the year, they were supportive of my research efforts by paying for students to get chips and soda for turning in consent forms that I needed and by helping facilitate my efforts to pull students out of class to participate in discussion groups about their experiences in the Tuesday/Thursday after-school program. In general, this combination of reasons to be having more contact with each other and supporting each others' efforts seemed to be contributing to a stronger partnership relationship between the CREATE team and the BCMS administration.

C. THE COMPUTER SKILLS AND PROJECTS CLASS IN PRACTICE

1. The New Class Begins

Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto decided to hold the new class in the other side of the computer lab from where the BCMS "5th Dimension" had been. While technically a new room, this side of the computer lab was only separated from the other side by a large, curtain-style partition that extended most of the way between the two rooms. This meant that each room was somewhat private and "bounded," but that people and sound could still travel easily between the two spaces. This side of the lab was where Mr. Gonzalez taught his section of the adult school computer class at night, so he was already used to maintaining the equipment and space as he wanted. In other words, it was more like "his classroom" than the computer lab where activities had taken place the previous semester, and he liked the idea of teaching there. At the same time, Mr. Quinto liked the idea of the computer class being on the other side of the room from where his office and

work area was. At the start of the semester, he mentioned to me that he was looking forward to having a break from the kids being on his side of the room right after school.[72]

As during the previous semester, each day began with students crowded around outside the door to the computer lab. Now that we were in a new computer room outside of Mr. Quinto's direct supervision, however, Mr. Quinto asked that neither Luke Kennedy nor I let students in the room until Mr. Gonzalez had arrived. He explained that he wanted students to be directly supervised by BCMS personnel. Mr. Gonzalez was frequently busy right after school finishing up his teaching responsibilities (such as keeping students after class or meeting with parents), so he usually arrived between 10-15 minutes after the bell rang. This meant that students waited for the class to start for a longer period of time than they had the previous semester. While some got used to the new routine and did other things around the school while waiting for the class to begin, other students waited by the door. Usually, the LFC students or I waited with them, sometimes talking with each other, sometimes talking with the BCMS students. The mood was generally friendly, but students were often restless and impatient. Many complained that they couldn't go inside and asked why we wouldn't let them in (even though we had told them the answer on various occasions). By the time Mr. Gonzalez arrived, most students came in closely behind him. Others, still doing various things around the school, trickled in late.

Excerpts from my field note about the first day of the new after-school activities provide a good example and introduction to what the Computer Skills and Projects class was like in practice, at least as the semester began. Later, I will return to examine many

[72] Personal field note, 1/18/01.

features of the program in greater detail, as well as how it evolved over the course of the semester.

> I went outside with the LFC students to greet the kids that came up to the door. We had them wait there for a few minutes until Mr. Gonzalez came up. There was a lot of noise as the kids gathered around, talked, and fooled around (some swinging backpacks at each other, some putting down their stuff and running off to do "something"...). The 2 LFC undergrads stood off to the side and talked, they had apparently just met for the first time (had shaken hands and introduced themselves to each other). Luke Kennedy and Vanessa Baker came up and joined us and we waited for Mr. Gonzalez.
>
> There was a pretty big crowd in front of the room. As we let people in, we told them to go in and sit down and not turn on the computers. Mr. Gonzalez, Esteben (BCMS student), and I think a couple other game design folks, said they wanted to be in the other room where they had all their game design files. We said no and there was some complaining, and "why not?"s. Several students asked what we were going to be doing and we said that Mr. Gonzalez would explain in a minute.
>
> As the BCMS students came in, they went to different computers and put down their things. I went around with a sign-in sheet and got students to sign in. (Later, after the final group of students had trickled in, I counted 21 students total. Big group!). Mr. Gonzalez was setting up his computer projector and students were a little restless waiting. Students had been told not to turn on the computers yet, but after one student turned his on, Esteben started turning on several computers. I told him to wait a few minutes.
>
> I noticed the girls tending to clump near each other in the back and on one side, the “Game Design guys” in the middle and some of the other guys (the ones who are in bilingual math class with Mr. Gonzalez) along the other side of the room. (Some of the girls who had been sitting in the back moved closer to the center after a few minutes so they could better follow Mr. Gonzalez and the computer screen projections on the wall.)
>
> M. Gonzalez spoke to them all, using a combination of English and Spanish. For the most part, the room was quiet and all were looking at him, paying attention. It felt a lot like a traditional classroom at that moment. He explained to them that they were going to be in a computer class and that they would be learning how to do a lot of different projects in the class. At first it seemed like there was some apprehension in the room, some of the quietness that usually comes from being lectured at.

Then Mr. Gonzalez explained how they would each be getting to finish the course with a portfolio of all their work, and he held up a sample portfolio from the adult school (one that has a colorful, creative cover). As he leafed through the portfolio and explained different things they could do, students started reacting with more enthusiasm. There were a number of "yeahs" and other whispers of excitement (especially around getting to make their own calendars). He explained that we would learn more about drawing (which students seemed happy about). He also explained that we would get to scan pictures in and work with images. He also explained that students would be able to get an elective credit if they did 60 hours, which meant that if they were 7th graders, they would have a free period next year to do something else interesting, like help out in the office, and if they were 8th graders, that there would be one less course they would have to take in high school (I wonder if that's right?). Lots of people seemed excited about that too.

Then, he wrote two questions (in English and Spanish) on the computer (projected on the wall) and he said everyone should write the answers to them (in English or in Spanish). The questions were about one reason they wanted to be in the class and what they thought about technology today. At that point students started trying to answer the questions. Many were copying the questions down too, not just the answers. They also were spending a lot of time (as seems common among this group) choosing what font to use, what size, what style, what part of the page to put the letters on, etc. Many had spent so much time doing this that they were behind and hadn't written any kind of response to the questions.

Somewhere in here a handful more students started coming in, and we started trying to help them sit down and get caught up. I asked Jessica (LFC student), that I found out speaks Spanish, if she could help a young boy who had very little knowledge about computers or how to get started. She said yes and jumped right in, interacting with him and helping him.

Jessica continued to help people and seemed pretty engaged. I noticed she was having various conversations with students, especially the girls. Alan (LFC student) seemed a little more hesitant to me, a little more like he was observing than being engaged. A couple of times I went up to Alan and mentioned to him that a certain student could use some help, and he nodded and said OK, but didn't seem to go interact with them. I was a little worried that I was coming off too directive or even critical, but I was also trying to figure out ways to engage him a bit more. Not sure how my actions came off or how he interpreted them.

There was a fair amount of movement throughout the classroom among the students, too. Some students would get up and go across the room, talk

to other students. Some were helping their neighbors. In some cases, where a student was out of their seat to visit with someone on the other side of the room, Mr. Gonzalez would tell them to go back and sit down. In general, the climate of the room seemed louder than before, a little more chaotic.

Carlos (BCMS student) kept finishing his activities quickly and asking what was next. (He had written about half a sentence for each question). At times, he seemed to be getting a little bored of how long the activities were taking everyone else. I think in the future I'll try and encourage him to keep improving his work (I, and I think Luke, did that a little bit today), or encourage him to help someone else.

Esteben (BCMS student) pretty much refused to follow directions or do things like everyone else. I kept telling him to use the disk he was supposed to use for this class, and he kept taking that disk out and using one of his many disks (from game design) so that he could try to go on line and download Pokemon images. He spent so much time trying to do this, trying to import the images he wanted, move them around, change their sizes, etc. that he was totally behind the class on writing any content. He also made the computer crash several times. Sometimes I would sit next to him for a minute or two. I would tell him to stop working on the images and start writing an answer to his question. He would say, just a minute, just a minute, and then ignore me and keep doing what he wanted. Sometimes I would stay until he put in the correct disk, but then he would swap it out after I went away. A couple times Mr. Gonzalez mentioned that maybe Esteben would have to sit next to him in the future. It was interesting to see both Esteben and Carlos so far advanced in their skills of how to move through the computer, but putting so little work into the written content of their work.

At the end of the day, we had our first “debriefing” session with Mr. Gonzalez, Luke Kennedy, the LFC students and me. I asked everyone to go around and say something about why they were there. Jessica and Alan talked about being interested in working with this age group, to get a better sense of if working with this kind of group was something they'd like to do. Luke and I talked about different versions of being involved in schools, CREATE, and liking working with the kids. Then, Mr. Gonzalez spoke (quite eloquently) about how he got involved with this program because he wanted a chance to communicate and interact with students outside of class and the normal in-school relationship with students. He said it had really changed him as a teacher to have these kinds of experiences with students outside the classroom, and that he thought he was a better teacher because of it, and could interact with his students in

class better, too. He also said he really loves computers, which is one of the reasons why he chose this type of activity in particular.

Then, I had us go around and say one thing that we felt positive about, like an interaction that we thought was successful, and one thing that we had a difficulty with or a question about.

Jessica talked really enthusiastically about how all the students had been more friendly than she had expected and that she had enjoyed them calling her "maestra" (teacher) and feeling like she was helping them.

Alan talked about enjoying the day and working with the different kids, and said the only thing he had questions or concerns about was not speaking Spanish.

Mr. Gonzalez talked about he had been pleased that so many of the students seemed excited about the work of the class. He said that he had been worried that they wouldn't like the change in the class that much, but that particularly when they saw that they were going to have something at the end of the semester to show with all their work (the portfolio), they seemed to get excited about it. He said his concern was that it was going to be tough to keep everyone doing what they were supposed to do, and that he would need our help. For instance, we might need to help students stay in their seats, he explained. He also said his voice was a bit hoarse from having to talk louder than usual (over the commotion of the class). He hoped that would change over the next classes.

For my turn, I talked about how I was pleased with how things went, how many students showed up and seemed interested, and how for a lot of them I could really tell we were helping them learn some valuable computer skills that they didn't already seem familiar with. For my concerns, I said I was a bit worried how it would be for the game design folks, keeping them interested and not too disappointed about not getting to work on their games. I also talked about how I had had a hard time keeping Esteben on task. Finally, I said I thought the challenge for us as a group was going to be trying to keep there being a fun atmosphere that would help students learn and be interested in being there, and not have things get either too chaotic or too structured and boring.[73]

[73] Ibid.

2. BCMS Student Participants

For the first three months of the Spring semester, the new Tuesday/Thursday class, "Computer Skills and Projects," attracted a somewhat consistent group of around 20 BCMS students. Most of these students had participated in the "5th Dimension" class the previous semester and learned about the new Computer Skills and Projects class just by showing up for what they thought would be the same set of activities as the previous semester. While some weren't interested in the new set of activities and quickly stopped attending (claiming the activities were "boring," for example)[74], many decided to stay. Other students came that heard about the class from a school announcement or from Mr. Gonzalez and specifically wanted to join the class.

Shortly after the beginning of the semester, attendance rose to as many as 35 students. Some of these students came because they just wanted to use the lab to work on homework, however, and after a couple difficult weeks of trying to run both a computer class and a homework lab, Mr. Gonzalez, Luke Kennedy, and I were able to make arrangements with the school administration for students to use other computers to work on homework after school. Mr. Quinto agreed that he would help students in his lab if he was available. Otherwise, students would do their homework in the school library. Shortly thereafter, attendance in Computer Skills and Projects leveled off to between 20 and 25 students that were, at least in theory, there to participate in the class. Midway through the semester, however, attendance started to drop (for reasons that will be discussed later in this chapter). Some days there were still about 20 students, but more

[74] At the end of the year I met with a variety of the students that had participated in the "5th Dimension" the previous semester, began to participate in the Computer Skills and Projects class, and then eventually stopped coming. We had a discussion group about the program and these were some of the reasons they gave for why they stopped coming.

frequently there were about 15. By the last two months of the semester, attendance fell to a small but consistent group of about 10-13 students that kept coming to class.

For the most part, the students who regularly participated in Computer Skills and Projects were in the school's general academic track. None were in the school's honors program, and only one was in the school's "Academy," a program for many of the school's lowest performing students. Another student was also in the school's Special Education program because of a mild learning disability. Most of the students that attended the after-school class received a combination of A's B's and C's in their regular classes, and some received a lot of D's and F's. According to their teachers, they were mostly average students with average scholastic abilities and class behavior. A few of the students stood out in teachers' comments, however, as either being exceptionally good or exceptionally difficult in terms of both academic performance and classroom behavior.[75]

Overall, the Computer Skills and Projects class was made up of a roughly even mixture of boys and girls, and seventh and eighth graders. As the previous semester, almost all the students that attended were of Mexican origin. Most were recent immigrants or immigrants of several years, and some had grown up in the U.S. Similar to students in the rest of the school, these students came primarily from low income, working class homes. Many of the students were Spanish dominant and enrolled in the school's Bilingual and English Language Development programs. These students typically spoke at least some English as well, but with a wide range of fluency and comfort levels. Other students in the computer class were enrolled in the school's

[75] I obtained this information by reviewing the classes and grades of the students that regularly attended the Computer Skills and Projects class and by interviewing a number of their teachers about their behavior in class.

mainstream, English-language classes and typically used English comfortably when talking with their friends and teachers. Many of these students were also bilingual and very comfortable speaking Spanish, and almost all of the students spoke at least some Spanish.

3. Tensions and Constraints on Program Development and Operation

Over the course of the semester, tensions emerged between BCMS and CREATE personnel, principally related to different beliefs and understandings about what the after-school program should look like in practice and what our various roles should be in running and developing the program. These tensions and differences interacted with very practical constraints that, together, limited CREATE's efforts to play a more active, decisive role in guiding and developing the after-school program. Before I discuss in detail what the new curriculum involved and how BCMS and LFC students responded to the changes in the after-school program, it is thus important to provide some background information about the kinds of tensions and constraints that emerged *in the process* of trying to work together to develop and run the class. Here, I focus my discussion on the processes of developing the new curriculum with Mr. Gonzalez and on sharing the school's space and technology with Mr. Quinto.

a. Developing the New Curriculum

Throughout the Spring semester (semester 4), the curriculum for the Computer Skills and Projects Class was being developed as it was being implemented. Mr. Gonzalez was primarily responsible for deciding what the new curriculum would be, and

for explaining assignments to students and teaching them what to do. I was responsible for assisting him in this process. Originally, I hoped to play a role in helping design a variety of interesting projects for students to work on over the course of the semester. Also, I hoped that by working more closely with Mr. Gonzalez, he might come to better understand and be more interested in achieving an optimal educational activity more in line with CREATE and 5th Dimension theoretical models and goals.

While some positive steps were made in meeting these objectives, my efforts to work with Mr. Gonzalez to develop the curriculum were impeded by a number of practical constraints related to Mr. Gonzalez' work responsibilities and other priorities. Gonzalez was now in his second year of teaching, but his first year of teaching bilingual math. His bilingual classes required him to develop some supplemental Spanish language instructional materials for both 7th and 8th graders, which took extra time and work. What's more, he still had to do the regular preparation for his mainstream English-language math classes. His other teaching-related commitments included attending staff and committee meetings, grading student work, and meeting with parents when needed—and he only had one paid "prep period" in which to do this kind of work. In addition to his regular school responsibilities, Mr. Gonzalez was also a soccer coach for BCMS and taught soccer after school, two days a week. He was also an avid soccer player and a committed member of a local league that had its own afternoon practices and games in both San Diego and Tijuana. As mentioned earlier, two nights a week, Mr. Gonzalez also instructed adult school computer classes. Finally, Mr. Gonzalez and his fiancé were in the process of planning their wedding for June, immediately following the end of the school year. Although CREATE had offered to pay Mr. Gonzalez for time spent developing

curriculum and planning for the Computer Skills and Projects class, the reality was that he didn't have very much free time to do this, much less to meet with me to discuss it. Nor was preparing for the class a high priority for him.

Mr. Gonzalez and I were able to have one meeting early in the semester during which we made some decisions about what to do for a few assignments. As the semester progressed, however, it became increasingly difficult to find time to meet. One example from my field notes illustrates the kinds of challenges that Mr. Gonzalez and I faced in being able to find the time to work together in a meaningful way:

> I arrived during lunch for my meeting with Mr. Gonzalez, but couldn't find him in his classroom. (He and I had plans to make some decisions about the upcoming assignment, do some samples for students, talk about the class, etc.) I looked around for a while, and eventually found him in the office, where he told me he was trying to fax his registration to a math conference (in LA) for next week…I asked him if we could go somewhere to have our meeting, but he said he had to try and get this registration done. He said that he might not even be able to start today's class until 3:00 (15 minutes late) because he needed to finish trying to register after school…I walked with him to his class, and asked if we could talk for a few minutes during his "ROAR" period (where all the students are supposed to be reading silently). He said that would be good. So, we stood in front of his class and whispered (because he had to keep an eye on his class the whole time... Telling different students to be quiet, keep facing toward the front, keep reading, etc.). Needless to say, it wasn't the best space for discussing anything deeply.[76]

As there were limited opportunities in which Mr. Gonzalez and I could meet together to discuss and plan the class, the curriculum that developed was thus largely based on what Mr. Gonzalez decided to do on his own, often at the last minute. On the few occasions that I was able to meet with Mr. Gonzalez specifically to plan the class, however, he was receptive to, and interested in, my ideas. In the process, I was sometimes able to

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[76] Personal field note, 2/27/01.

influence the progression of the curriculum. Even in these cases, however, I played very little role in helping decide *how* a particular assignment concept would be explained to students or implemented in practice.

As Mr. Gonzalez developed the new curriculum, he drew principally from the model of the adult school computer class with which he was already familiar. This curriculum emphasized teaching computer *skills*, including how to type and use the keyboard and mouse, how to use basic applications such as word processing, drawing/painting, and a spreadsheet program, how to scan, cut, and paste images into a document, and how to do Internet searches. While students in the adult school class were instructed to complete short assignments that allowed them to practice these skills, the focus of the curriculum was not by any means "content-driven," nor was the focus on developing academic skills. As Mr. Gonzalez adapted this curriculum to the BCMS after-school context, the kinds of assignments he emphasized were consistent with this pattern.

For the first couple weeks of the new semester, for example, Mr. Gonzalez focused on having students do typing drills and drawing exercises. During this time, because of the constraints mentioned above, Mr. Gonzalez had been unable to find a time to meet with me to plan and share ideas for the course. By the end of January, however, we were able to have a meeting after school one day that was devoted solely to brainstorming and planning activities for the class.[77] In the meeting, Mr. Gonzalez told me the various computer applications he thought we should cover in the class and asked me to suggest ideas for activities related to each application. In the process of discussing the activities, I suggested that we try to have a theme to which everything we did related,

[77] The details of this meeting were recorded in a personal field note, 1/31/01.

such as “autobiography.” I also said I thought we should think of a project that might get students to work together more, or ask each other for ideas or help, or encourage students to work with the undergraduates. This related to ideas I had brought up to Mr. Gonzalez in previous conversations that he had sometimes been apprehensive about, but this time he seemed to agree and we began to brainstorm possible project ideas.

The idea that Mr. Gonzalez and I decided on was for students to make a “Time Line” of major personal and historical events in their lives, and then a *PowerPoint* style slide show presentation to illustrate some of the ideas from their time lines (using *AppleWorks* software). Our plan was for students to do both projects within the next two months. We also agreed that students would do some of the other activities that Mr. Gonzalez had been planning, such as resumes and “acronyms” (writing their names and then finding adjectives to go with each letter in their names). He liked the idea that these supplemental activities fit generally with the theme of “autobiography” because students would be writing about themselves.

Mr. Gonzalez implemented the ideas for these two new projects (a process I discuss later in the chapter). Unlike we had planned in our meeting, however, the class spent the rest of the semester on both the “Time Line” and “Presentation” activities. While we did other small activities along the way, such as practicing the typing drills and making the resumes, acronyms, calendars and drawings, we never actually implemented any other major projects. This was in large part because, as mentioned above, Mr. Gonzalez and I were not able to spend more time over the semester working together to develop ideas and assignments for larger projects and when Mr. Gonzalez was deciding

the curriculum on his own, he continued to resort to the computer exercises and smaller assignments with which he was already familiar.

Also, as the semester progressed, Mr. Gonzalez became even busier with his multiple commitments, and had even less time or interest in planning new projects or activities than he had earlier in the semester. His bigger challenge had become, quite literally, having schedule conflicts such that on several occasions he was not even able attend the Tuesday/Thursday class. Ever more frequently, he had to come to the class late or leave early. As this occurred, I gradually took on more and more the role of a classroom supervisor just so that we could still have the class operating when Mr. Gonzalez was busy. While I sometimes came up with last minute ideas for computer activities to suggest to students who were looking for something to do, I had too little advance notice and very little time left in the semester to develop or try out any larger projects. What's more, the ideas that I had been working on for potential projects (collaborative efforts with other teachers, described earlier) were too time intensive and required too much coordination to implement on such short notice and without a greater degree of interest and "buy in" from Mr. Gonzalez and the other teachers we might have worked with. As a result of these various challenges, I began to focus less on trying to develop new curriculum and more on trying to help make the existing activities and projects more interesting and meaningful to students.

b. Sharing School Space and Technology

As the new Computer Skills and Projects Class was implemented over the course of the new semester, additional constraints and tensions emerged that were related to

sharing the school's space and technology. In particular, there were a number of specific ways in which the school's computer technician, Martin Quinto, controlled and restricted access to the school's technology that created very practical difficulties in running the class. Also, the norms for student behavior and classroom management that he wanted to maintain in the computer lab influenced how the class developed. As many of these norms were in conflict with some of CREATE's goals for the program, it is important to discuss what these norms were and the impact they had on how the class operated in practice.

Mr. Quinto's work involved maintaining and overseeing the school's computer lab, in addition to maintaining the rest of the school's computers and helping teachers and staff with their computer-related needs. His days involved a wide variety of tasks throughout the school, including configuring and fixing equipment and setting up and helping monitor the classes that came to the computer lab. Mr. Quinto also taught Adult School computer classes two nights a week in the BCMS computer lab and helped coordinate and supervise Game Designer Studio with UCSD professor Jerry Balzano, one day a week after school.

For Mr. Quinto, these many responsibilities were taxing. He sometimes complained to me of being overworked, "stressed out," of having too much to do, and of trying, unsuccessfully, to get the administration to hire some kind of assistant or other staff support to help meet the school's computer needs. He also complained of frequent headaches that sometimes made him leave school early.

In doing his job, Mr. Quinto typically emphasized tight control of both computer use and student behavior in the computer lab. For example, in order to avoid having other

people alter how the computers were configured, he had particular "user levels" that limited most people's access to a smaller range of computer applications and operations. What's more, when students came to the lab with their teachers, he typically required that the students stay at their desks, keep their voices low, use headphones if necessary, and when they left, turn their "mice" upside down so that he could make sure they didn't take the controller ball out of the mouse (apparently there had been a problem with this sort of thing in the past). On any given day, after a teacher's class left the computer lab, Mr. Quinto inventoried the equipment to make sure that everything was accounted for and in order. While his norms for after-school were somewhat looser, he was still very concerned with maintaining control of the computer lab.[78]

While working with CREATE, Mr. Quinto had already been frustrated with some aspects of the partnership activities. He had often complained, for example, that neither the students nor the adults working with Game Designer Studio were remembering to return the computers to the correct resolutions when they were done with the class (something he had repeatedly asked them to do). This created extra work for him, as he then needed to go around and switch the computers back to the normal resolutions. He also didn't like the fact that students in the BCMS 5th Dimension were not assigned a computer to stay at for the whole semester. If something went wrong with a computer, he wanted to be able to know who had been using it. Finally, he also expressed irritation from time to time when students got too loud, rowdy, or printed something without permission, and wanted more help from CREATE personnel in monitoring this sort of

[78] This information was gathered from both participant observation and a personal interview with Mr. Quinto, 6/20/01.

student misbehavior. Still, since he was often around after school working on a variety of projects, and his desk and work area were in the same space as the after-school program, he had frequently played a role in maintaining "classroom control."[79]

In planning and deciding on implementing the new Computer Skills and Projects Class, Mr. Quinto and Mr. Gonzalez had agreed with the idea that CREATE staff and researchers would play a more active role in helping develop and run the after-school program. In practice, however, for Mr. Quinto, this role did not mean that we should have full access to the computer room or technology, or have full responsibility for the class at any time. When the new semester began, for example, Mr. Gonzalez explained to me that Mr. Quinto had made it very clear that he didn't want Luke Kennedy or me to let students into the class without Mr. Gonzalez being there because he felt that a teacher needed to be present to supervise the students. What's more, Mr. Quinto did not want CREATE personnel to set up or reconfigure any of the school's equipment. He did not give us the access codes to be able to perform higher-level operations on the computers. Nor did he give us (or even Mr. Gonzalez) keys to unlock the cabinet that had the computer projector and other extra equipment.

