

West Contra Costa Unified School District
Office of the Superintendent

Friday Memo
October 5, 2018

Upcoming Events – Matthew Duffy

October 10: College Day
October 10: Agenda Setting, Superintendent's Office, 4:00 PM
October 12: State of the Schools Breakfast, DeJean MS, 7:30 AM
October 17: Board of Education Meeting, DeJean MS, 6:00 PM
October 25: End of 1st Quarter
October 26: Report Card Making, Minimum Day Middle and High Schools
October 31: Minimum Day K-8
November 1: Elementary Conference Day, No School
November 2, 5, 6, 7 & 8: Elementary Conference Days, Minimum Days
November 7: Agenda Setting, Superintendent's Office, 4:00 PM

Superintendent's Report – Matthew Duffy

At this past Wednesday's Board Meeting, the Superintendent's Report was not read. Please see the attached report for details. Please note that the District will be taking a pause on two conferences this year, Parents as Partners and the Best Practices Conference, to reassess the effectiveness and need for these events.

Erik Radkiewicz Wins Another Teaching Award - Marcus Walton

Pinole Valley High School band director Erik Radkiewicz was named a winner of the 2018 Warren W. Eukel Teacher Trust award. The Eukel Foundation gives \$10,000 awards to the best teachers in Contra Costa County each year. Radkiewicz is the third honoree from PVHS in the award's 26-year history and will be honored at a dinner at the Diablo Country Club on November 15th. Information on the dinner is available at <http://www.eukeltrust.org/awards-dinner/>.

SBAC Results - Gracie Guerrero

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) summative assessments were administered to students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11 in the 2018 spring semester and results were released to the public by the California Department of Education (CDE) after verifying for accuracy on Tuesday, October 2. The results were to have been presented to the Board for review and discussion during the meeting on October 3, 2018. This presentation was one of the items that was moved to the next meeting. The presentation is included in this memo for your review. Some of the slides may be updated in time for the October 17 Board meeting. Emphasis will be placed on current actions and next steps.

Media Stories of Interest - Marcus Walton

News articles of interest are attached.

HEALTH

EDUCATION



IS
THE
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ACADEMY



Superintendent's Report

October 3rd, 2018



Recent Events

- **Labor-Management Conference and Solutions Team**
- **Special Education Workshops**
- **High School Principal Meeting**
- **Solutions Team**



Roadmap Update

Budget Reductions

Reminder: **We have committed to 10m in reductions for the 19-20 school year and 4m to balance the budget.** Staff is working on proposals for the Board to be brought over the fall. **A study session will also be scheduled for Wednesday November 7th.** (This will also include enrollment information as previously scheduled.)

Student Achievement

Tonight we will look at both SBAC data and early literacy data from our first benchmark

Upcoming

- **State of the Schools Breakfast Friday October 12th**
- **Elementary and Middle Principal Meeting next Tuesday**
- **Next Board Meeting, Wednesday Oct. 24th**





WCCUSD

SBAC and Fall Literacy Results

Educational Services

2017-18 SBAC Results

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

- Given to students in **grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11**
- One statewide administration in the spring
- Consists of two subject areas: **English Language Arts** and **Math**
- **Computer Adaptive**: test items are tailored to more accurately identify knowledge and skills
- Students receive **Overall Score** in both ELA and Math
- Each score falls into one of four **Achievement Levels**:
 - standard not met, standard nearly met, standard met, standard exceeded

2017-18 SBAC Results

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

	WCCUSD			COUNTY	STATE
	Total # Tested	Participation Rate	% Meeting Standard	% Meeting Standard	% Meeting Standard
English Language Arts					
2017-18	14,247	96%	34%	54%	50%
2016-17	14,525	96%	34%	54%	49%
2015-16	14,760	96%	35%	55%	49%
Mathematics					
2017-18	14,340	97%	23%	44%	39%
2016-17	14,684	97%	24%	44%	38%
2015-16	14,865	96%	24%	45%	37%

2017-18 SBAC Results

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

/ % Meeting or Exceeding Standards by Grade Level

	ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS						MATHEMATICS					
	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
3rd Grade	2,357	30%	2,272	32%	2,180	31%	2,379	32%	2,297	32%	2,211	30%
4th Grade	2,328	33%	2,325	32%	2,272	34%	2,344	29%	2,351	27%	2,284	28%
5th Grade	2,226	40%	2,214	34%	2,185	34%	2,246	23%	2,240	22%	2,211	21%
6th Grade	2,152	39%	2,071	39%	2,076	35%	2,173	25%	2,104	26%	2,088	26%
7th Grade	1,849	30%	1,881	31%	1,809	34%	1,856	22%	1,893	20%	1,824	22%
8th Grade	1,943	32%	1,793	33%	1,844	34%	1,961	20%	1,819	19%	1,862	18%
11th Grade	1,905	41%	1,969	38%	1,881	40%	1,906	17%	1,980	17%	1,860	17%

