

# The Reform Initiative at Manual High School

## Background

In February 1996, the Board of Education approved a new pupil assignment plan for high schools to be implemented in the 1997-1998 school year. The school most impacted by the approved changes was Manual High School. In October 1996, Manual’s enrollment included the following: a neighborhood attendance area that was predominantly low income and minority; a satellite attendance area that was predominantly middle class and white; and Denver School of the Arts, a magnet program for artistically talented students.

Beginning in the 1997-1998 school year, Manual no longer had a satellite attendance area and the School of the Arts was relocated. Manual’s enrollment was now drawn only from the surrounding neighborhoods. Characteristics of the students residing in Manual’s new attendance area in 1997-1998 and 1998-1999 are shown below together with comparative information from 1996-1997 (*See Appendix 1 for a map of Manual High School boundaries comparing 1996-1997 and 1997-1998*).

<b>Student Categories</b>	<b>1996-1997</b>	<b>1997-1998</b>	<b>1998-1999</b>
Ethnicity – White	42.4%	6.5%	7.2%
Ethnicity – Black	42.4%	40.4%	41.3%
Ethnicity – Hispanic	14.0%	51.3%	50.5%
Limited English Proficiency – Spanish	3.7%	28.3%	31.5%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	26.6%	75.1%	75.5%
Reading At/Below 25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile (9 <sup>th</sup> )	30.4%	56.5%	45.9%
Reading At/Below 50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile (9 <sup>th</sup> )	48.5%	82.5%	89.8%

*(See Appendix 2 for entire school profile)*

In February 1997, Manual High School presented to the Board of Education a proposal for restructuring the educational program at Manual beginning with the ninth grade in the 1997-1998 school year and continuing in subsequent years with the other grade levels (one grade per year). According to the proposal, Manual High School’s reform initiative would be based on the following commitments:

**Vision:** Manual High School will be a place where young people are challenged and supported to reach their highest potential and to value life and learning through engagement in a rigorous, interdisciplinary academic program within a collaborative and personalized learning environment.

**Mission:** All graduates of Manual will demonstrate basic skills in mathematics, science, English, social studies, and technology; thoughtful habits of mind; and a comprehensive understanding of one or more areas of applied academics.

**Culture:** Manual High School will be a warm and nurturing environment with high expectations for all students and staff. Each student will be known well by a faculty team and will have an individual educational plan. Students will have leadership roles in the development of their learning plans and the organization of their school. Staff will have a firm commitment to supporting each student's mastery of an essential body of skills and knowledge.

**Goals:** Manual graduates will be able to do the following:

- Read at grade level;
- Convey a clear, focused idea or message with supporting evidence in written and oral forms;
- Apply learned skills and knowledge from one or more academic disciplines to 'real world' complex problems;
- Demonstrate an understanding of their community; use technological tools for learning, life, and work;
- Enter a career and/or post-secondary education upon graduation.

**Expectations:** Manual will have high expectations of students, parents, and staff. While not required, all will be asked to sign a statement indicating their commitment to the school.

- Teachers will be asked to commit their support for the vision, mission, culture, and goals of the school and to work with all of their assigned students to reach these goals.
- Parents will be asked to commit to monitoring their children's attendance, completion of homework, and progress toward graduation.
- Students will be asked to commit to attending regularly, completing assigned work, behaving appropriately, and graduating from high school.

## **Implementation of the Vision**

**Two Houses:** Guided by a vision of high academic standards and increased personalization, Manual has been separated by grade levels into two houses:

<b><u>Foundations House</u></b> <b>(9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> Grades)</b>	<b><u>Programs of Excellence (PoEs)</u></b> <b>(11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Grades)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Block Schedule</li><li>• Core Content Teaching Teams</li><li>• Standards-based Instruction</li><li>• Performance Assessments</li><li>• Career Exploration</li><li>• Leadership Training</li><li>• Grade Level Advisement</li><li>• Service Learning Experiences</li><li>• Rites of Passage</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Block Schedule</li><li>• Core Content Teaching Teams</li><li>• Standards-based Instruction</li><li>• Performance Assessments</li><li>• PoE Signature Courses</li><li>• PoE Advisement</li><li>• Job Shadowing/Internship Experiences</li><li>• Senior Service Learning Project</li><li>• Graduation by Exhibition</li></ul>

