

Written Responses to Questions/Comments from the Community
Posted online May 10 - May 31, 2018

Goal 1

Comment/Question:

Training, training, training: teachers & non-teachers, district programs. For students to 'come first', staff needs to know expectations, services, resources and what support services are available. Communication and updates at each site, each school has its own unique environment, see what works well, nurture it, and replace what needs actual improvement....everyone sees through their own eyes. Create a campus culture where kindness, care, and citizen help shape the world of our youngsters, so they may see the world and dream big!

The District is working to develop better ways of communicating important information with parents and community and supporting sites to do the same. District communications focus on mission-critical initiatives and efforts that are outlined by the Strategic Plan. The District will continue with website upgrades and is also implementing a new initiative called "Let's Talk." "Let's Talk" is a series of short videos on topics that are of interest to parents and community.

Comment/Question:

Developing a curriculum needs to be a two way street. You guys would get better results and higher teacher retention rates if you listened to your teachers. Why are all your "actions" focused on top-down control of the classroom and getting new teachers once you've burnt out the old ones?

The District has a new Professional Development Committee in which teachers and administrators worked together to develop the 2018-19 professional development plan. This committee took the data collected in a teacher professional development survey and from the LCAP survey to create the offerings in the plan. Additionally, all curriculum adoption committees must be made up of a majority of teachers, and the committees make the final recommendation about which curriculum should be adopted.

Additionally, MVWSD works to support new teachers. The District offers an induction program for teachers in years 1 and 2 of teaching. The induction program allows new teachers to clear their credentials which is a state requirement. This program is an incentive for teachers to come to our District. Most Districts around us require teachers to do this on their own at a substantial personal cost.

Comment/Question:

Continuity. Too many changes at Mistral have eroded the school. Data driven decisions do not take into consideration other aspects of teaching not accounted for in the data: i.e., does the teacher connect with students, make them feel competent and confident, etc.

Decisions about programmatic needs are not based on one data point. The District has learned much in its analysis of research and visits to high-performing Dual Immersion programs. This research does not indicate a restructuring, but instead a refocusing around best practices. This will be done through the work of a new Dual Immersion Task Force, which will be made up of teachers, parents and administrators. The Task Force will work through the fall of 2018 and anticipates having recommendations in January of 2019 for implementation in the 2019-20 school year.

Comment/Question:

Work hard to retain exceptional teachers and recruit new hires. Offer competitive salaries and enough staff development days so teachers can perform their best.

The District has given a 23% salary increase over the past 4 years and it is the Board of Trustees' goal that our teacher salaries stay in the top quartile among local districts. Additionally, the District provides stipends to teachers in hard to fill positions (Special Education and teachers with Bilingual, Crosscultural, Language and Academic Development (**BCLAD**) certificates) as an incentive to teach in MVWSD. All of our new teachers get coaches to support them to obtain a clear credential (state requirement) as well as coaching to support them with improving instructional practices. The District provides 6 professional development days over the course of each school year as well as 2 additional release days for professional development and planning instruction.

Comment/Question:

Consider that some students will be stressing out over changing school the following year.

Student wellness is always a priority for the District. MVWSD partners with Community Health Awareness Council (CHAC) to have counseling support at all sites and each middle school has a counselor on staff. Additionally, all schools have a School and Community Engagement Facilitator who supports families and students. The District's

Health and Wellness Committee is looking at social emotional learning programs that could be implemented at sites.

Goal 2

Comment/Question:

English language learners need access to role models modeling good reading habits, practice speaking, reading and writing English. Pair-share reading with other students in the ELL group with adult oversight will help students succeed and move forward in becoming English language proficient. Coaches have been great resources for teachers, bringing support, guidance, suggestions for successful lesson plans. The D.O. might consider ways to help support IA's with grade level input, not to teach, but to help assist the assigned student master the classwork. Adding a math coach in elementary school is a great idea, adding layers of instruction to help students grasp new math concepts.

A six-hour, full-day preschool might be a stretch for most young children 4 and under, they will need longer break times, perhaps a nap time. Tired children do not learn or play well with others. Frustration should be avoided. A half-day preschool with extended day care with rest period and preschool type activities might work best, with lots of outdoor activities.

The District began offering more targeted professional development for classified employees including instructional assistants in 2017-18. The goal is to expand on these offerings to better support employees with their daily work. Classified professional development is being planned for August 17th and December 7th.

The District is piloting the full day preschool in 2018-19. The pilot comes after a survey of preschool parents overwhelmingly asked for a full day option. The full-day program is already full for next year. The program will be balanced between academic and social-emotional learning and will include a nap time daily. The preschool team will work to make adjustments and refinements to the program over the course of the year in order to meet the needs of the students and their families.

