

## **Study Session Meeting of Board of Education - 5:30 p.m. - Conducted Telephonically (Tuesday, April 28, 2020)**

### 1.1 Opening Items

**Meeting called to order at 5:30 PM**

### 1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Dr. Debbie Stark, Assistant Superintendent-Educational Services

### 1.3 Roll Call

#### **Members present**

Vivian Hansen, Yesenia Cuarenta, Sonia De Leon, Linda Garcia, Carmen Gomez

### 1.4 Approve Agenda April 28, 2020 Study Session Meeting of Board of Education

Approve Study Session agenda of the Board of Education April 28, 2020

Motion by Carmen Gomez, second by Linda Garcia.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Carmen Gomez, Linda Garcia, Sonia De Leon, Vivian Hansen, Yesenia Cuarenta

## **2. Public Hearing**

Public comments were received and read by President Hansen.

Denise Johnson through her comment received, shared that her niece goes to Paramount and she saw an email from her teachers about the Board deciding on grades and options and have questions. Why should grades only go up but not down? Where is the accountability for students? Some have really good grades but haven't done any work at all because they know their grade can't get worse. Why should they get a grade they didn't earn? On the other hand she knows many students work hard but they are struggling to keep up online. If they were in school, their grade would probably go up with teachers help but since they aren't it won't. This is my niece. That's unfair to her and them. Why should they be stuck with a bad grade or no grade at all when others will get good ones?

Mark Ruiz through his comment thanked the Board for the opportunity to say something. He heard there would be talk about giving kids grades from a teacher email. His kids have good grades, so he is ok with that but is worried about cheating. Do you know for sure who is really doing students work at home? He thinks you probably don't. He caught his son doing his friends work. He said he and everyone else do this all the time and he think it's true. He also caught his daughter paying him to do her math so that's not good. They told me all their friends do that kind stuff too. Why should kids with worse grades than mine end up get better grades or just as good due to cheating? He doesn't think this is fair or right. His kids probably should get worse grades because of their cheating too but their teachers don't know.

## **3. Superintendent Report**

### **School Closures Update**

Dr. Perez shared with the Board that an update from each department would be provided on what is happening as the District strives to serve students and community.

Mr. Ruben Frutos, Assistant Superintendent-Business Services provided a brief update on the latest budgetary information and shared more information will be received on May 14 during the May Revise. There are three thoughts at the state level from the Governor's office, the department of finance, and the legislative analyst office. One of them includes the possibility of deferrals this year. If you have been during deferral times, you know, that's when they withhold money from this year and give it to you next year effectively creating cuts. So that's one proposal but it's not final. The other one is three COLAS. There is a conversation about a negative COLA, a zero COLA or up to a 2% COLA. In May, the legislative analyst office also proposed not allowing school districts to reduce their reserves to protect them during these difficult times.

The governor also proposed a workload budget. A workload budget at the state level is a budget that will remain in baseline, meaning as in a prior year with very few Cola increases to those items that are considered for safety. The budget looks very tenuous for next year and somewhat difficult. The federal government came in with the Corona Virus aid relief and economic Security Act and provided \$2 trillion for school districts. A portion of that will come under the federal disaster declaration and will be available for COVID-19 expenditures that are eligible for reimbursement. Our district is keeping track of all that and hopefully we will get some reimbursement. Finally, the most important part of our budget is the factoring of our attendance. We are losing attendance. We got the attendance for this year and it's 13,103 which is a lot less than we anticipated. You may remember that last year we were at 14,001 so the loss is over a thousand and that is in addition to the 460 we had lost the year before. As we developed our budgets for next year, we are taking into consideration proposals from the state and the federal government and we will bring you additional information after the May revise on May 14th.

