

West Contra Costa Unified School District  
*Office of the Superintendent*

**Friday Memo**  
**January 8, 2021**

**Upcoming Events – Matthew Duffy**

January 9: Board of Education Retreat, 9:00 AM

January 12: DLCAPS Meeting, 6:30 PM

January 13: Board of Education Meeting, 6:30 PM

January 15: Secondary Workday, No School for Middle and High School students

January 18: Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday, Schools and Offices Closed

January 20: Board of Education COVID-19 Study Session, 5:30 PM

January 27: Board of Education Meeting, 6:30 PM

**Next Week's Board Meeting January 13 - Matthew Duffy**

Closed Session will begin at 5:00 PM.

**Budget Development and Program Offerings - Tony Wold**

January begins the start of the process of developing the budget for the following school year. This week Governor Newsom releases his initial budget proposal and identifies the priorities as defined by the State. In a normal year, this proposal would then become the basis for planning how we would build staffing and budget scenarios for the following year as we closed out the current one. There are statutory notification deadlines of March 15th (Certificated) and April 30 (60-day notice for Classified) that school districts must follow to notify staff if there will not be the funding or defined work to maintain their position for the following school year. The District creates these projections based upon enrollment projections and the proposal submitted by the Governor.

This year, obviously things are very different but we are still required to maintain the same statutory deadlines. We anticipate that this year will be more fluid as we are monitoring the current increase in COVID cases across the nation, planning for possible return to in-person instruction, and building a plan for next year simultaneously. The number of variables in play right now make it difficult to be able to make decisions for the future, when the present itself is not clear. The District, however, must do both simultaneously and this requires staff and the Board to define the options that will become the foundation for staffing and budgetary decisions now to be able to have the time to begin the process for each within the statutory guidelines.

The next 4 weeks will have multiple check-points and opportunities to review ever-changing information and define the road ahead. The following is a brief outline of the major meetings and subjects that will be discussed:

Week of January 11

- Board Meeting - Discussion items on Distance Learning and Attendance; Programs options for 2021 - 2022; and opportunities for the long-term revenue generation for the district.
- DLCAP meets to begin process of outlining priority recommendations for the LCAP to be adopted by the Board in June

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- Staff attends the School Services budget workshop to review analysis of the Governor's budget proposal

Week of January 18

- Enrollment window for kindergarten and new enrollment for 2021 - 2022 opens
- Special Board Meeting on COVID-19: Presentations from County Public Health (Chris Farnitano, MD); UCSF Epidemiology (George Rutherford, III, MD); Policy Analysis for California Education (Benjamin W. Cottingham); and Forensic Facilities Review (Forensic Analytical Consulting Services and Keenan)
- Board budget subcommittee meeting

Week of January 25th

- Board meeting: Presentations on the State budget and current policy movement from Capital Advisors (Kevin Gordon); Strategic Educational Services (Dale Shimaski, Ph.D.) and District budget update
- District works on completing initial staffing allocations and program offerings for 2021 - 2022

Week of February 1

- Special Board Meeting: Discussion on COVID-19 and next steps
- Open enrollment window opens for families to apply for transfer and programs within the District

Week of February 8

- Board meeting - Presentation on budget and cash flow analysis and finalization of options for consideration for 2021 - 2022

The following week is Presidents week and then we move into the statutory reporting deadlines of March and April. The District would release staffing allocations to school sites and departments right after that break. Based on the timelines above the District must begin the process of determining the program options that guide staffing and budget decisions now in order to be able to provide the Board with the appropriate information to guide the District forward.

**Program Offerings for 2021 - 2022 - Tony Wold and Ruben Aurelio**

At the board meeting next week staff will present to the board several options for program implementations and possible enhancements. Among these options are the creation of a new K-12 virtual school and the addition of a new add-on program Academy focused on Visual and Performing Arts. In addition, staff will present the framework for the creation of focused Trades Academy. These program options are designed to sustain and attract enrollment and stabilize revenue for the District.

When building new programs the District can implement them in two ways:

- The first method is to embed the program or academy within a single (or several) schools. Families that are interested in this program option would need to apply for transfer to the school (if it is not their neighborhood boundary school). Examples of this are our Dual Language Immersion (Spanish and Mandarin), International Baccalaureate program, Internationals program, and our CTE pathways.