*(See **Appendix 3** for the Support Structure developed to support this Program Structure)*

Students in both houses receive daily instruction in core academics and electives in four extended blocks of time (@85 minutes). Students are placed in core content teams (Math/Science and Social Studies/Language Arts) for two of the four blocks. Curricula for the core content areas have been redesigned to align with state/district standards and to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery through authentic performance assessments.

All students are assigned to an advisement block (20 minutes 3 days per week – 38 minutes 2 days per week) during which academic coaching as well as relationship building occur.

Students in the Foundations House are required to take Career Explorations and Foundation of Leadership, two courses developed by Manual faculty to prepare students for the world of post-secondary options. At the end of sophomore year students present a portfolio of exemplary work produced in the Foundations House to a panel of community judges for review. Upon successful completion of this Rite of Passage (*see **Appendix 4** for a description of Rites of Passage requirements*) students enroll in one four Programs of Excellence in their junior and senior years:

- Math/Science/Medicine
- Business/Entrepreneurship
- Cultural Studies/Law/Government
- Arts/Humanities/ Communication

*(See **Appendix 5** for a description of each Program)*

In the Programs of Excellence students continue to receive daily instruction in extended blocks and are placed on core content teams, but also are given the opportunity to explore career opportunities in the career pathway they have chosen. Signature courses have been designed by the faculty for each Program and student are assigned to an advisement block according to their

PoE. Job shadowing and internship opportunities are provided for students in each PoE and every senior will be required to design and implement a community service learning project before graduation. Graduation by Exhibition will be required for the first time next year in which students will present and defend before a panel of community judges the work they have completed during four years at Manual High School (*See Appendix 6 for a description of Graduation by Exhibition requirements*).

## Achievements/Results

Every part of the schoolwide reform initiative approved by the Board has been developed and implemented according to plan. For example, curriculum for the Foundations House has been developed according to state and district standard with adaptations for limited English proficient and special education students (*See Appendix 7 for excerpts from sample curriculum unit*). This year, the eleventh grade, upper house structures, curriculum and support services were fully implemented. Next year, our twelfth-grade structure will be fully implemented, again according to plan.

Modifications and enrichments to this plan have been added as the need arises. Listed below are major enhancements:

### A. Program Enhancements

1. Professional development school partnership with University of Colorado at Denver (UCD). For the past two years, Manual has developed an intense professional development school partnership with UCD. Major benefits to the school include approximately twenty teacher candidates each year to coteach with Manual faculty; a staff developer (site coordinator) and university professor. This year, UCD professor, Dr. Nancy Shanklin, has taken a sabbatical and devotes half of her time working with Manual faculty specifically to develop and implement a comprehensive reading program (*See Appendix 8 for a description of the comprehensive reading program*). During Dr. Shanklin's sabbatical, Dr. Oscar Joseph is serving as the UCD site professor. Dr. Joseph, in addition to supervising teacher candidates, provides our staff with resources and instructional strategies to support culturally diverse and enriched curriculum. He also works in the Manual community as a liaison to the school, accompanying the principal to community council meetings and church services where local churches have invited the school to deliver a message about Manual during Sunday morning church services.
2. Rites of Passage. All tenth grade students who have completed at least 90 hours of academic work and received passing grades in most core academic classes (English/ELA, math, science and social studies) develop a portfolio of their work and present this work to a team of community and business persons, faculty, and the student's parents. Eighty percent of Manual's tenth grade students presented their work and received "passing marks" from their review committees. Those who lacked the academic credits to participate or who did not pass their review committee were placed in an intensive student advisement group and mentored. Of the forty students originally placed in the mentor group, twenty-five have now successfully completed Rites of Passage. Upon completion, all students are formally accepted into a Program of Excellence in the Upper House. One hundred and fifty community people, including two members of the School Board and several administrators from 900 Grant, participated in this process.

