

West Contra Costa Unified School District
Office of the Superintendent

Friday Memo
July 20, 2018

Upcoming Events – Matthew Duffy

July 24: County Committee on School District Organization, DeJean, 6:30 PM

July 25: Board of Education Meeting, DeJean, 6:30 PM

July 30: CBOC Meeting, FOC, 6:00 PM

August 1: Agenda Setting, Superintendent's Office, 5:00 PM

August 8: Board of Education Meeting, DeJean, 6:30 PM

Annual Charter School Visits Report – Matt Duffy

Each year the WCCUSD charter school office makes annual visits to schools. These visits result in a summary report that outlines highlights and questions of the visits. Dr. Linda Delgado finished these visits in the spring and has summarized her reviews of our 12 charter schools in a simple one-page format for each school. The report is attached.

Agenda for Contra Costa County Committee on School District Organization -- Marcus Walton

The county committee will meet on Tuesday, July 24, at 6:30 p.m. at DeJean Middle School.

The agenda for this meeting has been posted. You can review it

at <http://www.boarddocs.com/ca/cccoe/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=B2JQZM5770CE>

Please note that under Item 3.9, there are resolutions for both approval and denial of our proposal.

Public Records Log – Marcus Walton

Included in this week's memo is the log of public records requests received by the district. If you have any questions, please contact me.

News Articles of Note - Marcus Walton

The attached news article may be of interest to the Board.

Annual Charter School Visits

Academic Year 2017-2018

Purpose, and Background

PURPOSE: California Education Code (47604.32) requires authorizers to annually visit charter schools.

BACKGROUND: The Charter office offered schools options over a 30 day period, and sent instructions* to charter Principals, who made specified arrangements to minimize impact to their school schedule.

WCCUSD Board members and Area Director of California Charter Schools Association were invited to attend each visit. One visit included District site leadership.

- ★ Three hour visits took place beginning March 29, 2018, and were completed May 1, 2018.
- ★ 100% of visits included interviews with students, teachers, and principals.
- ★ 90% of visits included parent interviews.
- ★ 80% of visits included board interviews.

*(<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-2jMU07Wf7RNV1ypkMv58XQ2feLplxPT>)

Report Contents

REPORT CONTENTS: A synopsis for each school follows, and is comprised of “Wows!”, meaning exceptional practices or results, and “Wonders”, consisting of questions or concerns. Finally, the “Opportunities” section focuses on how charters and District schools can partner.

Charter staff have initiated contact, or completed actions to support partnership opportunities listed under “Opportunities”. Completed actions are marked with a checked box (☑). For actions not yet completed, the Charter office will work with CCSA Regional Director, and site leadership from Harding, Dover and Montalvin Elementary Schools to develop or complete further opportunities.

Manzanita Middle School

Wows

- ★ Engaged, empowered **parents and students**.
- ★ Dedicated and focused **staff and leadership**.
- ★ Calm campus, and positive culture.
- ★ Gains on SBAC.
- ★ **Families and students** value small school and class size, and close relationships between leadership, staff and families.
- ★ **Teachers** value collegiality and opportunities to collaborate.

Wonders

- Does staff have opportunities to leverage evident strengths in each department to encourage the culture of innovation throughout?

Opportunities

- ☑ Staff expressed interest in observing District Schools that have implemented Writers' Workshop.
- ☑ Montalvin leadership have expressed interest in touring Manzanita and RTA.
- ☑ Manzanita staff are interested in touring Aspire RTA to observe math instruction.
- ☑ Staff and leadership are interested in District process of sending tablets home with students.
- ☑ Arranged Science support for NGSS.

Aspire RTA

Wows

- ★ Shared Mission and Vision, well supported by site leadership.
- ★ Orderly and friendly environment, evidence of student engagement.
- ★ Commonly adopted processes and procedures insure efficiency and focus on learning.
- ★ **Parents** reported feeling welcome and included from staff, leadership and front office staff. Parents appreciate being “in the loop” on student progress.
- ★ Strong results on SBAC in math, and plans to bring Eureka Math.
- ★ **Students** report a high level of support and encouragement for learning.

Opportunities

- Arranged visit for Montalvin Principal to observe and discuss math instruction and curriculum.
 - Asked for K-2nd assessments, and Aspire principal agree to share (pending).
- Arranged visit for Aspire RTA teachers to visit Montalvin to observe Writers' Workshop.

Wonders

- Are limited opportunities for sports, enrichment and afterschool care a limiting factor in enrollment?
- Will Aspire RTA have support from the home office to develop a play yard?