Comment/Question:

Why is there no RTI for kids in the 6.2 math track?

The RTI for kids on the 6.2 track will be a second block of math. This is necessary for the 2018-19 school year in order for students to cover all of the content necessary to leave 8th grade meeting or exceeding standard in Geometry. Students in this track cover 5 years of math in 3 years. It is the goal of the District is to review the pacing of

the content in the .2 pathways during the 2018-19 school year to see if we can condense this class to 1 period instead of 2.

Comment/Question:

Really, you need to develop a system with more individualized instruction. I realized you tried that with TTO and some implementation issues combined with an organized effort by [REDACTED] undermined it, but that (individualization) is the right direction for all classes, not just one period in middle school. Too bad you broke up the teams that were actually trying to do this at Mistral.

The lessons learned by Teach to One about individualization and differentiation are still being used in our middle school math departments, especially at Crittenden. Additionally, the District's Technology team is working on coaching teachers on how to better integrate technology into curriculum on a more regular basis. The District is currently reviewing a variety of supplemental math programs to be used during Response to Instruction block. These programs are all based on supporting students through on individualized learning and will utilize technology. Teacher and grade level team placement are site-based decisions.

Comment/Question:

Training for each segment; flat teacher will not translate successfully for all groups, some need specialized training, practice and support.

The District has a new Professional Development Committee in which teachers and administrators worked together to develop the 2018-19 professional development plan. This committee took the data collected in a teacher professional development survey and from the LCAP survey to create the offerings in the plan. The plan offers a variety of options to support teachers at all levels.

Comment/Question:

Appropriate tracking of progress made in RTI, as well as quick adjustments and maybe partner brainstorming to keep students moving toward desired goal.

Two important components of the RTI program include data driven instruction and collaboration. Teachers have been trained to use a data protocol to form groups and target specific instruction. Collaboration among grade level teams takes place weekly with RTI teachers joining in grade level collaboration. RTI teachers also meet together monthly to share best practices and data. One of goals for the upcoming year is to

develop common parameters for in-process data at each site to inform instructional decisions and demonstrate growth.

Goal 3

Comment/Question:

Create an overall plan, break it down into manageable segments with those responsible meeting regularly to review what works, what needs improvement or re-design. Continue all programs that introduce students to a broader view of the world, their environment, their community. Help students see past their own needs, to think about what they can contribute to others, the world. Dream big.

There will be a team of teachers and administrators working to develop and refine the capstone projects. This will happen over the course of several school years with final implementation scheduled for the 2020-21 school year.

Additionally, a team of teachers, administrators and parents will work to develop the culturally responsive instruction training for teachers. This will be worked on over the course of the 2018-19 school year and then continually revised.

Comment/Question:

In addition to adding a culturally responsive component, include diversity, accepting differences, respecting differences, no matter if culturally, ethnically, religiously, or otherwise. The world is not vanilla or chocolate, it is every color, creed, etc., of the rainbow. We don't need a melting pot, expecting to blend, independent identity, strengths, gifts make the world. Students who are accepted, welcomed and celebrated in elementary and middle school will be better prepared for high school, college and the world of the future. Citizenship is taught everyday by everyone that students see, hear and learn from. We all have an impact, let's make it a positive impact with wide effects.

The District has already begun providing culturally responsive training for staff. Additionally, there are many actions in the LCAP to support the idea of making a positive impact on all students including, but not limited to

- Project Cornerstone
- Climate Goals in all school plans
- Professional Development for staff around inclusion and social and emotional support for students.

These programs will work in tandem with the culturally responsive instruction component that is being developed to support healthy environments at all of our schools.

Comment/Question:

Why don't you give the CELDT to all students? Okay, I know the answer, but I think you need to consider the effects of this racist policy that requires people who check a box saying someone in the house speaks a language other than English to pass a test that many native English speakers cannot pass.

This is a state requirement. The California English Language Development Test has ended. The new assessment, the English Learner Proficiency Assessment of California was first given this spring.

Comment/Question:

Invest in arts, science and language collaboration projects. Science camp and Yosemite trips are definitely helpful to shape well rounded growth in students by including social emotional lessons and teaching self reliance.

The District along with the support from the Mountain View Education Foundation (MVEF) and the Community School of Music and Art work hard to make sure that students are provided a variety of experiences in art, music, and hands-on/environmental science throughout their time in MVWSD. A large focus for the 2018-19 school year will be on developing a comprehensive science plan to improve the science program K-8.

Comment/Question;

Keep a great diversity of electives.