2017-18 SBAC Results

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

/ % Meeting or Exceeding Standards by Ethnicity

	ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS						MATHEMATICS					
	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
African American	2,696	23%	2490	21%	2330	20%	2690	12%	2480	12%	2311	11%
Asian	1,611	55%	1597	55%	1537	53%	1636	46%	1614	45%	1554	45%
Filipino	801	61%	748	60%	711	62%	802	44%	753	43%	714	44%
Latino	7,668	26%	7603	25%	7519	25%	7739	16%	7743	15%	7604	14%
Native Hawaiian / Pac Islander	103	37%	102	32%	104	27%	101	24%	102	18%	103	16%
Two or More Races	226	46%	321	52%	437	54%	230	34%	318	42%	434	40%
White	1,594	61%	1571	60%	1579	62%	1599	50%	1568	50%	1589	50%

2017-18 SBAC Results

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

/ % Meeting or Exceeding Standards by Student Subgroup

	ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS						MATHEMATICS					
	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18		2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Students with Disability	1,654	7%	1,656	7%	1,608	8%	1,639	6%	1,637	5%	1,597	6%
Economically Disadvantaged	11,074	26%	10,311	25%	10,351	26%	11,161	16%	10,402	15%	10,420	15%
English Learner (Less than 12 mo)	100	6%	146	2%	72	3%	224	9%	309	4%	200	10%
English Learner (12 mo or more)	4,111	6%	3,784	4%	3,636	3%	4,102	5%	3,765	4%	3,638	4%

Our SBAC Highlights

- **9 schools increased ELA % Proficient by 5% or more**
(Ellerhorst, Grant, Montalvin, Murphy, Shannon, Hercules MS, De Anza HS, Kennedy HS, Richmond HS)
- **5 schools increased Math % Proficient by 5% or more**
(Ellerhorst, Lake, Murphy, Shannon, De Anza HS)
- **6 schools increased ELA % Proficient by 3-4%**
(Lake, Lincoln, Madera, Ohlone, Valley View, DeJean MS)
- **5 schools increased Math % Proficient by 3-4%**
(Madera, Nystrom, Olinda, Verde, Hercules MS)

Ellerhorst

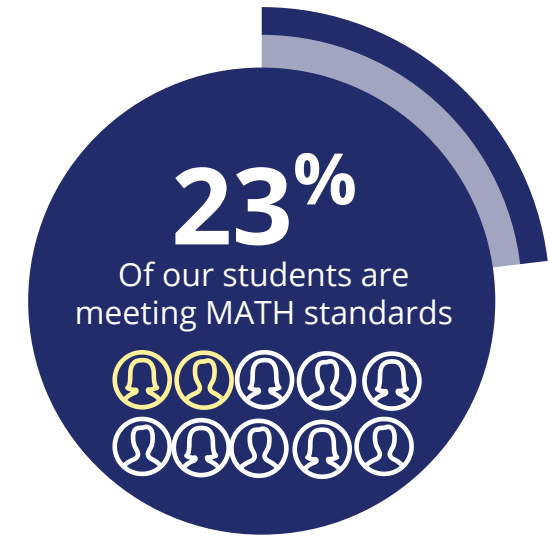
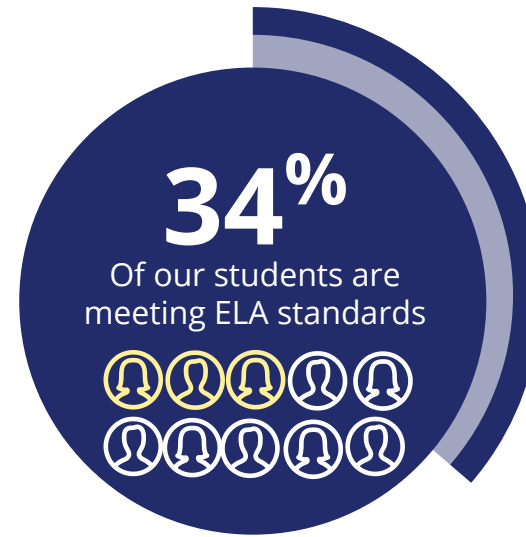
Increased from 36% to 45% in ELA and 23% to 33% in Math!