3. Advisement. Recognizing the need to escalate the school's personalization need, the faculty agreed to "sponsor" fifteen to twenty students per year. This advisement period, called "Bolt Block," is developing as a major "home base" for students and families. Although the purpose is mainly to meet the need that "every student will be known by and advocated for by at least one member of the faculty," the Bolt Block has also become the place for student portfolio development, career coaching and test preparation.
4. Career coaching. Recognizing that Manual students are often isolated from the mainstream of business and postsecondary opportunities, Manual, under the leadership of business and community leader, Rollie Heath, developed a career coaching program for 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students. Approximately 150 community leaders, including two DPS School Board Members, devote two hours each month to coaching Manual students. The 10<sup>th</sup> grade coaches are preparing students to successfully complete Rites of Passage. The 11<sup>th</sup> grade coaches are preparing students to interview for summer jobs and internships consistent with the student's Program of Excellence.
5. Math/Science/Medicine Collaborative. Children's Hospital, at the direction of the chairman of the board, Gary Williams and hospital president, Dori Bister, have joined with the Health Sciences Center and Manual High School to develop and support an intensive academic and career-track experience for students interested in math and science. Thus far, over 60 students and their parents have committed to meet the high expectations of this academically rigorous program (*See Appendix 9 for a description of the Collaborative*).
6. ELA. During the 1999-00 school year the number of students at various levels of English language acquisition has allowed Manual to implement a complete program for all limited English proficient students. Manual faculty have developed the standards-based curricula, identified appropriate instructional materials and devised assessments to determine placement on site (*See Appendix 10 for a description of the ELA program*).
7. ELA core courses. ELA core courses that are based on standards have been developed by Manual faculty in English and Spanish. We have been concerned about all of our Spanish speaking students having access to the same, high quality content. Our faculty has taken every precaution to ensure that the courses, expectations, and student level of performance are consistent.
8. Reading laboratories. Manual has developed reading support courses to meet the needs of our students. These courses have been in operation for two years. Although the Aspen Learning Center Model is being followed as our partnership with that company dictates, Manual, with the support of Dr. Eileen Morelli, DPS curriculum supervisor and Dr. Nancy Shanklin, UCD has completely

rewritten the CCC laboratory course of study. The changes, implemented in October of this year, are based on student data obtained over the past two years.

9. AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination). This academic coaching Program that is widely used throughout Cherry Creek Schools, targets “B” and “C” students who aspire toward college. Manual is the only high school in the nation that teaches this course in Spanish. Because we are the only School in our district to have this program, we have had to rely on our teacher’s developing much of the curriculum as well as locating large numbers of college tutors to work with AVID students. This year, Cherry Creek has invited our teachers to participate in that district’s staff development.
10. Technology Focus. Until this year, Manual has not had the ability to serve the majority of its student’s technology needs. Through our district UROG grant, we have hired a staff developer who focuses on getting technology into classrooms. She has trained 80% of the faculty on use of the internet, has developed favorite web sites for teachers and students, and has transformed the media center from a “card catalogue” environment into a research and word-processing center for students.

## B. Professional Development

To support the vision, mission, goals and expectations of the reform initiative at Manual High School all Manual faculty participate in ongoing staff development (*See Appendix 11 for diagram describing professional development opportunities*).

1. Teaching and Learning Institute. For the past three years teachers have returned from summer vacation two days early to participate in a four-day Teaching and Learning Institute (*See Appendix 12 for the agenda of this year’s Institute*).
2. Critical Friends Groups. Throughout the year teachers are required to spend 85 minutes of planning per week in professional development activities. Every other week this consists of participation in Critical Friends Groups where teachers engage in professional conversations around teachers’ and students’ work facilitated by Annenberg-trained faculty coaches (*See Appendix 13 for a description of the work done in CFGs*).
3. Impact and Planning Teams. In alternating weeks, teachers participate in action research Impact Teams and administration-led planning teams (*See Appendix 14 and 15 for the research model used by Impact Teams and for a description of the work of two of the Impact Teams*).
4. Data Based Decision-Making. Four times a year all teachers are required to turn in to a Research Team a standards-based unit plan, end-of-unit performance assessment, the rubric used to assess performance, and all student work associated with the

assessment. Written reports are presented to the faculty after each collection by the Research Team (*See Appendix 16 for a sample report*).