The new middle school schedule will allow the middle schools to offer students opportunities for more electives. The District will keep the list as diverse as possible. The electives offered each year are dependent on the credentials teachers have. For example, one middle school is able to offer French next year, because they have a teacher with a single subject French credential.

Goal 4:

Comment/Question:

In the past, task forces have been used as a way to sell district policy to the masses rather than actually gather information and come to rational decisions. I

am looking at the task force on restructuring (splitting) Castro a few years ago in particular; although that doesn't seem to be the only one. Don't do that.

Task Force groups are designed to engage all stakeholders and provide a venue for input. The Board of Trustees are very clear that any input requested and shared is taken seriously as decisions are made.

Comment/Question:

It appears that someone has decided that we need to restructure the dual immersion program because the test scores don't exceed those of other schools. That seems like a stupid criterion. If you are meeting everyone else's scores and you are coming out speaking Spanish and honoring/respecting the Spanish heritage of this region, that seems like a win.

Decisions about programmatic needs are not based on one data point. The performance of the English Language students at Mistral is not as strong as scores of English Language Learners across the District, which contradicts research findings about effective Dual Immersion programs. The District has learned much in its analysis of research and visits to high-performing Dual Immersion programs. This research does not indicate a restructuring, but instead a refocusing around best practices. This will be done through the work of a new Dual Immersion Task Force, which will be made up of teachers, parents and administrators. The Task Force will work through the fall of 2018 and anticipates having recommendations in The Task Force will work through the fall of 2018 and anticipates having recommendations in January of 2019 for implementation in the 2019-20 school year.

Comment Question:

Facilitator staff is so important. Please expand their services.

This year, the School Community Engagement Facilitator Team will increase by 1.0 Full Time Equivalent employee for a total of one full-time Facilitator at each school site.

Comment/Question:

Better communication with the district and more transparency in every process

MVWSD is committed to communicating with students, staff, families and the community in a clear and positive way. The District has committed time and resources to standardizing communications. MVWSD continues to use multiple communications strategies to reach parents and community members, including newsletters, social media, direct email, newspaper ads and direct mail postcards. Additionally, the District

website is newly redesigned and award-winning, and school websites are in the process of being redesigned. District communications focus on mission-critical initiatives and efforts that are outlined by the Strategic Plan. Next year, it will implement a new video series, "Let's Talk," which will highlight programs and services that are important to parents.

Here are some examples of times the public can talk with the Superintendent and/or Board.

For the Superintendent:

Board of Education meetings twice a month

Saturdays with the Superintendent

Cafecitos with the Superintendent

PTA meetings

Public events, such as MVEF events and City Council meetings

Various committees and task force groups.

Any member of the public can request an appointment with the Superintendent at any time or can send an email to him. As the for the Board, email is also available and many members of the public request and are granted meetings with the Board members. Board members individually attend many public and school events throughout the year.

Comment/Question:

More district interaction with the community at large. Promote a communication channel where parents can better understand the district's direction.

MVWSD continues to use multiple communications strategies to reach parents and families, including newsletters, social media, direct email, newspaper ads and direct mail postcards. Additionally, the District website is newly redesigned and award-winning, and school websites are in the process of being redesigned. District communications focus on mission-critical initiatives and efforts that are outlined by the Strategic Plan. Next year, it will implement a new video series, "Let's Talk," which will highlight programs and services that are important to parents.

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Board of Education meetings twice a month
Saturdays with the Superintendent
Cafecitos with the Superintendent

I hope this request can be put into the LCAP. I know the submissions have been closed, but I was wondering if I could make an addition to the LCAP input. On the LCAP Objective 4, in the area of providing a safe and respectful environment, it was brought to my attention that we need more qualified adult supervision in the middle school (most pointedly Graham) due to repeated physical violence in campus either during school hours or right after school. It would be ideal to see increased supervision, hopefully in the form of adult presence on campus, but I would also like to suggest installing security cameras on campus so footage can be reviewed when incidents happen.

All sites receive funding to hire adult site supervisors each year. At times, it can be difficult to hire these positions since they are for short amounts of time each day (lunch, recess etc.). Site supervision funds are part of our core program so this would not be included in the LCAP.

The District has investigated security cameras. Cameras that are of high enough quality to see and or identify individuals are expensive and the District would need to purchase a lot to cover all areas of the Graham campus. Additionally, the District would need to hire someone to monitor and keep up the equipment and storage of information.

The District believes an effective way to curb student issues is to prevent them, through vigilance, adult connections with students and services. The District has renewed School and Community Engagement Facilitator and At-Risk Supervisor positions for the next school year. These positions serve to identify and address potential issues with students before they become a problem. These positions are already action items in the LCAP. Graham will continue to look for ways to support student discipline.