Lake

Increased from 16% to 20% in ELA and 10% to 20% in Math!

Our Challenge

- Large gap between English Learners and English Only performance (gap of 38% in ELA and 26% in math)
- 80% of African American students are not proficient in ELA and 89% of African American students are not proficient in math
- 18 schools where 80% or more of students are not meeting ELA standards
- 28 schools where 80% or more of students are not meeting math standards



Fall Literacy Results

The literacy assessments are administered in **English** and **Spanish**.

	Frequency	Grades Served
FastBridge Early Reading	Fall, Winter, Spring	TK, K, 1
STAR Reading	Fall, Spring	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
Reading Inventory (English Only)	Fall, Spring	9, 10

Fall Literacy Results

FastBridge (Grades TK, K, 1) screens a student's foundational reading skills in the core areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency. A total of **4,143 students (83%)** completed the new FastBridge Early Reading assessment.

	English				Spanish			
	TK / K		1st		TK / K		1st	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
High Risk	575	31%	793	43%	24	16%	135	47%
Some Risk	426	23%	368	20%	70	46%	77	27%
Low Risk	848	46%	695	37%	59	39%	73	26%

Fall Literacy Results

[STAR Reading \(Grades 2-8\)](#) is an assessment that measures reading comprehension and skills for independent reading. A total of **13,731 students (84%)** took the STAR Reading assessment.

	# Test Takers	Intervention / Urgent	On Watch	Exceeds / Meets
Grade 2	2,074	46%	20%	34%
Grade 3	2,176	45%	22%	32%
Grade 4	2,146	48%	22%	30%
Grade 5	2,058	48%	23%	30%
Grade 6	1,956	54%	21%	24%
Grade 7	1,628	53%	21%	26%
Grade 8	1,701	53%	22%	24%

Fall Literacy Results

Reading Inventory (Grades 9, 10) is a formative assessment that measures students' level of reading comprehension. A total of **3,468 students (88%)** took the Reading Inventory.

	# Test Takers	Below Basic		Basic		Proficient		Advanced	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
9th Grade	1744	666	36%	424	23%	436	28%	218	13%
10th Grade	1724	572	30%	431	26%	567	36%	154	9%





Our 2022 STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT GOALS!



**80% of
3rd graders
are reading
on grade
level!**



**80% of
ELL students
are reclassified
in 5 years!**



**80% of
African-American
6th graders are
proficient in
Math!**



**80% of
Graduates
are college
and career
ready!**

SBAC & Fall Literacy Results

Plan of Action / Areas of Focus

- **3rd graders reading on grade level**
 - Articulate and communicate District framework for literacy instruction
 - Review local assessment data with site leaders 3 times during the year to inform site level data driven cycles of inquiry
 - Identify individual student instructional needs based on data
 - Focus on effective Tier 1 instruction
 - Support progress monitoring of students
 - Set standards (cut-points) for expected mastery of reading levels and writing for primary grades

SBAC & Fall Literacy Results

Plan of Action / Areas of Focus

- **English Learner reclassification**

- Regular dissemination of reclassification criteria data to sites
- Full implementation of ELD using Standards Based Instruction
- Strategic “team” coaching to build site capacity and targeted English Learner goals
- Integration and alignment of Teaching, Leading, and Learning work with Multilingual and Multicultural Services to provide increased access to high quality instruction for ELs
- Intensive services to sites to support deep implementation of best practices for ELs
- Development of districtwide EL RoadMap based on state policy recommendations

SBAC & Fall Literacy Results

Plan of Action / Areas of Focus

- **African American students proficient in Math**

- Disaggregation of math formative assessment data by ethnicity 3 times during the year used to inform core instruction and intervention
- Quarterly “data-talks” to address achievement/progress of AA students, leading to site-based coaching support
- Continued work with Partners in School Innovation for the continued progress of student achievement in the Kennedy family
- Strategic continuation of support programs (i.e Mafanikio, Rising Scholars)
- Continued engagement of families through participation in African-American Site Advisory Team (AASAT)

SBAC & Fall Literacy Results

Plan of Action / Areas of Focus

- **College and career ready graduates**

- Monitoring of students passing with C and above
- Increased information to families and students regarding college admissions and the application process
- Rising Scholars serving 140 district students at Hercules HS, Pinole Valley HS, DeAnza HS, Richmond HS, El Cerrito HS
- More opportunities for students to recover credits and remain on target for graduation
- Usage of Khan Academy, based on PSAT and SAT data, to increase performance