### C. Community Outreach

1. A Parent-Outreach coordinator and two parent-outreach workers were hired under two major grants (Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Grant and Annie Casey Foundation Grant). Although these positions are part time, the accomplishments of these parents have been major. Developing a parent-room in the school, newsletters to parents and community, and organizing parent and community events to meet the needs of a highly diverse parent group are a few of their accomplishments. These parents also participate in parent-outreach initiatives around standards-based education and the development of a K-12 community-wide parenting network to support education.
2. Community Outreach Council. With the support of Annie Casey Foundation, Manual has formed a collaborative with the nine communities from which the majority of Manual students come. The directors of the nine neighborhood associations (Cole, Whittier, Skyview, North Park Hill, Globeville, Elyria-Swansea, Curtis Park, and Five Points) meet monthly to develop a common understanding of the needs of students and parents within their communities and to develop a comprehensive support plan for improving student academic success at Manual. This cutting-edge educational support group will participate actively in Manual's redesign process over the next few months (*See Appendix 17 for Community Outreach Council roster*).
3. Program of Excellence Advisory Groups. Community leaders from each of the four Programs of Excellence (Arts, Humanities and Communication, Business and Entrepreneurship, Cultural Studies, Law and Government Systems; and Math/Science and Medicine) meet monthly to design a series of school-to-career experiences including signature courses, internships and post-secondary transitional experiences for their respective students. These groups are also designing "Graduation by Exhibition" portfolios and experiences that, like the 10<sup>th</sup> grade Rites of Passage, will showcase student accomplishments and will serve as a "resume" to enhance students' successful transitions to post-secondary experiences.

### D. Postsecondary Options

In addition to the regular post-secondary programs such as Advanced Placement, dual-credit courses, college and career fairs held at the school and senior contracts and conferences, Manual has implemented the following in the past two years.

1. College Summit. Under the leadership of Manual Counselor, Pat Ludwig, Manual has organized, staffed and funded 35 juniors' attendance at a weeklong college experience at DU. Under the direction of the College Summit staff, students write

- college essays and complete all of their college application work. Strong parent involvement and participation is expected.
2. Daniels College Summit. This year, Manual submitted 65 completed recommendations to the Daniel's Foundation for a summer college experience.
  3. UCD, CCD, and Metro at Manual teach four college courses each year. Twenty to thirty students take these courses. Student completion rate exceeds 90%.

#### E. Management/Organizational Structure Changes

1. A faculty leader position was created to coordinate all parts of the schoolwide reform and to analyze data connected with the School Improvement Plan as well as with faculty and student work.
2. A Manual cabinet was established to coordinate the support structure of the school reform. Comprised of the principal, the three assistant principals, the faculty leaders from each program area, this group of fifteen meets for two hours weekly to provide ongoing communication, coordination and support.
3. Extending the school day. To provide support for students who dropped out of school, Manual joined with the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training and developed a grant to provide night school classes taught by Manual teachers that are designed to transition students back into the day school. These students are also provided with skilled-level jobs during the daytime as well as intensive academic, personal, and career counseling to enable them to reconnect with day school.

Manual also provides individualized and small group tutoring from 7:00 a.m. to 7:30 am. Monday through Friday, 2:30-4:30, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m on Saturdays for every student receiving a grade lower than "C" in core academic classes (required participation) and for any student requesting academic support or enrichment. Approximately 180 to 250 students participate on a regular basis.

