

West Contra Costa Unified School District
Office of the Superintendent

Friday Memo
November 13, 2020

Upcoming Events – Matthew Duffy

November 17: Special Board Meeting, 5:00 PM
November 17: Black Student Engagement, 6:15 – 8:00pm
November 17: Facilities Meeting, 3:00 – 5:00pm
November 18: Board of Education, 6:30 PM
November 23-27: Thanksgiving Week, No School
November 26-27: Thanksgiving Holidays, Offices Closed
November 30: Agenda Setting, 4:30 PM
December 3-4: CSBA Annual Education Conference (Virtual)

Next Week’s Board Meeting November 18 - Matthew Duffy

Closed Session will begin at 6:00 PM.

No Friday Memo on November 27 - Matthew Duffy

Because district offices will be closed during the Thanksgiving holidays, there will be no Friday Memo on November 27.

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

Math - Mark Lobaco & Team

The math team has created a new Math Power Half Hour PD on math language routines and co-crafting questions shared with teachers in November.

STEM - Mark Lobaco & Team

In celebration of Native American Heritage Month, the STEM department is sharing [these slides](#) highlighting our indigenous heroes!

Assessment - Stephanie Hearne & Team

The CAASSP Interim Assessments testing window for ELA and Math has opened for High Schools on the block schedule.

2020 STAR Results - Gabriel Chilcott & Team

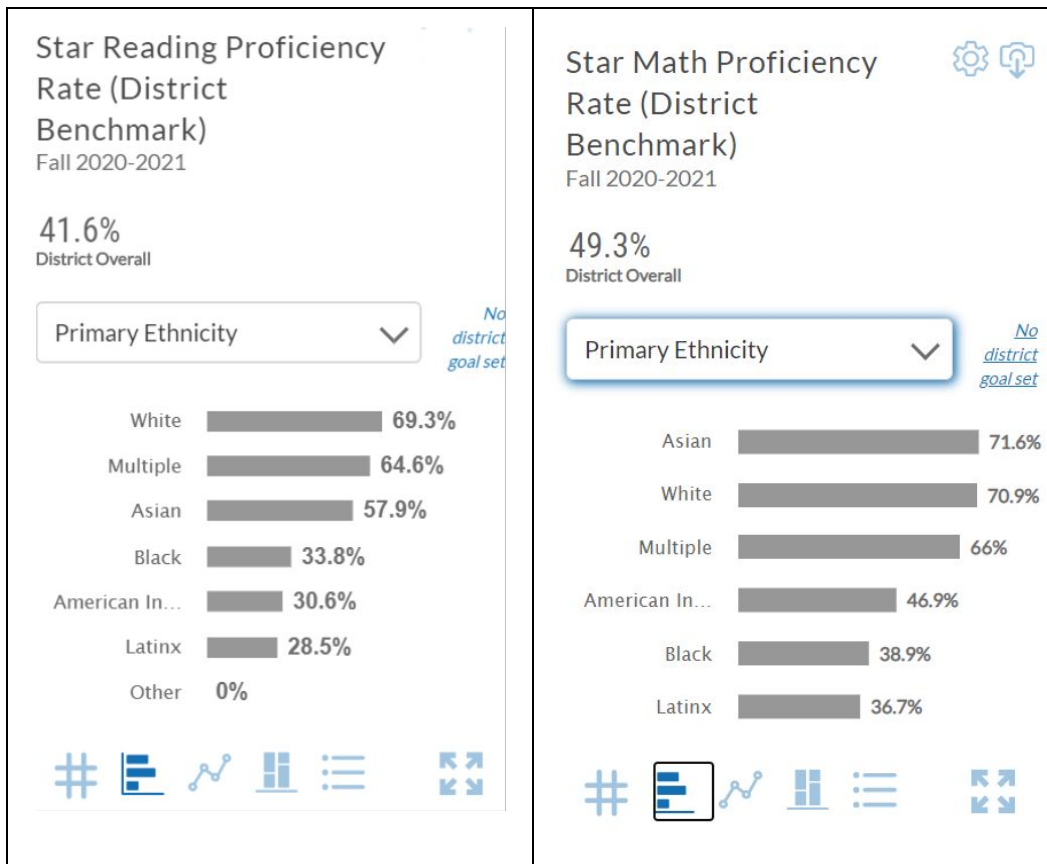
In comparing the last five years of STAR Reading, the scores have held steady the previous four years, and there is a significant jump in scores this year. The manner of test delivery was quite different this year, with most schools opting to deliver the test asynchronously. This test was also timed in past administrations. This may indicate that test anxiety was lessened. Although some work on interpreting the data is still needed, it does indicate that learning loss has not been as significant as feared in reading. The overall number of students assessed fell by less than 10% due to the new systems of delivery and an issue with the testing window. These issues have been resolved, and the total number should be comparable in future administrations.