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- The second method is an add-on option. In this model the academy or program is still attached to a school site but the program offerings that begin within the regular student day extend into the afternoon. This extension allows for participation of students who attend other schools within the district. For example, at the high school level where a traditional 6-period bell schedule is utilized the add-on program/academy might begin in period 5 and run through period 8 or 9 each day. Students would be able to take their first 4 classes at one school and then complete their day within the add-on program. Add-on programs allow for greater access to specialized programs while maintaining the ability for students to also experience the benefits of a comprehensive school environment.

### **K-12 Virtual Academy**

As we plan for next year it is clear that a population of our students would benefit from, and choose to, remain in a distance learning environment for the 2021 - 2022 school year and beyond. The District plans to create a brand new stand-alone school that will be 100% distance learning. This school will be an option for all K-12 students within the District (and open for inter-district transfer students). To be able to implement this school we need to begin the planning process now and have it available as an open when the enrollment windows open up.

The district will assign and hire dedicated administrative and clerical staff to design and implement the program. As the number of students are defined through the enrollment process, staffing allocations will be created and we will follow the process of staffing to permanent WSD teachers to the school. The instructional model will be built collaboratively based upon the best practices that have been learned from the past 10 months of distance learning. This school will be a permanent option for students in West Contra Costa Unified and will have it's own CDS code with the State.

The funding for this school will be from normal ADA as students are identified and enrolled and the District believes that the inclusion of this school as an option for families will sustain, and possibly even increase enrollment in the coming years.

### **Academy of Visual and Performing Arts**

The District will present to the board the framework for the implementation of an add-on Academy of Visual and Performing Arts (APA) to possibly begin in a pilot phase in the 2021 - 2022 school year. This Academy would be open to students from all of our District High Schools through an application / audition process. There are several models of visual and performing arts programs across the State that will help guide the development of this program and we would work to build out the academy over the next couple of years.

When fully implemented the Academy would focus on both performance art and the behind the curtain functions essential to the industry. Students would be able to take classes and gain experiences in several pathways with the creation of courses and sequences that build upon each other. The long-term goal would be to also enhance the facilities that are utilized for the program to ensure that students leave the District having the practical application skills to move on within the profession.

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To visualize the potential of an academy we will need to identify a program lead and work with our entire stakeholder group to build out the departments that would be offered. Leaning on other models some of the following components could be built into the academy:

- Acting - for front of the stage/camera experiences
- Dance - for experience in multi domains include ballet, jazz, contemporary, hip hop, etc
- Popular Music - for experience in performing, as well as producing and recording original works
- Musical Theater - for experience in the full production of musicals
- Orchestra and Band - for experience in the full spectrum of performance music from pit orchestras all the way to modern rock bands
- Costume Design - research of eras and actual production and creation of wardrobe for period-centered productions
- Dramatic Production - the entire behind the curtain set of experiences including the writing, producing and directing of original works
- Media - the whole gamut of writing, creating, editing, producing, filming and broadcasting film and television productions
- Technical Theater - the functions necessary to produce theatrical productions
- Visual Arts - experiences in multiple genres of art including painting, drawing, and crafting of physical art

The goal of the District will be to define several of the components listed above to implement the beginning of the Academy in the upcoming school year with the goal of growing the Academy over the coming year. Based upon an analysis of the District facilities and student need the Academy would be housed within the Kennedy family of schools.

This academy would initially be funded using one-time funding that will be dedicated to the program with the goal of it being self-sustaining within 3 years from a combination of increased ADA enrollment and the possibility of revenue generation from initiatives with District facilities.

### **Trades Academy**

The District also believes that we should begin the planning process now for the implementation of a Future Technologies Academy. This would also be an add-on model to ensure broadest possible access for our students. The Academy would focus on skills development in high demand industry sectors within our region and emphasize strong relationships with labor and industry partners to develop pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship models that lead directly to post-secondary employment, if desired by the students.

