

## **AGENDA - August 19, 2021**

### **REPORTS (30 min.)**

**6.1** Student Services Update: Director of Student Services, Niamh Foley (5 min. + Board Discussion)

**Department/Category:** INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS & STUDENT ACTIVITIES

#### **Background Information:**

#### **Reports:**

Student Services

August, 2021

#### **Special Education:**

*Staffing, Professional Development*

As the new school year approaches, we are excited to greet our returning Special Educators and welcome new members to our team: Jeff Kozlowski, Special Education Coordinator; Jillian Arnold, Education Specialist VES; Julie Fox, Education Specialist CHS; Courtney Moore, Speech & Language Pathologist CMS/CHS; Jordan Navarro, Speech & Language Pathologist VES/Crown Preschool and Rebecca Rabe, Clinical Counselor CMS/CHS. Welcome all. We look forward to an awesome year ahead.

Our special education team gathered “virtually” for our annual Special Education Boot Camp on August 18-19, 2021. The professional development opportunities were designed around team building, caseload management, legal training and guidance, Special Education Information System (SEIS) and data collection, behavioral and mental health supports, and district special education procedures. Although this year’s event was virtual, the team enjoyed reconnecting and learning together. This annual event is a wonderful opportunity for our special education team to learn new skills, refresh and update procedures and processes, and prepare for the new year.

#### **Student Services:**

*AB 104, No Place for Hate*

## Assembly Bill (AB) 104 Pupil Instruction: Retention, Grade Changes, and Exemptions

### Overview

Assembly Bill (AB) 104 requires school districts to implement policies that give students opportunities to counteract the impact of the pandemic on students' academic achievement and graduation credits. The new law, which went into effect on July 1, 2021, included options that include requesting retention for eligible students, changing grades to a Pass or No Pass for students enrolled in high school during the 2020-2021 school year, and waiving local district graduation requirements that exceed the state credit and course minimums for students who were juniors or seniors in the 2020-2021 school year.

Education Code section 49066.5 established that a parent, guardian, or educational rights holder, or the 18-year-old student, may apply for one or more of their letter grades for a course, taken during the 2020-2021 school year in high school, be changed to a Pass or No Pass on the student's permanent transcript. There is no limit as to the number or type of courses eligible for this [grade change application](#). The grade change application shall not negatively affect the student's grade point average or result in the forfeiture of a student's eligibility for athletics or school programs. Additionally, Education Code section 49066.5 required the California Department of Education to create a list of postsecondary colleges in California that may accept Pass/No Pass grades for 2020-2021 high school coursework. These postsecondary institutions have indicated to the California Department of Education that they will accept, for admissions purposes, a transcript with a Pass or No Pass grade instead of a letter grade for an applicant. CUSD families were notified of the Pass/No Pass grade change option via email, in-touch, newsletter, and district website. The deadline for grade change application is August 20, 2021. To date, approximately 25 applications for grade changes have been received.

### **No Place for Hate (NPfH):**

During the summer and early fall of 2020, current and former students shared stories of bullying, harassment and hate-related incidents. As school resumed, we experienced an increase in overt acts of bullying, primarily cyber bullying, during virtual classrooms. In accordance with [California Education Code § 201](#), and our district [Long Range Plan 3.2](#) the administration took actionable steps to foster safe and supportive schools.

Trusted partners such as: the San Diego County Office of Education, the San Diego County District Attorney Office, and neighboring districts all used the organizing framework of No Place for Hate which is a program developed by the Anti-Defamation League. ADL is a 501c3 nonprofit, and thus a non-partisan, anti-hate organization. ADL Education is a department within the larger ADL organization with the mission of providing evidence-based anti-bias education. Utilizing a previously established organizing framework to supplement our current social/emotional learning curricula was prudent, especially during a pandemic and school reopening.

Each campus established a NPfH committee and met regularly to plan and conduct school-wide activities to teach respect, celebrate diversity, and build a positive school climate. The committees scheduled school-wide activities that answered the question how does this activity directly relate to teaching about: bias, prejudice, stereotypes, discrimination, name-calling, and bullying. The activities were carefully tailored to each school and grade level. Conversations at the elementary schools looked very different from conversations at a high school level. Staff and parents, at the elementary level, supported students in coordinating school-wide activities. Student voice was at the forefront of all committee work.

At Silver Strand Elementary School, the committee consisted of 27, 4th and 5th grade students, plus parents and staff. The committee created video updates to be added to Principal Moore's Friday Flagpole video. They prepared a Unity Tree poster with the goal of "increasing students' awareness and appreciation of the many ways we are unique as individuals, but united as a school. Everyone belongs and our unique identity is an asset to the overall makeup of the school." Additionally, the committee created a bitmoji 'Inclusion Lounge' to offer students, staff, and families a centralized space for resources and activities which promote inclusion and celebrate diversity. The SSES committee also hosted an *Ability Awareness - Turning Struggles into Strengths* learning opportunity that invited students to research learning differences and share information with their class or school. Small groups of students researched ADHD and Down's Syndrome and recorded presentations for Friday flagpole videos.

At Village Elementary School the NPfH committee had 20 students, parents and staff members. They held meetings monthly and created activities that focused on inclusivity and a positive school environment. In November 2020, they displayed a superhero banner that included the NPfH pledge for interested students to sign.

The pledge states:

*"I promise to do my best to treat everyone fairly. I promise to do my best to be kind to EVERYONE-even*

*if they are not like me. If I see someone being hurt or bullied, I will tell a teacher. I will help others to feel safe and happy at school. I will be part of making my school No Place for Hate."*

Additional activities included: Tip your Hat for Kindness, where students wore hats to demonstrate a commitment to kindness; Mahalo Monday's where students greeted others at the gate with positive reminders of respect, empathy, and kindness.

The committees at CMS and CHS also conducted activities and incorporated lessons surrounding kindness in conjunction with Bullying Awareness and prevention month. They sponsored No Name Calling Week, and discussed the impact of social cruelty with regard to "digital drama." The themes of ways to be an ally and how to appreciate differences in others permeated their work. The CHS committee also focused on poetry related to social justice.

Concerns that NPfH received more attention than other clubs on our campuses are valid and district staff recognize this to be true, however, that should not negate the tremendous positivity that radiates from this club. We have learned and have directed our site administrators to relegate NPfH to the category of all other clubs. Activities related to the club will be conducted in accordance with AR 6145.5 which states: "Such meetings shall not interfere with regular school activities. The Superintendent or designee shall identify the non-instructional time period(s) set aside for meetings of student groups either before or after actual classroom instruction times."

The presence of the NPfH clubs in our district was a direct response to our student voices. The lessons and activities developed during the 20-21 school year promoted inclusion, kindness, respect, and compassion. The momentum started should be continued as we strive to ensure every child, every day feels safe, valued and respected. These are student-led clubs, and we will encourage them to continue making each school a welcoming and inviting place for all.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

No action needed on the report.

**LCAP Goals:**

**COMMUNICATION: Communicate openly, freely and accurately to engage and involve all shareholders**

*Shareholder Participation*

*Informative Communication to the CUSD Community*

Moved \_\_\_\_\_ . Seconded \_\_\_\_\_

Ayes \_\_\_\_\_ Noes \_\_\_\_\_ Absent \_\_\_\_\_ Abstain \_\_\_\_\_ Student \_\_\_\_\_