These kinds of restrictions made it very difficult for CREATE staff to help prepare or set up for the class without the assistance of Mr. Quinto or Mr. Gonzalez. When the new curriculum began, there were greater and more varied demands on the lab's computer equipment than the previous semester's activities. Now, for example, we needed regular access to a computer projector and scanner, and sometimes to other things

[79] Mr. Quinto made these concerns and frustrations known in a variety of informal discussions as well as the staff meetings that we had from time to time.

such as an external Zip disk. The restricted access we had to the lab's space and equipment was thus a very noticeable limitation in the role we could play in the collaborative effort to run the class.

As each day began, for example, BCMS and LFC students gathered outside the computer lab to wait for the class to begin. Because Mr. Gonzalez had to do a variety of things to finish his teaching responsibilities before coming to class, sometimes the wait grew long and students became restless. It was not uncommon for the class to begin 15 minutes after the scheduled time. Once inside the class, all the work to hook up the equipment and get it running had to be done by Mr. Gonzalez. This meant that he could not begin teaching the class for at least another several minutes (sometimes as much as 10-20 minutes). As will be discussed in greater detail below, this influenced him to begin each day with students doing typing drills—an activity that CREATE did not view as particularly rewarding given how it was done—while he set up the equipment needed for the day and finished preparing for the day's class. (While Mr. Gonzalez did this, I typically helped students get their nametags and folders or helped them learn the typing program). On several occasions, this process was further slowed because Mr. Quinto had left school early or was in some other part of the campus, and hadn't remembered to leave the key to the cabinet for Mr. Gonzalez to be able to get the computer projector. Mr. Gonzalez thus sometimes had to go around the school looking for Mr. Quinto or come up with an alternate plan for teaching his lesson.

As the semester progressed and I began taking a more active role in helping prepare for the day's lessons, these challenges became even more pronounced because sometimes neither Mr. Gonzalez nor Mr. Quinto were available to help me. One day, for

example, I had arranged with Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto to come to school before the computer class to type up instructions for the day's activities to hand out to students. Mr. Quinto had had to leave the school early, however, and the door to the computer room was locked. At the time, I didn't want to bother anyone to let me into the room, so I went to a nearby restaurant and wrote out the instructions on my laptop. Upon returning to the school, I ran into additional difficulties. I explained in my field notes about the day as follows:

> I needed to get the directions I had made off a Zip disk and onto a floppy, so Mr. Gonzalez could print them and project them. Unfortunately, because the computer I needed to use (the only one with a Zip drive) only recognizes the Zip drive if Mr. Quinto puts in a special code for his User ID, and Mr. Quinto was absent, there was no way to get all the work I had done off my computer or zip disk. Oh well…[80]

As a result, Mr. Gonzalez and I were not able to use the directions as we had planned. Still, while BCMS students were busy, I was able to have the LFC students read the directions directly off my computer screen and ask me any questions they had.

On another day while I was doing a similar kind of prep work for the class, I ran into slightly different challenges. This day, Mr. Quinto was still in the lab, working at his desk, while I sat at a nearby computer. I explain in my field notes:

> I needed to do three basic things in about 30 minutes: copy some files from a zip disk to a floppy disk; scan 2 pictures and save to a floppy; and, remove files from a disk to create more space. It turned out to be quite a fiasco because some of these things I could only do from "Fifth Dimension" user set up, and other things I could only do from "Student" user set up. I kept having to change the user set up and kept getting confused... (almost everything I tried to do it would tell me I didn't have enough access privileges). I had to keep asking Mr. Quinto what to try, and he would look frustrated to be interrupted and then come over to help me for a minute. At one point he said he was sorry it wasn't set up to do

[80] Personal field note, 2/27/01.

> what I wanted, that not many people needed to do that... Nevertheless, I was kind of frazzled because I was really behind and hadn't been able to finish what I had wanted to finish (and what Mr. Gonzalez expected I would finish).

On this particular day, even though I was finally able to finish the prep work for the class, Mr. Quinto left without remembering to leave the key for Mr. Gonzalez to be able to get the projector. When Mr. Gonzalez arrived, he asked me if Mr. Quinto was still here and I said no. He said, "did you get the key from him?" I said "no" (I hadn't known I needed to). Mr. Gonzalez looked kind of upset and said, “Why didn't you get the key... Now we can't use the projector...” I said I was sorry but that I hadn't known he needed it. I also said that it was OK, we could just use my laptop to show students the project in small groups. Mr. Gonzalez seemed to calm down a bit and said, "I guess it's hard for Mr. Quinto to remember to leave it for me..." (He didn't seem too frustrated with me anymore). He said OK, that we would have a few people come up at a time to look at the project on my laptop.[81]

These examples are just a few among many of the kinds of challenges associated with sharing the school’s technology and coordinating the use of that technology with school personnel. These challenges frequently created delays in starting out a day’s activities, or in being able to follow a lesson as planned. They also delayed the start of the class because Mr. Gonzalez and I were often busy attending to problem solving and handling technology-related mishaps.

Toward the end of the semester, Mr. Gonzalez had increasing work and scheduling constraints, described above, that made it difficult for him to attend some of

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[81] Personal field note, 3/6/01.

the after-school sessions. In order to avoid canceling class, Luke Kennedy and I got permission from the school's Vice Principal to be able to supervise the after-school program. Mr. Quinto agreed to this as well. As a result, I began to cover the class (sometimes with Luke Kennedy) when Mr. Gonzalez was unavailable. As I gradually took on more and more responsibility, Mr. Quinto seemed to be increasingly comfortable with (or at least tolerant of) me supervising the class. Now I let people into the computer lab without having to wait for Mr. Gonzalez to start the class and, occasionally, Mr. Quinto even gave me permission to set up the computer projector. In this way, there was some indication that, by the end of the semester, Mr. Quinto and the other school personnel were developing a greater sense of trust in the CREATE team.

As mentioned above, there were also ways in which Mr. Quinto's norms for classroom management and student behavior created tensions in the partnership and, at least to some extent, influenced how the after-school class developed. Once the Computer Skills and Projects Class began, for example, Mr. Quinto began to have strong objections to how Mr. Gonzalez and I were running the class. These objections centered on what he perceived to be a lack of class structure, control, and discipline. From CREATE's perspective, the tone of the after-school program was gradually improving and becoming more flexible. Students were starting to collaborate more, talk, and move around the room. Some were increasingly playful. At the same time, there was still a heavy emphasis from Mr. Gonzalez on controlling student movement and activity and on disciplining students that were misbehaving (separating them, making them leave the class, etc.). From Mr. Quinto's perspective, however, the class was becoming much too lax. In

addition, he was worried about our wasting what he perceived as “school resources,” such as paper and toner.

A few weeks after the class began, Mr. Quinto and I had a very tense interaction about these differences. My record of the incident (from my field notes of the day) conveys some of the tensions and differences in perspective that were becoming increasingly evident:

> Anyway, shortly after we started talking, things got pretty tense. Mr. Quinto pulled out two pieces of paper that he had obviously been saving in his desk to talk to someone about. One was a picture of a desert drawn by a student using Apple Works (that I thought was quite pretty) and another was a mistakenly printed page of a background pattern. He said, "look at these, Lisa, they are both a waste." He went on to say that he was very worried about our waste of paper, that it was very costly. One time I started to explain that students weren't printing that much anymore, and that we were monitoring it more closely, and he cut me off, saying "Now listen to me, Lisa....". He went on to say (in a lecturing way) that it looked to him like we didn't have control in the class, and that the students lacked structure and discipline. If we had told students not to print and some of them still printed, then it was a problem that students weren't paying attention to us. There should be consequences for printing if we told them not to print. (Note: from my perspective, the reality is that this problem of excessive printing was a problem 2 weeks ago and that it has been solved for the most part. What is happening now is mainly small mistakes. In this particular conversation, it seemed almost pointless to try and clarify because Mr. Quinto wasn't really listening to anything I said).
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> I said something about how sometimes we wanted students to print something, and that we either kept it in their file, for their portfolio, or sent it home with them. Mr. Quinto replied that he thought those things were a waste unless we were grading them. Then he complained that the students were doing things like drawing, and although they were pretty pictures, he was worried that students would come into his class and start doing things like that instead of doing their assigned work (I remember him making this argument from last quarter!). While I didn't respond to that point, I did say that I thought that, if needed, we could talk to Luke about CREATE paying for some toner and paper, and that I thought that would be OK. Mr. Quinto then went on to complain again about the overall lack of structure in the class…Mixed in here were complaints about the students getting up

> and moving around the room, not having computers that they were assigned to, etc.[82]

As the semester progressed, Mr. Quinto did not openly express the same level of frustration or hostility about the after-school program again (at least not to me). Still, he often requested that we improve our classroom control. On some occasions, he even came into the class from his side of the computer lab to intervene in student behavior he deemed inappropriate. The following excerpts from my field notes exemplify some of the ways this occurred in practice:

> Some students were a bit loud with their side bar conversations, and Mr. Quinto overheard two boys playfully saying "shut up" back and forth. He came in from his side of the room (from the other side of the partition) to tell them to quiet down and not use that kind of language.[83]

> Mr. Quinto poked his head in the room after a few minutes and came over to talk to three boys (who don't come to our class very often). They had just sat down and were launching Internet Explorer. Mr. Quinto said that they had to show their ID cards that show they have permission to be on the Internet. One of them said that they didn't bring it. Mr. Quinto said something like, "just because this is after-school doesn't mean you can do whatever you want to... This is the school... It isn't the public library..." One of the boys was slouching over and he told him to sit up straight and kind of pushed his chair in toward the computer a bit to make the boy sit straighter. Mr. Quinto mentioned something (I think to me) about how you have to watch what these kids are doing closely…[84]

> At one point, some of the students started to get a little loud. Casandra sat next to Miguel and was giggling a lot. Eventually, she fell on the floor and started laughing. I was worried immediately that this kind of behavior would attract Mr. Quinto's attention, so I went over to try and calm them down. They were quieting down and getting back to work, but it was too late. Mr. Quinto came over and made some comments about how they needed to face their own computers and do their own work and quiet down... Then he left. I told Casandra to go back to her computer.[85]

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[82] Personal field note, 2/7/01.
[83] Personal field note, 1/25/01.
[84] Personal field note, 4/26/01.
[85] Personal field note, 5/15/01.

As will be seen below, Mr. Quinto's approach to controlling computer use and student behavior did not ultimately set the tone for how the after-school program evolved. It did, however, affect the tone of the class and represent an ongoing source of tension and difference in perspective between Mr. Quinto and CREATE staff and, to some extent, between him and Mr. Gonzalez. Also, I believe these tensions and differences limited the extent to which I, and probably others, felt comfortable and relaxed in the computer lab.

4. Implementation and Evolution of the Computer Skills and Projects Class

I turn now to discuss how the new curriculum for the Computer Skills and Projects Class was implemented in practice. In the process, I examine how the class changed and evolved over the semester. As in the previous chapter, I pay close attention to the activities that students were engaged in as well as the quality of BCMS and LFC students' participation. I am particularly interested in how BCMS students responded to the new curriculum, both when working "on their own" and when working with an LFC student or other adult. I am also interested in the extent to which the LFC students and other adults were able to help scaffold the academic and social development of the BCMS students, and the role that the new curriculum and activities played in facilitating pro-academic or pro-social interactions. Finally, I am interested in how the learning environment, or culture, of the after-school program evolved and changed while the new curriculum was being implemented, and the extent to which these changes were able to help enable CREATE's goals for the activity, such as mixing learning with play, supporting collaborative learning between BCMS and LFC students, and promoting BCMS students' academic development. I begin my discussion by looking at some of the

general tendencies and new behavior patterns that emerged over the semester, and then examine in closer detail how three different types of computer activities functioned in practice: typing exercises, drawing assignments, and larger projects.

a. General Tendencies

When Mr. Gonzalez began to teach students a new assignment, he typically set up a projector attached to his computer so he could demonstrate on a big screen in front of the class the step-by-step procedures students should follow. While he explained the assignment (in both English and Spanish), students often quieted down and paid attention, trying to follow along closely with Mr. Gonzalez. When he was done with his presentation, it was time for students to get to work on the activity. When students worked on a particular assignment for several class sessions (such as the Time Line Presentations), however, Mr. Gonzalez did not typically give new lectures or presentations each time. Instead, after students finished their typing exercises, they were told to go right to work.

An important feature of almost all the new activities was that in order for the BCMS students to get started and be able to complete a given assignment, they needed a lot of help along the way. BCMS students had a wide range of computer skills coming into the class. Some needed help just to get started with very simple computer operations, such as clicking the mouse, inserting a disk, opening a program, saving a file, etc. Other students knew the basics of using a computer but needed a lot of help learning the tools of a new computer application or the technical skills needed to complete a more complicated assignment (such as formatting the document correctly, using the

appropriate tools to place images and text, etc.). Still other students were extremely savvy computer users and already knew most of the technical skills required for a given assignment (or otherwise learned them very quickly). Mr. Gonzalez, the LFC students, and I usually moved around the room, helping students, fixing problems, and responding to questions. Sometimes, students would turn to each other for help, or Mr. Gonzalez or I would ask one of the more advanced BCMS students to help out a few of those who were less experienced.

In addition to needing help using the computer technology in order to complete an assignment, students also needed help with the *content* of the assignment. Sometimes they needed help understanding what they were supposed to do; sometimes they needed help coming up with ideas. Mostly, they needed help with the reading and writing components of an activity. Mr. Gonzalez always let students choose what language they wanted to use on any given assignment. Some students were schooled in Mexico until recently and fairly skilled at reading and writing in Spanish. These students usually did their assignments in Spanish and the content-related help they needed was mostly about getting ideas concerning what to do and then correcting their work. Most students, however, faced tremendous difficulties with basic literacy skills in both English and Spanish. They often struggled to read and write fairly simple sentences in either language. Often, these students would attempt to avoid literacy-rich assignments. They typically needed encouragement and help to be able to stay on task and complete the reading and writing components of an activity.

Most students were excited to learn new technical skills related to drawing, using images (especially related to popular culture), and otherwise being able to design and

change the visual layout of a project. As mentioned above, the projects that required students to read or write something were much more challenging and they often struggled to stay on task or complete these aspects of the activities. What's more, once students worked on an assignment over a few class sessions—even the assignments involving strong artistic and design components—they typically began to lose interest in the activity and did something else instead. Students would start to complain of being bored, get easily distracted, and began to talk with their friends, work on a homework assignment, or surf the Internet. When this happened, many of the adult helpers tried to get the BCMS students back "on task," sometimes by telling them to "get back to work" (which was usually unsuccessful), and sometimes by working closely with them to actually help them move ahead with the assignment. BCMS students still often managed to avoid doing the aspects of assignments they didn't want to do. When we *were* successful at engaging them in the assignments, it was usually because we figured out how to collaborate on the activity in a way that made it more meaningful, interesting, or fun.

As I noted earlier, the learning environment, or culture, of the Computer Skills and Projects class varied over the course of the semester. Sometimes the atmosphere in the room seemed like a traditional school classroom, with a teacher lecturing at the front and students at their seats, listening quietly or talking with their friends and fidgeting. Frequently, the adults present told students to be quiet, go back to their seats, or get back to work. On a few occasions, students were even reprimanded or asked to leave for being too "disruptive." At the same time, however, the atmosphere was typically "looser" and more playful than it had been over the previous semester. Adults might tell students to

"get back to work" on a given assignment, but they were usually lighthearted in how they said it and did not force students to be "on task." Students regularly conversed with their neighbors and moved around the room to visit each other or help out a friend. What's more, there were many opportunities for students and adult helpers to work together on the class activities and, in the process, get to know and like each other. Often, groups of students would laugh together or with one of the LFC students or other adults while working on their projects. As the semester progressed, as will be discussed in greater detail below, a general sense of camaraderie and friendship grew among the class participants (including the BCMS students, the LFC students, Mr. Gonzalez, and CREATE personnel).

As can be inferred in this discussion, throughout any given day, the LFC students were centrally involved in making the class go well. A few of the LFC students spoke little Spanish and often struggled to communicate with the Spanish dominant BCMS students. Even so, most LFC students were able to help with the BCMS students by moving around the room and answering their questions or by working closely with them one-on-one. They also helped with behind-the-scenes, organizational aspects of the class, such as maintaining student folders, making and passing out nametags for students, collecting and filing student work, etc. Some LFC students were more skilled than others in Spanish, at taking initiative with the BCMS students, or in figuring out how to help scaffold BCMS student learning and development. Still, all of the LFC students played good roles with individual BCMS students throughout the semester and with helping make the class more interesting to the BCMS students overall. In general, the LFC students contributed to making the class have a more playful, friendly tone and, in many

cases, BCMS students looked forward to seeing and talking with the particular LFC students they knew well. Given the importance of the role played by LFC students in the Computer Skills and Projects Class, the lack of a high concentration of LFC students at BCMS should be understood as negatively impacting the after-school program.

b. Debriefing Sessions at the End of Each Class

At the end of most days, all of the LFC students would gather for 10-20 minutes to have a "debriefing session," like that described earlier in the chapter, with Mr. Gonzalez, me, and any other adults that had participated in the day's activities. Each person would take a turn to talk about what the day had been like for them and what they had observed in the class. Then, we often tried to think together about how to solve problems that were coming up, such as how to handle students that weren't interested in the assignments or students that were rude to an LFC student or to each other, or how to handle language barriers between BCMS and LFC students. The following example from my field notes demonstrates the kind of conversation that would occur during a typical debriefing session:

> Frankie (a new LFC student) talked about feeling like he hadn't been able to be very useful today. I asked what he thought got in the way, and he said he thought it was because he didn't speak much Spanish and therefore had a hard time making a connection with the students he worked with. I asked Jesus and Erin (LFC students) to talk about how they had dealt with "language barriers" and they talked about trying to communicate in some English and Spanish, and then getting help from other BCMS students or adult helpers when they got stuck. Frankie also mentioned that he thought maybe Becky had felt uncomfortable with him. I told him I that it seemed to me like it was more an issue of her being shy in general (because she was usually like that), not just with him. (She always looks down when she speaks, talks very quietly... Although perhaps it was aggravated by the fact that he was a guy). Then we talked about ideas for how he might have

> built more rapport with her, such as trying to say some words in Spanish, or trying other things that might make her laugh a little bit or notice him being friendly or playful. He seemed to be thinking seriously about all the different issues we were talking about and interested in the ideas we were sharing (looking at us intently, nodding, etc.).[86]

Because there were a number of LFC students who participated in BCMS after-school computer activities who did not belong to the LFC Practicum in Learning and Development course, these meetings also provided an opportunity for me to share some of CREATE's theoretical principles and goals for how the after-school program should function. At the same time, the meetings also provided an opportunity for Mr. Gonzalez to share his perspectives about what kinds of things he wanted to see happening in the after-school program and what role the LFC students could play in making the program go better. An example from my field notes illustrates the type of comments he typically made:

> Everyone had positive remarks about how the day went. I talked about how much I had enjoyed my interactions with Consuela. Mr. Gonzalez talked about how Consuela and some others, like Rebeca, were very smart but only doing their work up to a certain level, and wouldn't ask for help. He said we all needed to really go up and ask them how it's going, or to take a look at their work and try and figure out where and how they need help…[87]

In this way, Mr. Gonzalez could share his priorities, concerns, and ideas for working with the students, and sometimes provide us with relevant background information about the school and particular students to help us better understand the issues at hand.

Over the course of the semester, the debriefing sessions helped those of us staffing the program (principally Mr. Gonzalez, me, and the LFC students) build a greater sense of teamwork and shared perspective in running the program and working with the

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[86] Personal field note, 4/24/01.
[87] Personal field note, 4/26/01.

BCMS students. As the semester progressed, the LFC students seemed more and more pleased and relaxed, talking about their work with the children and the strategies they had used. They seemed to have developed a fair amount of comfort in using the debriefings as a time to talk and share ideas, thoughts, etc. Toward the end of the year, I reflected in my field notes that the debriefings were "definitely the place where we've done the most to build the foundations of a team."[88]

5. Focused Observations of Computer Activities and Student Engagement

a. Starting Each Class: Mavis Beacon Typing Tutor

Almost every day, Mr. Gonzalez started off the day's activities by having students do typing tutor exercises, using *Mavis Beacon* (usually while he set up equipment and finished preparing for class). After about 10-15 minutes, he made an announcement for everyone to "file quit" and begin the day's assignment. On occasion, this initial "typing/prep time" dragged on to as much as half an hour long.

While BCMS students typed, the LFC students and I often walked around the room to see if anyone needed help and to encourage students to practice using correct finger placement and not look at their fingers. Most students still used the "hunt and peck" method they were familiar with, however, except for the minute or two that one of the adult helpers worked with them. Sometimes we sat next to students and worked on the typing tutor exercises ourselves. There were some aspects of the typing program that were like a game, in which students would try to type quickly to move a car forward (as if in a car race). There were other aspects of the program in which they just practiced

[88] Personal field note, 5/3/01.

typing a sentence or paragraph given to them on a blank screen. The program rewarded them with points for speed and accuracy.

A few field note excerpts demonstrate the variety of ways that students engaged in this activity, and how LFC students and other adult helpers (myself included) assisted and interacted with the BCMS students in the process. Near the beginning of the semester, for example, I wrote:

> Jesus (LFC student), Vanessa Baker and I walked around and helped students open programs and get started typing. I tried to show students how to place their fingers on the keyboard for typing. Most of them would try it for a few minutes, but then go back to the hunt and peck method, especially when they could go faster by looking at the keyboard. I noticed that as I went around to help people, I spoke mostly Spanish. Sometimes I spoke English, but then felt like I wasn't sure a student was understanding, so then I'd switch to Spanish…We adult helpers were very spread out and wandering around a lot, not working with any individual student for very long at all! As students worked they seemed to be chatting with their neighbors some of the time. The room had a pretty lively feel to it. There was also some of the typical giggling between Linda and Ana, as they sat next to each other on one computer.[89]

While some BCMS students seemed to enjoy the activity for at least a few minutes, most grew tired of typing before the assignment was up. Jesus Leon, one of the LFC students, recorded this observation:

> …I asked Manuel, "How long have you guys been playing *Mavis Beacon*?" He looked at his watch and replied " About an hour." I looked at my pager and saw that it was only 3:12. I then told him "You guys haven't even been here for half an hour." He laughed and said, “It feels like we have been here for that long.” This was the feeling that I got from all the kids… After that I began to patrol the room. I had a lot of questions, but none of them were related to *Mavis Beacon*. The most popular question was, "This is boring. Can I go on the Internet?"[90]

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[89] Personal field note, 1/23/01.
[90] Jesus Leon field note, 2/6/01.

Eventually, Mr. Gonzalez would announce that it was time to quit typing and turn to the main activity of the day.