SBAC & Fall Literacy Results

Plan of Action / Areas of Focus

- **Use Local Interim Assessments to Monitor Student Progress on Common Core Standards for Literacy**
 - Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) twice a year grades 3-10
 - FastBridge Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring
- **Support Site Based Data Driven Cycles of Inquiry**
 - Job embedded site based coaching for course teams and site leadership teams
- **Professional Development**
 - STAR Reading, FastBridge Reading for Administrators, Testing Coordinators, and Teachers
 - Early Literacy Academy for teachers and administrators of early grades
 - New Teacher Academy
 - Teachers College Lab-Sites
- **Observation and Feedback**
 - Classroom walks 2 days/week to observe instruction and give immediate feedback

Alleged violation sets date for charter revocation hearing

By [Edward Booth](#)

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(<http://richmondconfidential.org/author/edward-booth/>)

Posted October 2, 2018 9:25 am

The West Contra Costa Unified School Board initiated a charter revocation process for John Henry High School last week after hearing allegations that a student complained of abuse and the school failed to report it to government authorities as required by law.

In other business, the board also took steps toward establishing a district-based voting map.

Board President Valerie Cuevas advocated for the revocation after the alleged mandatory reporting violations were brought to the attention of the board during public comment. A mandated reporter, such as a teacher, is legally required to report abuse that he or she sees or suspects.

The board will hold a public hearing on the question of revoking the charter on Wednesday, Oct. 3.

After the meeting last week, multiple current and former John Henry school teachers sent messages to the district alleging an instance of failed mandatory reporting at the school, according to the public hearing notice. They alleged in the messages that a student had reported being beaten at home to a member of the school staff. They alleged that in response, Evelia Villa, then the chief academic officer of Amethod Public Schools, which operates the John Henry school, decided to investigate herself instead of calling Child Protection Services, which she was legally required to do.

Villa allegedly called the student's mother to the school, and instructed the child to strip off his shirt. After seeing no bruises on the student's back, she determined his story was false, according to the messages sent to the district.

Villa reportedly described her handling of the complaint of abuse during a professional development event held prior to the 2017-18 school year, and she used it as an example to recommend the teachers investigate student stories before reporting to child protection officials, according to the messages.

Villa is the wife of Jorge Lopez, chief executive officer of Amethod, the charter school system that operates John Henry school. She is currently the Richmond regional superintendent of Amethod.

Robert Moncada, outreach coordinator for Amethod who attended the school board meeting, corroborated at least one instance of failed mandatory reporting. He was listed alongside Villa as a presenter at the professional development meeting where she allegedly described how the school had responded to the complaint of abuse.

“We asked the student, had he, or had he not, been hit. The answer was, ‘no,’” Moncada told the school board last week. “That same student was having difficulties in other aspects of his life,” Moncada said, arguing that the school didn’t need to report to child protective services because, “we checked, we double checked. We checked with the parent, both parents.”

In a statement Monday, Amethod said it has launched an investigation of the alleged violations of mandatory reporting. But Amethod argued against the charter revocation, saying the current practices at John Henry do not pose any severe or imminent threat to pupils at the school.

“Even if the allegations regarding the statements made at the training are determined to be true after the investigation is completed, they were made over a year ago,” Amethod’s statement reads. It says the current staff is trained online in mandatory reporting, and that a live training will also be held.

At last week’s meeting, board members agreed the alleged mandatory reporting violations were important to consider, but they disagreed about how to respond.

After Cuevas initiated a motion to revoke the charter, the board approved it on a 3-2 vote. Board members Cuevas, Madeline Kronenberg and Tom Panas voted for revocation.

“I don’t play when it comes to mandatory reporting,” said Cuevas, who led the effort on the board to vote to revoke the charter.

“If saying what I said gets me unelected, then I can’t think of a better reason to be unelected,” she said.

The next step is for the board is to hold the public hearing on the question of revoking the charter. If the charter is ultimately revoked, it may later be reinstated through an appeals process.

The board had issued a notice of violation to John Henry and Amethod in February. But the school has since taken steps to redress the problems raised, according to a staff report made at the meeting.

The problems raised then included a lack of properly credentialed teachers, a failure to provide appropriate special education support and services and an inadequate system to select students through a random name drawing.

Several newer concerns were identified during an April site visit, including insufficient textbooks, not enough lab equipment and an inadequate curriculum, according to the staff report. These issues have also been adequately addressed, although they are not completely resolved, according to the report.

Staff recommended the board allow the school to finish addressing these problems, and suggested continued oversight of John Henry to ensure ongoing compliance.