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Overall

	Fall 16-17 ↑↑	Fall 17-18 ↑↑	Fall 18-19 ↑↑	Fall 19-20 ↑↑	Fall 20-21 ↑↑
At/Above Benchmark	36.3%	35.8%	35.8%	36.6%	41.6%
On Watch	14.7%	14.2%	14%	13.6%	13.8%
Intervention	20.6%	19.9%	19.4%	18%	17.5%
Urgent Intervention	28.4%	30%	30.9%	31.9%	27.1%

The STAR proficiency rates, in both Reading and Math, show disproportionality among our student subgroups. This disproportionality is an area of focus with resources targeted toward intervention. An example is the adoption of the Freckle platform and associated small group work coordinated by the OAASA department.

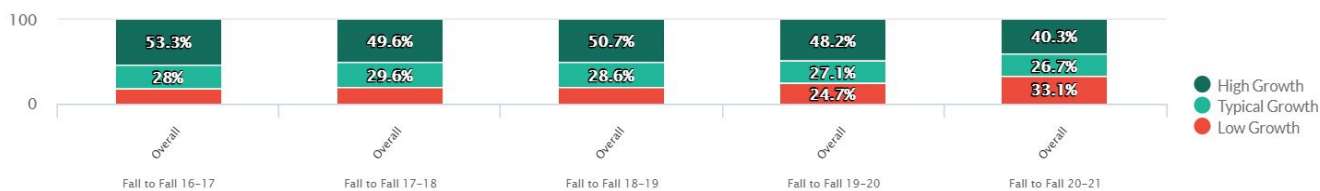


As with overall STAR scores above, when disaggregated by EL students, there is a clear trend of improvement. The nature of the data set is such that this is not entirely conclusive, but it does indicate that learning loss has not been severe.

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Overall – Compared By: EL Status

	Fall 16-17 ↑↑	Fall 17-18 ↑↑	Fall 18-19 ↑↑	Fall 19-20 ↑↑	Fall 20-21 ↑↑
At/Above Benchmark - English Language Learner	5.3%	3.7%	5.3%	8.8%	15.2%
On Watch - English Language Learner	6.9%	7.6%	7.5%	9.3%	12.1%
Intervention - English Language Learner	21.8%	22.2%	23.6%	21.1%	21.6%
Urgent Intervention - English Language Learner	66%	66.6%	63.6%	60.7%	51%
At/Above Benchmark - Unknown	38.7%	39.9%	42.1%	45.9%	53.3%
On Watch - Unknown	15.3%	15%	15.3%	15%	14.5%
Intervention - Unknown	20.5%	19.7%	18.5%	16.9%	15.7%

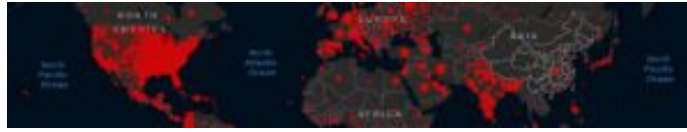


Career & Technical Education during Distance Learning - Rubén Aurelio (Allison Huie & team)

Along with many opportunities, distance learning has brought a host of challenges. The challenge is how to continue offering the skills-based and hands-on experiences that are often industry-specific via a distance learning format. Students in our College and Career Pathway programs typically participate in these activities in specialized laboratories, classrooms, and workshops, often utilizing sophisticated tools and equipment.