On some occasions, the LFC students or I would try to make the activity more meaningful by suggesting students practice typing with correct form and then by trying to find ways of playfully making them do it. Sometimes this helped students practice correctly for a short while. This example from my field notes demonstrates the kind of effort we made:

> I noticed Erin (LFC student) trying to help Rosa, who was visibly looking at her fingers and using the hunt and peck method. Rosa kept refusing to do it the "correct" way (all in a very chipper, happy, but insistent way). I went over to help out too, and we ended up laughing together a lot (with Erin and I both trying to cover the keyboard so Rosa couldn't see it...), but it didn't change Rosa's typing one bit in the long run.[91]

In general, however, it was very hard for LFC students or other adult helpers to turn this activity into something that was interesting for the BCMS students. A more and more common observation from my field notes had this flavor: "I noticed that all the adult helpers stayed fairly uninvolved and looked on from a distance."[92]

In general, the typing exercises did little to further the kinds of goals that CREATE had for the program. In emails and meetings between CREATE staff and researchers, we discussed how the activity was not really teaching students to type or furthering their academic development, and how it did not seem to help facilitate LFC student interaction with the BCMS students. It was difficult for me to get Mr. Gonzalez to change his mind about doing the exercises, however. A few times I mentioned some of CREATE's concerns, but he responded that he needed the time that students were typing

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[91] Personal field note, 2/6/01.
[92] Personal field note, 2/22/01

in order to finish his prep time and equipment set up. He also said he liked the activity because it seemed to calm the students down a bit.[93] For the most part, Mr. Gonzalez wasn't interested in coming up with other ideas for ways students could start the day. Some days, however, I was able to help shorten the time spent on typing by suggesting to Mr. Gonzalez that we move on to something else. For example:

> I told Mr. Gonzalez I thought we should change the activity (typing), and he said to wait 5 more minutes. After a few minutes I suggested again, and then he made an announcement for students to quit typing.[94]

Gradually, as the semester progressed, however, Mr. Gonzalez had students spend less and less time on typing and eventually began to start the day with students continuing their work on assignments and projects they had not yet finished. By the end of the semester, he started each class with typing only occasionally. This demonstrated some movement on his part toward agreeing with CREATE about what kinds of activities we should have in the after-school program.

b. Computer Exercises and "Short Assignments"

As mentioned above, throughout the semester Mr. Gonzalez instructed students in a number of basic computer applications by having students do short exercises and assignments. Here, I examine how he did this in the case of teaching students the drawing and painting applications in *AppleWorks*, and how BCMS and LFC students responded to the assignments. This example provides a useful illustration of the kinds of patterns that emerged as the new curriculum was implemented in the class.

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[93] Personal field note, 2/6/01.
[94] Personal field note, 2/22/01.

When Mr. Gonzalez first introduced the drawing application, he hooked up his computer to the projector and told students to copy his drawing exactly. He took students through making different sizes of lines, changing the colors of lines, drawing different figures (such as a house and a star), and making different shapes (such as a box, circle, etc.) and filling them with different colors. The following class session, he told students that they could draw something of their own choice. In general, students reacted to these assignments with enthusiasm. It wasn't unusual to hear "oh, cool!" coming from different corners of the room.[95] At the same time, many students had very basic questions about how to get started and what to do.

For the LFC students, the fact that BCMS students had questions and needed help provided opportunities for interaction that otherwise might have been more difficult to achieve. In the BCMS 5th Dimension, for example, BCMS students often seemed disinterested in working with LFC students and often told the LFC students that they didn't "need" their "help." Many of the more timid or shy LFC students reacted to this kind of attitude by staying somewhat quiet and removed from the day's activities. Now, however, as many BCMS students were actively involved in trying to do things they were interested in but didn't know how to do, they were much more receptive to getting help and working with others than they had in the past. In the process, most LFC students began taking on an active role in trying to help.

Jesus Leon, an LFC student who had participated in the BCMS 5th Dimension activities the previous semester, describes how the new drawing activities unfolded in practice:

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[95] Personal field note, 1/25/01.

> Once the kids were done with the typing, it was time for them to begin drawing. Their goal was to try to keep up with Mr. Gonzalez. A job easier said than done for most of the children there, and for me. I had to half listen to Mr. Gonzalez, while helping kids catch up simultaneously. The kids struggled right from the first line. The kids who usually draw flew past the instructions given by Mr. Gonzalez, while others struggled heavily. It was my unofficial job to keep everyone caught up. I had a chance to work with a lot of kids …[96]

A few days later after a similar day at site of helping out student after student, Jesus reflected on how taxing his new role was: "This was a very exhausting site visit. I got an idea of what it is like to be a teacher, and Frankly, I was pooped out. My legs felt like rubber, and my brain felt vacant."[97] This was a big change for an LFC student who, over the previous semester, had often sat on the sidelines.

As LFC students tried to figure out how to help the BCMS students, they were often unfamiliar with the particular programs and didn't really know how to do the assignments either. In the process of trying to help the BCMS students to figure it out, however, the interactions that resulted often created opportunities for BCMS and LFC students to build rapport, get to know each other, and collaborate on the task at hand. LFC student, Alan Prieto, demonstrates a good example of how a students' need for help created an opening for collaboration and interaction. In this case, one of the drawing assignments in the class facilitated his starting to build a relationship with a young boy named Daniel:

> A few minutes pass by and all of a sudden Lisa taps me on the shoulder and asks me to help this boy who was having a little trouble with the program. I sat down next to him and I ask him " what's your name?" he kind of shrugs and gives me an attitude in saying his name. His name was Daniel. My next question was "what do you want to draw?" he replies still

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[96] Jesus Leon field note, 1/23/01.
[97] Jesus Leon field note, 1/30/01.

> in an attitude "a man." I'm thinking "what's his problem?" then I realize Daniel really didn't know how to use this program. And when I played with it I didn't know what I was doing too. And it kind of looked bad for me because Daniel was getting restless and saying some rude remarks. Like "don't you know what your doing? You're the teacher!" I kind of took offense to that remark. But after a couple of minutes we started to get the hang of drawing and painting with the different tools. I noticed that Daniel liked to use the polygon tool, because it made nice spiky hair for Daniel's drawing of a man.
>
> Daniel and me started to talk and he asked me a question about what I do…I told him how I work with computers in one of my jobs. Then he jokes with me that I work with computers because it didn't look like it to him. I told him I don't work with Macs. We talked briefly for 5 minutes then I realize that he should be working on his drawing. So I get up but right after Daniel calls me and shows me this new tool he's using, it was the text box and it allows the user to add text to the drawing. Daniel was putting a few bands on the shirt of his man. I once again sat down and told him "that's cool".
>
> Daniel and me started to talk about his favorite bands, while working of course. I noticed that he wasn't giving me attitude any more and he looked as if he wanted to stay till the end of class. This made me happy because I thought I wasn't going to get along with Daniel. We ended up talking about our favorite music and bands for the rest of the class… I was impressed on how much he knew about alternative music. Having Daniel to talk to really made my day better. I felt really good that I got to talk to someone who had similar interest… At the end of the day there was a part of me that wanted Daniel to stay a little longer so that we can finish up on his picture. But we all had to go so we said "later see you next week" just the fact that I might see him made me look forward to next week.[98]

In this example, the fact that Daniel really didn't know how to use the program helped Alan decide to keep working with him, despite the "bad attitude" Daniel gave him at first. In the process, Alan was able to start getting to know Daniel and building a relationship with him and, in the process, they were able to collaborate together on the assignment. Being able to have this kind of interaction seemed to make the drawing activity more interesting and meaningful for both participants.

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[98] Alan Prieto field note, 1/18/01.

From CREATE's standpoint, the introduction of these kinds of assignments were a big improvement over the BCMS "5th Dimension" activities and drill exercises such as *Mavis Beacon* because they genuinely seemed to be creating opportunities for BCMS and LFC students to collaborate, interact, and build rapport. At the same time, CREATE staff and researchers were concerned that the new curriculum wasn't evolving in a way that was academically as rich as it could be.[99] As mentioned earlier, the computer exercises and assignments that Mr. Gonzalez was teaching focused on students learning computer skills more than on *using* computer skills to mediate other kinds of learning and development. In this way, he was treating computer skills as ends, not means. This is one of the reasons that I made the efforts (described earlier) to work with Mr. Gonzalez on developing the curriculum to include other, more project oriented activities that, in theory, would be more "academically enriching" for students.

c. Timeline and Presentation Projects

The two bigger projects that were implemented over the course of the semester, the "Timeline" and the "Presentation," were by far the most challenging activities that the computer class attempted. They were also the activities that, as measured by CREATE's goals, held the most potential for engaging the BCMS students in more traditional kinds of academic activities. Both assignments included a writing component. The potential of these assignments was only partially realized, however, in large part because of the ways that the assignments were implemented. In each case, the teacher established the general goals and specific components of the projects instead of helping students discover and

[99] This was discussed in field notes and meetings between the various members of the "CREATE team."

determine them. What's more, for the most part, the goals of the activities were not communicated or developed in such a way as to capture student interest, and many components of the activities held little meaning for the students.

In the "Timeline" assignment, for example, students were supposed to write down key "personal" events and "historical" events for each year they had been alive. In order to learn more about the historical events that happened each year, students were instructed to do research on the Internet and were given a possible website address to use that listed key events for the 80s and 90s. In the "Presentation" project, students were instructed to draw from some of the events listed in their Timelines to make three visually interesting "slides" (and one cover page) that dealt with different phases of their lives: before elementary school, during elementary school, and during middle school. Students were told to bring in photos of themselves, their friends, and family to scan and put on each page, and then to write something about the photo or about what was happening during their lives at that time. They were also told to bring in or find other images obtained from the Internet for each page, related to key historical events that occurred during those years and to other things that interested them, such as hobbies, favorite stars, etc. Finally, they were told to use the drawing program to add some graphic designs or drawings to their slides (see Appendix for samples of completed projects).

An excerpt from my field note on the first day the Timeline assignment was given provides a sense of how the project was initially introduced and how students reacted to it:

> Eventually Mr. Gonzalez told the class that we would be doing a time line and had them open *AppleWorks*. He showed them how to select a pattern for a background, draw a box that they then filled with the pattern, and

> then write on top of the pattern with different colors of text. He said that they should write down the year that they were born, and then each year they were alive until 2001. Next, he told them to write down something that happened in their lives from each year. He wrote as an example the day he was born and the place he was born.
>
> Students needed a LOT of help to get started! Much of the help they needed today was technical. They needed to figure out how to change fonts, font size, and spacing, move the pattern to the back of the page so it didn't cover up the fonts, and other such details. There was some confusion, but as I and others went around the room, many were able to get started on the content. Eventually, Mr. Gonzalez instructed everyone to delete their background and just work with the text, saying that we would put on a background when we were done with the text.
>
> As usual, there were many different levels of skill in the room. Some students were able to make a lot of progress--some even finished writing something for almost every year. Other students struggled with the technicalities and/or worked very slowly (often getting caught up in side bar conversations). Some of these students barely finished writing something for the year they were born. A couple of students complained that they didn't want to do it. Others seemed pretty into it.[100]

It is interesting to note that on this day, Mr. Gonzalez made no mention of the "historical events" component of the assignment. At least twice, however, he told students that soon they would be going on the Internet. There were many cheers and signs of excitement about that possibility (although he didn't tell them they would be going on to look for historical events on different years).[101] Nor were students told until several weeks later that they would be turning the assignment into a slide show presentation.

About a week after students began working on the Timeline project, Mr. Gonzalez told students of the "historical events" component of the assignment. Unfortunately, he made little effort to capture students' attention or get them excited about or interested in

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[100] Personal field note, 2/6/01.
[101] Ibid.

the activity. An excerpt from one of my field notes demonstrates how the assignment was introduced:

> After about 10 minutes on typing, Mr. Gonzalez told the class to quit. He then lectured for a few minutes about how after the students finished the personal events on their timelines, they would be including an historical or social event... And that they could go on the Internet to find what they needed (and that we had some sites they could go to). Some students paid attention; others didn't look up from their computers. To a couple people, I went over and told them to listen to the instructions.[102]

In this way, the assignment was introduced without discussion of any historical context or why it might be relevant or interesting for students to think about world events that had occurred in their lifetimes. As will be demonstrated below, unless an LFC student or other adult helper figured out how to make the assignment more interesting, the majority of students treated the assignment like a task that they had to do rather than something they looked forward to. In general, students had very little background information about recent social history and could think of, or even recognize, very few "historical events." While many still attempted to work on this aspect of the assignment by using the Internet to look up historical events from different years, they did so reluctantly and with very little enthusiasm. Later in the semester, when Mr. Gonzalez introduced the Presentation project, this trend continued. The historical events component of the assignment was presented as a requirement among a list of other requirements (students were told that each slide needed to have at least two personal photographs, two drawings, two personal events, two historical or social events, a background, etc.). There was no discussion, for example, of why students were supposed to do this or what kinds of things they might want to think about in planning what to choose. In this way, the

[102] Personal field note, 2/13/01.

assignment often took on a characteristic of so many school-like assignments in which students are told to do things regardless of whether or not they understand them or care why they are doing them.

d. Reading and Writing Activities

While both the Timeline and Presentation projects had the potential for helping students practice and develop their reading and writing skills as means to a valued end, as well as increase their knowledge of recent history, in practice this potential was only sometimes realized. Students were primarily interested and put most of their time and attention on the technical and more visual aspects of their projects. This tendency is demonstrated well in a typical interaction I had with students about their writing:

> As I looked at different students' work, I noticed that they hadn't proofread for if their sentences made sense…As I started making suggestions for corrections, it was clear that none of them had any real interest in correcting their work, or making it look formatted in a clear or consistent way. Esteben kept saying, it's done, it's done, "Please show me how to put on a background!" Emmanuel kept saying "it's perfect already, I don't need to change anything" (he had some sections that were completely out of wack with fragments of sentences that didn't make sense, copied in twice, etc.). Irene kept saying that she wanted to print in color, and didn't want to correct it anymore.[103]

Most students were also excited about putting personal photographs and Internet images on their Presentation projects. An excerpt from one of my field notes demonstrates a typical response that BCMS students had to learning how to scan a photo:

> Mr. Gonzalez was finally able to show Ynez how to scan one of her photos (it was a current, small, snap shot of her face). She was so excited when the photo came out, she was beaming…She went back to her

[103] Personal field note, 2/22/01.

> computer and I helped her insert the photo onto her title page. She seemed really happy about it (smiling a lot)…[104]

When students began surfing the Internet to look for possible images for their presentations, they often got sidetracked and just began to look at their favorite web sites. They seemed to enjoy making the selection of which image they liked the best and could use for their Presentation (often showing it off and talking about it to the LFC students and their friends). Often, Mr. Gonzalez or I told them to stop surfing the Internet and get back to work on their projects. (In this way, I was increasingly taking on a more teacher-like role in my interactions with students).

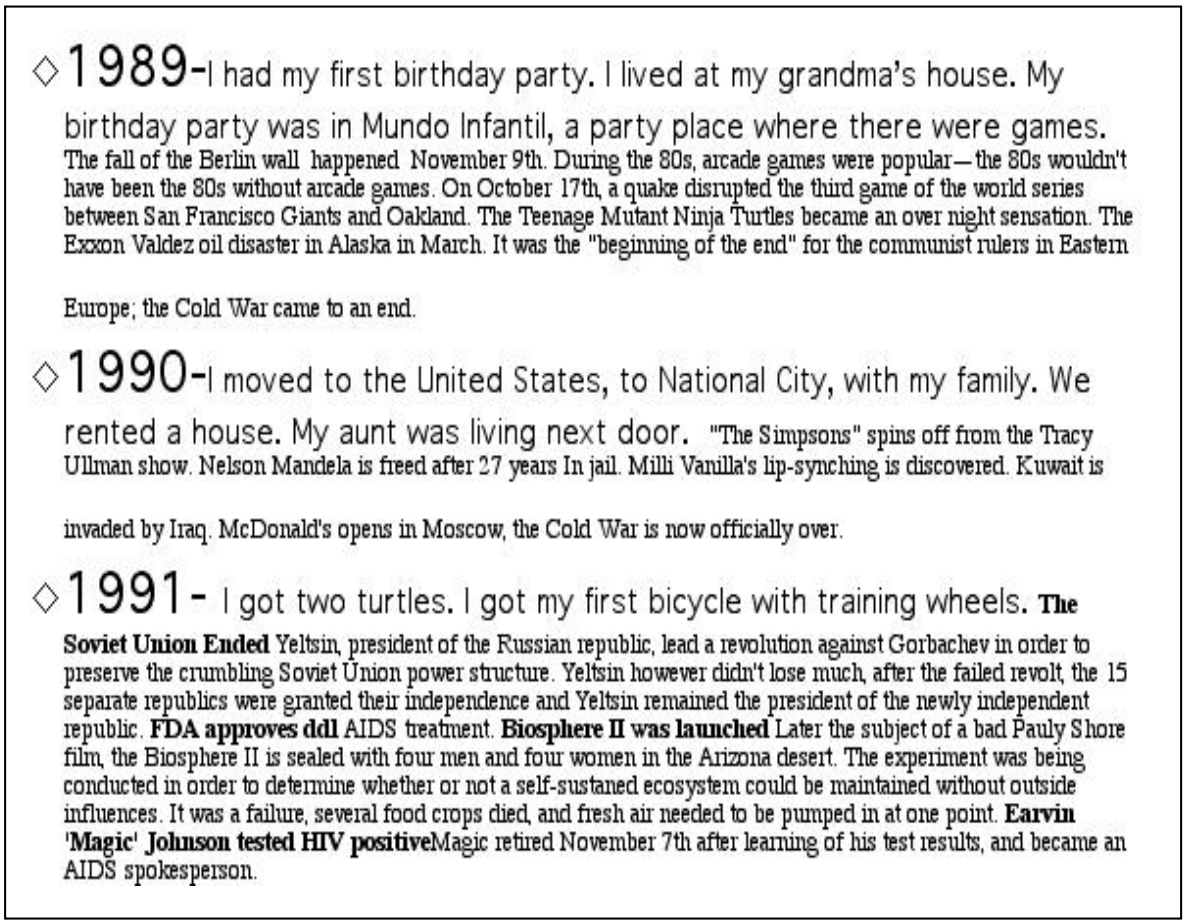
As mentioned above, however, when it came to the more "literacy-rich" components of the assignment—especially those related to "historical events"—students were much less interested. They often complained about being bored and sometimes avoided these aspects of the activity altogether. For example, once students learned how to find the website with historical events listed on it, they typically selected a few of the sentences on the page and copied them directly into their Timelines (sometimes without even reading them). Often, they had no interest in reviewing what they wrote or in correcting it. Excerpts from one of my field notes demonstrate this tendency:

> Irene had been doing the activity (mostly by herself), but not paying that much attention to the historical events. She was just copying the first three events listed for each year, and not really proofreading. She and I did spell check for a bit, and started proofreading... But she was very reluctant to make any changes…
>
> Esteben developed a system for going back and forth between the web and the timeline, copying historical facts onto his timeline. When I said we needed to correct the things he copied and make them into real sentences,

[104] Personal field note, 3/6/01.

> he complained that he came here because he wanted to have fun, and this was no fun.[105]

The result can be seen in an example from Esteben's Timeline in Figure 3 (below).



◇1989-I had my first birthday party. I lived at my grandma's house. My birthday party was in Mundo Infantil, a party place where there were games. The fall of the Berlin wall happened November 9th. During the 80s, arcade games were popular—the 80s wouldn't have been the 80s without arcade games. On October 17th, a quake disrupted the third game of the world series between San Francisco Giants and Oakland. The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles became an over night sensation. The Exxon Valdez oil disaster in Alaska in March. It was the "beginning of the end" for the communist rulers in Eastern Europe; the Cold War came to an end.

◇1990-I moved to the United States, to National City, with my family. We rented a house. My aunt was living next door. "The Simpsons" spins off from the Tracy Ullman show. Nelson Mandela is freed after 27 years In jail. Milli Vanilla's lip-synching is discovered. Kuwait is invaded by Iraq. McDonald's opens in Moscow, the Cold War is now officially over.

◇1991- I got two turtles. I got my first bicycle with training wheels. **The Soviet Union Ended** Yeltsin, president of the Russian republic, lead a revolution against Gorbachev in order to preserve the crumbling Soviet Union power structure. Yeltsin however didn't lose much, after the failed revolt, the 15 separate republics were granted their independence and Yeltsin remained the president of the newly independent republic. **FDA approves ddI** AIDS treatment. **Biosphere II was launched** Later the subject of a bad Pauly Shore film, the Biosphere II is sealed with four men and four women in the Arizona desert. The experiment was being conducted in order to determine whether or not a self-sustaned ecosystem could be maintained without outside influences. It was a failure, several food crops died, and fresh air needed to be pumped in at one point. **Earvin 'Magic' Johnson tested HIV positive**Magic retired November 7th after learning of his test results, and became an AIDS spokesperson.

Figure 3. Example of BCMS Student Timeline (by Esteben)

As a result of this kind of strategy for doing the assignment, as well as overall disinterest in the task, students' final versions of their timelines often list a wide, somewhat random array of disconnected events copied directly off of the Internet. These events differ in style and content from the more personal events that they also included in their timelines (and which generally held more meaning for them, as will be discussed in

[105] Personal field note, 2/20/01.

greater detail below). For the most part, the "historical events" component of the assignments, more than other components, came to represent an example of purely meaningless work. When I asked students about the events listed on their timelines, for example, I often discovered that they didn't actually know what the events were about (and sometimes hadn't even read what they had written). Sometimes, they had even copied the same information off the Internet into their timelines more than once, as can be seen in the example of a student's work in Figure 4 (below).

◇ 1992 - I had a new baby cousin. His name is Alfonso Beltran. **LA Riots**

◇ Rodney King was beaten badly by police officers in L.A when resisting arrest. Unknown to the police, there was somebody filming it in the bushes. The police officers were handed a verdict of not guilty by the first review board. This caused racial riots to break out in south central L.A. and led to several days of rioting.
◇ **Bosnia and Hercegovina Secede from Yugoslavia**
◇ April 1992, pretty much leaving Serbia and Macedonia as the last provinces of Yugoslavia
◇ **Peace in El Salvador**
◇ In February, El Salvador signed peace agreements between the leftist rebels and the rightist government. Open elections followed two years later.
◇ **Quebec votes to remain part of Canada**
◇ Quebec had been campaigning for many years to become independent, but the vote fell short of what was needed for the change to happen.
◇ **Largest shopping mall in the US is constructed**
◇ Minnesota's Mall of America, 78 acres, with the largest indoor amusment park

◇ 1993 - I turned four. My cousin was born.His name is Reyneiro. **LA Riots**

◇ Rodney King was beaten badly by police officers in L.A when resisting arrest. Unknown to the police, there was somebody filming it in the bushes. The police officers were handed a verdict of not guilty by the first review board. This caused racial riots to break out in south central L.A. and led to several days of rioting.
◇ **Bosnia and Hercegovina Secede from Yugoslavia**
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◇ **Quebec votes to remain part of Canada**
◇ Quebec had been campaigning for many years to become independent, but the vote fell short of what was needed for the change to happen.
◇ **Largest shopping mall in the US is constructed**
◇ Minnesota's Mall of America, 78 acres, with the largest indoor amusment park
◇ **Nicoderm, first nicotine transdermal patch**
◇ The first patch for smokers to quit smoking...

Figure 4. Example of BCMS Student Timeline (by Ana)

Perhaps in part because the assignment had not been taught in such a way as to provide background information to students about recent history or try to get them excited to learn about it, most students had little investment in this aspect of their projects. In general, students were more interested in writing about "personal events" for

their Timelines and captions for the images on their Presentations. Still, a review of students' final projects demonstrates that most of them only wrote very little for each assignment (see other examples of student work in Appendix). In this way, in practice, neither the Timeline or Presentation assignments really seemed to help students practice or build their reading and writing skills in any substantial way.

e. Trying to Engage BCMS Students in "Historical Events"

As BCMS students worked on the Timeline and Presentation assignments, sometimes an LFC student or other adult was able to help make the activities more interesting and meaningful for the BCMS students. In these instances, the new curriculum was successful at providing a context for BCMS students to participate in important developmental activities, such as engaging in discussions about personal and social history, and building relationships with adults. Over the course of the semester, in large part because of the kinds of interactions and relationships that developed in this context, the learning environment and culture of the after-school program gradually became much richer and more in the direction of CREATE's goals.

Despite the fact that many BCMS students were reluctant to work on the "historical events" component of either the Timeline or the Presentation projects, LFC students and other adults were sometimes able to play a role in making the assignment more interesting to the students they worked with. When the assignment was first introduced, for example, several of the LFC students and other adults that had been helping that day reported that they had had good conversations with BCMS students

about particular historical events. LFC student Jessica Clay offers one such example in her field notes:

> After I read through Alfonso's timeline I helped him get on the Internet… It was very interesting for me to read and remember the events that happened in the late 80's and early 90's. Although I remember the events that happened, Alfonso didn't know many of them. I thought this would be a good history lesson for him, so I would read an event to him and ask him if he know what that event was, and if he didn't I would tell him a little bit about it. Some events were somewhat of a bore, but other ones he was excited to hear about. I told him about the Desert Storm War, and he was asking a lot of questions about what happened and telling me about what he heard on the news about it. I thought it was cool that I can share information to him that I lived through.[106]

Throughout the semester, as students continued to work on their Timelines and then later, their Presentations, these more meaningful discussions about history seemed to occur only rarely. Still, they are important to note because they demonstrate the potential for an adult helper to scaffold a younger students' learning and development in this area. (They also signal the extent to which the potential success of the after-school program was limited by the small number of LFC students that attended BCMS activities). An excerpt from one of my field notes demonstrates an example of the kind of rich discussion about history that was sometimes able to occur. In this excerpt, I worked with a young girl, Consuela, who wanted help finding a historical event to put in her Presentation project:

> I suggested we look at events she had listed for each year on her timeline…We read through the historical events together, and I asked her which ones for a given year seemed the most important or interesting. For one of the years (around 1990?) she had written that Nelson Mandela had been released from prison and that Mili Vanili had been caught lip synching. I asked which was more interesting and she said Mili Vanili. I said "Really?! More interesting than Nelson Mandela?" And it turned out she hadn't heard of Nelson Mandela, or even Apartheid. I told her, in the best Spanish I could muster, a brief overview of Apartheid and how

[106] Jessica Clay field note, 2/4/01.