But several district teachers at other schools raised the alleged mandatory reporting violation during the public comment period and called upon the board to revoke John Henry’s charter.

United Teachers of Richmond Vice President Marissa Glidden, a teacher at Verde Elementary School, spoke of being hired to teach by one of the Amethod schools in 2013. Glidden said she was asked to discipline children in illegal ways during her training, though she did not say how. She told the board that it had an ethical obligation to close down the school.

“It was the worst experience of my life,” Glidden said at the meeting.

Some speakers criticized the disciplinary methods and approach of Lopez, the Amethod charter school system’s chief executive officer. One teacher linked to an [East Bay Express \(https://www.eastbayexpress.com/oakland/the-method-of-king-jorge/Content?oid=1082398\)](https://www.eastbayexpress.com/oakland/the-method-of-king-jorge/Content?oid=1082398) profile of him, in which he is quoted as saying, “One thing I know about boards is they’re dumber than shit.” In the story, he goes on to say, “I went in and told them everything they wanted to hear.”

But in stark contrast to the complaints from people who aren’t currently affiliated with the school, staff, students, and parents of John Henry spoke at the board meeting in support of their school. Some talked about how their children fit in well at the school. Others pointed out that the school had satisfactorily improved over time.

John Henry currently serves 257 students and has been in operation since 2015.

Though all board members said they were concerned about the problems at the school raised during public comment, they each approached finding a resolution differently.

Board member Mister Phillips methodically questioned attorney Edward Sklar, the attorney who was advising the board on how satisfactorily the school had responded to each of the earlier problems raised.

Phillips noted that John Henry was now in compliance with the earlier problems raised. He argued that the board should take the advice of its lawyer and not take action as yet on the problems raised in public comment.

Kronenberg also raised questions of legality. She said because the mandated reporting issue hadn’t been brought up before, the board hadn’t given John Henry school time to respond to the new allegations.

Pressed by the board, Sklar also said he “would have concerns” about the legality of the process.

As the board debated how to proceed, Cuevas consistently expressed no tolerance for failed mandatory reporting and pushed for taking action at the meeting on revoking John Henry’s charter.

“I’m going to be just as tough on our district schools,” Cuevas said. “If there’s indications of failed mandatory reporting, then I won’t support it.”

In other business at the meeting, the board offered an update on the drawing of a new trustee-area map, which will be used when the district switches in 2020 to trustee-area elections from the current at-large system.

At the start of the meeting, the board announced the results of a closed session that was held to decide aspects of the final map.

In a 3-2 vote, the board decided that the trustee-areas with the largest minority populations will have four-year school board terms, while the other areas will have two-year terms. Board members Elizabeth Block and Phillips voted against the majority.

Among the new trustee areas, the board voted that one area will be made up of 50 percent Latino registered voters, while another will be made up of as close to 50 percent African American registered voters as possible. This motion passed 3-1, with Phillips against and Block abstaining.

Phillips said he voted against every motion not because he disagreed but because the decisions were made in closed session and not in front of the public. He said the board had previously promised to make the decisions in a public vote.

A tentative timeline for public map planning meetings has also been set, with three meetings suggested for Oct. 22, 29, and 30, leading up to the Nov. 14 board meeting.

The map must be approved by the Contra Costa County Board of Education before redistricting can proceed. A map was previously rejected (<https://www.eastbaytimes.com/2018/07/26/county-turns-down-west-contra-costa-unified-trustee-area-map/>) by the county board in July.

Some members of the public spoke of the importance of properly informing and involving the community during the mapping process.

Richmond resident Don Gosney suggested the board reach out by using social media, local media, and through making upcoming events easy to find on the district website. He also suggested the meetings not be scheduled at the same time as other important events like city council meetings and candidate forums.

“One of the biggest complaints is lack of proper notice,” Gosney said, advising fellow members not to, “be so arrogant to think you are the center of the universe and the rest of the world needs to bow to your superiority.”

Cuevas said she wanted to remind the public that the board had previously been under a tight timeline, and that she wished to move forward with full community involvement.

“We want everybody to be involved in this process,” Cuevas said “Here’s our chance to do it again, and practice makes perfect.”

Correction: A previous version of this article misidentified the Nov. 14 school board meeting as a County Board of Education Meeting.

7 Comments

Mister Phillips

October 2, 2018 at 12:50 pm

This is a fair summary of my position on several issues. However, it omits that the school district’s attorney advised the school board to investigate the new allegations against John Henry High School BEFORE voting to take action on the new allegations. That was the advice I urged the school board to follow.

j. z.