Another example of how CTE teachers and the College & Career staff are working tirelessly to reimagine and reconfigure what high-quality CTE learning looks like in this new environment comes thanks to a joint partnership between WCCUSD’s Department of College and Career, Contra Costa County Office of Education (CCCOE), and the Bay Area Bioscience Education Community (BABEC).

CCCOE and WCCUSD are part of the state’s K-12 Strong Workforce Program, which provides grant funding to support CTE initiatives in the K-12 schools. Some of this funding is being used to provide teachers with access to a host of online lessons designed for remote learning developed by BABEC. Recently, students in Richmond High School’s Public Health Pathway participated in BABEC’s COVID-19 Pandemic Project.



[COVID-19 Pandemic Project Video Overview](#)

This is an inquiry-based project that prompts students to explore the epidemiology of COVID-19. To begin, students learn about the epidemiology of COVID-19 and then develop their own inquiry question that will be the focus for the rest of the project. The project encourages students to interrogate the information they receive through media sources and to examine, analyze, and interpret data. In the final activities, students use what they have learned to devise an answer to their inquiry question and then create a media piece (infographic, poster, slides) to convey their learning. We are looking forward to students engaging further in project-based exploration of this real-world public health issue when BABEC releases its upcoming COVID-19 testing lab simulation.

Virtual African American Male Symposium - Rubén Aurelio (Allison Huie & team)

WCCUSD students are invited to participate in Contra Costa College's annual **African American Male Symposium** virtually. The event will take place on **Friday, November 13th from 10am-12pm**. The symposium is geared towards High School students and will focus on Real Estate, Financial Literacy, and a Focus Mindset. [Register Here](#)

CTE Public Policy Alert - Rubén Aurelio (Allison Huie & team)

On Tuesday, Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education (Labor-H) Appropriations Committee Chairman Roy Blunt (R-MO) [released](#) his proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Labor-H appropriations bill, which included a **\$75 million increase for the Perkins Basic State Grant**. This bill will serve as a negotiating position for the Senate as it works with the House on final FY 2021 appropriations bills. The House passed its education appropriations bill in July with a smaller, \$18 million increase for Perkins.

After years of declining federal support for CTE, the past three federal budgets (FY18, FY19, FY20) have included modest increases for the Perkins Basic State Grant program. Your advocacy these past few years has been critical to securing increases in Perkins funding, and so we need your help again to ensure that Congress understands the important role CTE plays during these challenging times and the need for significant additional resources.

[We encourage you to click here to ask your policymakers to support the Senate's proposed \\$75 million increase in funding for the Perkins Basic State Grant program in FY 2021.](#)

Members of Congress prioritize action requests from their constituents, so contacting them makes a huge difference. Through your work on a daily basis, you can provide a critical viewpoint on why they should be prioritizing CTE and workforce programs during this pandemic. We highly encourage you to customize the sample letter to include information or personal stories related to what your school, district, or community are facing in light of the pandemic and why Perkins funds are critical.

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Office of the Superintendent

You can also call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121. An operator will then connect you with your requested office. This can be particularly effective if you have a contact in the congressional office that you can ask for directly. For sample talking points, please see below:

- CTE will play a critical role in helping our nation's economy recover from the pandemic, which is why Congress should prioritize funding the Perkins Basic State Grant program in FY 21.
- Significant investment in the Perkins Basic State Grant program is needed to help upskill and retrain the over 40 million Americans who are out of work. Many of these jobs are likely to be significantly changed or impacted as a result of Coronavirus, requiring workers to garner new skills to remain competitive.
- CTE is proven effective. Nationwide, CTE concentrators' graduation rate is 10% higher than their more traditional counterparts.
- FY 2021 must include a significant investment in CTE to ensure that CTE programs have the capacity and resources to nimbly and adequately support urgent workforce needs in local communities.