> Nelson Mandela had gone to prison for 27 years for fighting for the rights of Black South Africans, and then later was elected president of the country after Black people won the right to vote. She seemed pretty interested while I was talking. After, she said that Nelson Mandela was more interesting than Mili Vanili and that she wanted to put him on her timeline instead of Mili Vanili…Later, Adriana (LFC student) said in the debriefing session that she had helped Consuela find pictures of Nelson Mandela on the Internet…[107]

More often, however, as mentioned above, BCMS students remained disinterested in the "history" part of the assignment and none of the LFC students or other adults figured out how to help them "get into" it. LFC student Adriana Vigil reports such an example in her field notes:

> Next I was walking around taking a look at what the rest of the kids were doing. I ran into Casandra and Adriana, and I sat there with them and they were showing me all the singers that they liked. They weren't exactly doing their work…I helped them find some pictures to put on their timeline and I tried to convince them to look for some historical events but they didn't want to.[108]

In this example, the LFC student came and found me and told me of the challenges she was having and I went over to try and to help the two BCMS students get more "on task." When I got there, the two BCMS students insisted they were already done. I persisted, somewhat playfully, about how they weren't done yet. Any time I mentioned the word history, Adriana would say "¡Ay no, Lisa!" and then tell me how history is "aburrida, aburrida, aburrida" (boring, boring, boring).[109] Despite many efforts that I made over the next several weeks to convince Adriana to try working on this part of the assignment, she refused and, as a result, did not include any historical events in her final presentation.

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[107] Jessica Clay field note, 4/26/01.
[108] Adriana Vigil field note, 4/25/01
[109] Personal field note, 4/25/01.

f. Using “Personal Stories” to Build Relationships

While BCMS students often had difficulty writing the “personal events” component of their Timeline and Presentation projects, this aspect of the assignment was in general much more relevant and interesting to them than the “historical events” component. As a result, they were typically more engaged in this aspect of the assignment and as such, more receptive to working with the LFC students to do it. The LFC students in turn helped them with technical problems or helped them think of what to write about. In the process, the nature of the assignment lent itself to interactions in which the LFC students and other adult helpers were able to get to know more about the BCMS students they worked with. What’s more, the BCMS students often seemed to enjoy getting to talk about their lives and get to know more about the LFC students and other adults that helped them. As a result, they were often more able to stay focused on doing the assignment than when they worked alone.

Two excerpts from LFC student field notes demonstrate some of the typical ways that BCMS students responded to the “personal events” component of the assignment and the ways that LFC students used the activity as a context for building stronger rapport with the BCMS students. LFC student Jessica Clay, for example, was able to use to the content of what a young boy wrote to start a conversation with him:

> I saw that Juan Manuel walked in and so I went to sit next to him to help him finish up on his timeline. I started reading his timeline and I read that the first three years of his life all he put was how his father would yell at him all the time, and how when he was two years old that he made his father really mad and his mother made his father stop yelling at him. I thought that was the most saddest thing I have ever read, considering that the author is a child. I asked him a few questions about what he meant by saying that his father would yell at him, and he told me that he didn’t really remember, all he could remember though, was his father yelling at

> him. I later was asking Juan about himself and at first he seemed a little shy but then he really opened up to me. He would talk to me when he was done with a sentence or two in his timeline. He was talking real proudly about his family. He told me about his little brother, and that his sister just had a baby. I really enjoyed his company…[110]

LFC student Monica Goya provides another example of how helping a student with the Timeline assignment provided an opportunity for strengthening her relationship with a young girl named Ynez:

> I went back to Ynez and helped her correct some words that she had put in present tense. She speaks both English and Spanish very well but has a problem with present and past tense…Whenever we got the chance she would tell me why she put certain things in her time line. For instance, when she was four her mother stopped feeding her. She started eating alone. Until she started Preschool, her mother would feed her and tell her she was her baby, but the teacher got upset because her mom would go during her snack time to feed her and the teacher told the mom she had to let her feed alone because she was harming Ynez by not letting her be independent. I thought that was very cute. She told me her mom still babies her in many ways…Ynez finished her job on time.[111]

In my efforts to work with the BCMS students, I often focused on students who struggled the most academically or who had behavior problems (such as teasing other students or picking fights). In the case of this assignment, I also found that some of these students were able to get involved in the activity and seemed to enjoy talking about themselves. In the process, they at least tolerated the writing component. At the same time, I was able to strengthen my relationships with the students. One such example was when I worked with a young boy named Esteben:

> I sat down next to Esteben and asked him how his day had been (that's when he told me that he had gotten suspended). I then said we were going to work on the time line again, and he said something like, "awww why?" I said I thought it would be fun and that we could work on it together. I asked him what else he remembered or knew about what happened the

[110] Jessica Clay field note, 2/15/01.
[111] Monica Goya field note, 2/8/01.

> first year he was born (1986 or 1987, I don't remember). He said something about being born in Ensenada and where he had his first birthday party. I told him to write it down. He started to complain, and I suggested that we take turns. I took the keyboard and wrote down what he dictated about what he remembered. Pretty quickly, Esteben started getting into it. He told me about living with his grandmother, moving to the United States and living close to his aunt, getting in trouble, going to his first day of kindergarten and crying non stop about missing his mom... He was very animated, making lots of eye contact, smiling and laughing a lot (something he's never done with me before!). He asked me questions, like if I had been born in Mexico, and we had a little conversation about how I had lived in Sinaloa as a child…
>
> I really saw a neat side to Esteben coming through. I did a lot of the writing, but then I also gave him the keyboard and encouraged him to write down the things he was saying some of the time. He was less into that part of it, and complained some, but he did do it. We probably worked together for a good 1/2 hour. He was well on his way to being done with the assignment (which would be a first for him in this class!).[112]

In another instance, I worked with Miguel, a student who was failing most of his classes and was known by his teachers for not doing any work:

> Miguel needed to start his timeline. First, I helped him set up the font and page format, and noticed that, like many students, he had very little knowledge about how to set up or change basic word processing things. Then, we talked about what happened the year he was born. He talked about being born in Tecate, his grandfather dying from drinking too much alcohol, and his parents buying a new car. I stayed with him while he wrote down everything.[113]

This particular interaction was the first time that I had been able to start a conversation with Miguel. After this, Miguel began talking with me regularly about his life and saying hello to me whenever he saw me around the school.

In general, LFC students, CREATE researchers and staff, and Mr. Gonzalez were pleased about the kinds of interactions that occurred with the BCMS students surrounding the "personal events" component of their Timelines. Mr. Gonzalez, for example, reported

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[112] Personal field note, 2/8/01.
[113] Personal field note, 2/13/01.

in our debriefing sessions that he was learning more about his students' lives and, in the process, was getting a better sense of why some of them were having certain difficulties in school.[114]

Later in the semester, when BCMS students began working on their Presentations, these kinds of positive interactions continued. BCMS students still often needed help to make progress on the assignments, which again helped facilitate new interactions between BCMS and LFC students. Now, however, regardless of whether or not BCMS students "needed" help, many of them had established friendly relationships with the LFC students and often seemed happy to work with them. LFC student Erin Jones provides a good example of the kind of rapport and camaraderie that many BCMS and LFC students had developed:

> …So Tom asked me to sit with him and watch while he scooted around the 'Dragon Ball Z' website. While he was looking for an image he liked, he insisted on giving me a crash course in 'Dragon Ball Z.' I am pleased to report that I can name about 3 or 4 of the good guys, a few bad guys, and one bad guy turned good. After we found an image that both Tom and I liked, we downloaded that on to his disc.[115]

LFC student Jesus Leon provides another such example:

> I sat down with Carlos, and we began to play around with his timeline. He was creating his own background. We were having a lot of fun, laughing out loud at his background…[116]

In the process of these kinds of interactions, both BCMS and LFC students seemed to be enjoying and benefiting from working with, and getting to know, each other. Jessica Clay, an LFC student, provides another good example of the kinds of interactions that were becoming more common. In a previous class session, she had

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[114] Personal field note, 2/16/01.
[115] Erin Jones field note, 3/9/01.
[116] Jesus Leon field note, 3/6/01.

worked with a girl named Consuela. They had tried to find information about the girl's favorite singing group on the Internet but had been unsuccessful because neither knew how to spell the group's name. While at home, Jessica had found out how to spell it and now she had been looking forward to telling Consuela the information. She explains:

> When I went up to Anglea she was sitting with two friends, and it seemed like she didn't want me to talk to her in front of her friends, but I took the chance anyway. I told her that I now knew how to spell the group's name, and her face lit up and she said, "Stay here and help me find them on the Internet, I want to see them, they're my favorite group, thank you so much." I felt like a million dollars. I felt that I was building a friendship with her, and that was a cool feeling. For the rest of the day she was calling me over by my first name to see the pictures she had found…[117]

As students worked on their presentations, gradually the atmosphere in the computer lab was becoming more and more relaxed and conducive to CREATE's goals, such as mixing learning with play and supporting collaborative learning and non-hierarchical relationships. Postdoctoral researcher Vanessa Baker, visiting the site while BCMS students were working on their Presentation projects, reported these observations in her field notes:

> I noticed students (BCMS) were moving around and helping each other…I also noticed the LFC students appeared to be quite engaged in the activity. They sat side by side with one or two children and offered suggestions on the colors and designs they could use for the presentation background. I overheard a few children laughing and joking about each other's baby pictures…Students appeared to be having fun, but also remained on task while I was there…The undergrads appeared to be much more engaged with the students. I noticed Alan (LFC student) interacted more with the boys this time as opposed to standing on the side (as he had earlier in the year). I watched Erin and Jessica (LFC students) actively participate with the children by giving suggestions and solving problems…[118]

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[117] Jessica Clay field note, 4/19/01.
[118] Vanessa Baker field note, 3/8/01.

Increasingly, it became common for BCMS and LFC students to be working together in a relaxed way and, and at the same time, for them to be engaged in some aspects of the assignment.

6. The Computer Skills and Projects Class Toward the End of the Year

As the semester progressed, the Presentation assignment seemed to "drag on." Many BCMS students began to lose interest in working on their projects or actually trying to finish them. Many claimed they were done, even though they were really missing big components of the assignment. Several students stopped coming to the class altogether. Others came, but got permission from Mr. Gonzalez or me to work on homework or do a different activity. Still other students came but worked without permission, and semi-secretively, on what they wanted to do instead (such as chat with friends and surf the Internet). Many claimed they were "bored" and wanted to learn something new or do a new project.

A variety of factors seemed to prevent students from completing the Presentation assignment. To begin with, without assistance from an LFC student or other adult, BCMS students were rarely able to make significant progress on the project (especially the parts that were more challenging for them). This was partly because the BCMS students often lacked the motivation to do so on their own, but also because they still needed a lot of technical and content-related assistance to actually finish their Presentations. At the same time, there weren't enough adults available to work with all of the BCMS students present. Some of the more advanced BCMS students sometimes helped out by working with the less advanced students. Still, on any given day, many BCMS students went

without assistance and subsequently made very little progress on their projects. Also, when the LFC students and other adults were able to work with the BCMS students, they were usually successful at helping the BCMS students work on the components of the project that interested them. However, when BCMS students openly resisted working on the assignment (or parts of the assignment), or tried to hide the fact that they hadn't made very much progress, most of the LFC students and other adults did not take the initiative or otherwise figure out how to get them engaged in the activity.

These trends worried me. At the time, I commented in my field notes:

> It was good to see the BCMS students again. I enjoy talking and joking with many of them, and I enjoy the rapport I have with several of them. On the other hand, I was a bit frustrated by how hard it seems to be for students to finish up their presentations. There are many that seem to not be able to get anything done on it without some pretty persistent coaxing/help/etc. And, it seems like not many helpers are engaged in trying to keep them on task or working on the assignments in a collaborative enough way that it seems engaging or meaningful to the kids. Maybe it's that it's just hard to compete with all the more fluffy, "fun" stuff on the Internet... Maybe it's that our assignment is too advanced from what students are capable of doing on their own that it gets discouraging for them... Or maybe it's just not interesting enough to hold their attention. Either way, I was starting to feel like we should be moving on from this assignment to a new one.[119]

I raised many of these concerns with Mr. Gonzalez in conversations while at site and during debriefing meetings. I emphasized that I thought we should be introducing new projects and assignments and encouraging students to finish their Presentations quickly. In general, Mr. Gonzalez seemed to agree with me. In response, he occasionally made announcements to the class about students needing to finish their work that provoked a

[119] Personal field note, 4/17/01.

day of students being more "on task." For the most part, however, this kind of momentum wasn't sustained.

As discussed earlier in the chapter, as the semester progressed Mr. Gonzalez had less and less time to work on developing new curriculum or meeting with me to discuss it. Often, he had to come to the classroom late or leave early, and sometimes wasn't able to come to class at all. I gradually took on more and more responsibility in helping run the class, but often had little advance warning to prepare lessons or activities for students. In the process, the computer class lost some of its momentum and continuity, and the curriculum failed to develop in such a way as to hold students' interest. An excerpt from one of my field notes provides some insight into what this period of the computer class was like, as well as the changing role I was playing:

> When Mr. Gonzalez saw me he told me that he had a problem today in that he had to leave right away. He said that Mr. Ignacio (the Assistant Principal) had told him that it was OK for me to supervise the class…There were several students claiming to be all done with their presentations (even though they weren't really done yet)… They were saying they wanted something else to do. Mr. Gonzalez suggested they draw. He told Mayra to draw a picture of a beach, and she got to work. Consuela, however, said she didn't want to draw, and that she was bored. I told Mr. Gonzalez that we really need to talk about having a different activity, and finishing the presentation project, and making sure students were here this Thursday to finish up or do a different project (I tried to get time for us to talk about this last week, and Saturday, but every time we set up this time, he postponed it because he had to go do something else)… After Mr. Gonzalez left, things were calm for a little while. I kept trying to make up spur-of-the-moment activities for people who were done, or mostly done, with their presentations, but many complained that they couldn't find anything they wanted to do…[120]

As can be seen from this example, many students were now almost done with their Presentations but had very little incentive to try and finish them once and for all. At

[120] Personal field note, 5/15/01.

the same time, there were no new activities or projects on the horizon for us to tell them about that might have helped motivate them to finish their work (because Mr. Gonzalez and I didn't have any new curriculum planned or decided). What's more, because of the delays in students finishing their projects and the scheduling challenges that Mr. Gonzalez was having, the date for students to present their final projects kept getting pushed back. As a result, students had even less of a real reason to try to finish their final projects.

This pattern continued for roughly the last month and a half of the semester. During this time, the enrollment in Computer Skills and Projects declined to a small group of about 10-13 students. While these students still complained of being bored, they nevertheless kept coming to class. Sometimes, Mr. Gonzalez suggested new computer activities or exercises in order to give the students something to do. Most of the time, however, the students typically tinkered slowly away at some aspect of their Presentations, did homework, talked with other BCMS and LFC students, or surfed the Internet (with or without permission, as mentioned above). While these students continued getting very little work done, they still seemed to be enjoying the social interactions and relationships that had evolved.

Toward the very end of the year, the tone of the class shifted again and seemed to pick up some momentum. A firm date for students to give their final Presentations was set for the very last day of class. Mr. Gonzalez suggested that the students make invitations on the computer to invite their families to come watch the screening and join the class in an end-of-the-year Pizza party. Many students worked diligently on these invitations as well as on finishing their Presentations. Meanwhile, I helped a few students

who were ready for the screening to make a simple web page on which to post the final Presentation projects. As students worked on these various activities and prepared for the screening, they seemed to approach their Presentations with a renewed sense of purpose. For example, one of the boys in the class who had often gotten in trouble for being rowdy and loud seemed to have a new level of focus. I observed the following in my field notes:

> Miguel didn't use to work on his presentation unless someone was helping him closely (and encouraging him to stay on task). Now he was working pretty steadily without too much help, and often lending a hand to his friends. Sometimes I saw him motion to them to cut out their loud talk or horsing around (rough play, hitting each other back and forth...), so he could keep working…[121]

Another student, Mayra, became very focused on trying to make her presentation "perfect":

> Mayra worked by herself for a while, finished her presentation, and then wanted my help correcting it and trying to make it "absolutely perfect"--she said she didn't want ANY errors. I sat down with Mayra and we read every sentence she had written to check for errors. She had done the whole presentation in Spanish. I asked her if she wanted it to have proper accents and she said yes, so we went through and corrected it together. I showed her how to do accents and which words had accents and where, and pointed out some of the patterns (but not all the rules for accents), and she was quickly recognizing a lot of the patterns and doing it herself. I also showed her how to do the "ñ" and she corrected those words as well. She seemed pleased to be being so thorough…[122]

As the time for students to do their Presentations drew near, many of the BCMS students became somewhat apprehensive. Some told me they were embarrassed about talking in front of people and having everyone looking at them. Some said that they weren't really going to invite their parents. When the actual day arrived, however, many of the students hurried to make last minute phone calls to remind their parents to attend.

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[121] Personal field note, 5/29/01
[122] Ibid.

Fortunately, many parents and siblings were able to show up. The following excerpt from one of my field notes offers a partial description of the day's events:

> The parents seemed very happy to be there and Mr. Gonzalez made it a priority to stop what he was doing and talk to them, shake hands, etc., whenever they came in the door…Miguel's little brother had a great time eating pizza and sitting with Miguel and his friends and watching the presentations. Other parents and younger siblings sat around and ate pizza and talked as well. The mood was lively. LFC students Jorge, Luis, and Jesus were also present. I made a little speech appreciating all their hard work, and everyone clapped.[123]

As the BCMS students stood in front of the room and showed their Presentations, Mr. Gonzalez sat at the computer and advanced the slides. The students described what they had done on the project and read the text they had written aloud. Many spoke in Spanish; some spoke in English. Many talked shyly and quietly, but all seemed happy and pleased. In my field note at the end of the day, I reflected: "All of this was a big contrast to last semester's end-of-the-semester party when we had snacks outside the door to the computer room and then all the kids ran off with the snacks to eat their snacks in other parts of the school."[124] This semester, everyone lingered to talk and eat. Many of the BCMS students (even the 8th graders that were going on to the high school) even insisted that they would come back to the computer class when school started again at the end of the summer. Despite this progress, however, it was unfortunate that this kind of event couldn't have come as much as two months earlier to help provide BCMS students with a deeper sense of the potential and meaning of their after-school endeavors.

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[123] Personal field note, 6/13/01.
[124] Ibid.

D. SUMMARY AND EVALUATION OF THE CHANGES IN THE AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

As documented in this chapter, the new Computer Skills and Projects Class never became a model educational intervention as measured by CREATE's goals. Still, significant changes in the after-school program were achieved that were in the direction that CREATE considered improvements. Here, I offer a brief summary and evaluation of these changes between the BCMS 5th Dimension and the Computer Skills and Projects Class.

1. The Curriculum and Computer Activities

An important feature of the new activities was that, for the most part, they were more complex and challenging than the activities of the previous semester. In the BCMS "5th Dimension," for example, students could easily select the lower levels on the computer games and were very capable of completing them without assistance. In the Computer Skills and Projects Class, on the other hand, students often needed to turn to others for help in order to complete both the technical and content-related elements of the assignments. This factor seemed to provide a useful "icebreaker" in helping facilitate BCMS and LFC student interactions. At the same time, some aspects of the new computer assignments created opportunities for BCMS and LFC students, as well as other adults, to engage in relationship-building activities like sharing personal information about themselves. This often contributed to the various class participants (students and staff) getting to know and like each other.

In general, BCMS students now seemed more interested and open to working with LFC students and other adults than they had been previously. On many occasions, a BCMS student asking for (or agreeing to) "help" facilitated the student working collaboratively with an LFC student or other adult on the task at hand. As the semester progressed, the various class participants seemed more likely to begin working together on a task or project even without the pretext of giving or receiving "help." In the context of these various kinds of collaborative interactions, the LFC students and other adults were sometimes successful at helping scaffold the learning and development of the BCMS students. Even more frequently, they were successful at helping make the activity more fun and enjoyable—which was rewarding for both the BCMS and LFC students.

A significant criticism of the new course, by CREATE's standards, was that it often emphasized students learning *computer skills* as an end in itself, instead of students learning and using computer skills to *mediate* other kinds of learning and development. Specifically, CREATE was interested in BCMS students having opportunities to engage in more academically rigorous activities that could help improve their academic skills and school success. Over the course of the semester the Computer Skills and Projects Class featured two larger projects that, in theory, were supposed to incorporate a research and writing component, as well as more traditional "academic content" (in this case, recent history). These projects, however, were not developed or implemented in such a way as to hold most students' interest or easily engage them in the more academic components of the activities. Sometimes an LFC student or other adult was able to work closely with a BCMS student and figure out a way to make the academic components of the projects more meaningful. Much of the time, however, no one was able to play this role and the

BCMS students put little effort into doing the parts of the assignments that were more challenging and/or less interesting to them.

It is also important to note that while the new curriculum created more opportunities for BCMS and LFC students to work together and collaborate on doing computer-related activities than in previous semesters, these opportunities were still somewhat limited. Significantly, the curriculum failed to develop over the course of the semester such that there might be ongoing and compelling reasons for class participants to continue working on the assigned tasks, much less work on those tasks with others. What's more, given that the assignments were still individual assignments, "collaboration" primarily involved giving and receiving help, or at best, working jointly on one person's project for a short while. The curriculum did not really facilitate opportunities for the various participants to work together on a shared goal or project, which might have helped make collaborative activities richer, more frequent, and more sustained.

2. The Learning Environment

In general, throughout the semester the learning environment, or culture, of the new Computer Skills and Projects Class also grew more and more in line with CREATE's goals for the program than what had been possible in previous semesters. In general, these goals included mixing learning and play and nurturing a culture of collaboration and non-hierarchical relationships. As described above, there was a growing sense of friendship, playfulness, and camaraderie that developed among the various participants, as well as more instances of collaboration while BCMS and LFC

students worked together on computer-related activities. This seemed to be facilitated in part by the features of the new curriculum, described above, that encouraged rapport and relationship building activities, as well as by those features that encouraged students to turn to others for assistance. At the same time, the fact that there was a relatively consistent group of BCMS and LFC students—and as the semester progressed, a better ratio of students to helpers—made it possible for various participants to have regular enough contact with each other to begin getting to know each other and become more comfortable working together.[125] What's more, LFC students seemed to take their role in the program very seriously and to be committed to the idea of building rapport and connections with the young people in the class (as evidenced by frequent comments to this effect in both debriefing sessions and field notes).

As in previous semesters, the atmosphere of the after-school program was still one that incorporated many school-like norms and rules. Teachers (and sometimes other adults) were still authority figures who told students what to do and how to behave; and students still had to act "behaved." If they didn't, they risked getting in trouble or being asked to leave the program. In this context, the teachers were sometimes more controlling and strict with students than CREATE would have wanted. At the same time, under Mr. Gonzalez' leadership and direction of the class (and sometimes under my leadership when I was left in charge of the class), the tone of the class became progressively "looser" and less disciplinarian as the semester progressed. Mr. Quinto continued to have

[125] While the general lack of LFC students was still damaging to BCMS activities, the 3 LFC Practicum students that participated regularly at BCMS were in general, very consistent. What's more, the other 3 LFC students who participated (not from the Practicum) came twice a week. As the semester progressed, then, on a typical day between 3 and 4 LFC students and 15 BCMS students were present (whereas earlier in the semester there had only been 1-2 LFC students on any given day and as many as 20-30 BCMS students).

a stricter standard for what kind of behavior he was willing to tolerate from the students, however, and sometimes enforced this standard by coming into "our side" of the computer lab when he heard or saw something he didn't like and disciplining the students as he saw fit.