Aspire Cal Prep Academy

Wows

- ★ Clear evidence of a strong culture of acceptance and unity.
- ★ Student Art aligns to theme of school, and work is well-presented throughout school.
- ★ Friendly and happy staff, despite significant challenges (several unexpected faculty deaths, doubling in enrollment, and numerous staff out on mat/paternity leave over the school year).
- ★ Unified focus and processes.
- ★ Students described warm and caring staff and leadership who hold high expectations and provide ample support.

Opportunities

☑ Leadership offered opportunity for District school students to engage in their college fair. Charter staff sent invitations to all Middle and Charter Schools.

Wonders

- Will the impact of the many unforeseeable challenges have an impact on student learning?
- Evidence of helpful grieving opportunities could be found throughout the school. How will staff, leadership and CMO central office insure that all are supported going forward?

Amethod BJE

Wows

- ★ Locally rooted **school leader** with extensive experience and skills.
- ★ Site leader implemented parent conferences, and intends to work at training teachers to work with parents.
- ★ **Students** feel engaged and challenged.
- ★ **Parents** report a high degree of satisfaction with teachers, and appreciate teacher warmth and innovation.
- ★ **Parents** report satisfaction with strict uniform policy (no nail polish, no earrings).

Wonders

- Can CMO actualize stated plans to create more diversity at the school?
- In what ways are parents allowed access to authentic, decision-making roles?

Opportunities

- ☑ Site leader is eager to work with other primary principals; Charter office will connect RCP, Harding and Dover.
 - ☐ Looking for strong assessments for early primary-- will arrange to share Aspire's once received.
- ☑ Wants to see Student-Led Conferencing; sent planning materials and arrange tour with Montalvin.
- ☑ Site leader would like to see Writers' Workshop in action, and interested in a tour of Harding Elementary.
- ☑ Would like to connect with other elementary school leaders around English Language Learner support (Dover).

A method RCA

Wows

- ★ Strong, warm and knowledgeable **principal** who supports staff empowerment and growth.
- ★ **Teachers** feel supported by site leader, and able to learn and develop.
- ★ **Families** feel that small size and strong staff/family relationships support student learning.
- ★ Classrooms show evidence of interesting, challenging projects.
- ★ **Student** work was neatly displayed throughout the campus.

Opportunities

- ☑ Mr. Taylor is interested in bringing student led conferences to the school, and has been put in touch with the two site leaders who have implemented this concept in WCCUSD schools.
- ☑ Charter staff provided materials for implementation of student led conferences.

Wonders

- In what ways is the CMO communicating issues and challenges to parents?
- How can board and CMO leadership increase transparency?

A method JHHS

Wows

- ★ The site is well-situated.
- ★ The building has been reconfigured in an innovative fashion, and allows observers to see into many classrooms. Similarly the central area appears to offer an useful location for all-school meetings or student projects.
- ★ The students were bright.
- ★ The teachers worked hard at providing students with a college preparatory education.
- ★ The program is ambitious.

Wonders

- With high teacher and leadership turnover, can the model be sustained?
- Lab-based Science courses did not appear to have any materials. Will this affect student understanding of how labs are conducted?

Opportunities

- ❑ Staff expressed interest in viewing other schools, and working collaboratively with other High School teachers in local charters and West Contra Costa Unified.

Leadership Public Schools

Wows

- ★ Calm, kind, purposeful and professional **teachers** and **leadership**.
- ★ **Students** reported a full measure of support balanced with high expectations.
- ★ **Families** appreciate the strong preparation for all students.
- ★ **Teachers** appreciated the high expectations and support at honing their craft.
- ★ A high degree of transparency permeates the organization; challenges and successes are shared openly.

Opportunities

- ☑ The organization noted a trend toward serving students who were already successful, and so developed a new lottery process to bring in students who are behind grade level. Next year the District can support this effort by providing data on student SBAC scores.
 - District and Leadership teachers have expressed interest in observing and collaborating.

Wonders

- Dr. Waters, Superintendent of LPS, has announced her retirement. Fortunately the organization's culture appears to have been codified into a set of effective practices and policies. What changes will new leadership bring?

Richmond College Prep

Wows

- ★ Orderly campus, clear behavior expectations, and consistent practices.
- ★ Shared vision and mission.
- ★ The school is educating a representative demographic population.
- ★ Student learning is evident from SBAC test scores.
- ★ Every classroom has an [aide](#) who actively supports student learning.
- ★ [Teachers](#) and aides report satisfaction in working conditions and site leadership.
- ★ [Students](#) felt supported and challenged.
- ★ [Parents](#) were committed and engaged.
- ★ Focus on Culturally appropriate pedagogy.