October 2, 2018 at 1:38 pm

I find that the 3 board members who voted to close the charter school are irresponsible and not worthy of their position. 1st. the vote they performed last week was ILLEGAL. 2nd. they are willing to close the school based on an allegation that was falsely accused and who the supposed victim even denies happening! And lastly, the accusations from people who were not even involved with John Henry High School. I have personally had horrible experiences with WCCUSD. My child was bullied for 3 years! And the principle nor the district did anything to protect my child and went as far as to tell me that they could not guarantee my child safety in their school. On top of that after years of asking for additional tutoring for both of my kids they never had anything available. The tutoring was because as a parent from a private and public school education I could see that my children were not being given the proper tools to learn. I was never given that help. So I took my kids to the charter school system. My kids feel safe now and have

been getting the help they need (and it is included in the schools). Now my kids have a chance at a proper education so they can succeed and You 3 who voted to close the school, I will hold personally responsible for the damage educationally, mentally and emotionally that you are willing to inflict not only on my kids, but on all the children that go to JHHS ny closing the only high school in the area where they all can become a purposeful person to society and not some drop out from the district high schools which are known for abandoning its students.

V. Z.

October 3, 2018 at 11:06 pm

Hello, I am a student a John Henry High School and I am thankful to have you in our meeting today. I just wanted to say thank you for thinking about the students first and listening to what we had to say. I am very grateful that you oppose shutting down my school which is has helped me with my education for over 4 years. John Henry is a great school and I believe that students should have the opportunity to choose their own education.

Marcus Walton

October 2, 2018 at 1:26 pm

The Nov. 14 meeting is a WCCUSD Board of Education meeting. There is no schedule to take this item back to the county.

Carter

October 2, 2018 at 11:11 pm

Concerned Citizens and Parents of Richmond,

Please come out to attend this meeting and hear the facts. This alleged violation is said to have taken place at a completely different site in 2012, well before JHHS even existed. The charge itself has been made by three disgruntled, former employees of the school (with the support and assistance of colleagues from their newly joined district unions).

To weigh an alleged and unproven internal directive as more important, in regard to student safety, than the actual safety records of this organization in comparison to those of the district schools where these students will potentially be sent is grossly irresponsible. We all have a right to know about the safety records of these institutions in order to compare fairly and make this student safety decision in an informed manner, but we don't have that power here. We've entrusted the members of this school board with that responsibility.

AMPS has provided students in other parts of Oakland with real pathways in terms of college and career opportunities, and this school board has a duty to give this organization a fair chance of providing the young people of Richmond with these same opportunities. Please attend this meeting and look into all of these facts yourself. The politics of adults should not close doors of opportunity for young people who are already disenfranchised in our society, and unfortunately that is exactly what is happening in this case. Personal vengeance and school choice politics are at play here. Pressure the school board for a more reasonable response to this alleged violation. Everyone must be held accountable when the stakes are this high.

Jay Stafford

October 4, 2018 at 12:27 pm

Something is not right here. Now, I watched last night's WCCUSD board meeting as well as the meeting on September 26th. I have never seen anything like this before in my life. The words spoken and action taken by Valerie Cuevas regarding the possible revocation of this school's charter are suspect as she seems to have already made up her mind before hearing any evidence, comments or remedies put forth by the school. I don't know what is going on, but something seems off. Is she taking money from a special interest group? Does she have some special financial interest in shutting down this school? Are some of these board members simply seeking votes and endorsement prior to the upcoming election season? I do not have the answers, but there absolutely must be a reason why Ms. Cuevas et al., are severely circumventing their normal procedures and policies and taking such an interesting interpretation of the law at play here to try and close this school down, even against the advice of their counsel. From what I could gather from the meetings, the allegations made seem to be mostly hearsay and taken out of context. During public comment, I even noticed a few of the 3-4 individuals for revoking the charter (and supporting the allegations made) are part of the Richmond teacher's union so that is also suspect. Moreover, the fact that someone from the board would contact the landlord of this charter school prior to the hearing to say that the school was indeed closing is unethical and, potentially, illegal. I would urge the Richmond Standard to look deeper into this story as there appears to be much more than the "serious concern for students' safety." My kids are all grown and out of school now, but I am very concerned as a member of this community and city resident who lives within a mile of this school. Who is really running this school board? Cuevas is up to something, I just wish I knew what. Please investigate. This high school sits on a pretty swanky piece of land. Surely, many might have an interest in seeing this school closed and replaced with a tech company. Follow the money.....