Also much as in the previous semester, there was often a tone amongst the BCMS students of academic disengagement and subversion of teacher authority and school rules. This typically manifested itself in students resisting or avoiding the parts of assignments that they found particularly difficult and/or boring. Instead of being "on task" and doing what they were "supposed to do," students sometimes did other things like talk with friends, surf the Internet, etc (with or without permission). In many cases, students kept working on the assignments, but did so with a minimum level of investment in the content or quality of the project. Unless students were particularly blatant about doing something against the rules, however, most of the time this kind of "academic disengagement" was tolerated. There was very little effort on the part of Mr. Gonzalez, for example, to set a tone for the class of everyone getting interested or invested in the outcome of the assignments, or of everyone "working hard" to do them. Furthermore, most LFC students did not seem to have the skills or otherwise take the initiative to try to figure out how to get the BCMS students engaged or "into" the parts of assignments that they were avoiding.

3. BCMS and LFC Student Participation and Engagement

BCMS student participation and level of engagement in the after-school program varied throughout the semester. Several students that had previously attended the BCMS

"5th Dimension" were not interested in the direction of the new class and stopped coming to the after-school program. Many of the students who did come to Computer Skills and Projects came precisely because they were interested in taking a "computer class." For this reason, there was still a large group of BCMS students participating in the class at the beginning of the semester. Most class participants were very enthusiastic and eager to learn about using the new computer applications and do many of the exercises and assignments. As particular assignments "dragged on" and the curriculum did not develop or change fast enough or in an interesting enough way, students became less and less interested. A number of students stopped coming to the after-school program altogether. Still, a small, core group of students continued to come throughout the semester, in large part because of the strength of the relationships and the quality of the social environment that had developed in the after-school setting.

LFC student participation and level of engagement in the after-school program was of consistently higher quality than during the previous semesters. In general, the LFC students were able to build stronger levels of rapport and collaboration with BCMS students, and more frequently helped scaffold their academic and social development (probably in large part because of many of the other changes in the course, described above). Also, this semester's LFC students seemed to take greater degrees of initiative with BCMS students and express a greater level of investment in helping make the program go well. Some of this is probably attributable to the particular characteristics of the LFC students involved in the program. Two of the students had participated in the LFC Practicum course the previous semester and thus had more experience. Three were particularly outgoing and relaxed when interacting with young adolescents. At the same

time, the introduction of "debriefing sessions" also seemed to play a significant role in raising the quality of LFC student participation and helping build a sense of teamwork and shared goals among those of us that were "staffing" the site. Nevertheless, LFC students still often struggled to be able to effectively scaffold the learning and development of the BCMS students, particularly when BCMS students were trying to avoid activities that they found too difficult or boring.

4. CREATE-BCMS Partnership Relationship

The development and implementation of the new Computer Skills and Projects Class also coincided with, and facilitated, significant changes in the partnership relationship between BCMS and CREATE. Now CREATE was attempting to play a much greater role in guiding and shaping the development of the after-school program, and the school was demonstrating a greater degree of interest in the overall direction of the after-school computer activities (i.e., the administration wanted to have an after-school class to teach students computer literacy skills, for example). The plans for the new class included increased responsibility for both Mr. Gonzalez and for me. Mr. Gonzalez would put more effort into the class than he had put into the "5th Dimension" in terms of designing curriculum and instructing students. I would provide more resource to the program than CREATE had been able to provide in the past, by way of regularly assisting him, helping him develop and implement the new activities, helping supervise BCMS and LFC students, etc.

As documented in this chapter, there were significant constraints and challenges that impeded the extent to which CREATE was able to achieve its goals, both in terms of

the kind of collaborative relationship it was able to have with the school and the kind of after-school program that evolved. As we have seen, underlying these challenges were often significant differences in perspective between CREATE and school personnel about what the program should look like in practice. I will return to discuss these in greater detail in the following chapter.

In general, the variety of changes in the after-school program over the course of the Spring 2001 semester (semester 4) facilitated a much greater degree of collaboration, joint effort, and communication, between CREATE and BCMS personnel than what had existed previously. In the process, there were new opportunities for sharing ideas and perspectives, solving problems together, and in general, building relationships with each other. Despite the tensions and conflicts that emerged, by the end of the semester there was a much stronger partnership relationship than what had existed previously, a stronger sense that we were working together. Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto were both more familiar with CREATE's goals and perspectives than they had been previously. Mr. Gonzalez, in particular, was increasingly likely to agree with many of CREATE's ideals for the after-school program, regardless of whether or not he had the time or expertise to implement them. Mr. Quinto, on the other hand, maintained fundamental disagreements with CREATE's vision; nevertheless, he was gradually more trusting of CREATE personnel and allowed us increasing levels of responsibility to oversee BCMS students and computer technology. While there were still significant differences, tensions, and imbalances in the partnership relationship, there had been enough signs of improvement to give CREATE a sense of hope in the future possibilities of the collaboration.

Chapter V:
Conclusion: Achievements, Limitations, and Insights

This chapter addresses the achievements and limitations of the South Bay Project in relation to CREATE's goals for the project. It also addresses key insights from the study. In particular, I am concerned with the extent to which the South Bay Project is helping achieve the goals of educational equity and access and the factors that have limited its success. I will discuss the indications available from my research about what kind of impact the South Bay Project has had on BCMS and LFC students, particularly on improving their academic skills and increasing their potential for college eligibility and success. I will also be assessing CREATE's "theory of action" in the context of the South Bay Project, specifically the extent to which CREATE's model of intervention was, in this case, able to contribute to the broader goals of school-wide change at BCMS. Finally, I will be examining the barriers and constraints that that the project has encountered and that have often limited the success of the project as a whole, and what insights can be learned from the overall study.

A. IMPACT OF THE SOUTH BAY PROJECT ON STUDENTS

CREATE is centrally concerned with if and how participation in the South Bay Project is helping to improve the academic skills and increase the potential for college eligibility and success of underrepresented minority students. Therefore, a question of great importance to CREATE is what kind of impact the South Bay Project has had on the various students that have participated in the different components of the project—both the LFC students and the school-aged children. At this point in the development of

the South Bay Project and in my research, the data available to begin answering this question are qualitative and mostly anecdotal. In what follows, I offer an analysis of some of the tendencies in these data, as well as critical speculation about what kind of impact the project has had. Because of the focus of my study and the limitations of my research, I focus on BCMS students participating in the Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer programs and on LFC students participating in the Practicum in Learning and Development course who attended BCMS.

1. BCMS Students

As documented in my research, the after-school computer program at BCMS never developed the kind of academically rigorous curriculum or learning culture that CREATE would have liked. Nevertheless, both the BCMS "5th Dimension" and Computer Skills and Projects Class provided numerous opportunities for BCMS students to work on academic tasks, often with the help and/or collaboration of a more capable peer. Over the course of the various semesters, students practiced math skills, Internet research, and writing exercises, as well as engaged in activities with academic content related to school subjects such as science and history. Sometimes students worked on homework for their classes.

It is difficult to assess the kind of impact these activities might have had on students' academic performance in their regular school classes. During the Spring 2001 semester (semester 4), for example, I collected data on the school academic performance of the BCMS students that participated regularly in the after-school program. In reviewing their grades and interviewing some of their teachers, I observed no noticeable

patterns of students' school achievement improving over the semester. Within the context of the after-school program, however, we were indeed able to observe instances of students' learning new skills and strategies for doing academic tasks, as well as new academic content.

While the long-term impact of these kinds of experiences is not known, it is plausible that they were useful to students. Most students reported to me in small discussion groups, for example, that neither of their parents had been to college (and in many cases, neither parent had been to high school). Few reported that their parents helped them with their homework. In this way, having older tutor/mentors available to help them provided them with an important resource that was often not available to them at home. It also let them gain practice and experience in figuring out how to mobilize such resources to help them achieve academically.

In addition, many of the LFC students were Latino and came from similar backgrounds as the BCMS students. In this way, they were able to serve as college-going role models. While it is unknown what kind of impact this had or will have on the BCMS students, it is clear that the BCMS students were interested in the LFC students specifically *as college students*. On many occasions, for example, BCMS students asked the LFC students specifically about college. In the semester that I observed most closely (semester 4), it appeared that as BCMS and LFC students' level of rapport and comfort with each other increased, these conversations became more frequent. An excerpt from my field notes exemplifies how these kinds of discussions often emerged in the context of a friendly relationship between the BCMS and LFC students. In this case, the example involves me, as well:

> Shortly after the bell rang, Monica and Ynez (BCMS students) came rushing toward the door with arms outstretched, yelling and acting like they were going to crash into us. I played along and covered my head, but they stopped in time and lined up by the door, laughing and smiling. Carlos (BCMS student) came over more quietly and stood with us. Ynez asked Jorge (LFC student) and me about what colleges we were in, what degrees we were getting, and what that all meant…She seemed really curious about all of it…[126]

As can be seen in this example, BCMS students in the program had opportunities to learn about both LFC and UCSD while talking with the LFC students, Luke Kennedy, or me. They were also exposed to hearing about UCSD in other parts of the school, in the context of the GEAR UP program or the partnership between BCMS and UCSD. Also, during the Spring 2001 semester (semester 4), we arranged to take a group of approximately 25 BCMS students from the after-school program to tour UCSD, visit UCSD's Super Computer Center, and talk with "college advocates" (in this case, two Latina UCSD students who talked about being the first in their families to go to college).

At the end of the school year, the BCMS students who had participated regularly in the Computer Skills and Projects Class (semester 4) met with me in small groups to discuss their experiences in the program. Not surprisingly, when I asked them which colleges they'd heard of, they all said, "UCSD," and "La Frontera College." Many also said they had heard of SDSU (the local California State University). Beyond that, however, few had heard of any other colleges. Almost every student I spoke to said they wanted to go to college, and many listed specific professional careers that they wanted to pursue. I also asked several of them if being in the after-school program had made them think more about going to college, and many said yes (but usually follow-up questions

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[126] Personal field note, 4/26/01.

didn't provide details about how it had impacted them). One student explained: "porque te motivan" (because they motivate you). While it is likely that these students already had thought at least some about going to college before entering our after-school program,[127] it is also likely that being in the after-school program exposed them to a culture of college going with which they were not familiar.

At the same time, it is important to remember that the students we are discussing were not in the school's "college prep" track (the Honors program) and many were years behind grade level in English literacy skills. Many also received poor to average grades and had few skills for studying independently. It is likely that without intensive ongoing intervention and access to additional institutional resources and supports, many of these students will not actually be in a position to go to college when they graduate from high school.

There are other important ways that the after-school program seemed to impact the BCMS students that are worth discussing. Students attended voluntarily after a long day of school, and many attended consistently throughout the year. An interesting question is why they came, especially when they were sometimes bored with the official curriculum of the after-school program. While it would be interesting and useful to be able to get a rich picture of the lives of the BCMS students that attended both the BCMS "5th Dimension" and Computer Skills and Projects Class—and then to examine the role that the program played in the context of their lives—to do this was beyond the scope of my research. In the case of the Computer Skills and Projects Class, however, I was able

[127] When I asked various students at BCMS (even those not in our after-school program) about going to college, they typically said they wanted to go and listed various professional careers they wanted.

to learn more about what the BCMS students thought about the program and why they came. Their attitudes and perspectives are a useful starting point for being able to reflect on what kind of meaning the program had for them.

Toward the end of the school year I was working with two of the BCMS students on making the home page for our computer class' web site. I had suggested that the students write some comments about why they come to the class, or what they like about the class. The following is an excerpt from my field notes about how they responded:

> Mayra started dictating, in Spanish (with me writing down what she said) about how she liked learning about computers and then she paused like she was trying to think of what it was she was trying to say. Miguel chimed in, "el ambiente" and said it a couple of times. Mayra nodded in agreement. I translated it as the "atmosphere." That was all she wanted to say. Next, Miguel went and explained that he liked learning about computers and liked "the ambiente." I asked him what he meant and he said that the people were nice here, very friendly, and the people who come to help seemed to like helping them.[128]

These were their words for the web page:

> Vengo a las computadoras porque estoy interesada en las computadoras y me gusta el ambiente que tenemos entre compañeros en el cual trabajamos. (I like coming to computers because I'm interested in computers and I like the atmosphere, of being among friends, that we have while we work.)
>
> I come here because I want to learn more about computers and to learn new skills and I like the way it is here. It is very friendly and everybody helps each other. The people who come to help us are very nice people and they really like to work with us and I feel comfortable because I am working with them, and those are some of the main reasons I come to the computer lab.

Over the next few class sessions, we continued asking students for their comments about why they came to the class. Many students had brief things to say, like, "to learn more

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[128] Personal field note, 5/15/01.

about computers" and "to use the Internet." Others were more revealing in their comments:

> I come here because we use the computers and it is very fun. We learn lots of neat stuff too, like how to do presentations and how to use the computer. In one project we did a time line of our lives and we got to remember when we were little kids and learn about historical events…
>
> Vengo para aprender mas acerca de las computadoras de los juegos y de las partes educativas de las computadoras y para no aburrirme en mi casa. (I come to learn more about computers, the games and the educational parts, and to not be bored at home.)

A few weeks later I met with several BCMS students to discuss the after-school program in greater detail. The students were pulled out of their classes, a few at a time, to meet with me in small discussion groups. In these groups, I met with all of the students that were still attending the program regularly. (In a different discussion group, I met with some of the students that had stopped attending the class earlier in the semester). We sat in the school's library to do a few of the discussion groups. For the other discussion groups, we went outside and sat at a table. Most of the conversations were lively and animated. The students spoke in a mixture of English and Spanish, often talking over one another to make their points and respond to each other. It was interesting to note, for the most part, how comfortable the students seemed to be expressing themselves with me and with each other.[129]

Again, I asked students what they liked and didn't like about the after-school computer program and why they came. Miguel reiterated that he liked to come because of

[129] These discussions had a completely different tone, for example, than a series of discussion groups I helped lead with another teacher to find out students reactions to the mandatory tutoring program. In these meetings, most students reacted by being completely quiet, offering only one or two word answers when spoken to. I believe this contrast is representative of the kind of rapport and comfort that students in our after-school program had developed with each other and with me.

the “ambiente.” A few students talked about how they liked doing things like the Timeline Presentation projects, and things that were “about when they were little.” Almost everyone mentioned that they liked “learning computers”, scanning photos, and using the Internet. Students’ complaints included the Timeline and Presentation projects being too long and becoming boring, as well as the class still having “too many rules” and “too many people telling you what to do.” Still, most spoke enthusiastically about the computer class, particularly about getting to talk with friends and the LFC students and other adults, and getting to know people. One student complained that it would have been even better if there were fewer students and more helpers.

From these kinds of comments, it seems that the kinds of things that were particularly significant to the students included such things as gaining technical competence in computers, being among friends, having “fun,” working and getting to know the LFC students and other adults, and enjoying the atmosphere that evolved. These comments point to a number of important ways that the program was useful to students.

Many students, for example, got to have the experience of becoming knowledgeable and skilled at using particular computer programs. Some students became local “experts,” able to help out other students that were stuck. Others never achieved this level of competence, but still seemed proud of their accomplishments (sometimes showing off what they could do on the computer to parents and younger siblings that stopped by the class). Most of the students didn’t have computers at home, and many of

their parents didn't know how to use computers.[130] In this way, participation in the after-school program often gave them opportunities to learn skills and gain competencies that were not easily accessible to them. In the process, they seemed to be developing a great deal of pride in their new abilities. In some cases, students that were doing very poorly in their regular school classes were able to excel in the after-school environment and in using computers. In these cases, it is especially likely that getting to be good at something was developmentally significant for the students.

Despite the limitations of the after-school program, documented earlier, the learning environment that was ultimately achieved seemed to mean something special to the students. Many students spoke to me about how being in the after-school program was different from being in school (less rules, more "fun," etc.). In general, they said they really liked being able to be among friends, visit, and work together, and at the same time, be building relationships with the LFC students and other adults. They also spoke of liking the extra help with their work. While students did not articulate this themselves, my observations suggested that students in the class increasingly grew to have a sense that they were "a part of something" and that they "belonged." What's more, the relationships that the students were building were important to them. Some students brought school pictures of themselves to give to me and other LFC students. Others brought their yearbooks for us to sign. Many eighth graders commented repeatedly that they wanted to be able to return to the class in the Fall Semester (and some actually did return to visit several times when the class resumed). While it is unknown how

[130] I gained this information in informal discussions with students and their parents, and in students' comments during the end-of-the-year discussion groups.

participating in this kind of learning environment and building these various relationships might impact the BCMS students in the long run, it is clear that it mattered to them. It is also likely that it gave them a positive and unique experience with learning that was unlike what they normally had access to in their school.

2. LFC Students

As discussed in Chapter 2, one of CREATE's motivations for working with LFC was to help improve the academic preparation and successful transfer of underrepresented minority students to four year universities. Ideally, CREATE hoped that participation in the program would also encourage community college students to transfer to a UC, and to UCSD in particular. A significant question from CREATE's standpoint is whether or not participation in the LFC Practicum course and various site activities is helping to accomplish these goals. While CREATE is still working out the protocols and arrangements for tracking the transfer rates and college success of the students that have participated in the Practicum course, there is a great deal of anecdotal evidence that participation in the program is indeed having a positive impact in the direction of CREATE's goals.

One of CREATE's initial intentions was to have students who were already interested in transferring to UCSD be the primary targets for participation in the LFC Practicum course. In practice, this didn't end up happening. Many of the students that actually enrolled in the Practicum course were hoping to transfer to a university some day, but few had considered UCSD as an option. If they were considering a four-year

college, they usually planned on going to SDSU, the local California State University.[131] Through participation in the Practicum course and the information about and exposure to UCSD that they received in the process, many claimed they were now considering UCSD as an option. In one case, an LFC student who had originally only considered transferring to SDSU decided to apply to both UCSD and UC Santa Cruz, was accepted to both, and ultimately attended UCSC.

An excerpt from one of my field notes demonstrates how common the tendency was for the LFC students who participated in the South Bay Project to begin to consider attending the UC as a result of participating in the Practicum course. In this excerpt, I was meeting with several of the LFC students in an after-site debriefing session at BCMS. One of the students had mentioned that she planned on transferring to SDSU and I asked her why she wasn't interested in UCSD. Several of the other LFC students laughed and said that I was going to try to convince her to go to UCSD…

> But then Jorge chimed in how he had planned to go to State but now, because of our program, was going to either go to UCSD or UCSC. Luis said he was also considering UCSD now. I asked Alan what his plans were, and he said that he had also planned on going to State, but now, because of our class, he was having serious leanings toward UCSD. Jessica explained that she would really like to go to UCSD, but couldn't because of money. The others (like Jorge) started jumping in about financial aid, and how she could try and make it possible…Overall, this seemed like a very positive discussion, especially with so much enthusiasm coming from them in talking to each other about college (and the role of our program in making them interested in UCSD).[132]

While it is difficult to assess the extent to which students have been able to follow through with such interests in attending UCSD, it seems likely that participating in the

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[131] These data were gathered primarily from informal conversations with LFC students and participation in class discussions at LFC.
[132] Personal field note, 5/3/01.

program has made many of them consider pathways to college that they never had seriously considered before.

From CREATE's standpoint, perhaps an even more important question is if participating in the Practicum course and South Bay Project activities is actually helping LFC students gain the competencies they need to be able to succeed in a four year college. To begin to answer this question, I draw on the observations and anecdotes of the LFC professors who have taught the Practicum course, Susan Buckley and Janet Wilder. It is important to acknowledge that the statements of the professors cannot stand as evidence of how students actually experienced the class. At the same time, Buckley and Wilder offer a useful perspective for understanding how the Practicum course was different from other LFC classes and thereby offered the LFC students opportunities that they did not have elsewhere. The two professors also offer insights into how students seemed to experience and benefit from the class.

Both professors explained how the Practicum course was giving LFC students access to a rare, "college prep" opportunity. While most of the classes that LFC students could take were larger, lecture style courses, the Practicum class was smaller and discussion style. Whereas other classes emphasized reading textbooks and taking multiple-choice tests, the Practicum class was writing intensive and featured critical reading and discussion of academic articles. Both professors thought that these experiences were both valuable for the students in general, and important for them in terms of gaining the kinds of skills they would need for success at a four-year university.

Susan Buckley explained, for example:

> Our students are by and large blue-collar students who have had not much demanded of them in terms of writing and speaking skills all the way through school. A lot of them are, of course, right out of high school. Those who aren't have taken other classes here, but there is not a big emphasis on writing, even though we have been trying to institutionally emphasize that a great deal. Still, in reality, in individual classrooms, it doesn't happen that often. So, we have students that don't know how to write.[133]

Buckley continued to explain how for the most part at LFC, students aren't having opportunities to express themselves in writing or get feedback on their writing. In the Practicum course, on the other hand, she explained, "we really, really emphasize writing." Both professors noted several cases in which they had seen LFC students' writing improve significantly over the course of the one semester in which they took the class. Buckley said that a common phenomena is that the "first field notes are typically horrible, just awful." By the end of the course, students' writing is often much better, and, "the last field notes and the last paper look very polished." To Buckley, this means that students are learning writing "by doing it," and "by the feedback that they're getting."

According to Wilder, students have also benefited academically and socially from being in a small class where they get lots of personal attention, and where they get to know each other and the professor. In this context, Wilder explained, there is no "passive, sitting-in-the-back-row kind of thing." For Wilder, this is particularly important because students don't have many other classes where they can be "critical thinkers," where they either have the opportunity or the "self-esteem" to speak their minds or discuss readings

[133] Interview with Susan Buckley, 12/10/01.

and ideas. In this class, however, students were often able to gain both practice and confidence in speaking and reading.[134]

Buckley further explained that students could go through their whole time at LFC and "never have to present anything in class formally…never have to speak anything, but maybe say, "Here," when somebody calls their name. In the Practicum course, students were not only gaining practice talking in class, but also in the "Distance Learning" videoconference sessions with UCSD faculty. These sessions gave each LFC student a chance to present and discuss difficult concepts from class readings and apply them to experiences they were having at the various South Bay sites. According to Buckley, this opportunity was tremendously important for the students because it gave them experience "being able to handle themselves in public…in speaking situations" which would be valuable to them at a four-year university.[135]

Both professors also spoke of the Practicum class providing a context for them to work more closely with students than their regular classes. Buckley explained, for example, that in most of her classes there was typically "a lot of distance" in her relationships with students. In the Practicum course, on the other hand, she claimed, "We have a relationship that we are helping each other, we're a team." She explained that this is in large part because of the challenging, rigorous nature of the course:

> …We're stretching them, we're pushing them, we're giving them things that are very difficult to understand in those… those readings…It is very difficult. They have to read those things with a dictionary in hand. There's no question about it. And the writing is very demanding…So, you know, there's more demanded of them and I think because they do that and do it successfully, they have a feeling more that this is a team-work sort of

[134] Interview with Janet Wilder, 12/10/01.
[135] Interview with Susan Buckley, 12/10/01.

> thing. This is a real experience. This isn't just a little isolated class you go to and then run on and do something else. You know, this becomes part of their life.[136]

These insights from Buckley and Wilder point to the likelihood that the LFC course is indeed succeeding at providing students with access to the kinds of social and academic skills that will be beneficial to them should they go on to a four-year university. Unfortunately, their insights also reveal that LFC students are not typically getting quality personal attention or rigorous academic experiences in their regular classes. This raises the concern that while LFC students seem to be gaining significant experiences and skills in the Practicum course, these may be too isolated and unusual to make a substantial difference in their academic careers.

