Description of the RVS Student-Centered Blended Learning Model

RVS provides a student-centered blended learning environment. Students create, with their advising teacher, personalized learning plans that include short and long-term goals. Students attend school one to five days a week based on grade level and individual objectives. RVS chose this practice to fulfill a need for an alternative model of a student-centered school. The goal of RVS anticipates students who participate in our program to be best prepared for college or career due to their development of time management, collaborative, goal setting, and communication skills.

RVS has five full-time teachers with single subject credentials, experts in their area of teaching and study, and a technology specialist who is available to help all RVS students regarding technology needs. Shared classrooms are outfitted with desktops, laptops, and furniture oriented to foster collaboration. The science lab is prepared for students to complete labs in groups or individually. Materials are organized and available for students whenever needed. RVS shares one “traditional” classroom for seminars, tutorials, and indoor activities. Students are able to check out laptops and texts from the school’s bookroom. All curriculum is housed online.

The model used by RVS benefits all students because of a truly student-centered program. For example, a current RVS student is a rising sports star, playing soccer in both US and Mexican leagues. Currently committed to San Diego State University, this student’s training and travel schedules often conflict with traditional school attendance. RVS teachers work with this student to ensure seminar content and lab requirements can be rescheduled; the student does not lose valuable collaborative or classroom time. If students are ill or cannot attend, advisory meetings can occur through email, google chat, or video chat. Students who prefer a traditional schedule can attend school daily; when not in seminar or labs, students can work independently or collaboratively in study hall. RVS teachers promote AVID strategies in all content courses. All RVS middle school students are enrolled in AVID, learning time management, team building, and participating in cooperative learning opportunities. Teachers are available throughout the day to assist students individually or in small groups. No matter where a student is, advisory and content teachers are available to help.

Another component of a student-centered school is the ability to help students grow socially and emotionally. RVS administrators, counselors, and teachers follow restorative practices in the classroom. As students participate in restorative circles and other team building activities, they learn about one another, and how to deal with friendships and conflict in a healthy manner.

The administration is supportive of each teacher’s professional development goals allowing them to participate in requested training. Teachers have chosen professional development opportunities in restorative practices, NGSS, curriculum development, special needs students, and online instruction. The technology assistant also attends relevant training such as Google Suite.

All site goals and the school’s action plan are fully aligned with Riverside Unified School District’s LCAP. The first LCAP goal is to “provide high-quality teaching and learning environments for all students.” One ongoing RVS goal is to add at least one AP course each school year. We also hope to increase student participation in these and other rigorous courses.
The second LCAP goal is to “prepare all students to be college, career, and world ready upon graduation.” RVS offers a CTE Pathway in International Business, which offers articulated college courses and internship opportunities. Lastly, the LCAP goal is to “fully engage students, parents, and the community of short and long term educational outcomes.” Use of an RVS advisory teacher ensures that RVS parents and students are a part of their educational journey.

Due to the alternative nature of RVS, attendance is determined by work completed, not by seat based presence. RVS had one suspension and no expulsions in the past three years.

**Implementation & Monitoring of Model Program/Practice**

RVS parents are encouraged to attend advisory meetings with their students. At the beginning of the year, at the quarters, and as needed, parents meet with advisory teachers, the counselor, and/or the student in creating short and long term goals. Goals are revisited frequently and parents are updated on their students’ progress. Parents are also encouraged to attend school activities, field trips, and parent leadership meetings.

As one of the first online schools in the area, RVS is a popular site for educational leaders to visit classrooms, discuss strategies with teachers, and interview students regarding their experiences in a hybrid learning program. RVS teachers present at conferences regarding online learning, cross-curricular units, CTE pathways in an alternative program, and other pertinent topics.

Parents participate in an annual Parent Survey. The data shows that most parents feel their students are in a positive, rigorous, and supportive academic environment. Parents indicated that the RVS staff is professional and helpful and that RVS administrators, teachers, counselors, and staff are doing the best they can to help students achieve their personal and academic goals. Visiting community members, such as guest speakers and lunchtime presenters often comment on the ingenuity and student-centered approach.

RVS administrators, teachers, and non-instructional staff attend a variety of professional development opportunities not only in RUSD, but also throughout California and the United States. After participating in these opportunities, RVS staff share and implement new strategies, procedures, or technological tools.

Instructional learning activities are evaluated through peer evaluation and student success. All RVS classrooms are shared meaning there are at least two teachers in each room; through constructive discussions, teachers share their insights after introducing a new or different learning activity. Teachers use student understanding and success as another evaluation tool of instructional learning activities; if a practice is not successful, teachers will revise their approach.

**Results of the Model Program/Practice**

RVS makes use of state summative assessment data for academic growth and content mastery validation. The English Language Arts State Dashboard Indicator for 2018 shows RVS having an average distance from standard of 50.2 with Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students being 63.5. This amounts to just over 80% of the students scoring at or above standard on their ELA Smarter Balanced summative performance assessment. Although current math scores are not yet at standard, student difference grew 40.6 for all students and
68.2 for Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students in 2018. This means that in 2018, 50% of the students scored at or above standard on their Math Smarter Balanced summative performance assessment.

RVS uses yearly Gallup Student Hope and Engagement surveys to monitor school climate. On a 5 point scale, RVS students have a mean score of 4.24 on their Hope survey. The district mean is 4.18 with the national mean at 4.20. On the Engagement survey, RVS students scored a mean of 4.01 in 2018. The district mean for Engagement was 3.89 for all students and 3.68 for secondary students. Gallup reports that across the nation, Engagement scores drop significantly as students get older. The personalized learning program at RVS mitigates this especially at two significant indicators: “My teachers make me feel my schoolwork is important” had a mean score of 4.26 and “The adults at my school care about me” had a mean score of 4.25. RVS has been tracking the Gallup Hope and Engagement survey data since 2015. The school is also very excited about the indicator “I have fun at school” scoring 3.93. The national norm for this indicator is 3.44.

Teacher efficacy is evidenced in student academic performance and well-being indicators. Not only do RVS teachers genuinely believe their students will achieve great things, but the Gallup data suggests students experience this support. RVS prides itself on providing a student-centered high academic program that ensures students are always engaged and enthusiastic about their learning.