4. Feeder-school academic alliance. This year, Manual meets with principals from our primary feeder schools to develop a clear understanding of K-12 literacy needs, expectations and programming. Lead teachers from each school also participate. This year, our group will develop a handbook of "proficient student writing papers for each grade level. This handbook of student work from our students will be used as examples for teachers, students, parents and communities to use to promote an understanding of "standards-based writing." This effort is supported by a Ford Foundation/PEBC grant.

## Summary of Student Outcomes.

A. School Climate. Creating a school where students and families from neighborhoods disconnected for twenty-three years as a result of court-ordered bussing could feel safe and welcomed was the school's number one priority. The following data support our school's progress in this area.

1. In 1997-98, total number of suspensions was 651. During 1998-99, our total number of suspensions was 505. This is a net decrease of 146 suspensions.
2. In 1997-98, our total number of expulsions was 15. During the 1998-99 school year, our total number of expulsions was 6.
3. In 1997-98, our graduation rate was 64.9%. In 1998-99, our graduation rate improved to 67.4%.

A major "school safety" indicator comes from the Denver Police Department January 2000 report that identified Manual as having the largest percent decrease (64%) of calls to DPD for outside assistance. In fact, DPD data shows that only one other DPS high school had fewer calls for assistance than Manual (*See Appendix 18 for complete report*).

B. Academic Achievement. Although Manual was able to qualify 80% of our students through our Rites of Passage, our gains on ITED, as reported in the newspapers have been small. However, using the 1999-2000 DPS district achievement goals as benchmarks for what Manual has accomplished during the past two years, provides more positive results. For example, Manual:

- Reduced by 5% students, grade 9, in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quartile on ITED reading.
- Reduced by 5% students, grades 9-11, in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quartile on ITED math.
- Increased by 5% students, grade 9<sup>th</sup>, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Quartile on ITED reading.

Using these same DPS benchmarks, however, Manual failed to meet these district goals:

- Increase by 5% students, grades 9-11, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Quartiles on ITED math scores.
- Decrease by 5% students, grade 11<sup>th</sup>, in the 1<sup>st</sup> Quartile on ITED math.

Note: In September 1997, Manual converted its math curriculum and instruction program to Interactive Mathematics (IMP). This curriculum focuses on higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills such as those required for proficiency on CSAP. Statistics supported that more at-risk students through this curriculum were prepared to enroll in advanced math classes than were students from a traditional curriculum. In September of 1998, Manual added an IMP Math Laboratory for 9<sup>th</sup> grade student needing basic skills instruction concurrent with IMP. This curriculum was written entirely by Manual math department faculty. In September 1999, the math department revised IMP to include more direct instruction on basic skills, reading and vocabulary development. These changes were made for bilingual math as well. (Note, In September of 1999, the math department held a math workshop for parents to explain and demonstrate the methods of and reasons behind IMP. We learned that many parents had believed that

IMP was a “dumbed down curriculum” rather than a highly rigorous one. We will continue these parent workshops.

- C. Gains in Reading Achievement. Manual is in the process of developing a comprehensive, schoolwide reading curriculum. We have built a reading-support team in order to implement at the highest level Reading in the Content Areas and reading-support systems for limited-English proficient students as well as other students not proficient in reading. There is an upward trend in student performance but it does not meet with our expectations.

***ITBS Matched Pairs – Percentile Frequency***

	<u>Grade 8 1997-98</u>	<u>Grade 9 1998-99</u>
Quartile 1	42.1%	30.3%
Quartile 2	80.3%	65.8%
	<u>Grade 10 1997-98</u>	<u>Grade 11, 1998-99</u>
Quartile 1	44.3%	23.0%
Quartile 2	75.4%	68.9%

***Reading Laboratories – 1998-99 Results.***

Aspen Reading Lab. A partnership between Manual and a private consulting firm. Students enrolled in this program typically read from the 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5th grade level.

Students served

55 ESL Students  
 26 Special Ed Students  
 50 Regular Ed Students  
 Total 131

Aspen Results

50% gained three years or more on total reading  
 30% showed gains at the end of term but no significant gains on ITED  
 20% did not complete course/showed no gains

CCC Reading Lab. Students typically reading from 6<sup>th</sup> grade to 1 year below grade level.