The development of this will take time to plan and shape but could be designed with several potential focus areas including the following:

- Residential and Commercial Construction - with departments in Cabinetry, Millwork and Woodworking; Mechanical Systems Installation and Repair (ex. HVAC); and Plumbing
- Advanced Manufacturing - with departments in Computer Integrated Manufacturing; and Welding and Materials Joining
- Green Energy and Power Technology - with departments in Solar Power Systems

**COVID-19 District Protocols and Current Trends - Tony Wold (Michael Booker)**

As we turn the calendar into January and the focus toward potential re-opening and planning for the next school year we wanted to update the board on our current protocols in response to growing numbers of positive COVID diagnoses within the District and community. The District has created a dedicated email for reporting: [covid@wccusd.net](mailto:covid@wccusd.net) which immediately notifies our response team. We are seeing a very sharp increase in the number or reports from District staff who report being either exposed or testing positive as you can see in the chart below:

Month	Number of reported exposures / positive tests
August - October	10 - 15 each month
November	30
December	50
January (so far)	Already 4 cases of positive in the first two days back

These are staff cases that have been reports of exposure or positive cases. These numbers do not indicate whether or not they have been on site. The increase is related directly to the increase in community spread, which started in October and has been increasing rapidly.

**Overview**

COVID-19 is mostly spread by respiratory droplets released when people talk, cough, or sneeze. It is thought that the virus may spread to hands from a contaminated surface and then to the nose or mouth, causing infection. Therefore, personal prevention practices (such as handwashing, staying home when sick) and environmental cleaning and disinfection are important principles that are covered in this document. Fortunately, there are a number of actions school administrators can take to help lower the risk of COVID-19 exposure and spread during school sessions and activities.

Common COVID-19 symptoms among children include fever, headache, sore throat, cough, fatigue, nausea/vomiting, and diarrhea. However, many children and adults infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 are asymptomatic (meaning they have no signs or symptoms of illness).

The more people a student or staff member interacts with, and the longer that interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread. The risk of COVID-19 spread increases in school settings as follows:

- ❑ Lowest Risk: Students and teachers engage in virtual-only classes, activities, and events.
- ❑ More Risk: Small, in-person classes, activities, and events. Groups of students stay together and with the same teacher throughout/across school days and groups do not mix. Students remain at least 6 feet apart and do not share objects (e.g., hybrid virtual and in-person class structures, or staggered/rotated scheduling to accommodate smaller class sizes).

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- ❑ Highest Risk: Full sized, in-person classes, activities, and events. Students are not spaced apart, share classroom materials or supplies, and mix between classes and activities.

**Site Preparedness:**

- Covid Education/PSA- Placed on District webpage, Schools website and through district email communications.
- Current Guidance- Inline with CDC, CDPH and County PH
- Screening- Facilitron system using QR Code to track each person entering each site.
- Cleaning- Following CDC guidance each site is cleaned and sanitized using prescribed clean solutions and cleaning methods before and after reported exposure cases.
- Anonymous Hotline (Phone line)- used for reporting non compliance with Covid protocols.

**District Safety Department Personnel (Covid response);**

- Contact Tracing Team- 5 nurse 6 LVN document required information regarding a Covid exposure or confirmed case.
- Covid Response Team- District Operations Director, Communications Director, District Safety Coordinator, CSO Supervisor, District Nurse and Facilities Director.

**Current Notification Procedure (Covid-19):**

1. The site leader or their designee shall notify the Districts Safety department ([Covid@wccusd.net](mailto:Covid@wccusd.net)) with the information requested. The contact tracing team will gather more information and stay in touch with the person to provide further assessment and instruction if and when appropriate.

**Covid Documentation Questions:**

Date Reported

Location

Name

Date Last on Site

Date of Test

Test Results

Date of Symptom Onset

Name of Contact Tracer/Nurse performing assessment

Close Contact Notification (if/when necessary)

Closure Necessary (in consultation with county and district admin)

Cleaning Necessary

M&O Notification

Date Area Cleaned

Report to County for positives (if/when infectious during last date on site)

**In Person School Response (If needed):**

2. The Safety Coordinator or designee shall activate the Covid response protocol using a One Call system
3. The CRT shall respond to the incident location and evaluate the situation

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4. If needed, the Emergency Management Team (EMT) shall respond to the Command Center (FOC building) and initiate the Incident Command System (ICS)
5. The EMT will operate under the National Incident Management System (NIMS) for all emergency situations
6. The districts CRT will work with the schools admin to resolve the critical incident
7. Once the incident is resolved the school principal shall submit an After Action report within 72 hours
8. The After Action report should be reviewed by the EMT for debriefing purposes.

