

West Contra Costa Unified School District
Office of the Superintendent

Friday Memo
January 13, 2023

Upcoming Events – Kenneth Chris Hurst Sr., Ed.D

January 13: End of Second Quarter

January 16: Martin Luther King Holiday (No School)

January 17: Secondary Work Day (No School Middle and High School Only)

Next Board of Education Meeting/CBOC January 18, 2023– Kenneth Chris Hurst Sr., Ed.D.

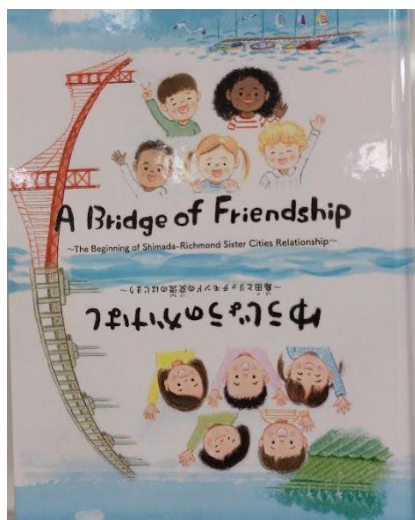
Special Education Updates & Events- Sonja Neely-Johnson, SELPA Director

- **International Teachers-** Anticipating 27 teachers total
 - 5 have already arrived; 2 are cleared to start working this week
 - 22 tentatively arriving January 16th.
 - International Teacher Institute scheduled for Wednesday 1/18 -Friday 1/20 from 8:00 - 3:00 at Serra Adult Education Center
- **Special Education Parent Conference,** Saturday, February 11, 2023 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. Breakfast, lunch and childcare provided. Dr. Mary Bacon - Keynote. Registration should be available online beginning 01/11.
- **The You Make a Difference Awards Ceremony** will be held March 10, 2023, at DeJean Middle School, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Nominating committee meeting 01/12. Letters will go out to honorees and nominators by 01/13. Returning Guest MC - Tom Vacar-KTVU

Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment STEM- LaResha Huffman (Gabriel Chilcott & team)

Library Services - (Francie Kunaniec & Team)

In 2021 the city of Richmond celebrated the 60th anniversary of its Sister City relationship with Shimada, Japan. The Shimada Foundation published a children's picture book to commemorate this partnership. Copies of *A Bridge of Friendship: The Beginning of the Shimada-Richmond Sister Cities Relationship* are being sent to WCCUSD's 18 Richmond elementary school libraries this month. The English / Japanese bilingual book honors decades of international friendship, in addition to providing an historical perspective of local government activities.



**Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Early Learning/Early Literacy/TK-12
Literacy/OAASA- LaResha Huffman (Elizabeth Henry & team)**

On January 10, 2023, the WCCUSD Literacy Department hosted an afterschool PD session for TK/Kindergarten teachers on the engaging use of decodable texts, leveled texts, browsable nonfiction & wordless picture books to support foundational skills instruction. 20+ teachers left the session energized and with a number of supportive instructional strategies to use with students.

WCCUSD Literacy Department met with site leaders to recommend the use of Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) as an instructional tool for grades 3-11 to ensure students are building confidence, stamina and familiarity with the online test taking platform and teachers are provided valuable information about students' strengths or needs in relation to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Resources and tools were provided to leaders to engage teachers around which IABs will be administered and how students will interface with the platform. Communication will also be sent directly to teachers and office hours/ training will be held.

Upcoming Professional Learning:

SIPPS 101/Launching SIPPS Professional Development 1/18/23, 3:15-4:45pm
This session is designed for teachers and administrators just getting started with SIPPS.

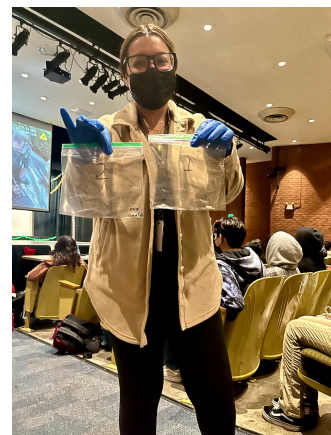
Literacy PD for 1st/2nd Grade Teachers, 1/24/23, 3:00-5:00pm
This session is specifically designed for 1st/2nd teachers, and is facilitated by Teachers College Staff Developer Sarah Mann.