It is important to note that LFC students also gained a great deal from participation in site activities. These experiences are important to discuss in order to portray a broader perspective of what kind of impact participation in the South Bay Project had on them. Many students spoke, for example, of the ways they had benefited personally from getting to practice Spanish and learn new technology. The experience that seemed to matter the most to the LFC students, however, was getting to work with the children and young people at the various sites. In Practicum class sessions, in LFC student field notes, in debriefing meetings at BCMS, and in casual conversations, many LFC students discussed the value and pride they felt in being able to tell they made a difference to a child, or in helping "give back to the community," or sometimes in something as simple as being able to tell that a child "liked them" and "wanted them there." LFC students frequently spoke of the relationships they formed with different

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[136] Ibid.

children at the various sites, and often mentioned missing the children over the school breaks. Many also talked about how they were using some of the principles they learned from the class with their own children or younger siblings. Many LFC students who participated in the program also commented that having a chance to work with children had given them a chance to think more about careers they had been considering. Some LFC students, for example, became more enthusiastic and confident about wanting to work with children, and even began taking steps to look into the prerequisites for teacher education programs. In a few cases, other LFC students that had intended to go into a teaching career were able to decide that it didn't suit them after all. In either case, the experiences of being at the various sites and working with the young people made a strong impression on them.

During the Spring 2001 semester (semester 4), LFC student Jessica Clay gave a presentation at a CREATE-sponsored conference at UCSD in which she talked about her experience in the LFC course and at BCMS. There, she summarized what many of the other BCMS students had expressed about having the opportunity to work with the young people at site. She explained, for example, that of all the activities in the Practicum class, getting to be a "mentor, friend, and teacher" to a child had "changed her perspective on life." It was a new experience for her, she explained, to "see kids learning from her and her learning from them." She elaborated as follows:

> The children really grew on me. I would always like to go to site and at times just sit next to them and feel the interaction between us…I am a mentor for these children in many ways. I take a big role in their lives as an outsider coming in and showing them it is possible to excel in education and attend college. As an Hispanic female, I at times may not seem as a stereotypical example of a college student, so I feel that these children are definitely learning something from my presence there. I build

> friendships with these children. I always listen to what they ask me and try to give them the confidence to excel…By far, the biggest impact on me were the children because that is what the program is about, mine and the children's development.[137]

B. ASSESSING CREATE'S "THEORY OF ACTION"

As described in Chapter 2, CREATE's "theory of action" in working with partner schools includes attempting to address the technical, cultural, and political dimensions of school change. CREATE operates from the perspective that achieving such changes is a slow and incremental process that will work best if done in close collaboration with schools—including students, parents, teachers, staff, and administrators—to address the problems they face. Often, CREATE begins a partnership relationship by providing a school with "tangible 'goods' and services" that respond to local needs articulated by the school. As members of the CREATE and school community then work together to respond to these needs, they have an opportunity to build rapport and establish a common sense of working together toward mutual interests and shared goals. One of CREATE's purposes in this effort is to develop "social capital" (such as strong, trusting, inter-personal relationships with school personnel) that can be "exchanged" in other settings to address the more deep-seated cultural beliefs and structural conditions that perpetuate educational disparities. In other words, CREATE hopes to be able to use the collaboration and trust established to more effectively address the cultural and political dimensions of school change.

At BCMS, the implementation of CREATE's "theory of action" included developing the South Bay Project's after-school computer-based activities in partnership

[137] CREATE Conference, 5/12/01.

with the school. In part, the new activities were intended to facilitate CREATE's goal of helping provide underrepresented students in a high poverty school with additional resources to which that they might not otherwise have access. From CREATE's point of view, BCMS students gaining access to such resources could contribute to their acquisition of social and cultural capital useful for succeeding in school.

The South Bay Project after-school computer programs at BCMS were also an example of CREATE providing a school with "tangible 'goods' and services" as an entry point for building more trusting, collaborative relationships with school personnel. In this context, CREATE hoped that working more closely with the school toward a shared goal (such as improving the school's technology and after-school resources) would help enable a stronger partnership between BCMS and UCSD that could potentially effect deeper, equity-related changes in the school. From this standpoint, an important research question that emerges is the extent to which South Bay Project activities at BCMS were able to help achieve these goals. To fully answer this question would take both a longer-term study and a much deeper examination of the school than my research enabled. Nevertheless, it is worth discussing indications from my research that address some of the achievements and limitations in how the South Bay Project seemed to impact the school.

1. Impact of Project on UCSD-BCMS Partnership Relationship

CREATE's efforts to bring South Bay Project activities to BCMS helped serve a broad function of strengthening the partnership relationship between UCSD and BCMS. The school administration was, in general, extremely pleased to have such special programs as Game Designer Studio, the 5th Dimension, and later, the Computer Skills and

Projects Class available at the school. The school's principal and vice principals often mentioned the programs as some of the important ways that UCSD was helping the school, for example, in parent meetings and school assemblies. They also expressed these sentiments to me in informal conversations and personal interviews. Their support for, and interest in, maintaining the programs can also be seen in that fact that they took on increasing responsibility to help fund the after-school programs (in partnership with CREATE).[138]

When I began documenting South Bay Project activities at BCMS, CREATE had been working with the school for two years. By that time, CREATE had a variety of partnership activities at the school that ran independently from the South Bay Project. CREATE was involved, for example, in helping fund and design pull-out days for each department to meet, discuss curriculum, and develop plans for implementing state standards. In many ways, CREATE now had a solid working relationship with the school administration and was able to work with the school to address more basic issues related to school change. By the end of the year in which I conducted my research, for example, CREATE was moving ahead to fund (in collaboration with the school) an Eighth Grade Academy that would target the school's lower performing eighth graders with additional resources (such as access to smaller classes, a rich curriculum, and the school's best teachers). While this kind of work with BCMS was not directly related to the South Bay Project, it is important to note that CREATE's efforts to set up the after-school computer programs helped create the kind of partnership relationship with the school in which this

[138] For example, for the Fall Semester, 2001, the school agreed to begin funding the salaries of both Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto.

work could move forward. When the partnership with the school began (as discussed in Chapter 2), for example, the principal at the time had only been interested in somewhat limited contact with CREATE. Through CREATE's efforts to respond to the needs that the school articulated (such as, "help with technology"), CREATE personnel were eventually able to establish better working relationships with the BCMS administration and begin moving forward on broader partnership activities.

2. Impact of Project on BCMS Personnel

CREATE's goals for the South Bay Project activities at BCMS also included being able to positively impact the beliefs and practices of BCMS personnel and, ideally, contribute to broader cultural change in the school. In theory, for example, the after-school programs would be able to model, or demonstrate, the benefits of such practices as mixing learning with play, encouraging collaborative learning and non-hierarchical relationships, immersing students in a pro-academic culture with challenging educational activities, and providing students with access to additional supports (such as college mentors) to help them succeed academically. It is possible to imagine that if the various after-school computer-based programs that CREATE was involved in were actually successful at modeling these practices, other teachers or administrators might learn from and be inspired by them. Teachers might, for example, even adapt elements learned from the after-school programs into their classrooms or look for ways that their classes could be involved in the programs. In this way, CREATE had some hopes that the South Bay Project might be able to help contribute to broader changes in the general culture and resources of the school.

In practice, CREATE was not able to realize the kind of model after-school programs it had hoped for. In most cases, the kinds of pedagogical or curricular innovations it was able to demonstrate were, in fact, somewhat limited. What's more, in my work with the various departments in the school, I learned that while most teachers had heard of Game Designer Studio or the "5th Dimension" (and later the Computer Skills and Projects Class), they knew very little about the programs, and even less about the theoretical principles upon which they were based. School administrators, on the other hand, had more information about the programs, but for the most part had little exposure to how the programs operated in practice.

During the year that I conducted my dissertation research, there were some signs that school personnel were taking a stronger interest in how the after-school programs were running. On a few occasions, for example, one of the Assistant Principals, Tim Ignacio, came to visit Game Designer Studio and the Computer Skills and Projects Class. Also, because I was working more closely with this administrator on other projects for the school (such as evaluating the school's mandatory tutoring program), I had some opportunities to talk with him more about the underlying philosophy and goals of CREATE and the after-school computer programs. Also, my interactions with various teachers (often in the context of departmental meetings, informal conversations, classroom visits, or personal interviews), gave me opportunities to let them know more about the after-school programs, particularly the Computer Skills and Projects Class. In the process, some teachers expressed an interest in becoming involved. In practice, however, it was very difficult to coordinate how they might easily participate in the class given its existing structure, and none of the teachers were interested at that point in

putting extra time into developing a project or activity with the after-school program. After two years of South Bay Project implementation, it seems relatively safe to conclude that CREATE's South Bay Project activities had had very little direct impact on most BCMS personnel.

The main arena in which the South Bay Project did have an opportunity to more directly impact BCMS personnel was in its collaborative work with the teacher and computer technician that helped run the after-school programs. As documented in this study, both Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto differed from CREATE in their approaches to, and understandings of, what the after-school program should look like. What's more, their beliefs about teaching, what students were capable of, how students should be controlled, what the relationship should be between adults and students, etc., also differed from the approach of CREATE in important ways. A significant question is then, through the process of working with CREATE, if Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto came to better understand and/or adopt beliefs or practices that were more in line with CREATE's goals, either for the after-school program or for education more generally.

a. BCMS Teacher

On several occasions, I heard BCMS teacher, Mr. Gonzalez talk about how his work with CREATE and in the after-school program had influenced his teaching. Specifically, he claimed, it had affected how he related to his students. In an interview, he reiterated this point, explaining:

> …At the beginning, I had quite a different idea of what teaching was all about. First of all, when I started, well, when I started the program, it was my first year as a teacher. And I thought I would just go into the

> classroom, teach them what they needed to know, and then leave, not leave, but actually just go on with the next group of students.

His work in the after-school program, he explained, had given him a different context in which to get to know his students, where he didn't have to be as "serious." The after-school setting provided a "different social environment," he explained, where he could "joke around with the kids a little bit more." He thought this had helped him build a stronger connection with his students and contributed to him having a better understanding of what it means to be a good teacher:

> …Now I realize that I have to do a lot of… in order for the students to be successful, I have to make sure that they… I need to know a little bit more about them. I need to be more connected with the students. Because if I don't know what's going on behind, or what the thought process is, I might never get them to learn math. So the more I know about the students, the more involved I am, the more I can probably help them…

There is some evidence that, for the most part, students responded well to Mr. Gonzalez' efforts to establish good relationships with them. Mr. Gonzalez claimed, for example, that students, especially those that participated in the after-school program, had become more comfortable working with him and more able to communicate with him. Many, he explained, now called him "Papi" or "Tío" (this directly translates as "dad" or "uncle"), which implies that they felt a good degree of comfort, familiarity, and affection toward him. My observations supported these claims. I often saw Mr. Gonzalez joking around and being playful with the students, and the students laughing and acting relaxed around him. What's more, in my conversations with students, many told me that Mr. Gonzalez was one of their favorite teachers. (This is not to say, however, that he was not strict with students that were "misbehaving" in the in-school or after-school environment).

In practice, it is difficult to know exactly how Mr. Gonzalez' teaching practices and relationships with his students changed over the course of his work with CREATE, and the specific role that CREATE played in facilitating these changes. It is significant, however, that he attributes the after-school program with having such a positive impact on his relationships with his students and his ideas about the importance of getting to know the students he teaches.

There are also many indications that through working with the after-school program, Mr. Gonzalez grew to have a better understanding of, and interest in, CREATE's goals for the program. For example, as the Computer Skills and Projects Class progressed, Mr. Gonzalez began to look for ways to encourage collaboration between BCMS and LFC students. In one of our debriefing sessions, he suggested that LFC students begin working on their own "Timeline Presentations," and let the BCMS students "*help them* (the LFC students) for a change."[139] Over the next few sessions, this proved somewhat successful as some of the LFC students began working on their own presentations (and some of the BCMS students began helping them). However, when we tried this, it turned out that there were not enough people available to assist all the other BCMS students that needed help, so the LFC students returned to focus primarily on helping BCMS students with their work. Nevertheless, that Mr. Gonzalez was now initiating these kinds of ideas with the LFC students demonstrated his growing understanding and "uptake" of some of CREATE's goals for the program.

Over the course of the Computer Skills and Projects Class, Mr. Gonzalez also became increasingly interested in the goal of making the after-school program more

[139] Personal field note, 4/17/01.

academically rigorous and "educational."[140] He also became increasingly supportive of the concept of students doing larger projects that were, ideally, both meaningful to them and supportive of their in-school learning. For example, when Mr. Gonzalez helped give a presentation about the Computer Skills and Projects Class at a conference that CREATE sponsored in the spring of 2001, he explained to the audience that the Timeline and Presentation projects students were currently working on helped them "build cultural awareness and pride" in their own backgrounds because they got to show a part of themselves and their cultures in their work. In the future, he explained, he hoped the class would be developing these kinds of projects more. He also talked about how "we" (referring to himself and CREATE staff) hoped to be working in collaboration with other teachers at BCMS to further enrich and develop the curriculum and to connect it to what students were learning and doing in their classes.[141]

While Mr. Gonzalez did not necessarily have the time, expertise, or commitment to the after-school program to actually develop or implement such a curriculum, he was becoming increasingly open to and interested in the process. In an interview with me, for example, he explained that the major challenge he saw with the Computer Skills and Projects Class was that it was the first time in the after-school program that we were trying to do "teacher-directed instruction" and that we were having to "make up the curriculum as we went along," which he had found difficult. At the same time, he hoped that in the future, designing the curriculum was something that "both he and CREATE could work on." He explained:

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[140] Interview with Jose Gonzalez, Fall 2001.
[141] CREATE Conference, 5/12/01.

> It would be good to see what kind of projects (for the class) CREATE can come up with and then I can just go over them and see if we can adjust it to this environment. So if there are some things that I know our students, my students, our students from this area, will not be able to comprehend, then we'll probably need to modify it or change it a little bit, so we can meet their needs and use their prior knowledge also as a basis for starting the work.[142]

These comments are revealing for a few reasons. Mr. Gonzalez now seemed to be fully supportive of the idea of students working on more complex projects in the after-school context and on working with CREATE to develop these projects. He also seemed interested in making sure the projects were meaningful and appropriate for the students. At the same time, Mr. Gonzalez did not seem to envision that he would take on the primary responsibility for developing the curriculum and activities for the Computer Skills and Projects Class, but would instead rely more heavily on CREATE to be actively developing this richer curriculum. From CREATE's standpoint, this signaled that Mr. Gonzalez was open and willing to collaborate with CREATE, but also that he wasn't ready to take on as active a role as CREATE would have liked.

In these ways, there were many indications that through working with CREATE, Mr. Gonzalez did in fact grow more understanding of, and interested in, CREATE's approach to the after-school program. There were still important limitations in this understanding, however. For example, despite Mr. Gonzalez' enthusiasm for the new computer projects and activities, his emphasis was still on students learning "computer skills." When he spoke of the academic benefits of the computer class for the BCMS students, he still spoke primarily of the importance of them learning how to use "computer programs." Because schools and businesses use these computer programs, he

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[142] Interview with Jose Gonzalez, Fall 2001.

explained, our after-school program was helping students "get ready for the future" and the "challenges that may come later on."[143] From CREATE's standpoint, it was indeed important for students to be learning how to use computer programs, but a more important goal was that these activities *support and mediate* students' broader learning and development. This was still not a theoretical distinction that Mr. Gonzalez seemed to make.

b. BCMS Computer Technician

It is much more challenging to detect ways that working with CREATE might have influenced Mr. Quinto, either in his approach to the after-school program specifically, or to education more generally. Even after two years of working with CREATE, Mr. Quinto still disagreed with many of CREATE's more basic goals for how the after-school programs should operate. On the last day of the Computer Skills and Projects Class for the Spring 2001 semester (semester 4), I had a talk with Mr. Quinto that illustrates some of these disagreements. The following is an excerpt from my field note in which I recorded key points from our conversation:

> After students had gone home for the day, Mr. Quinto and I began discussing the after-school computer programs at BCMS. Mr. Quinto complained that he didn't like how much the attendance fluctuated throughout the year, and that we needed to work on "retaining" students. I said I agreed, and that I thought we needed to keep working to find a good balance of making the activities, and the environment, interesting and enjoyable enough that they (the BCMS students) would want to come to the after-school program voluntarily. I also said that I had spoken with a number of different students who had stopped coming to the program to get some ideas about why, and that it seemed from them that they might be more likely to come if the environment was a little less "school-like."

[143] Ibid.

> Mr. Quinto replied that actually, that's where he thought our programs had "gone wrong," and that they shouldn't be voluntary or try to incorporate "fun." He said that he thought "fun" was very dangerous for these students and that what they needed was to "learn how to study" and "do well in school." He went on to explain how he thought students should come to our program on a "mandatory referral basis"…

In this conversation, Mr. Quinto was disagreeing with two of CREATE's basic principles for the after-school programs, that they should attempt to "mix learning with play" and that they should be voluntary. While surely CREATE agreed that students needed to "learn how to study" and "do well in school," Mr. Quinto had a fundamentally different idea about how to best achieve these goals. In his own experience, he later told me, when he was younger he had been a "gang banger type" and wasn't involved in anything educational because it wasn't "cool." The experience that had "turned him around" was a program that had strong discipline and structure, and older role models that were real authority figures that he could look up to (as opposed to older "buddies," which he thought our program offered).[144] As he had emphasized to me on various occasions, he again explained that he thought our after-school program should exercise a greater degree of control over students, have more structure and discipline, and perhaps (as mentioned above) require (or mandate) students to attend.

Mr. Quinto's vision for the after-school program, like CREATE, was still ultimately to help students succeed in school. In fact, one of his other major criticisms of the after-school programs was that the programs were not yet doing enough to impact student achievement or give students the help they needed in basic skills. He thought, for example, that we should do more to make sure students weren't falling behind in their

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[144] Interview with Martin Quinto, 6/20/01.

classes and, perhaps, give them more writing exercises or word drills.[145] While Mr. Quinto often seemed to emphasize the need for a more "basic skills" and "remedial education" focus to the after-school programs than CREATE would have wanted, he also showed some signs that he was open to the kinds of learning activities that CREATE wanted to see in place. For instance, at the end of the Spring 2001 semester (semester 4), when I spoke with him about CREATE's goal of having the Computer Skills and Projects Class focus less on "computer skills" and more on "project-based learning activities," he said that if that could actually work it would be "awesome." This showed some signs of Mr. Quinto being more open than he had in the past to the kinds of curricular goals that CREATE was suggesting.

For the most part, however, there were real differences in perspective between Mr. Quinto and CREATE that remained unresolved during the course of this study. As documented in this research, many of these differences contributed to tensions in the partnership and barriers to developing and running the after-school programs as CREATE would have liked. Significantly, Mr. Quinto remained somewhat skeptical and critical of South Bay Project activities, and had a somewhat antagonistic relationship with CREATE. In general, he seemed to view the after-school programs as "CREATE's programs" and not *collaborative ventures with the school* as CREATE viewed them. He was typically very concerned about "our" (CREATE's) use of "the school's" space and technology, for example, and rarely treated us like trusted partners in using the computer room. What's more, he never became invested enough in trying to make the after-school programs go well to do things like install software or set up needed equipment in a timely

[145] Ibid.

fashion. In these ways, on a day-to-day basis, it often seemed that the impact that the South Bay Project was having on Mr. Quinto was to cause him extra work and stress.

C. LIMITATIONS OF TUESDAY/THURSDAY AFTER-SCHOOL COMPUTER PROGRAMS

This study has documented significant limitations in the extent to which the Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer-based programs at BCMS were able to "live up to" CREATE's goals for the program. Despite CREATE's efforts to play a stronger role in the development of BCMS activities, and my "on the ground" efforts to help facilitate programmatic changes, the after-school program that evolved never represented the kind of model educational activity that CREATE intended.

The curriculum of the Computer Skills and Projects Class, for example, was in general richer and more varied than what had been available in the BCMS "5th Dimension." Still, this curriculum only rarely facilitated students' engagement with academically meaningful or rigorous endeavors. The activities were often remedial in nature and focused on students acquiring computer skills as an end in itself instead of as a means to other kinds of more meaningful activities. Those activities that were more demanding of students—in terms of the reading, writing, "academic" content, and visual creativity required—were not designed or implemented in such a way as to get students' interested in or excited about doing them. The Timeline and Presentation projects were introduced, for example, as exercises in following teacher-given steps and rules as opposed to students coming to understand or share the goals for the projects. Especially

as these particular assignments dragged on and the curriculum failed to develop or change, students increasingly lost interest in the official curriculum of the class.

In many ways a more flexible, playful, and collaborative learning environment was eventually realized in the after-school program than what had been available in the BCMS "5th Dimension." Still, the "tone" of the program was heavily influenced by the norms and culture of the school. For the most part, teachers acted as strong authority figures in relation to the young people; they monitored and often attempted to control student behavior, movement, activity, and noise-level. In my efforts to help supervise and run the program, even I began taking on this teacher-like role at times, trying to get students to stay "on task" with the official curriculum of the class. Also much like what happens in a typical classroom, students were often disinterested in what they were "supposed to be doing" and exhibited mild forms of resisting what the teachers and other adults wanted them to do.

There were many signs, however, that BCMS students working closely with an LFC student or other adult often made the after-school program much richer, more meaningful, and more engaging for them. When this kind of collaboration worked well, it could sometimes make even rote or remedial activities more interesting, and could sometimes turn the more challenging activities into opportunities for more rigorous learning and development. In general, the impact that LFC students might have had on the after-school program was significantly limited, however, by the fact that there weren't very many of them available to participate in activities at the middle school (in part because of the LFC Practicum course having low enrollments, in part because of the LFC Practicum students being spread between several different site placements). What's more,

those LFC students that were able to participate consistently in BCMS after-school activities often lacked the skills and initiative needed to effectively scaffold the learning and development of the BCMS students, particularly when BCMS students were disinterested in the activities. Despite these limitations, in general, the Computer Skills and Projects Class helped facilitate greater levels of LFC student participation and engagement in the activities and with the BCMS students than had been exhibited previously in the Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer programs.

In summary, while the Computer Skills and Projects Class represented changes to the after-school program that were in the direction that CREATE considered improvements, there were still significant limitations in the program. A question of key importance is why it was so difficult to change the Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer program to be more in line with CREATE's goals, or perhaps more generally, why it was so difficult to realize the kind of model program that CREATE had envisioned in the first place. To answer this question, I will examine the broader context of the challenges that the South Bay Project faced as a multi-institutional, inter-segmental collaboration.

D. BARRIERS AND CONSTRAINTS FACING THE SOUTH BAY PROJECT

A defining feature of the South Bay Project is that it aligns the resources and personnel of several distinct institutions and segments of the educational system to work together on a common project. In this case, the institutions involved include a community center, an elementary school, a middle school, a community college, and a four-year university (and CREATE has taken some steps to incorporate a high school into the

project as well). The various educational institutions involved are also part of much larger educational systems, including two distinct public school districts, the California Community College system, and the University of California system. The individuals involved in running different components of the project include people in diverse positions of authority and responsibility, including college and university faculty and staff, school teachers and administrators, computer and technical staff, parents and community members, as well as graduate students and postdoctoral researchers. There is very little (and in some cases, no) precedent for these various institutions and individuals to be working together, and there are significant challenges that impede their ability to collaborate effectively.

For each of the institutions involved in the South Bay Project, key components of the project represent some form of innovation in the usual routines and operating procedures. What's more, sometimes these innovations conflict with the priorities, routines, norms, and even the culture, of the different institutions. This factor influences and often limits how the institutions are involved in the project and what can happen in the context of each institution.

At the same time, the individuals involved in the collaboration come from diverse backgrounds with varying levels of experience and expertise in the kinds of activities involved in the South Bay Project. They often have different (and sometimes conflicting) beliefs, interests, and understandings about different components of the project, and vary in the extent to which they understand or are committed to many of each others' goals for the project.

Each person involved in the South Bay Project has particular workplace norms and responsibilities, as well as personal interests, that influence and constrain what kind of involvement they have, and the extent to which they are able to make participation a high priority. Almost everyone involved in helping oversee, run, coordinate, research, develop, or teach components of the South Bay Project is doing the work as just one aspect of otherwise very full jobs. Often, they are doing the work as an *additional* component to their jobs. The amount of work that people are willing and able to contribute to partnership-related activities is thus often limited and constrained by simply not having enough time. This over-commitment results in significant gaps in the partnership-related work and also adds a certain amount of stress in trying to maintain the collaboration. It also makes it more difficult for many of the partners less familiar with CREATE and 5th Dimension principles and activities to have the time to learn new and unfamiliar ideas and practices.