Lupe

October 4, 2018 at 3:46 pm

Now lets all breath and do our homework please. Dont go off what you think go, off of what you know. Some people are quick to jump in with blind eyes. Let's look at the big picture and a little investigation done on our own goes a long way. We are talking special interest. Then what about the way the others are voting. What's their special interest? Asking questions will only clarify the answers. Do we start over seeing situations or do we ask the right

questions to get the answers we need to proceed. There are some things that could be waited on and some things that need immediate reactions. So just now jumping in on these threads to put our two cents in. Without even having clarity or a direct stance on the issue is doing more harm than good. And it's not helping a situation because there's no validation behind it. Getting involved educated comments that are backed by involvement in the proceedings. People go to the school board and put your two cents in there not here ask questiibs research answers and stop feedibg into the bs orchestrated by others. I am a involved parent and community member of both charter and public with no special interest but the children and not just mine.No hidden agendas and i agree with the board on this one. Now what does that say? Get involved and seek actions not just criticize them.

Pinole Valley High coach named Oakland Raiders' Coach of the Week

October 1, 2018



Photo credit: Jennifer Ramos/Oakland Raiders

Last week, former Oakland Raiders running back Charlie Smith stopped by Pinole Valley High — along with a \$1,000 check from the NFL team.

That's because Spartans head coach Luke Bodwin earned the Oakland Raiders' Tom Flores Coach of the Week honor for Week 4, according to the West Contra Costa Unified School District.

It was a big honor but not a huge surprise, as the Spartans have opened with a 7-0 overall record, 3-0 in league, including a 52-20 win over Vallejo on Sept. 14, a 27-21 win over De Anza High on Sept. 21, and a 35-6 win over Bethel this past Friday.

Each week, coaches from the Oakland and Las Vegas areas are selected for the Raiders' program on Raiders.com and \$1,000 is gifted to their programs.

During Week 2, De Anza High coach Tyree Reed earned the same honor.

Here's the Raiders video from their visit last week to Pinole Valley High.

Mike Aldax

Richmond school's charter facing revocation; rally planned

October 2, 2018



Photo: WCCUSD offices at 1108 Bissell Ave.

John Henry High School, a public charter school at 1402 Marina Way South in Richmond operated under Amethod Public Schools, is under threat of having its charter revoked following reports that administrators instructed teachers during a training event last year to investigate reports of child abuse themselves before alerting Child Protective Services (CPS).

California law requires that child abuse reports be immediately forwarded to CPS.

On Wednesday, Oct. 3, the school district's Board of Education is set to hold a public hearing on whether to revoke the high school's charter, stripping its ability to receive public funding. Policy direction to delay CPS reporting was described by the district as a "severe and imminent threat to pupil health or safety."

Amethod officials deny that John Henry High is unsafe. In a statement, school officials said "all staff are trained as mandatory reporters [of child abuse and neglect to CPS] and take their responsibility as mandatory reporters seriously."

At 5 p.m. Wednesday, ahead of the 6:30 p.m. start of the district board meeting at DeJean Middle School, over 400 John Henry High students, staff and families plan to march from Richmond Civic Center Plaza to DeJean Middle to oppose the revocation of their charter.

"The District is holding a hearing to consider revoking the school's charter in response to assertions about a teacher training held last year, without having a full investigation into those assertions and taking into account the schools academic performance compared to district schools," according to a statement by Amethod.

According to the school district report recommending charter revocation, the teacher training in question occurred before the 2017-2018 school year. During the professional development event, Amethod Chief Academic Officer Evilia Villa "advised teachers that when a student complains of abuse, the teachers should investigate the matter themselves, rather than immediately calling Child Protective Services," according to the district's report.

"A number of teachers who were present at that meeting have submitted written statements describing the event, and expressing concern with Ms. Villa's directives," the district's report stated.

According to the statements from three former teachers at John Henry High who were present at the training, Villa presented an incident where a student claimed he was being physically abused at home. Rather than call CPS, Villa reportedly had a conference with at least one parent during which she instructed the boy to remove his shirt to verify his story. Based on that encounter, Villa told teachers it was important for school staff to investigate prior to reporting to CPS, as students could be lying, the district said.

Amethod Outreach Coordinator Robert Moncada, described as a presenter alongside Villa at the professional development event, defended the incident during public comment at the district's regular board meeting last week, on Sept. 26, according to WCCUSD.

"Because of our outreach efforts we have a very good relationship with the family, we had a very good relationship with the student," Moncada stated during the videotaped public hearing. "So we asked the student, had he or had he not been hit. The answer was no. That same student was having difficulties in other aspects of his life. Just a small update, there was no CPS report needed because we checked, we double checked. We checked with the parent, both parents."

