

Written Responses to Questions/Comments from Stakeholders through District Website

May 2019

Question/Comment: Professional development for increasing rigor in classrooms.

The District has included professional development around rigor in two actions:

Goal 1, Action 5 - professional development and Goal 2, Action 26 - sites will have an action in their site plan to increase rigor in instruction.

Question/Comment: It's very important to keep working on new teacher induction, professional development, and materials review.

The District will continue its partnership with the Santa Cruz/Silicon Valley New Teacher project (Goal 1, Action 1) focus on professional development (Goal 1, Action 5) and reviewing materials (Goal 1, Action 3).

Question/Comment: Focus on classroom management strategies and increase behavioral expectations for students (especially at the Middle School level).

All sites are asked to have a climate goal in their school site plan which outlines their plans for creating a respectful school environment for all students. This feedback will be shared with site administrators before they develop their plans.

Question/Comment: Teacher retention is also an important consideration. We need to make this an attractive place to work. Also, the district clearly went overboard with firing too many principals at once recently, and needs to put something in place to make those who didn't get fired feel more secure in their positions.

The District compiles a staff retention report each year to better understand why staff may leave and make improvements to programs and processes for attracting and retaining staff (Goal 1, Action 10).

Additionally, the District's Strategic Plan 2021 has a goal to invest in teachers, leaders, and staff to ensure we are the place talented educators choose to work. Strategy 4.1 includes actions to meet this goal including recruitment and hiring strategies, compensation statements, and partnerships with local universities. The District provided substantial raises over the past 3 years to all staff and will also be able to provide staff housing in the upcoming years.

Question/Comment: Continue to have instructional coaches.

Instructional coaching for teachers will continue in all academic subjects in 2019-20.

Question/Comment: Response to Instruction with teacher support as needed for the student

The District is continuing its Response to Instruction program at all schools to support students who need intervention or extension (Goal 2, Actions 9 and 10).

Question/Comment: Please continue working on plans to improve the science curriculum. I think individual coaching is a good way to help with lower achieving students.

The District is moving to a science-based Response to Instruction model. Each elementary school will have dedicated science teachers providing science instruction for all classes and grades. The science teachers will receive intensive professional development and coaching in science instruction (Goal 2, Actions 9 and 10). The District also has middle school science, math and literacy coaches as well instructional coaches for each school site (Goal 2, Action 1).

Question/Comment: I think it's important to restore an instructional coach at each site full time, as well as the release days as soon as possible. I think the sites with budgets that can afford to keep them are doing so, and the only underserved population will unfortunately be the one in most need of them. Special Day classes definitely need more help, whether it is contracted or hired is to be determined. I am unsure what measures need to be taken to help the special day classes, but I have seen kids with potential being stuck within the model that operated this year. Hopefully the new learning center model will bring good results.

The District will work with the Board of Trustees on processes for restoring programs that were reduced or eliminated due to budget considerations. Restoring any program depends on the District's assessed value and funding over time. The District is implementing the learning center model to ensure that students with disabilities have access to core instruction and regular programming that students in general education classes have.

Question/Comment: I don't think electives should be considered a form of Response to Instruction. As much as feasible, I think we should go with individual coaching in academic subjects.

Response to Instruction includes a full range of student needs. Students who need academic support are scheduled into a specific intervention class, not an elective. Students who are accelerated in math are scheduled into the second period of math to support their academic need. Students who are not in intervention or the accelerated math courses need to be enriched in a content area. The combined use of data and student interest helps the school find

the best academic class to support their needs. Instructional coaching for teachers will continue in all academic subjects in 2019-20.

Question/Comment: Review and monitor technology usage.

The District will review protocols for monitoring technology use and work with sites to make sure this is happening (Goal 3, Action 10).

Question/Comment: Art, music and PE. The art and music programs are excellent, so keep doing what you are doing.

Art, music and Physical Education classes will continue at all sites (Goal 3, Action 4).

Question/Comment: Add a study on the amount of technology students are being encouraged to use. Students are now struggling with physical writing. Funds for musical instruments and equipment. Music and Art Departments should have enough equipment and materials for the increased number of students.

The District has modified actions in the LCAP and is asking the technology department to work with sites to assess protocols and processes for monitoring student usage of devices during the school day. These protocols and processes will allow sites to better understand student technology usage.