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College & Career - LaResha Huffman (Allison Huie & team)

RHS Health Academy Students get real world training from San Pablo PD

Before the Winter Break, the San Pablo Police Department trained RHS Health Academy students how to administer the life-saving overdose medicine, Narcan.



As part of their in-class unit on the brain, addiction, and overdoses, students got to hear from Officer Banayat (8 years), Sgt. Blaisdell (12 years), and Officer Martinez (5 years) about their experience in the field with drugs in our community, overdoses, patrolling, helping juveniles, and their careers in law enforcement.

As part of the presentation, students learned about the very real danger that opioids like fentanyl present nationwide and in our very own communities. They learned that these controlled substances can be very difficult to distinguish from others and often contaminate other substances so that individuals aren't even aware of ingesting them until they overdose. As part of their certification, students got to practice administering Narcan to the class mannequin, Ms. Keisha!

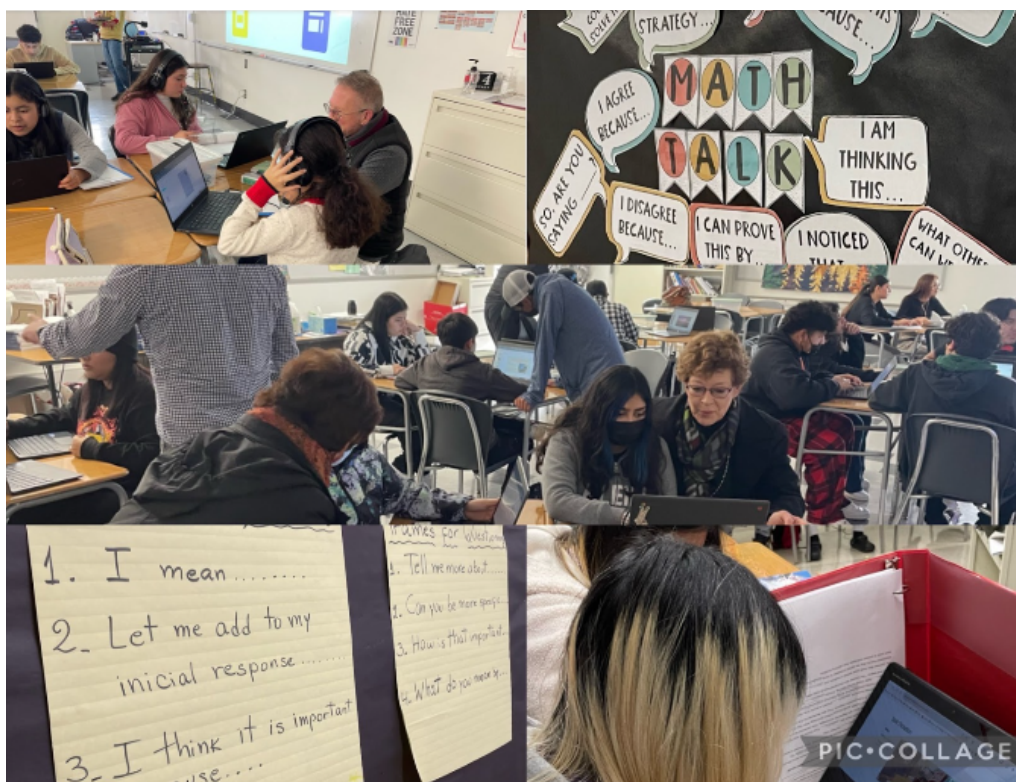
The importance of addressing the opioid epidemic, and the dangers of fentanyl specifically, with students was addressed by our state Superintendent, Tony Thurmond, in a [CDE press release](#)

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earlier this year. The training that students in the RHS Health Pathway received is one positive step in addressing this real problem facing our communities and youth.

English Learner Achievement - LaResha Huffman (Esaul Orozco & team)

The EL Achievement Team visited Newcomer Academies at Helms and RHS with the new Internationals Network director and coach. Students were completing their end of semester projects and getting ready for their academic goals reflection presentations. Our team observed strong academic students' conversations and engagement.



The EL Teacher Leader CoP meeting this week was also a success! Thirty participating teacher leaders are nearing specialist status with Elevation data and EL focus strategies.

