

West Contra Costa Unified School District
Office of the Superintendent

Friday Memo
March 12, 2021

Upcoming Events – Matthew Duffy

March 12: Board of Education Closed Session, 8:00 AM
March 12: Facilities Committee Meeting, 3:00 PM
March 12: CAC Meeting, 5:00 PM
March 13: Board of Education Closed Session, 8:00 AM
March 15: Charter Committee Meeting, 4:00 PM
March 16: Agenda Setting, 4:00 PM
March 19: Budget Committee Meeting, 3:00 PM
March 22: Academic Committee Meeting, 4:00 PM
March 23: DLI Committee Meeting, 4:00 PM
March 24: Board of Education Meeting, 6:30 PM
March 25: MDAC Meeting, 6:00 PM

African American Student Achievement - Rubén Aurelio (William McGee & team)

Black/Afrocentric Academy

This is supported by the resolution to support Black/African American students.

The need:

According to standardized data such as test scores, suspension, socio-emotional, and others, many of our Black/African American students have more challenges, more than their peers, in traditional schools in the WCCUSD. Suspensions, exclusion from class, and academics have proven challenging for a majority of the students. Standardized testing illustrates the need.

The process:

There have been several community meetings pertaining to this topic ([link](#) to meeting schedule here). Staff from the OAASA attended one meeting with the community group that has discussed the school. There was discussion of three options: a charter school; a district affiliated school; or a district school. The OAASA has sought information about what meetings have occurred with the community to see about joining with the effort.

The OAASA has engaged in the discussion as a department. There have been three informal conversations about the process of starting a school from the ground up.

1. Discussed as a department.
2. Worked with the community to ascertain the work they have done already.
3. Discussed with the AASAT and presented the concept at a meeting.
4. Held informal discussions, exchanged emails, and phone calls with a provider to gauge the process to begin a school from the ground up.
5. In January 2021, district staff proposed new and future school projects, inclusive of a Black/Afrocentric school.
6. Reviewed a proposed timeline for school development.

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Proposal:

Engage in a contract for the remainder of the 2020-21 SY with EdMetrix to assist us with the forming of the school. When progress is made, engage in a contract for the 2021-22 SY in order to open the school in August 2022. The OAASA will work with EdMetrix to engage with the community and the WCCUSD on getting the Afrocentric school open in August 2022.

English Learner Achievement & Literacy - Rubén Aurelio (Christi Roscigno & team)

EL planning documents

1. We are still working on our [Draft WCCUSD Three Year plan](#). This is a big picture guiding document around EL services. MDAC has given input that has strengthened the plan, and CDE has approved it as a part of the FPM clearance progress.
2. A complimentary plan, the Master Plan for English Learners (MPEL) is in need of an update (the last version was updated in 2012). We will be working with MDAC to rewrite this plan so that it encompasses all EL supports we are actualizing. The MPEL provides guidance and is also an operations manual.

College & Career Professional Learning During Distance Learning - Rubén Aurelio (Allison Huie & team)

Most aspects of the education world have looked different this year due to the unique needs and challenges of distance learning. One area that continues to be a bright spot for our College and Career Pathway Programs is professional learning. The distance learning environment has challenged everyone to find ways to offer professional learning experiences in new and innovative ways. Being able to engage in these experiences virtually, and many times on-demand has been beneficial in many ways. We don't have to worry about travel expenses, which comes with the added bonus of not being limited in scope of "where" we're looking for professional learning opportunities. We can *go* as far as we'd like - virtually! We are also finding that people are more likely to attend outside-of-school-day sessions virtually when they don't have to leave the home office, or fight traffic. Our Department seeks out high-quality professional learning experiences that meet established needs and curates a running calendar as well as [a weekly newsletter](#) for staff and we provide support to get teams registered. In the first semester alone, our College and Career calendar included over 200 professional learning opportunities.

In a recent example, a team of site and central staff members are participating in a series of experiential "site" visits with Porterville USD titled *College and Career Readiness through a Linked Learning Approach: A Virtual Site Visit with Porterville Unified School District*. Participants are excited to get to interact with Porterville students and key leaders to hear about how this District is implementing career and technical education to positively impact students, as well as to network with other school sites from across the nation. You can view overview agendas of the visits here: [Day 1](#) and [Day 2](#). Opportunities like this, where we get to learn from the successes of other Districts, allow us to identify and apply key learnings that will support us to continue our ongoing work of building and sustaining world-class, high-quality College & Career Pathway programs in WCCUSD.