**Summary and Logistics of Covid Tracing Team:**

Intake/notification of exposure or positive case is sent by supervisor (or staff member in collaboration with supervisor) using the site assessment tool/flow chart to Covid email. The email is constantly monitored by trained nurses throughout the work day, and occasionally after work hours. Nurses perform risk assessment and gather information directly from the person(s) that reports exposure or a positive test using current public health guidelines and makes recommendations based off of those guidelines. The recommendations, which may include deep cleaning or quarantine recommendations for high risk contacts when needed, are sent to department heads pertinent to the situation. Communications are then given to site supervisors to distribute to others on site that may have been affected by the situation if needed after a positive case at their site.

All cases that come in are charted and monitored, and are confidential to only the public health nurses on the team and pertinent supervisors/directors.

A district nurse reports positive cases to County Health when the positive case has been on a site while infectious and collaborates with them throughout the entirety of the case.

The team is currently in the process of expanding this month onboarding a few District LVNs and other District RNs as the cases and responsibilities have been increasing.

**Risk Assessment:**

- Facility inspection- Safety Coordinator conducts risk assessment for safety readiness and procedural compliance after a confirmed Covid case at a site.
- Infected Person Contact- The contact tracer/nurses connect with the infected person and gather the required information for documentation purposes.
- Safety Guidance- The Safety Coordinator/ team makes recommendations regarding policy/procedural concerns.

**Debrief:**

Operations Director, Safety Coordinator, District Nurse and Principal will debrief events within 7 days to garner any learning from the event and course correction that can be made.

We are sharing this information to assure the board and community that the District is following the best practices and guidelines from public health in ensuring that our employees are safe in our facilities. We will continue to work with all of our stakeholders to maintain this safety focus and will address

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non-compliance with safety protocols by employees within the district with warnings and progressive discipline for acts of non-compliance that put others at risk up to and including potential termination.

**Contracts Update 1/8/21 – Tony Wold (Mary Kitchen)**

The January 13<sup>th</sup> board summary has 4 items for review

The Special Education Department is bringing forward one contract

- Stepping Stones Group, formally known as 101 Therapy Staffing Solutions, is being increased by \$67,640 to provide an additional Special Education Teacher. [Link to additional information](#)

The Community Engagement Department is bringing forward one contract

- The City of San Pablo grants a mix of staffing and program funding to Bay Area Community Resources (BACR) to support the implementation of community schools at all San Pablo schools, Bayview, Dover, Downer, Helms, Lake and Riverside, through the San Pablo Beacon Community Schools Initiative. Beacon community schools focus on (1) improving School Culture & Climate where 90% or more of the participating students will report that they feel safe in their programs, that programs help them try harder in school, and that they can go to an adult in their program for advice; and (2) Beacon community schools will improve Health & Wellness by infusing physical activity and healthy eating into school events where at least 200 students and 50 families participate. [Link to additional information](#)

The Information Technology Department is bringing forward one contract

- Dell EMC will provide a data backup solution to ensure safe and secure district data. The Dell Backup solution will provide 4 appliances that make it easy to administer overall, replicate to the cloud, and to recover quickly in the event of an incident. Additionally, one of the appliances functions as a vault, keeping the golden image of servers from being attacked by ransomware while also employing automated integrity checks to determine whether data has been impacted by malware. [Link to additional information](#)

The Human Resources Department is bringing forward one contract

- Teach for America: Pursuant to the Educational Professional Agreement between Teach for America & the West Contra Costa Unified School District 2018-2021. The District will pay TFA for placement and ongoing professional support of teachers at \$5,000 per teacher for the 2020-21 school year. This is year three of a three year contract previously board approved on 12/6/2017 for the three year combined total. [Link to additional information](#)

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**Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment - Rubén Aurelio (Gabriel Chilcott & Team)**

**Science - John Iwawaki & Team**

Freshman Physics

One of the many differences in New Generation Science Standards (NGSS) is a shift toward an emphasis on scientific practices and concepts and away from memorizations of formulae. This shift pushes Physics courses toward a more skill-based conceptual approach. One positive outcome of this shift is increased accessibility: because Physics must no longer be a high-level course intended only for college-bound upperclassmen, all high school students may take Physics, allowing all students access to all standards. As neither the [NGSS Standards](#) nor the [CA Science Framework](#) implies a hierarchy or progression for high school courses, science courses can be taught in any order.