Family & Community Engagement - LaResha Huffman (Martine Blake & team)

Community Schools - Shakira Reynolds

On December 15, FACE, in partnership with Public Advocates and Bay Area Coalition for Education Justice, hosted our second Impact Education workshop. We discussed the [Transformative Family Engagement Standards](#), and in breakouts, reviewed the [Six Root Causes of Ineffective Family and Student Engagement](#). The youth breakout group was facilitated by the Student Board Trustees. We will be planning a third workshop, which we expect to hold in late March/Early April to solicit further ideas on strengthening WCCUSD's areas of need and further connect this to our Community Schools initiative.

Expanded Learning - Kasey Blackburn-Jiron

The Expanded Learning Office is currently reviewing data from summer 2022 as part of its planning process for summer 2023. Last summer, using both ELO-P and 21CCLC funding, the Expanded Learning Office served 1,967 students through a combination of 8 full-day summer camps operated by youth-serving community partners; 8 half day summer programming at district summer school sites; and 7 community based summer programs. Participation was highest amongst rising Kinder through rising 7th graders (ELO-P funding is for TK-6th grade). Demographic data shows 55% of participants were Hispanic/Latinx; 19% Black; 13.6% API; 4.7% White; 2% Native American/Alaskan Native. This summer, the Expanded Learning Office will be partnering once again with community partners and WCCUSD's Curriculum INstruction and Assessment Departments to offer a combination of summer programming options with the goal of serving 3,000 students district wide.

Positive School Climate & OAASA- LaResha Huffman (LaShante Smith)

Attendance and Enrollment

The Attendance and Enrollment team partnered with the Communications Department to begin an enrollment campaign. We know that our schools offer valuable programs and services, and we want to highlight our schools to all of the families in the West Contra Costa Unified School District, including the families we may have lost to surrounding schools and districts. In addition to working with site admin on promotion materials, we are exploring the following recruitment strategies:

- Strategic mailings and outreach to families
- Direct mail campaign
- Ad placement in local publications
- Press Release to media outlets
- Ad at Department Motor Vehicles El Cerrito
- Attendance at the WCCUSD Enrollment Fair
- Radio Ads
- Billboards
- Social Media Advertising

In addition, we have moved the IntraDistrict transfer application round to coincide with the Open Enrollment period which begins on January 17th, 2023. This means that families will be able to enroll in our district **AND** apply to another school within our District **at the same time**. We are hoping this streamlined process makes it easier for families. All families will receive notification of school placement or waitlist status

Ultimately, we want to continue to showcase all of the wonderful opportunities for students in the West Contra Costa Unified School District.

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Chronic Absenteeism

"80% of success is showing up!"- Attendance Works

We know that student achievement is limited when students do not attend school on a regular basis. We also know that the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to impact student attendance.

As part of our campaign to increase attendance, we are working with school sites to complete attendance conferences. Attendance conferences allow school staff to connect directly with students and families to understand the root cause of their excessive absences. This information helps the school site to provide interventions, supports, and resources to the student and family. In addition, attending conferences are an excellent way to build relationships and connect directly with families. Further, we are finalizing a contract with Counseling Options and Parent Education (C.O.P.E.). The partnership with C.O.P.E. will allow us to provide intensive support to students who have not responded to site level interventions.

TK-12 Schools - LaResha Huffman (Keisha Joyner, Koy Hill & Summer Sigler)

2023 California Distinguished Schools

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond announced that more than 350 elementary schools have been selected for the prestigious 2023 California Distinguished Schools Program. California Distinguished Schools represent examples of not just excellent teaching, learning, and collaboration, but also highly successful, data-driven school efforts ranging from professional development for educators to mental health and social-emotional wellness strategies to address the needs of students and families.

Congratulations to **Kensington Elementary** and **Madera Elementary** for receiving the California Distinguished School Award!

School Spotlight: Montalvin Manor K-8

Montalvin Manor K-8 held its 6th Annual Toy Drive giveaway. The event was hosted by Coach Pete and Nelda Welten, Office Clerk; the volunteers are former WCCUSD Graduates. Thank you to everyone who helped make this happen for the students, Coach Pete and Ms. Welten for hosting, and the alums for your generosity in giving back to your community.