The student graduated on time and now attends community college, Moncada added.

The district said it sent multiple notices to Amethod regarding this matter and stated dissatisfaction with Amethod's responses.

In its statement, Amethod officials said the investigation into the actions of the administrators is not yet complete, and so they cannot conclusively say whether the administrator acted improperly. Using the claims as grounds to revoke the school's charter is "an injustice," Amethod said.

Staff are trained and tested annually in the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act, according to Amethod, which provided [this link](#) to the training module offered by the California Department of Social Services.

"If our charter were revoked, 320 students would suddenly find themselves without a school, including 80 seniors who are applying to college," Amethod stated, adding, "Our students are safe and thriving academically."

Wednesday's WCCUSD board meeting is set to start at 6:30 p.m. at Lovonya DeJean Middle School, 3400 Macdonald Ave. For more information, click [here](#).

Mike Aldax

Sports > [High School Sports](#)

Football: Kennedy-Richmond faces toughest challenge Friday night

Kennedy Eagles are perfect through six games this season, but path to league title still goes through El Cerrito



El Cerrito will take on Kennedy High on Friday night in a Tri-County Athletic League showdown. (Ray Chavez/Bay Area News Group file)

By **MIKE LEFKOW, CORRESPONDENT** |

October 3, 2018 at 3:40 pm

The championship of the Tri-County Athletic League's Rock Division could very well be at stake Friday night when El Cerrito visits Kennedy.

Both teams won their league openers last week in convincing fashion. El Cerrito romped past St. Patrick-St. Vincent 47-0. Kennedy handled Hercules 43-0.

The calpreps.com computer, which predicts outcomes for every game in California, favors El Cerrito by 11 points (31-20) Friday night, but the machine could be overlooking Kennedy. The Eagles are flying high with a 6-0 start. They are outscoring opponents by 19 points per game, and have one of the stingier defenses around.

"Defense is where we hang our hat," said Greg Marshall, Kennedy's first-year coach. "Most of our (eight) returnees played defense last year."

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El Cerrito (3-3) will be the best team Kennedy faces this season. But Kennedy does have a 33-30 victory over Division 1 Deer Valley of the rough and tumble Bay Valley Athletic League, and it opened the season with a 46-0 thrashing of Bethel-Vallejo, a Division 2 member that plays in the TCAL's Stone Division.

To beat El Cerrito on Friday night, Kennedy will have to continue to play tough defense.

"They're an elite program," Marshall said of the Gauchos. "But we've played them tough the past few years."

El Cerrito squeaked out a 41-35 victory in 2016. It was the first meeting between the teams since 2012, when El Cerrito won 64-8.

Last year was unfortunate. With El Cerrito up by six (20-14) late in the first half, fighting erupted outside the Gauchos' stadium. Finally, the game was called and not made up.

El Cerrito has a plethora of talent led by 6-1, 360-pound defensive tackle Franklin Banks and 6-3, 175-pound receiver/defensive back Makai Polk, who recently committed to Cal. Banks' running mate on the defensive line is Uilison Amone, who measures 6-0, 310. Safety Daego Albert adds to a strong secondary and 6-4 wide receiver Malikhi Miller has committed to San Jose State.

Kennedy's defense is led by senior linebacker Tyrik Daniels, who has 10 tackles for loss, and junior Michael Richardson with 8.5 sacks. The Eagles have 29.5 sacks in all, a tick under five per game.

Offensively, JFK averages about three times as many yards on the ground (219 per game) as in the air (77). Quarterback Camron Young is a dual threat who has rushed for 621 yards and six touchdowns while passing for seven more. Daniels has added 480 yards and four rushing TDs.

Kennedy was moved up to the tougher Rock Division after going 19-4 the previous two seasons under George Jackson. Marshall was the junior varsity coach.

"We don't put too much pressure on our players to perform," said Marshall, who has been at Kennedy for four years after coming over from Albany High. "This is out first year in the new division, and it's an honor to move up.

"El Cerrito will not be our season. We still have to take care of St. Mary's, St. Patrick-St. Vincent and Salesian. Our guys are up for the challenge. Our goal is to win Division 4."

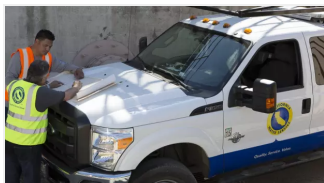
Moreau Catholic likely will be the favorite to capture that division, but Kennedy should be able to guarantee a high seed with a strong showing against El Cerrito.

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