The barriers and constraints that emerge from this general context are varied. Throughout the partnership, there were a wide array of practical difficulties that limited (and sometimes undermined) the project's success. In the case of CREATE's work with BCMS, there were also significant ideological and cultural barriers to implementing the kind of project that CREATE had intended. Below, I examine how these constraints functioned in practice at three of the institutions involved in the South Bay Project:

UCSD, LFC, and BCMS.[146] I also examine how these constraints put serious limitations on how the Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer activities evolved at BCMS.

1. UCSD

At UCSD, the core mission and practices of the university have not historically included such activities as School-University partnerships, K-12 improvement efforts, or academic collaboration with community colleges. "Outreach-related" activities have typically been handled by distinct, non-academic organizations within the university and not viewed as part of the academic core of the university. UC professors, for example, have not typically been involved in these activities; those that are involved must argue for the academic and institutional legitimacy of their efforts. For the UC (as an institution) and for the university faculty (as individuals), to be involved in K-14 partnership efforts is in itself an innovation.

Attempting to align the resources of UCSD with other educational institutions was thus a relatively new endeavor, and, as such, involved a tremendous amount of work. Few institutional relationships or protocols existed to help facilitate the collaboration. Much of the work of the South Bay Project thus involved trying to establish relationships with the different organizations involved, develop systems and procedures for working together, coordinate and align projects and activities, etc. For example, given the diverse (and often conflicting) academic calendars of each institution, it takes a tremendous amount of coordination and organization just to avoid major disruptions in the continuity

[146] Because of the limitations of my research, I do not provide a discussion of the involvement of Seaside Elementary or the Familia Center. It is useful to note, however, that faculty and researchers more familiar with these contexts have reported similar patterns as those discussed here.

of the LFC Practicum course or any of the programs at the two school sites. It also takes work to establish norms and procedures for such things as sharing the space and technology of the various institutions (the Distance Learning facilities at LFC and the computer lab at BCMS, for example), sending LFC students to various research sites, obtaining transfer credit for the LFC Practicum course at UCSD, sharing LFC student field notes and research papers between LFC and UCSD faculty, staff, and researchers, and making arrangements with the various school partners to supervise and conduct research with younger students. The complexities of these kinds of practical details have made it absolutely essential to have someone such as Luke Kennedy available to coordinate the various individuals and institutions involved in the project. Also, because of the busy schedules of everyone working on the project and the large distances between the partner institutions, it has been important to have the person in this coordinating position available to physically travel between the various sites in the project and meet face-to-face with everyone involved. It is important to note, however, that even with someone doing this level of multi-institutional coordination, there are significant gaps in communication between the various partners that sometimes occur (as described below).

Another defining feature and challenge for the South Bay Project has been that the UCSD faculty members involved in the project have had a wide range of other commitments and responsibilities and their participation in the project has necessarily fluctuated. For example, throughout the course of this study, there was no single UCSD faculty member in charge of overseeing, developing, or researching the whole South Bay Project. In fact, each professor involved in the project had other teaching and departmental responsibilities, as well as other major research projects they have been

directing. As a result, the kind of work they could each put into the South Bay Project was typically confined to only certain aspects of the partnership.

Several obstacles resulted from this general situation. In the case of the partnership with BCMS, for example, there was no UCSD faculty member available to play a "mentoring" or "program development" role for the Tuesday/Thursday activities. (At Seaside Elementary and the Familia Center, Olga Vásquez played this role; at BCMS for Wednesday's Game Designer Studio, Jerry Balzano played this role). This factor probably contributed to the extent to which the program developed by relying on the existing resources and norms of the school. For instance, if UCSD faculty had been able to provide a greater amount of time and leadership in developing the South Bay Project activities at BCMS, it is likely that school personnel would have developed a greater degree of understanding for, and interest in, some of CREATE's goals for the program. In the case of the partnership with LFC, the UCSD faculty involvement fluctuated and was sometimes insufficient to maintain a good working relationship with LFC faculty. For example, when Luke Kennedy or the UCSD faculty or researchers involved in the project were not providing the kind of support for the LFC Practicum course that the LFC faculty were expecting, tensions and difficulties emerged in the partnership (described in greater detail below). In general, the frequent unavailability of the UCSD faculty to work on the multiple components of the South Bay Project seemed to contribute to tensions and challenges in maintaining good relationships with project partners and being able to develop the project more in line with CREATE's goals. It is important to note that even the postdoctoral researcher hired by CREATE to work with the South Bay Project had a full teaching schedule that competed with her research responsibilities and limited her

ability to put concentrated time and effort into the project. In this way, she was unable to play the kind of role that she might have been able to play in helping provide needed leadership and resource into the South Bay Project as a whole and, in particular, activities at BCMS.

Another set of practical challenges and constraints in developing the South Bay Project came from the lack of adequate resources available for the project. In part because school-university partnership or other "outreach" endeavors are not at the heart of the priorities of the UC, the resources available to fund, participate in, and help develop the South Bay Project have been somewhat inadequate and uneven, especially given the broad scope of the project. The University faculty involved in the project, for example, are for the most part not compensated for their time and work on the project or given time off from other responsibilities to be able to do the work. This contributes to the challenges they face in having time to work on the project. While CREATE was able to fund one staff person to coordinate the project (Luke Kennedy, as mentioned above), there were still significant gaps in the level of attention and time that CREATE was able to put toward developing the activities at each partner site. Funding for other positions, such as graduate student research assistants or postdoctoral researchers has also fluctuated and been difficult to count on.

The funding available to assist each of the partner institutions in their participation in the project has also been uneven, and often inadequate. CREATE, for example, was able to "buy out" time for LFC faculty (from having to teach one of their regular classes) so they could do the extra work involved in learning about and teaching

the Practicum in Learning and Development course.[147] This proved to be absolutely necessary for them, as they needed extra time to learn the new material and engage in the new teaching and collaboration-related activities (which they found very time consuming).[148] CREATE was not able to provide this kind of funding, however, to "buy out" time for the BCMS teachers and staff involved in the South Bay Project to be able to have extra time to learn about the project or put time into preparing or developing the project-related activities at BCMS. More recently (in the Spring of 2002), the lack of strong UC commitment to these kinds of school-university partnership endeavors was dramatically demonstrated when the university administration agreed to budget cutbacks that eliminated most of the funding for K-14 partnership activities due to a major budget crisis in California. Such fluctuations in the funding for the South Bay Project have added elements of instability that threaten to undermine the whole project.

In sum, a key feature of the South Bay Project from the perspective of UCSD is that there have been tremendous practical challenges involved in maintaining and developing the multiple partnership efforts, while at the same time there have been limited resources available to do the work. Given this condition, for the development of the Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer programs at BCMS, it was a problem that under UCSD's direction the South Bay Project was essentially so thinly spread. It was also a problem that there were multiple South Bay Project sites competing for scarce resources, and therefore less resources could be put into developing or sustaining

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[147] CREATE arranged to fund this "buy out" time for the first three semesters of project implementation, after which LFC agreed to fund an additional two semesters. Currently, such buy out time is no longer provided for the LFC faculty. This has functioned well enough for the LFC faculty now very familiar with teaching the course. It may prove to be a problem, however, as new faculty that come "on board" the South Bay Project will most likely need extra time and resource to do the work.

[148] Interviews with Janet Wilder and Susan Buckley, 12/10/01.

activities at BCMS. In particular, that a limited number of LFC students were divided between so many different sites meant that there wasn't the kind of critical mass of students available to work at BCMS that might have been able to help the after-school program become a richer activity. In this way, for CREATE to have attempted developing activities at multiple sites with such limited resources contributed to undermining the possibility for success at BCMS.

2. LFC

Practical barriers and constraints also affected the development of the South Bay Project at LFC and, in the process, impacted the larger collaboration. At LFC, the institutional norms for faculty entail a heavy teaching load and lecture-style courses. Small, discussion-style seminars are rare and classes with low enrollments are often canceled. LFC faculty often have little time (and receive few institutional benefits) for being involved in research projects or "outreach-related" activities. Similar to UCSD, there is also little precedent or institutional support for the LFC faculty to engage in such multi-institutional collaborative efforts as the South Bay Project. In large part because of these kinds of constraints, the LFC faculty involved in the project have been, understandably, primarily concerned with the details of teaching the Practicum class. They have not been, for example, attempting to research or develop activities at the school sites. For both LFC as an institution and the particular faculty involved, the Practicum class and the collaboration represent new and unfamiliar activities.

Many features of the Practicum course make it unlike any other course at LFC. These "unusual features" include students writing weekly field notes and a research

paper, participating in routine class discussions, reading and presenting themes from academic journal articles, participating in video conference discussion sessions with UCSD faculty, and, of course, attending a field research site two hours a week. In part because the Practicum course was often unfamiliar to students and also very time consuming, enrollment for the class typically remained low (and many students dropped the course shortly after it began). Consequently, it has been difficult for SWC to justify having a course with enrollments fluctuating around 12-15 students. Both LFC professors teaching the course, Susan Buckley and Janet Wilder, expressed their concern that if the course enrollment didn't "pick up," the South Bay Project ran the risk of the LFC administration deciding to cancel the course altogether.[149] (Another result of the challenge with low enrollments is that the various sites have had less LFC student participation than they were counting on).

For both Wilder and Buckley, teaching a course like the Practicum in Learning and Development was also a new and labor-intensive experience.[150] The burden of the work involved was partially offset by CREATE "buying out" one of the classes they normally would have taught (mentioned above). Still, participation in the South Bay Project required a lot of effort. For example, it involved theories and concepts that they weren't yet familiar with as well as detailed and time-consuming logistics. Wilder explained to me that also, because the Practicum course was so different from her other courses in terms of the heavy emphasis on discussion (instead of the lecture format she was used to), it was "really emotionally exhausting" to teach. The course required more

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[149] Ibid.
[150] The following quotes and summaries of the perspectives and experiences of Janet Wilder and Susan Buckley are from personal interviews with each of them, 12/10/01.

maintenance than she was used to, she said, in part because she had to figure out how to ensure that all the students participate and that their participation was guided and meaningful. For both the LFC faculty, the work of maintaining the partnership relationship with UCSD was also challenging. According to Wilder, she and others from the community college feel like they don't usually "have the luxury to go to meetings." What's more, with everyone's competing schedules, she explained, it became a "sheer impossibility" to get "all the players together."

The challenge of teaching the new course and being involved in the collaboration was exacerbated by the fact that the professors were extremely busy with full teaching loads and a combination of other responsibilities. Susan Buckley explained, for example, that she and Janet Wilder had "five classes down here that we must teach, and the Practicum is only one of them." In addition to teaching roughly fifteen "contact hours" a week, holding five hours of office hours, preparing for class and grading student work, each also had a range of other commitments, such as serving on a wide variety of committees. During one semester, for example, Buckley was involved in coordinating an internship program throughout San Diego county as well as serving on four tenure review committees and serving as co-chair of her department's curriculum construction committee. Given that teaching the Practicum class often required more work and effort on the part of the LFC faculty than teaching a regular class, involvement in the South Bay Project and teaching the Practicum course thus represented a time-consuming endeavor amidst an already-full work schedule. In part because of the intensity of the work required, the LFC faculty involved in the project have traded off teaching the Practicum course every 2-3 semesters.

When teaching the Practicum course, both Susan Buckley and Janet Wilder have been centrally concerned with the class running well and with their students having a positive experience at their various site placements. While they have often been pleased with the course, the site placements, and the collaboration, problems have emerged when the involvement and support of the UCSD faculty, researchers and staff fluctuated (mentioned above). During one semester, for example, Mike Cole had become less involved in the South Bay Project and Luke Kennedy had also not been able to be as involved in helping manage the logistics of the LFC Practicum class as he had been in the past. UCSD faculty were still in the process of figuring out who would take on responsibility for working with LFC and what responsibilities the commitment would entail. Also, in the hopes of benefiting the long-term sustainability of the partnership, CREATE was interested in LFC faculty taking over a greater role in managing and sustaining the Practicum-related activities. The period of transition was difficult for the LFC faculty, however, who had become accustomed to CREATE's support. Buckley explained to me, for example, that she thought we needed to "get somebody back" (Luke Kennedy, Mike Cole, or Olga Vásquez) to help make things run smoothly (the Distance Learning sessions, the site placement scheduling details, etc.).

When these kinds of gaps in maintaining the partnership occurred, it created difficulties for Buckley and Wilder and tensions in the partnership relationship with UCSD. Buckley explained, for example, that "when things don't run well" with the Practicum course or the overall collaboration, she feels "very, very harried," and doesn't have time to really focus on those things or follow up to make sure everything is OK. Instead, she has "twenty other demands that are just as immediate." When the

collaboration didn't run smoothly, she explained, "then it just became a monumental problem." Wilder explained that when these kinds of things occur and she and Buckley feel they are not getting adequate support or feedback from UCSD, "the feeling we get sometimes is…that we're just being exploited," that "we're sending out thirteen students, two hours a week (to sites), and all we're getting back (from UCSD) is a couple comments on the field notes." Speaking of the partnership with UCSD, she explained, "Occasionally there was the feeling arising that we were being ripped off," and that "we were, you know, sitting at this end just providing the students…" After a recent period in which Wilder felt she hadn't been receiving "any help" from UCSD, she explained that there were times that she felt the partnership was kind of a "partnership of one."

Many of these kinds of tensions in the partnership between UCSD and LFC seemed to result from lack of communication (in part because faculty from both institutions didn't always follow through with meetings or other forms of communication). Toward the end of the Spring 2001 (semester 4) in which I was conducting the research of the South Bay Project, Olga Vásquez was in the process of taking over greater responsibility for the project as a whole. In order to help maintain a good collaborative relationship between the UCSD and LFC partners, Vásquez and Wilder agreed that UCSD would institute a "mid-term report" as a way to give feedback to the Practicum class about what was happening at the various sites from UCSD's perspective and what kind of role LFC students were playing in the project. This and other steps toward increasing the level of communication between the two partners and to continue providing logistical support to the LFC class seemed like basic and important steps for maintaining the collaboration. At the same time, given the fluctuating resources

and multiple responsibilities of the UCSD partners, it is likely that these kinds of difficulties in maintaining adequate levels of communication and collaboration will continue to occur.

The various challenges associated with the involvement of LFC in the South Bay Project have consistently impacted the rest of the collaboration. Most notably, the difficulties of recruiting and retaining students for the Practicum course have made it difficult to run the kinds of site activities that CREATE intended because they are often significantly under-staffed. The fact that LFC students are further divided between multiple sites only aggravates this problem. Also, the competing interests and responsibilities of the LFC faculty involved in the project have made it difficult for them to participate in meetings or other partnership-building activities that they might have otherwise been able to do. In addition, neither of the LFC faculty has been able to play an active role in the various site activities. There has often been a lack of communication, for example, between LFC faculty and the teams of people directing activities at the different sites. Similar to most of the UCSD faculty involved in the project, there have been only a few occasions during which the LFC faculty have visited the sites. While perhaps this lack of direct faculty involvement in site activities has been necessary given the circumstances of the current project, it has definitely limited the kind of impact that the faculty have been able to have on helping develop stronger and richer sites. For example, if the LFC faculty were more involved in site activities or in better communication with the team of people working with each site, they might be able to better address the kinds of challenges and difficulties the LFC students face at the various sites. In the case of BCMS, LFC faculty might be able to play a stronger role in helping

the LFC students become more effective at mentoring BCMS students and scaffolding their learning and development.

3. BCMS

At BCMS, there were indeed practical challenges involved in collaborating with UCSD and LFC on South Bay Project activities that constrained the development of the Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer programs (discussed below). Unlike UCSD's partnership activities with LFC, however, at BCMS there were also significant cultural and ideological barriers to implementing many of CREATE's goals for the program. These barriers included cultural norms and routine practices of the school, as well as beliefs and practices of the BCMS personnel involved in the project, which directly conflicted with key components of the model activity that CREATE had hoped to develop.

a. Cultural and Ideological Barriers

As discussed in Chapter 1, research has consistently demonstrated broad, class and race-based patterns in the education that students of poor, working class, and underrepresented minority backgrounds typically receive. In "low performing" schools serving high percentages of underrepresented minority students, for example, constraints such as academic tracking practices, inadequately trained teachers, low teaching standards, and negative, often race-based assumptions about student ability are typically widespread and institutionalized (Oakes et al., 1992). In these contexts, students are likely to receive a "lower-tracked" curriculum that is more remedial in nature, involve

more decoding activities, and more greatly emphasize classroom control and discipline (Anyon, 1980; Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Cazden, 1988; Haycock, 1997; Oakes et al., 1992). For a variety of reasons, the students that come to these schools are often years below grade level, demoralized by school, and disinterested in seemingly "academic" learning activities (Fine, 1991; Haycock, 1997; Stanton-Salazar, 2001; Willis, 1977). They often react to this lower tracked curriculum and disciplinary emphasis by resisting school norms and teacher authority—perpetuating a cycle of being treated with disrespect and low expectations. While it is beyond the scope of this study to document in detail how these institutionalized behavior patterns were exhibited at BCMS, it is important to note that they did exist and formed a part of the routine practices and general culture of the school (as described in chapters 2, 3 and 4).

From CREATE's perspective, many of the factors that limited the development of Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer activities at BCMS were related to the strength and persistence of these school-like cultural norms and tendencies. The two key BCMS personnel involved in the South Bay Project, for example, both held beliefs and understandings about students and teaching that reflected aspects of these norms and tendencies. As such, they often disagreed with, or lacked familiarity with, the kind of learning environment and curriculum that CREATE had hoped would evolve in the after-school context.

As documented in this study (in chapters 3 and 4), BCMS personnel involved in the project often had strong disagreements with CREATE's goals of mixing learning with play, supporting a more open and collaborative learning environment, and encouraging non-hierarchical relationships between adults and young people. Instead of CREATE's

vision for a model activity, BCMS personnel advocated for, and indeed often created, a learning culture that was more similar to a traditional, more authoritarian and controlling classroom environment.

This classroom-like learning culture emphasized the teachers' authority role with students, controlling (or attempting to control) their movement, noise levels, activities, and behavior, and often resorting to disciplinary measures to do so. This "classroom model" also emphasized students working, for the most part, independently and individually, and turning to others primarily for getting "help" (as opposed to for engaging in some form of joint or collaborative activity). Examples of Mr. Gonzalez' and Mr. Quinto's reliance on this model in the after-school program included the occasional use of the after-school program as a site for detention, Mr. Quinto's frequent insistence on quiet and order (especially by speaking to students in a harsh, often disciplinarian tone), and Mr. Gonzalez' efforts to control "loud" or "unruly" students by using "classroom control" strategies (such as reseating or expelling "repeat offenders"). Even more fundamentally, the very fact that both Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto insisted that students should follow rules such as keeping their voices low, not moving around the room without permission (or for a "good reason"), and in general, doing what the adults told them to do, represented their commitment to these school-like norms.

Also, as demonstrated in this study, BCMS personnel typically defended the use of these norms in the after-school context, which created tremendous obstacles to realizing the kind of learning culture that CREATE was hoping to achieve. For example, CREATE's efforts to suggest new computer-based activities that might have encouraged greater levels of student collaboration, movement, joint activity, and "fun," were

typically met with resistance or skepticism on the part of the BCMS personnel. Even though changes toward a more flexible learning environment in the after-school program were eventually achieved, these changes were still often constrained by Mr. Gonzalez and Mr. Quinto's (and sometimes even CREATE personnel's) efforts to maintain "classroom control" and, in general, a more traditional classroom-like culture.

In general, CREATE's conception of what kinds of learning activities and instructional techniques were beneficial to young people differed in significant ways from the beliefs and practices of the BCMS personnel involved in the South Bay Project. From CREATE's perspective, the BCMS personnel typically had low expectations for the kinds of academic and creative activities that students were capable of and should be engaged in. They also seemed to advocate and employ curriculum and teaching strategies that did not engage students in intellectually rigorous and academically meaningful activities, but instead emphasized more remedial and rote learning exercises. In this way, their beliefs and practices reflected the kinds of tendencies common in "low performing schools" (mentioned above) toward students receiving a "lower tracked," more "basic skills" education as opposed to a more academically demanding, "college prep" education.

An example of how these tendencies were exhibited in the context of South Bay Project activities at BCMS was the school's general emphasis on having BCMS students learn "computer skills" as an end in itself, as opposed to as *a means to an end* (such as engaging in other, more academically meaningful or rigorous learning activities). Another example was Mr. Gonzalez' and Mr. Quinto's reluctance (especially earlier on in the partnership) to teach students new computer programs or have them engage in more

complex or collaborative projects because they worried these activities would be "too advanced" for students or might encourage them to "goof off." While in general Mr. Gonzalez, Mr. Quinto, and other school personnel became increasingly open to, and interested in, CREATE's ideas for a more project-based and intellectually rigorous curriculum as the partnership progressed, they still often treated the after-school program primarily as a place to teach students more remedial computer skills. Much to CREATE's frustration, for example, BCMS personnel seemed comfortable with (and in general believed it worthwhile) to have students practice typing drills for long periods of time in the context of the after-school program. What's more, even when Mr. Gonzalez agreed to implement more complex computer projects (such as the Timeline Presentations), he did so by instructing students to follow step-by-step directions and rules for what to include in the project. Students did so, often without understanding the content of what they wrote, and with only a little room to discover their own goals for the project. These kinds of beliefs about education and young people, as well as these kinds of teaching practices, directly constrained the potential of the after-school program to develop the kind of curriculum and pedagogy that CREATE believed would be more educationally meaningful and rewarding for students.

b. Practical Challenges and Constraints

There were also significant practical challenges and constraints that influenced the development of the South Bay Project activities at BCMS and limited the kind of impact that CREATE was able to have on Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer programs. As has been documented above, throughout the South Bay Project, the challenges that

emerged were often related to the fact that the various institutions and individuals involved were attempting to develop new and unfamiliar activities and relationships across multiple institutions. The process was labor- and time-intensive and there were not, for the most part, the sufficient resources or infrastructure available to support it. At BCMS, these challenges contributed to CREATE having a somewhat limited impact on the Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer activities that evolved. These challenges also contributed to BCMS personnel's frequent reliance on existing school resources and on already-familiar teaching strategies, which further exacerbated the presence of school-like norms and practices in the after-school context.

For BCMS to be engaged in a close partnership relationship with a university that was involved in the "on-the-ground details" of the school's operation was itself an innovation in the normal routines of the school. Developing the partnership required the formation of new institutional relationships and procedures for working together. Initially, the BCMS administration was only somewhat interested in developing and maintaining this kind of relationship with CREATE. The principal, for example, assigned a staff person to be CREATE's contact and liaison in working with the school. This meant that for the first year of the partnership, CREATE did not usually have a "direct line" to the administration. After that, CREATE began working more directly with one of the school's vice principals. Only in the third year of the partnership did CREATE begin working more directly with the school's principal. This relationship with the administration is somewhat representative of the slow process by which CREATE began to develop a stronger presence in the school, build trusting relationships with teachers,

administrators, and staff, and in general, be viewed as a resource and collaborator in addressing school problems.

CREATE's slow-to-develop relationship with BCMS played a significant role in how the South Bay Project unfolded. Very few teachers, administrators, or staff in the school, for example, were familiar with CREATE's goals and objectives when the South Bay Project began. The teacher and computer technician that began working with CREATE in the after-school program did not do so because they necessarily understood or agreed with CREATE's goals for the program. What's more, the fact that CREATE was still trying to gain the trust and credibility of school personnel contributed to CREATE's general approach of often deferring to the goals and interests articulated by the school personnel in the development of the after-school programs.

At the same time, as has been documented in this study, the multiple and competing responsibilities of BCMS and UCSD personnel also influenced and constrained the development of the Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer activities at BCMS and limited the extent to which the various partners could actively collaborate on the project. In the initial development of the after-school program, for example, the UCSD faculty involved in CREATE and in the South Bay Project played a role in meeting with BCMS teachers, staff, and administrators to help them learn about CREATE and 5th Dimension principles and goals. They were not available, however, to play a role in adapting the 5th Dimension to the new context of the middle school or to otherwise aid in the "on-site" development of the program. What's more, they had not articulated a clear or strong vision for what the after-school program should involve. CREATE assigned Luke Kennedy the job of working with the middle school to help

oversee and develop the program, but this was to be just one small component of Kennedy's overall job of coordinating South Bay Project activities.