Lucy Albera, Director-Nutrition Services shared that there are four meal distribution sites currently being in service. Collins, Los Cerritos, and Wirtz Elementary school and serve every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:30 to 11:00 AM we are preparing nutritious grab and go meals where parents can essentially drive through or walk up to pick up both breakfast and lunch to all of the students district-wide. We are currently serving weekly about 36,000 meals, which includes both breakfast and lunch. Since March 16th, we have served approximately 163,000 meals.

Dr. Debbie Stark, Assistant Superintendent-Educational Services shared that a review and discussion on the guidelines took place with principals and principals are in the process or have discussed them with teachers and had them focus on everything but also to really focus on two topics. One of them is recommended screen time for each grade span, K-5, 6-8. And the second one was how do we monitor participation in online learning? Principals, again reviewed their guidelines with their teachers and they had, or having them discuss them within teams so that we can provide consistency within a grade level. As an example, if there's a recommendation for approximately two hours of screen time for a third grade, what does that two hours look like for third grade? How much of that time is language arts? How much of that time is matte? How much of that time did the other content principals reported that the feedback they're getting from teachers are that the guidelines are clear, they provided a direction, but also flexibility to make the good decision that they need to make on behalf of her students.

Dr. Ryan Smith, Assistant Superintendent-Secondary Educational Services shared that much of what Dr. Stark shared is similar to what we've done with our high school principal team. What is being seen with respect to participation in our distance learning program is we track weekly participation among our student users and we've been averaging roughly 95% of our students on a weekly basis are engaging with us in Schoology. Considering we are fully remote, we think that that's a good number, but we are really proud of our teachers and our staff for following up with students and ensuring that our students are engaging with us on a regular basis. We also track daily, um, active

user participation among our students. And typically our average daily usage is in the 70 to 75% range.

For the most part, our students are all pretty much accounted for and participating day to day. The conversations we have had with our principals and the follow up that they're taking with their teachers has really gotten us off to a great start and has been able to and has been allowed us to continue with our work in that area and continue keeping students engaged. The Instructional technology team continues to work closely with the teachers at the sites, the coaches at the sites and our instructional support team, curriculum specialist at the district office to make sure that everybody feels supported with using technology for distance learning.

Dr. Perez commented that as we move onto discussing tracking of student engagement and support for students not engaged and not engaging, this is an area that is of concern to all of us, not just in Paramount but nationwide. We are hoping that our students are all engaging. Dr. Perez wished to recognize counselors and social workers, as well as our administrators have the schools who are tracking students down and making phone calls to parents and families to ask, where the students are that are not engaging. She believes those efforts are the reason why 95% of our students are engaging and we have been tracking that and that has increased substantially. She knows it's because of the support of our support services personnel as well as teachers that reach out to students and families as well.

Dr. Debbie Stark, Assistant Superintendent- Educational Services shared that monitoring learning is always important and our principals and assistant principals have participated in an online training on how to do that. We are using analytics to monitor student participation and they can go in a to Schoology or to another platform we have and they can see how many students are participating in, who are those students and they're doing this at the teacher level and at the course level and teachers are doing it as well and what they have in the system in place where if teachers noticed that students are responding the first level of intervention, the teacher and then schools are also using counselors. There is an intervention teacher at that next level if students continue to not participate. All of our K-8 principals are in the process of developing a tiered approach to monitoring instruction. So what happens at tier one, tier two and tier three so that if students continue to not participate, the intervention and the monitoring and the feedback become more intensive. Ultimately at the tier three approach, it could be a conference with the parent and the student present and the teacher and that is where we are going to make sure that every student is engaged. As we continue down this road of remote learning because it's too much instructional time to lose, that's our focus.

Dr. Ryan Smith, Assistant Superintendent-Secondary Educational Services added that the high school's approach has been quite similar, and principals have done a really nice job of using the analytics features that are a part of our learning management system, which is Schoology, to be able to identify a user participation, um, on a day to day basis, on a weekly basis. And ultimately as our school closures continue on a monthly basis, they're able to use that analytics information to identify which students are not participating, which students are, they're also able to monitor teacher use of it. They're also able to monitor other groups such as our counselors and how much they're interacting with students, which is really positive. The other piece that's important is that we're also able to monitor parent engagement in Schoology.