We are also excited to learn from these visits additional ways that we can share our own successes with colleagues through professional learning opportunities. Recently, a cross-curricular team of teachers from

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WCCUSD presented at the CDE's annual [Educating for Careers](#) conference. Pathway Lead Teachers from different sectors to share their experiences of building and maintaining a professional community, even at a distance. Their session, titled [Connection, Curiosity, and Collaboration Through the Practice of Public Learning](#) highlighted how attendees could implement Public Learning to support their pathway Professional Learning Communities and was a smashing success.

Curriculum Development Team - Rubén Aurelio (Gabriel Chilcott & Team)

As part of our recent presentation on Ethnic Studies the [Course Catalog](#) was discussed as the place to go to find out what offerings we have across our district. These are classes that are currently available at our schools. In addition, the UC A-G course management portal was discussed as a place to look for courses that are not offered in the district but might be relevant as we explore new course offerings. As an example, as we expand our Ethnic Studies offerings, the first step is to collaborate on what already exists in the district to see if another school has a course that can be replicated at another site. If there is not an internal course that fits the need, the team could expand the search to the UC catalog to see if another district has a course that can be used as a model for the creation of a new course in the district.

Math Department - Rubén Aurelio (Gabriel Chilcott, Mark Lobaco & Team):

Detracking-The math department continues to work to align our middle school curriculum to state recommendations. To that end, we are prioritizing the three middle school math classes and will not offer on-site Algebra for the 21-22 school year. [Here is a letter](#) that explains the rationale and advancement pathways for students who wish to accelerate their math instruction.

Special Education - Kristen Hardy

Student registration for Extended School Year (ESY) will begin next week. Planning for Extended School Year 2020-21 is moving forward quickly. The special education department engages in a personalized process to support families to register their students for ESY. Case managers of students with ESY on their IEP will be contacting each family individually to walk through the registration process and ensure that they understand the program and transportation options. Case managers will have the support of interpreters for families whose home or preferred language is other than English. This process was begun last year in order to reduce literacy and technology barriers for families, and to ensure that eligible families are aware of ESY programs and options being offered. Our goal is to have completed the student registration process by April 2, 2021.

Due to current health and safety guidelines, the structure of ESY will be hybrid. Students will attend in person teaching for 2.5 hours per day in very small classes (6-8 students) with one teacher and 3 paraprofessionals. This will support intensive, small group, customized instruction to support our students with Extensive Support Needs (ESN) and those with Mild Moderate Support Needs (MMSN) who spend a majority of their day in self-contained special education settings, to re-enter the routines of school. In order to maintain stable cohorts, students will receive their designated support services, such as speech, occupational therapy, adaptive PE, etc. virtually, along with additional asynchronous learning opportunities for an additional 2.5 hours per day for the 20 days of ESY. Students with 1:1 aide support in their IEP will receive this support both in person and during virtual instruction, per their IEP / ISLP.

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For the purposes of the IEP, “hybrid” is considered Distance Learning and ESY services will be described in the Individual Student Learning Plan that accompanies the IEP. Each student will receive all services and support in their IEP as closely as can be provided to the IEP, based on health and safety guidelines.

We have worked with site principals to run our MMSN and ESN programs from preschool to Transition (students aged 18-22) on 12 campuses. Job postings will be released by the Human Resources Department over the next couple of days for certificated and classified staff.

For students with transportation in their IEP, parents will be offered the option of having their students transported by bus with First Student, or they can receive mileage reimbursement if they choose to drive their student. First Student must submit a plan for student transportation that complies with all county health requirements.

Identifying a student as disabled and requiring special education is a significant decision which will alter a student’s school experience. Our team takes this decision very seriously. We are also recruiting additional staff to form assessment teams for summer. The department has been collaborating with families to conduct virtual assessments all year for both initial evaluations and triennial reviews. Our team has researched and trained in new virtual assessment protocols that are valid and reliable under the current conditions. However, there are some evaluations that require in person assessment to gather comprehensive data to determine eligibility and student needs. As we look forward to transitioning back to in person learning, summer is a time when this data can be gathered to be current and informative for teams at the start of the school year. The department will be prioritizing assessments that require in person assessment for student planning for fall. Summer assessments will be conducted at district campuses following safety protocols and with proper PPE provided to staff.