When the BCMS personnel that CREATE had been working with changed suddenly before the Tuesday/Thursday program was set to begin, the new BCMS teacher and staff that came to work with the program (Mr. Gonzalez and then later, Mr. Quinto) had even less exposure to CREATE or the 5th Dimension and little familiarity with the underlying principles that CREATE was hoping would guide the program's development. Given the limited staff and other resources that CREATE had available at the time to help develop the program or to work more closely with BCMS personnel, and the overall lack of leadership and direction provided by CREATE, it was not surprising that the Tuesday/Thursday BCMS after-school computer program that developed relied heavily on the existing resources of the school. As documented in this study, this factor contributed to the after-school program evolving in a way that reflected many of the norms and practices of the existing school culture instead of what CREATE had wanted. What's more, these factors contributed to the after-school program relying on software and computer activities that BCMS personnel were already familiar with and found easily accessible, which resulted in serious deficiencies in the curriculum from CREATE's standpoint.

BCMS personnel involved in the South Bay Project also had serious work and time constraints that limited how much effort they could reasonably put into developing the after-school programs or into working more closely with CREATE researchers and staff on the project. These challenges became increasingly apparent once CREATE was in a position to put more effort and resource into the after-school program and began

trying to influence the curriculum and pedagogy to be more in line with CREATE's goals. As discussed in this study, for example, Mr. Gonzalez had a variety of competing responsibilities that made it difficult for him to do the increased level of planning required to develop and implement the new curriculum or to engage in the kind of collaborative work that CREATE had been hoping he would be able to do (such as meeting with me to plan curriculum and discuss teaching strategies, reading LFC student field notes, etc.). In general, these constraints also made it so that Mr. Gonzalez typically resorted to the kinds of curriculum and teaching strategies that he was already familiar with instead of trying to learn something new and unfamiliar. At the same time, work pressures and constraints played a key role in the challenges that Mr. Quinto experienced in working with CREATE and contributed to many of the tensions that arose between him and CREATE personnel. In many ways, the after-school programs represented additional demands on the space and technology of the computer lab that often made extra work for Mr. Quinto and caused him additional stress. From CREATE's standpoint, these various factors also seemed to contribute to many of the limitations in how the Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer programs developed.

4. Summary

This discussion has examined the variety of barriers and challenges that faced the South Bay Project as a way of addressing why it was so difficult to realize the kind of model program that CREATE had envisioned for the BCMS Tuesday/Thursday after-school computer programs. At BCMS, there were strong ideological and cultural factors related to school norms and practices that constrained the possibilities for achieving

CREATE's goals for a model after-school program. At the same time, it is important to remember and note that as CREATE worked more closely with BCMS personnel and took a more active role in guiding the program's development, some changes did occur that were in the direction CREATE considered improvements. Significantly, these improvements included dimensions related to both the learning culture and curriculum of the after-school program, as well as to the beliefs and understandings of the BCMS personnel working with CREATE. This demonstrated that "educational change" (albeit limited change) was indeed possible in the after-school context.

Unfortunately, however, the potential for CREATE to impact the after-school program, the BCMS personnel we worked with, and the culture of the school more generally, was undermined by a range of practical challenges and constraints. Central to these constraints were a range of time consuming, labor intensive problems of maintaining coordination and communication between all of the South Bay Project activities and partners. This made it absolutely essential to have someone like Luke Kennedy play the role of a "spider," able to go between and work with the variety of individuals and institutions involved in the project to ensure that the web of relationships was not broken. Still, there were often significant gaps in the partnership that resulted and much collaboration-building work that simply could not be done.

Another set of constraints involved CREATE essentially spreading itself too thin (especially given the lack of human and material resources available for the project). Given the multiple sites involved in the project, for example, important resources (such as LFC students) were often divided between the sites, thereby limiting the impact these resources could have at BCMS. Also, given that all of the UCSD faculty (and even the

postdoctoral researcher) that were involved in the project had multiple and competing commitments, CREATE was unable to provide BCMS with the necessary leadership, vision, support, and even guiding theory, that might have helped it develop after-school activities at BCMS more in line with CREATE's goals. When I became available to put more concentrated efforts into working with BCMS, positive but limited changes in the program were apparent. It is thus quite likely that CREATE would have had a much stronger impact at BCMS if it had concentrated its efforts and resources at the site over a sustained period of time.

E. LESSONS FROM THE STUDY

We know from the history of research about schooling that educational institutions are very resistant and slow to change. Reforms are usually implemented only partially and unevenly and innovations are typically absorbed into the culture of the school and adapted to fit preexisting routines and standard operating procedures (Tyak and Cuban, 1995; Mehan et al., 1996). Presumably an "after-school" context would be more malleable and open to change than a "regular" school or classroom context, for it is less constrained by the existing architecture, procedures, and general culture of the school. This study demonstrated, however, that many features of the culture and routine practices of the school persisted in the after-school context and constrained the possibilities for change that CREATE was attempting to realize. It also demonstrated that change was indeed possible.

CREATE's efforts in the South Bay Project and the after-school computer based activities at BCMS were aimed generally at the goals of facilitating the eventual college-

eligibility and access of underrepresented minority students in the K-14 public educational system. CREATE hoped to contribute to these goals by providing students with enriched educational opportunities and access to additional resources and supports. CREATE also hoped to contribute to these goals by sustaining and developing the partnership relationships involved in the project so as to facilitate ongoing collaboration in solving the educational problems facing low performing schools and underrepresented minority students. Finally, CREATE hoped that in the case of working with its K-12 partners, it might help facilitate deeper changes in the culture and routine practices of the schools such that students might have greater access to academically meaningful and challenging curriculum and learning environments.

This study demonstrated definite potential in CREATE's ability to achieve these goals. It also demonstrated that significant challenges and barriers must be confronted in the process, especially where there are entrenched ideological and cultural differences between the institutions and individuals involved. An important lesson from this study is that achieving the kinds of activity systems, institutional relationships, and educational changes of the sort that CREATE envisioned is thus a long, slow, and fragile process, dependent on a great deal of human effort and material resources.

To be able to adequately and consistently support this kind of multi-institutional and inter-segmental collaborative effort, the university should concentrate resources so that they are in principle sufficient to address the range of challenges and barriers involved. This means, for example, that there should be enough faculty leadership and LFC student participation available at any given site to be able to maintain a strong presence at that site and contribute to its ongoing development. Also, because many

aspects of the collaboration represent new and unfamiliar ideas and activities for many of the partners involved in the project (and because these partners are also very busy with full time jobs), additional resources should be made available to support professional development, training, and curriculum development activities. Also, in large part because of the range of levels of experience and expertise of the various partners, it is important to direct consistent effort and resource to the collaboration-building work of sharing perspectives and information between the various partners. Finally, to sustain and develop these efforts necessarily implies that there should be ongoing and adequate support for the participation of the LFC faculty, UCSD faculty, and school personnel involved in the project, as well as for the overall coordination of the partnership efforts.

If adequately developed and sustained, the South Bay Project and other such partnership initiatives show potential for being able to contribute, in the long run, to two central goals established by the University of California Outreach Task Force (1997): 1) to contribute to the academic enrichment of UC Campuses through a diverse student body, and 2) to improve opportunities for California students in disadvantaged circumstances to achieve eligibility and to enroll at UC Campuses. These kinds of partnership endeavors also demonstrate that there is indeed an important and positive role that the UC can play in contributing to the long-term improvement and educational capacity of K-12 schools.

As of the summer of 2002, however, recent signs in the California and UC budgets suggest that the state and the university do not have the commitment to these kinds of activities to support them over the long haul. This is extremely unfortunate and short sighted. Given the entrenched racial and class-based disparities that continue to

pervade all levels of the state's public education system, it is ever more crucial that the important groundwork, infrastructure, and relationships that have been established through activities like the South Bay Project continue to be built on and mobilized towards achieving the broader goals of educational change and social equality.

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Appendix: Examples of BCMS Student Projects

The following are excerpts from BCMS Student Timeline and Presentation Projects. They are meant to represent a range in how students completed the assignments.

◇1988 - I was 1 year old in my new home. I had seen my Brother Julio. I had seen my sister too. I had stared to crawl around the house on every floor. I had my first tooth that year. I had stared to see my whole family. Well not that whole family is that my eyes had just opened. Earthquake in the USSR . Cactus Jack Foley and Gary Young win the CWA tag team titles.

◇1989 - I had frosting from the cake when I was 2 years old, it was all over my face. I had stared to walk all over my parents room. I didn't know I had two brothers, it was Julio, and it was Victor. My dad just got separated from my step mom, Julio and Victor are her sons. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles become an over night sensation. Cactus Jack defeat Johnny Rotten to become the North American Wrestling heavyweight champion.

◇1990 - When I was 3 years old, I stated to speak to my parents. I had been potty trained all by myself. I went to church but I just thought that's just a play house or a puppet theater. I had to ride in the car in the car seat every day till I am grown. I had stared to get out of the crib that year I felt so free. "The Simpsons" spins off from the Tracy Ullman show. WWF wrestler Mick Foley marries Collette Christie.

Figure 5. Example of BCMS Student Timeline (by Carlos)

Figure 6. Example of BCMS Student Timeline (by Mayra)

Figure 7. Example of BCMS Student Timeline (by Pedro)

- 1998 - En quinto grado me cambiaron al Colegio Latino y me toco una maestra muy buena y luego me cambiaron con un maestro que su nombre es Isidoro, luego conoci a mi amiga Karla y luego a un niño que se llama Gabriel y luego yo vine a Disneyland y compre unas cadenitas de best friends 4 ever. Lugo entro una niña que se llama Alejandra y luego le di una a ella luego ella queria a gabriel pero Gabriel me queria y me rogaba mucho para que fuera su novia pero yo le decia que no porque yo sabia que mi amiga lo queria y yo le decia que no porque mi amiga lo queria y yo no podia defraudarla . Y haora que el va en el 7 toda via es mi amigo.
- 1999 - En diciembre fui a sinaloa y mire a un niño que se llama Alejandro, y en navidad en la noche jugamos a la botellita y luego mi primo Jose le dijo que me diera un beso y me lo dio, pero en el cachete. Luego en la mañana su abuelita que empas descanse le dijo a mi abuelita si era verdad y mi abuelita le dijo que si. En Junio vino un nino que se llama Abraham y luego mi amiga Karla y yo lo queriamos y luego el se fue de nuevo a Las Vegas Nevada donde el vive .
- 2000 - En Diciembre vino otra vez el Arturo pero yo ya no lo queria pero mi amiga Karla si lo queria y luego nos metimos a un problema muy grande porque su abuelita no le parecio que Karla lo quisiera y le llamavamos y le colgabamos y luego cuando se fue su abuelita le dijo a mi mama que nosotras llamabamos y colgabamos y luego mi mama hablo conmigo y ya no paso nada.En Junio entre al 7 .
- 2001 - En Febrero 3 me fui a Cd. Juarez y cuando veniamos nos venimos en avion y me vomite toda y estaba mareada y no me quedaron ganas de subirme a un avion.
  George Washintong presidente de los estados unidos. habia un temor en india . los estados unidos y inglaterra pelearon con bombas contra iraq .

Figure 8. Example of BCMS Student Timeline (by Casandra)

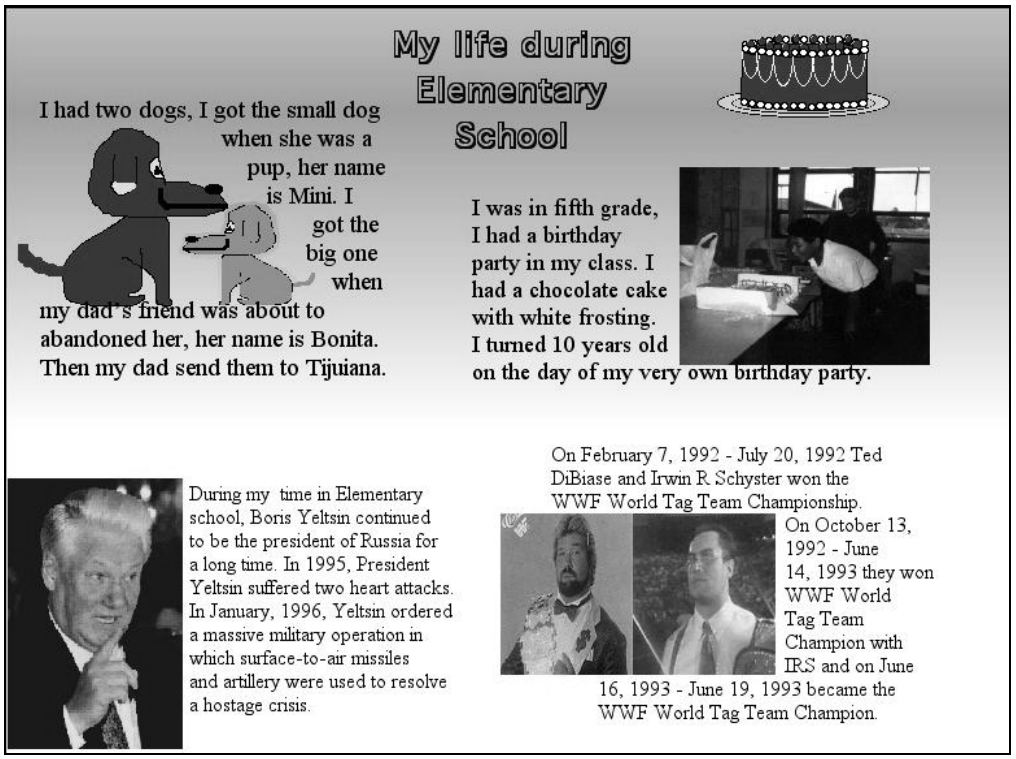

Figure 9. Example of BCMS Student Presentation (by Carlos)

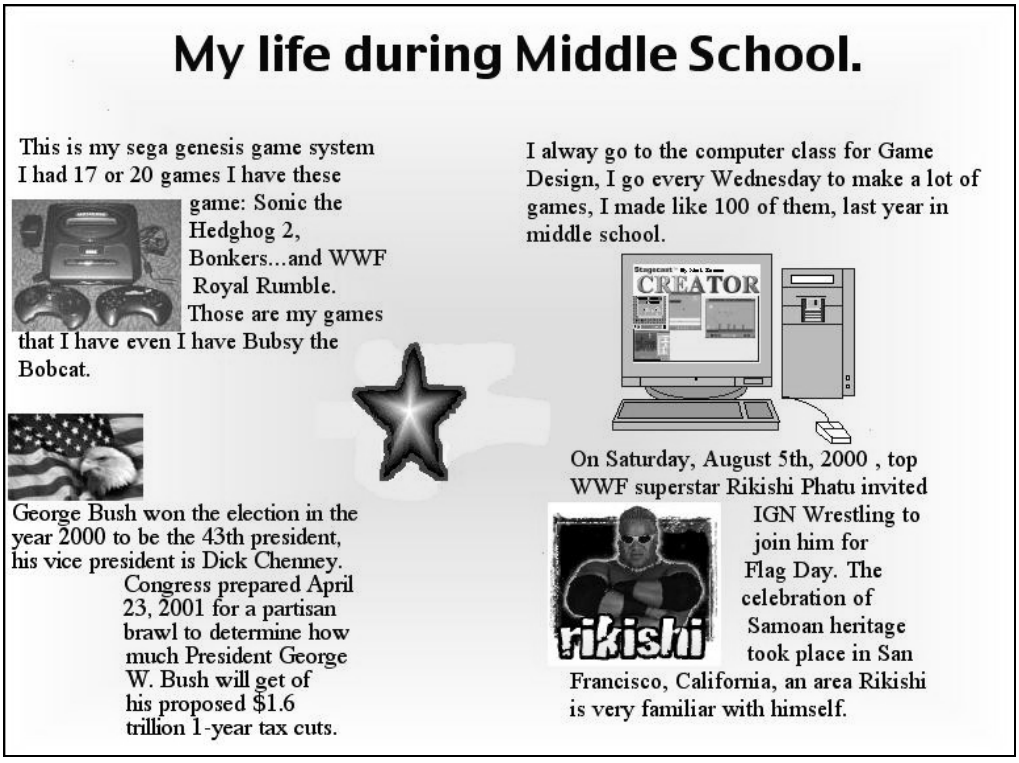

Figure 10. Example of BCMS Student Presentation (by Carlos)

Figure 11. Example of BCMS Student Presentation (by Monica)

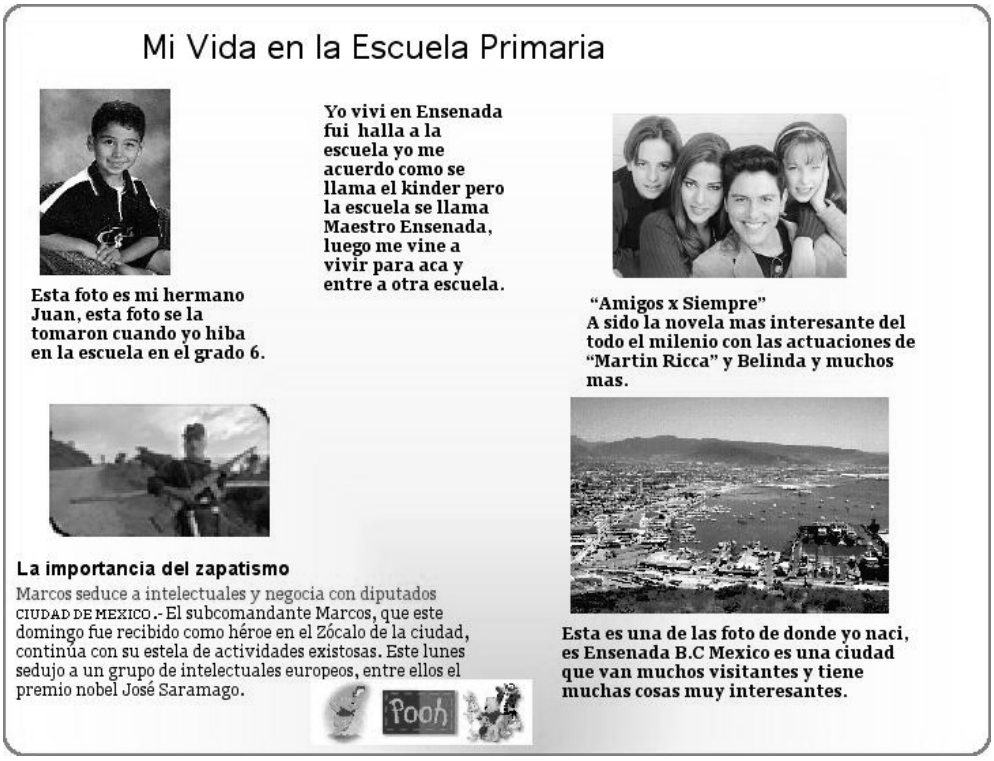

Figure 12 Example of BCMS Student Presentation (by Monica)

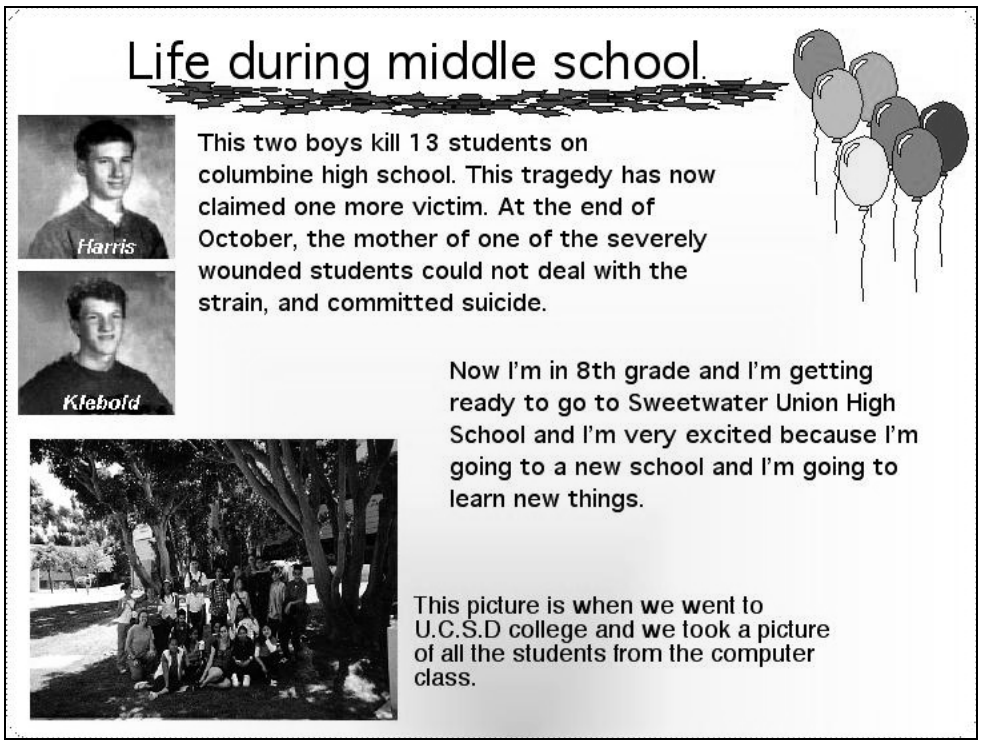

Figure 13. Example of BCMS Student Presentation (by Miguel)

Figure 14. Example of BCMS Student Presentation (by Mayra)

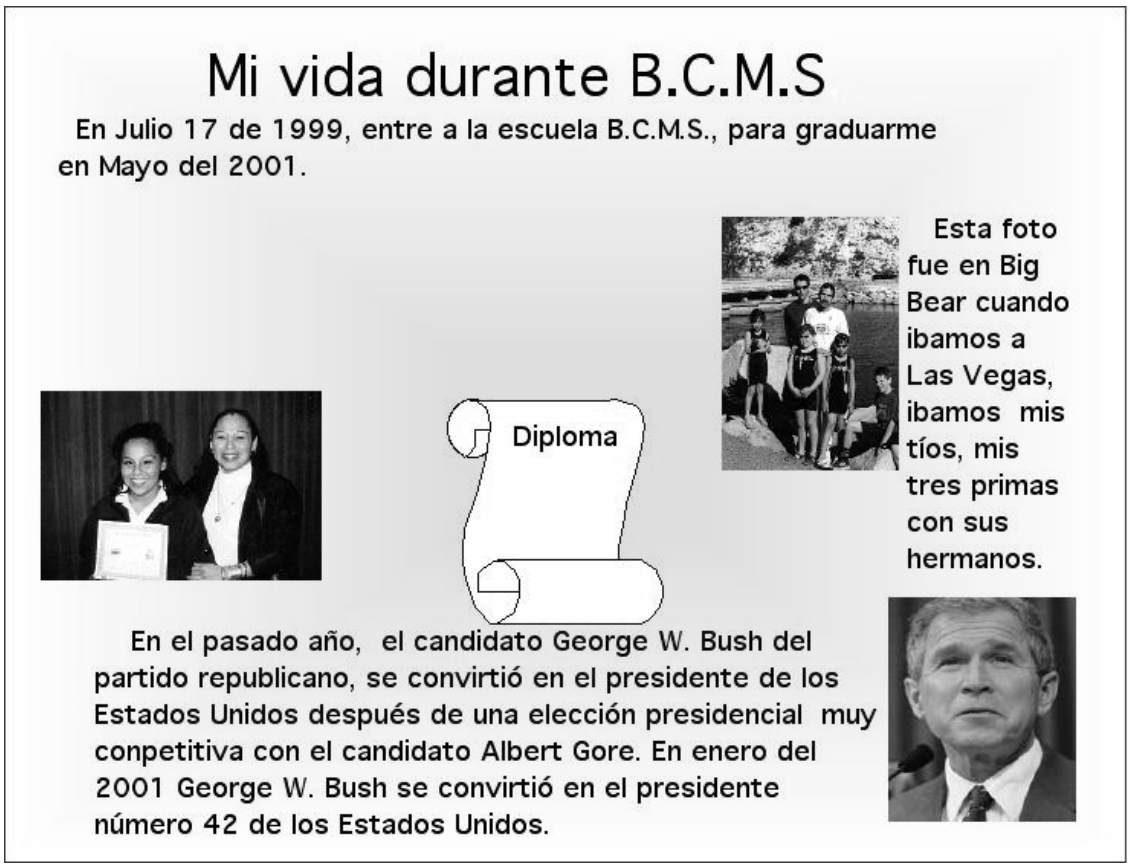

Figure 15. Example of BCMS Student Presentation (by Mayra)