Dr. Elida Garcia, Director-Special Education shared that virtual IEP meetings are being held for annual reviews as appropriate right now with parents also, upon request we have offered approximately 39 hotspots to families as well as 40 devices to our students with IETS. Our hardworking teachers continue to provide instruction remotely in a variety of ways. They do so with work packets, sometimes they do teaching with the general education teachers sharing courses and virtual lessons and as well as doing overall student check-ins.

We continue to update our parent resources on our districts at home learning website and we have a couple of different resources there for parents to always be able to check in and look at those. Our staff continues to look at a variety of different strategies that the parents could implement and reinforce learning in the home.

Mr. Jim Monico, Interim Director-Student Services shared that the foster youth and homeless programs to date in our district we have 98 foster youth students. We have 114 homeless students and we are supporting these students by working with those that are continuing to struggle with academic and social emotional issues. Student Services office helps with registration identification and answering questions from these families so they have access to some of our resources or connecting with families. Each week phone calls are made and information taken on the immediate need expressed by these parents who were talking about academic support issues with Chromebooks and even needs for hotspots as heard earlier. He wished to thank Foster Youth Coordinator, Julie White and her mentoring staff as they are the ones each week making phone calls to these families, finding out their needs and working food banks within and outside of our community to secure food and other essentials. Ms. White and her mentor group have delivered items to 76 homes via their portrait doorsteps by using social distancing or giving grocery items to other organizations that have the corroborated with door delivery. A special thanks to Mr. Velasquez foundation that has helped Ms. White with acquiring resources that identified needs for these families as well. We have had people reach out to the TAP president just last week to help support our efforts along with Walmart. He was sending a check for \$2,000 that we're going to convert into gift cards.

Mr. Jim Wolff, Director-Technology shared that to date we've had about 87 requests for hotspots. We have a process in place as the Board is familiar through the last Board update. Our principals or their designees make referrals using a form and that referral is then processed and reviewed. We have had 87 submissions and at this point we have had seven of those submissions have been for foster youth or homeless students while an additional 42 have been for a special education students. Mr. Jackson is working his way through those applications just as soon as they are processed. We have some priorities that are established and that we work through as the applications come in and Mr. Jackson has been diligently working and reaching out to the families to bring them in and get them signed up. The process is working quite well.

There were questions/discussion on the following: can reach out to business closed and see if we can collaborate with the businesses if possible and have the social distance distancing and have a couple of students in those businesses doing their schoolwork (Gomez).

### Launching Theme Based Schools

Dr. Renee Jeffrey, Director-K-5 Innovative & Instructional Support presented the Board with information on Launching Theme-Based Schools that will include a review of why Theme Based Schools, the planning process for launching theme-based schools in 2020-21, describe services and actions to be implemented at Jefferson and Los Cerritos Elementary Schools and outlined next steps.

Presentation can be accessed in its entirety on-line.

There was discussion/questions on the following:

who is paying for the field trips/how are they funded (Gomez), are all teachers interested (Garcia), how do we come up with the \$6,000 figure for support (Gomez).

Vice President Cuarenta thanked Dr. Jeffreys for planning and anyone else who assisted.

### Thinking Math Classroom Pilot: Progress and Plans

Kelly Morales, Facilitator of Instructional Improvement provided the Board with information on Thinking Math Classroom and reviewed the need to improve outcomes in middle school math, to understand the key components

of the Thinking Math Classroom; the pilot program at Jackson and data showing progress to expand this program in 2020-21, reviewed what accelerated math is and why there is a need to change the point of entry for students and shared next steps for 2020-21.

Presentation can be accessed in its entirety on-line.