Students served: 240 (80 each quarter)

Results:

200 complete the course  
 average gain at end of term 1.5 years  
 average gain on ITED 1 year

## **Remaining Major Challenges:**

In order to ensure academic rigor for all students, Manual must make major gains in these areas:

1. Improve student attendance. Despite massive attempts to improve student attendance, the average daily attendance remains below 77% (SASI does not allow schools to track attendance except at report card intervals so we are forced to estimate this year's figures). Manual believes that the daily attendance must exceed 90% and we must reconfigure ourselves to meet this goal
2. Reduce dropouts. Last year Manual lost 140 students, most were in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade; many had been socially promoted from middle schools. Since most of these students drop out during their first few months at Manual, we must configure our school to identify these students prior to their arrival and provide an intensive academic and social support structure to retain them.
3. Develop broader-based student leadership and participation in all aspects of their schooling.
4. Increase parent and community participation in all aspects of schooling
5. Increase student participation in extracurricular and athletic activities.
6. Increase parent and community participation in extracurricular and athletic activities
7. Develop a more personalized environment that engages the student and holds students, teachers, parents and administrators to a higher level of accountability (attainable only through a more narrow focus).
8. Connect the school and the communities it serves in more meaningful ways to support student achievement.
9. Develop a common vision with students, parents and community about educational goals to support our students as fully functioning citizens and workers for today and tomorrow.
10. With 75% of our students performing in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> quartile on basic skills tests and a failure rate of 46%, we must continue to find ways to deliver engaging grade-level content, shored up with strong support structures (e.g. reading and math labs, longer school days; more time on task, a highly trained, committed faculty that "connects" with students around important academic work).
11. Increase ability to meet the needs of ELA students. Additional resources are needed to support: assessment of language levels, placement of students in appropriate classes, smaller class sizes, additional instructional materials and technology, cultural transitions, professional development for all teachers, and additional personnel for parent outreach.
12. Develop a funding stream to continue reading, math, and bilingual/ESL support.
13. Enhance existing programs and explore new program opportunities for high performing students.
14. Focus adequate resources on high-performing students.
15. Continue to use data to inform teaching and learning decisions

## **Continuing the Educational Reform: The Next Two Years.**

Present through June 2001:

- A. Through CDM and Community Support Council, develop a common vision of Manual's role in educating community youth. Specific programs need to be examined for their perceived value to the community. For example, Manual is considering 'Academies', 'Magnets' and other content and structural components that will generate high-level value and interest. Specific considerations on the table at this time include:
  1. Math/Science Medicine Collaborative with Children's Hospital, Health Sciences Center and Community Health Clinics
  2. SISCO technology certification center
  3. Government service academies (police, fire, allied health)
  4. Community School (partnership with CCD, HEAT center)
  5. Academy to develop future teachers
  
- B. Manual High School must be made even more personal. Therefore, next year we will be tuning the structure further – creating families of teaching teams responsible for smaller number of students led by one administrator. We believe this network of smaller learning communities will create a 'sense of belonging' among students, parents and faculty that will positively impact student engagement and achievement.
  1. Set up 3-4 small 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> grade families – each with principal/counselor support.
  2. Give 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> grade families relative autonomy (within DPS guidelines).
    - a. common planning
    - b. curriculum delivery discretion
    - c. scheduling freedom within assigned large blocks of time
    - d. interdisciplinary, standards-based units (utilizing standards/based curriculum units developed to date)
    - e. budget allocation discretion
  3. CFG, Impact action research teams, and other professional development activities all contained within each family.
  4. Continue CDM, Community Outreach Council exploration of small school research and possible designs for Manual. These explorations may result in (a) no changes beyond those already in progress to (2) recommendations that several completely autonomous schools reside inside the Manual facility.
  5. Create opportunities for structured conversations about 'small schools' among and between faculty, students, parents and community members.
  6. Identify problems and design solutions.
  7. Present small school redesign plan to School Board in February 2001.