Opportunities

- ☑ Teacher-leads are interested in touring Harding to view Writers' Workshop practice.
- ☑ Board member expressed interest in learning about Summit platform. Charter office provided an introductory description and Powerpoint.

Wonders

- Board membership has been limited. Might new perspectives expand the reach of the program?

Summit Tamalpais

Wows

- ★ Shared vision and mission, upheld and supported by [leadership](#).
- ★ A culture of transparency-- challenges and successes freely shared.
- ★ Innovative and well-developed program and platform.
- ★ For [students](#) who appreciate and understand autonomy, an excellent option. For those who don't, an opportunity to learn it.
- ★ School building is innovative and effective, offering views into classrooms, open spaces for sharing student work, and collaboration.

Opportunities

Charter office has shared detailed information about Summit Platform with three local schools: two Traditional Public Schools and one Charter.

Wonders

- In what ways can staff and leadership build student capacity for self-direction for students for whom this concept is new?
- In what ways do local schools collaborate on local challenges?

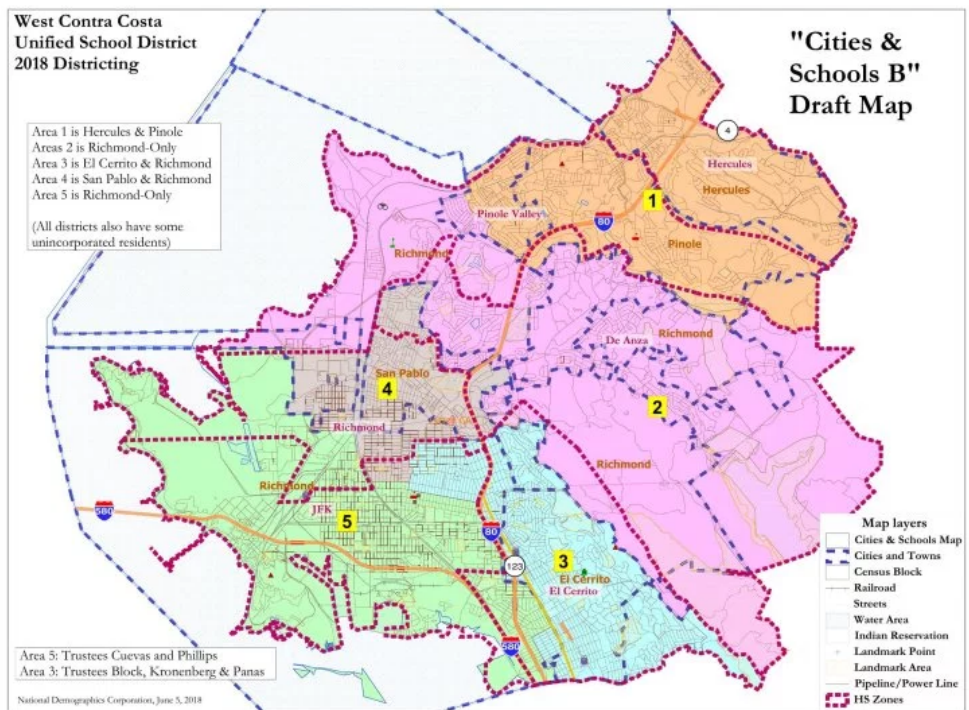
Public Records Request Log 2018 - 2019
Week Ending July 20, 2018