There were questions/discussion on the following: how are students selected for this pilot (Gomez), all 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at all three schools (Hansen), can students opt out of the program (Gomez), a request to receive data collected (Gomez), are students given the same problem to solve (Garcia), did anyone ask Downey why they are not offering (Gomez), by 5<sup>th</sup> grade will it be known who will participate (De Leon), a request was provided to measure progress (De Leon)

#### USC College Advising Corps

Dr. Ryan Smith, Assistant Superintendent-Secondary Educational Services and Dr. Greg Francois, Director-Secondary Education provided the Board with information on USC College Advising Corps and reviewed College enrollment trends for PHS graduates, California State University admissions, University of California admissions, steps the District has taken to drive college enrollment to new heights, the opportunity for more support through USC's College Advising Corps, reviewed the benefits and next steps.

Presentation can be accessed in its entirety on-line.

There were questions/discussion on the following: why aren't we provided with information on private institutions (Gomez), would like to see how many students make it to Harvard, Columbia (Cuarenta), would like information on how many students went to Private colleges (Gomez), how many students enrolled in 2019 (De Leon), would the college advisor just be advising for USC (De Leon), do we have partnerships with CSUDH and CSULB (Gomez), do we have data on how many students were accepted and how many enrolled (Gomez), how many students who enrolled in college are still enrolled (Garcia), how will the position help us (De Leon), do we have a goal in mind (De Leon)

#### Khan Academy District Partnership

Dr. Ryan Smith and Dr. Greg Francois provided the Board with information on the Khan Academy District partnership. Information presented to the Board included an explanation of what is the Khan Academy, courses that Khan Academy supports, Khan Academy Mastery System, how the District can use Khan Academy to support student achievement in mathematics, how else would Khan Academy be helpful, what metrics would the District pay attention to and next steps.

Presentation can be accessed in its entirety on-line.

There were questions/discussion on the following: one hour is very little, can we get two hours (Gomez), how are we being equitable (Cuarenta), would have like to see how students were targeted (De Leon), does this include Buena Vista and West (Garcia), is this for every student in all grades (Gomez), why are we going from Carnegie Learning to Khan Academy (De Leon)

#### Graduation Requirements/Grading

Dr. Ryan Smith and Dr. Debbie Stark provided the Board with information on graduation requirements and grading. This update is provided due to the unprecedented times due to COVID-19. Information provided included a key question of how do we ensure the graduation progress of all students is not adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic to the best of our ability, high school graduation requirements State vs. District, State mandated graduation requirements/130 credits, neighboring Districts applying graduation requirements for Class of 2020, the District recommendation to apply the State mandated graduation requirements to the Class of 2020, current PUSD grading policy, initial guidance to teachers when school closures began, shift in focus of

distance learning, proposed changes for K-12 grading, a review of research on high school grading and what approaches are local districts taking or considering.

The Board was also presented with options on grading that included Pros and Cons:

Option #1 – Letter grades: A, B, C, D, F – Current District practice

Option #2 – ABC Grades + Credit/No Credit

Option #3 – Credit/No Credit with Grade Opt In

Option #4 – Credit/No Credit

Based on research, discussions and feedback the District recommends the following:

- Suspend BP/AR 5121 for Spring 2020 and Summer 2020
- TK-5 – Teacher comments Spring 2020 only
- 6-8 – issue Pass/Fail marks to middle school students
- 9-12 – Option #3 – Credit/No Credit with Opt In or Option #4 – Credit/No Credit

There were questions/discussion on the following: some students most likely already have 130 credits (Garcia), need to be flexible and follow other districts in making sure that our students graduate and get those requirements (De Leon), echoed other Board member comments (Cuarenta) agrees and supports that every student should have the opportunity to graduate because of this crisis (Gomez)

#### **4. Adjournment**

The Study Session meeting adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

Motion by Carmen Gomez, second by Linda Garcia.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Carmen Gomez, Linda Garcia, Sonia De Leon, Vivian Hansen, Yesenia Cuarenta