Music programs at both middle schools were provided with significant funding in 2018-19 to address the increase in students participating in music electives. The District spent approximately \$49,000 for Crittenden Middle School, \$27,000 for Graham Middle School and \$20,000 for the elementary music program. The District meets regularly with the middle school administrators to review budgets and needs for site programs.

Question/Comment: In terms of electives, the district seems to have a challenge keeping foreign language teachers. I think we need to come up with a solution for that, potentially spending some money on it.

The District does offer bonus payments (up to \$6,000 over three years) for teachers that are hired into difficult to fill positions including foreign languages like Spanish.

Question/Comment: In terms of technology, this year's change in PowerSchool elective choice system configuration has been a giant flop. Students and parents perceive it as reducing students' ability to express their choices, with no visible benefit. Please open it to a serious amount of parent input and improve it before the next enrollment cycle.

The District will work with stakeholders to review our elective choice system and make revisions within the constraints of our scheduling system.

Address the needs highlighted by our CA Dashboard indication of "Red" for Chronic Absenteeism for homeless students, MVWSD will implement new training and protocols for schools and School and Community Engagement Facilitators.

The District is adding an action to address the needs highlighted by our CA Dashboard indication of "Red" for Chronic Absenteeism for homeless students (Goal 4, Action 23). The District will implement the following protocols to improve daily attendance of identified students:

1. Principals and school and community engagement facilitators will be trained in the fall and spring by the District McKinney-Vento Liaison on identifying and supporting McKinney-Vento student and family needs, updated reporting outcomes, and any legislative updates or changes with school based requirements.
2. The District has created a "homeless chronic absence" student information system data pull. This report will be used by principals and school and community engagement facilitators to monitor students' attendance regularly throughout the year.
3. A monthly and trimester Chronic Absenteeism report will be reviewed and disseminated to schools by the McKinney- Vento Liaison. Community engagement facilitators and principals will follow up with students and families to address needs hampering daily attendance

Please keep focusing on the climate.

The District will continue to have sites have an action plan in their site plans to address climate (See Goal 4, Action 2). The District also has a Health and Wellness Committee that is looking at how to provide better programs for Social Emotional Learning. School and District sites have access to and will continue to analyze the 2017 and 2018 Climate survey results.

Question/Comment: Parents need to be visited by officers. Work with CHAC to provide Family Counseling Services and provide Mental Health Assessments for low-income students with chronic absenteeism.

Families of students who are chronically absent and homeless will receive support through school sites, School and Community Engagement Facilitators, and the McKinney Vento liaison to find solutions to help them attend school regularly. The District will again partner with CHAC to provide services to students and families in need.

Question/Comment: Middle school students need to feel supported and valued. Integration activities should be implemented, as well as better response to behavioral issues. The district

needs to make behavioral expectations clear with a set of stated consequences made clear during the beginning of the year. Middle school teachers need to be better supported when discipline is required, instead of having them turn a "blind eye" because nothing gets done when students step out of line. Climate needs to be reinforced with clearer rules of conduct.

The District will continue to have sites have an action plan in their site plans to address climate (See Goal 4, Action 2). This feedback will be shared with the middle school administrators before they develop their plans.

Question/Comment: Please don't spend any more resources on the Let's Talk videos. I don't know any parent who has ever viewed one. The things that do work for parent engagement are email, online surveys, and in-person meetings (if the agenda is compelling enough to encourage attendance). Also, I don't think it really works to give us a 200-page document written in beaurocratese, such as the LCAP plan, and ask us for feedback. You need to add a short, human-readable summary. Engagement with parents is a big blind spot for the district and I think you need some kind of parent ombudsman to give us a single point of non-backside covering communication. Also, the district leadership must take a vow to never again make any highly visible change with only vague explanations after it is too late for us to give any meaningful inputs.

Using viewership data, the District is planning to reuse and refresh only the Let's Talk videos that were highly viewed by parents. This video series is only one method of engaging parents. Other methods include email, ThoughtExchange online idea discussions, in-person meetings with the Superintendent and more. The District will continue to work to meaningfully engage parents as appropriate. The LCAP is a large document and that is why we add the presentation to the website and descriptions in the form for input as these do provide shorter overviews of the plan. We will consider how else we can provide a better overview for next year.