	Date of Receipt	Requestor	Requested Records/Information	Current Status
56	3/22/18	Scott Rafferty	Communications regarding CVRA allegations	3/26/18 Email sent with DOCs & Links 3/27/18 Email sent with DOCs & Links Gathering/Reviewing Documents
62	4/17/18	Scott E. Jenny Jenny & Jenny LLP, Attorneys	Pinole HS Project- Tree removal, trenching and hill excavation project between Subject Properties, 2059 Shea Drive and 2069 Shea Drive, Pinole CA	5/31/18 Email sent extending date Gathering/Reviewing Documents
65	4/27/18	J. Paul Fanning Lankford, Crawford, Moreno & Ostertag LLP	Richmond High School / Asbestos Records	6/8/18 Email sent requesting clarification in order to narrow search, per our Facilities Department 6/11/18 Updated/Revised PRR received by Requester Gathering Documents
67	5/9/18	David Stephan	Roster of all WCCUSD High School Faculty	5/15/18 Acknowledgement email sent
68	5/15/18	Scottie Smith Educational Advocate	Student/District Inter and Intra Transfers Data for each School Site / For School Years 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18	5/15/18 Acknowledgement email sent Gathering/Reviewing Documents
72	6/19/10	Pablo Portillo Polsinellie LLP	DeAnza High School-Cafeteria / Construction and/or Abatement Projects beginning in 1971 through 2001	6/19/18 Acknowledgement email sent 7/27/2018 DOCs available
1819-01	7/3/218	Jamie Lund - Freedom Foundation	A data set with a record for every 2017-18 employee represented by a labor union	7/12/18 - Acknowledgement letter sent
1819-02	7/11/18	Clare Wendt - mb public affairs	From 1/1/2007 to 12/31/2013 - 1. Internal Crime Statistics by school, year, type of crime 2. Incident reports/cases related to incidents/crimes at WCCUSD schools 3. Complaints and accompanying appeals related to student discipline, facility conditions, discrimination/harassment against students or staff	7/12/18 - Acknowledgement letter sent and 14-day extension invoked

BREAKING NEWS Death toll from Missouri duck boat accident climbs to 17

News

West Contra Costa Unified trustee map shuts out some, critics say



This map, approved by the West Contra Costa County Unified School board June 27, shows the proposed areas where voters will approve trustees. (Courtesy of WCCUSD)

By **ALI TADAYON** | atadayon@bayareanewsgroup.com | Bay Area News Group
 PUBLISHED: July 18, 2018 at 11:57 am | UPDATED: July 19, 2018 at 4:56 am

Local elections where candidates are elected by district in theory give more voice to minorities, but West Contra Costa Unified's proposed boundaries give wealthier, white candidates an advantage, critics charge.

The new set of geographic boundaries will go into effect in the November 2020 election. They create five areas within the district spanning from Hercules to Richmond and El Cerrito. Voters in each area will choose a school board trustee to represent their part of the district.

The first area includes Hercules and Pinole, the second the Hilltop district of Richmond as well as east Richmond and the third El Cerrito and Kensington. The fourth has the city of San Pablo and the unincorporated area of North Richmond, and the fifth includes southwestern Richmond, including Point Richmond and the Iron Triangle.

ADVERTISING



The school board approved the new boundaries June 27.

Previously, West Contra Costa Unified's five school board trustees were elected at large from voters in the entire district. The change was prompted by [lawsuits filed against the school board and other publicly elected entities](#) in the Bay Area challenging the fairness of at-large voting.

Anthony Caro, who is running for school board and frequently speaks at school board meetings, said he and others in the community are concerned over the boundaries designating the fifth area. It includes parts of Richmond such as Point Richmond and the Richmond Marina — which are more affluent and have more white residents — as well as the Iron Triangle, which is more working-class and mostly made up of Latinos.

“The fear is that it would be easier for (candidates from more affluent areas) to outspend any candidate in the area,” Caro said in an interview.

Caro had pushed for the board to adopt a different map presented to the school board titled “June 4” — the date it was created. That map puts Point Richmond and the Richmond Marina in the third area with El Cerrito. The remaining fifth area under that map would include the Iron Triangle neighborhood and the unincorporated community of North Richmond.

Caro lives in the Iron Triangle, and will be running to represent the fifth area.

“How am I supposed to compete with somebody in Point Richmond when it comes to spending money on campaigns?” Caro said at the June 27 board meeting, where the map was adopted on a 3-2 vote.

School board trustee Mister Phillips, who was elected in 2016 and voted in favor of the adopted map, said via email that keeping the Richmond Marina and Point Richmond in the fifth area is a good thing.

“First, there are critical resources in the Marina and Point that can benefit the rest of District 5. Second, I am not interested in excluding the Marina or Point because white people live there. I ran for school board to represent everyone. Third, I do not believe keeping the Marina and Point in District 5 will prevent minorities from being elected to that area. Black candidates have been running for school board and Richmond City Council for decades. The Marina and Point have always been in their district, and that has not stopped them from winning seats on the school board or council yet,” Phillips said.

The Contra Costa County Board of Education’s County Committee on School District Organization must approve the trustee areas. It will hold a public hearing on the boundaries at 6:30 p.m. July 24 at Lovonya DeJean Middle School in Richmond.

Tags: [Education](#)



Ali Tadayon Ali Tadayon is an award-winning journalist covering Oakland for the Bay Area News Group. He joined the team in 2017 after working as a crime reporter in Riverside and Idaho Falls, Idaho.

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