Many across the state (including four sites in WCCUSD) are taking advantage of this opportunity to provide freshmen a Physics course that covers universal concepts like force, motion, and energy. The idea is that these tangible, directly investigable concepts are more developmentally appropriate than the molecular processes of Chemistry or Biology. 9th graders benefit from studying topics that they can hold, alter, repeatedly test, and directly relate to their own lives.

The NGSS course Physics of the Universe offered in WCCUSD is appropriate for any level of high school student, and while intended to be rigorous, does not require math concepts beyond those learned in middle school. The decision to move Physics of the Universe to ninth grade has been made at the site level, with support from the site administration, science department chairs, and Teaching Leading and Learning/CIA staff. While we have been supportive of this shift, we are aware of Human Resources / credentialing / staffing issues, among other factors, and have made an effort not to be overly prescriptive.

**Assessment - Gabriel Chilcott & Team**

Winter Assessment Windows

The assessment team has been working hard to support our schools in designing and delivering a system during distance learning. Below you will find a chart with the dates of the upcoming winter assessment windows for all levels. We are excited to capture a second set of STAR data for Reading and Math as this will allow us to compare scores and better understand our growth this year. This is a difficult year, where every system has to be flexible to respond to the needs of our school communities. As this is the second administration this year, we expect a much smoother testing experience and more useful data.

Level	Assessment	Dates
Elementary	Level Chinese Reading Assessment #2	1/19-2/5
	STAR Reading, STAR Math, #2	1/19-2/5
	Foundational Literacy Skills #2	1/25/2-12
	Reading Record #2	2/22-2/26
Middle/K-8	STAR Reading, STAR Math	1/19-2/5
High	Reading Inventory #2	1/11-2/5
DeAnza, El Cerrito, Richmond	Math IAB #2	2/1-2/26

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**College & Career - Rubén Aurelio (Allison Huie & team)**

**Business and Industry Partnerships Lead to Opportunities for Students - Allison Huie & Team**

A critical component of [high-quality Career and Technical Education](#) programs includes nurturing strong relationships with business and industry partners. These partnerships benefit students by providing opportunities for students to engage in a variety of authentic work-based learning experiences. At the same time, our business and industry partners benefit by helping to develop their future workforce.

In a recent example, Headstream, one of our Information & Communications Technology partners, launched an exciting new opportunity for students in our Information Technology pathways. This program is recruiting students who have ideas about how to utilize the internet for youth health and wellbeing. Headstream staff is looking for young people who have a vision of how the internet can be a more beautiful place for youth to join a new, student-driven tech incubator. Selected WCCUSD students will participate alongside other students throughout the United States who are working on innovations that address an aspect of youth wellbeing, especially issues specific to Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and LGBTQIIA+ youth. Participating students will be eligible to earn \$1,500 for their efforts.

Know of a business that you think would make an amazing partner? We encourage you to share [this link](#) widely with all of your networks. Interested individuals can complete a quick survey to let us know how they might be able to help.

**COVID Conditions Continue to Impact UC/CSU Admissions - Allison Huie & Team**

We have seen numerous impacts on college and university admissions processes in recent months in response to our current health crisis. Fortunately, many of them actually benefit our current high school seniors. Both UC and CSU have delayed their system-wide admissions deadlines at least once this season to better accommodate potential applicants' successful submissions. Most recently, CSU announced Tuesday 1/5/21 that 18 CSU campuses are still accepting applications for Fall 2021 admission.

Additionally, CSU released the following statement regarding their plans for returning to in-person learning:

“In keeping with previous efforts to provide current and prospective students and families with information, clarity, and time to plan, the California State University (CSU) has announced that it is planning for an anticipated return to delivering courses primarily in-person starting with the fall 2021 term”.