Learner-Centered Design - Rubén Aurelio (Sarah Breed & Alison Makela)

Our Grading for Equity professional learning continues. Session two occurred on Friday, November 6th as part of the District's Race and Equity series for all WCCUSD staff. The session focused on the Bias Resistance Pillar of Equitable grading. Participants explored individual and institutional bias and the impact on student learning. Key concepts about averaging, late work, participation, and effort were unpacked. Following the morning session, elementary teachers were allocated time to work on narrative report cards. All teachers will participate in site based follow-up sessions to explore bias in grading practice, review the pillars of equitable grading, and to analyze current grading practices by grade level or department. The [Grading for Equity- Site Based Follow-Up Powerpoint](#) and [Grading for Equity- Site Based Follow-Up Lesson Plan](#) are linked here for reference. Our next District level session is Friday, January 8th, 2021.

Elementary and secondary principals engage in ongoing monthly public learning sessions facilitated by Lead by Learning, formerly Mills Teacher Scholars. The session on Thursday, November 5th, included a reflection on student engagement in Distance Learning. Principals bring data to each meeting to reflect on in consultancies. Many principals brought first quarter grades to the November session. The impact of collaborative inquiry and public learning is highlighted in the September issue of the Lead by Learning newsletter [Shifting Toward Equitable Grading Practices](#). El Cerrito High School Principal Patty Crespo is featured.

Principals from the 18 school sites who have been awarded Hewlett grants for Learner Centered Design are participating in the Equity Centered Deeper Learning Community of Practice. The session on November 9th supported site leaders to reflect on the vision of their project through a race and equity lens. Smaller collaboration groups were formed based on the focus of school site projects. An overview of the [Deeper Learning School Projects](#) is here. We look forward to highlighting site journeys to becoming more Learner Centered.

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**English Reclassification process for 2020-2021 completed for Board review and approval -
Rubén Aurelio (Christi Roscigno & team)**

We have completed the process to ensure our eligible English Learners are reclassified in the 2020-2021 school year per the parameters outlined by the CDE. This process was done in collaboration with our colleagues from the Special Education department. The updated English Learner reclassification criteria will come to the Board as a consent item for approval at the November 18, 2020 board meeting.

The elementary grade section needs revision to reflect the grading policy changes due to distance learning in the spring, and our grading MOU approved this fall.

Contracts Update 11/13/20 – Tony Wold (Mary Kitchen)

The November 18th board summary had 4 items for review

- Bay Area Community Resources will provide mental health staff to provide therapy, case management, family support and resources networking to youth and families through the telehealth and phone platforms at Pinole Valley High School. Mental health counseling and case management to help students to develop healthy coping skills and resiliency that strengthens their ability to navigate life and school challenges and to achieve success in many domains.

Community Engagement is bringing forward one contract

- East Bay Center for Performing Arts will provide their in school Music program which provides arts instruction to 100% of students at King, Michelle Obama, Nystrom, Downer and Stege. Grant students in TK-3rd grades only will be participating.

The Technology Department is bringing forward one contract

- Infinity Communications and Consulting will assist the school district with their community connectivity project for a wireless network proof of concept. Infinity will work with the school district, and the cities of Richmond and San Pablo to define the physical parameters of the installation. They will assist in the creation and posting of the RFP and review all bid documents in order to provide an evaluation for each bid.

Expanded Learning is bringing forward one contract

- Youth Code Now that is sponsored by the West Contra Costa Education Fund will introduce Elementary School Children to their first computer programming and coding experience to inspire them about computer programming. Programs will occur during the after school period and serve students at seven (8) sites: Chavez, Grant, King, Obama, Nystrom, Stege, Downer and Dover.