### **Request for waivers to support educational reform.**

Manual High School agrees with DPS superintendent, Dr. Zullinger, that public schools can meet or exceed the performance expectations of well designed charter schools if the school thinks outside of the box and is given permission to seek waivers necessary to improve the school's ability to rethink itself. Therefore, Manual High School presents the following "potential barriers to success" list and asks the Board to consider waivers, and if such waivers are needed, to remove those barriers.

1. Change in the school day (One team asks to start later; another asks for 'flexible scheduling' for academic enrichment and reteaching opportunities).
2. Change in the role of principals – each must assume an academic focus, lead a teaching-learning team .
3. Reallocation of district resources to meet school redesign needs.
4. Development of our own transportation support system.
5. Hiring discretion. Because Manual's reform design requires specific involvement on the part of faculty and staff for peer collaboration, curriculum design and implementation strengths as well as a high level of involvement with parents and community, Manual requests the "right to refuse" placement of unassigned teachers into small-school teams.
6. Certification waivers in the areas of supervision and counseling.
7. Certification waivers for teachers in interdisciplinary teaching teams to teach outside their certification areas if a team is unable to include a certified teacher in a particular unit of instruction.

Our "personalized teaching-learning teams" are in the process of forming. Until our incoming ninth-grade enrollment projections are determined for the 2000-2001 year, our requests, which in some instances will meet the needs of one specific group of students and parents rather than the entire school, must remain global. These waiver requests would be for one year only, pending the presentation to the School Board of a comprehensive plan in February 2001. Should these waiver requests be granted by the School Board, Manual's CDM would subsequently assume the responsibility for individual teaching-team requests based on the guidelines of Manual's 2000-2001 School Improvement Plan.

All of the work around schoolwide redesign will be applied to the work of these teams; but the teams will have different foci to meet the needs of our highly diverse student body (Mr. Sims, Assistant Principal will focus on the gifted and talented; Mrs. Pointer , Assistant Principal, will focus on the students transitioning into Manual who have not been successful in middle school; Mrs. Sutton will focus on ELA and bilingual teaching teams as well as on special education students seeking a regular diploma; her focus will be to provide a tightly structured support structure for students transitioning into regular classes, Programs of Excellence and into college; Mr. Romero, Assistant Principal will lead 9-10 grade teams that are heterogeneously grouped.

Manual will be responsible for designing a "principal duties" infrastructure so that schoolwide duties (athletics, facilities management, discipline, etc) will be supported

**Resource Request.** Over the past three years, the cost for Manual's reform have averaged around \$200,000 or about \$100 per student. Half of these resources targeted reading and math support for students seriously below grade level. Half of these resources went to train teachers reading, writing and math strategies for use in their content areas and to develop instructional units containing basic skills support as needed to master their academic content

For next year, Manual hopes that the School Board would consider continuing support for our students who are at high risk of failure as a result of poverty, and whose basic skills are two or more years below grade level. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of this year's ninth grade students, for example, fall into this category.

We know that all schools have needs. However, we ask that the School Board consider the following:

- (1) that Manual has the lowest test scores, the highest dropout rate and the highest percent of non English speaking students;
- (2) that Manual has the highest percent of students qualifying for free lunch of all the high schools
- (3) that Manual has the only schoolwide reform initiative at the high school level
- (4) and, finally, that Manual faculty, parents and community are earnestly engaged around a common purpose to affect a huge turnaround in student achievement.
- (5) That we believe that the work we have engaged in over the past three years has taken the school and the community from alienation and distrust to a common purpose and focus.
- (6) That there are examples of high schools (our CDM parents and faculty have visited two of these) that have achieved academic success for all students; that we will break through the achievement barrier based not only on what we have learned, but on a "will to achieve" that will brook no other result than becoming a "National Blue Ribbon School" within the next two years.

Therefore, we ask that you consider making Manual a Title I schoolwide program. This will support our "high poverty/low achievement" academic support programs. Manual will continue to seek outside funding for our other needs around schoolwide reform. (*See Appendix 19 for budget detail*)