

West Contra Costa Unified School District
Office of the Superintendent

Friday Memo
November 10, 2023

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

November 10: Veteran's Day Holiday - No School

November 13: CBOC Meeting, FOC, 6:00-8:00pm

Next Board of Education Meeting November 15, 2023 – Kenneth Chris Hurst Sr., Ed.D.

College & Career - Sonja Neely-Johnson (Dr. Allison Huie & Team)

Girls Lead The Way - PMS and PVHS Girls at Chevron Headquarters

Students from Pinole Valley High's Engineering Academy and Pinole Middle's Design & Modeling course returned for the annual "Girls Lead The Way" event at Chevron Headquarters in San Ramon. The event matches girls in 8th and 9th grades from articulated schools using Project Lead The Way (PLTW) course curriculum. The students heard guest speakers with backgrounds in Physics and Engineering, Dr. Crystal Bray and Dr. Maliika Chambers. Then they partnered with other female professionals (from Chevron and IBEW for example) on an engineering challenge involving electrical circuits.



Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment STEM- Sonja Neely-Johnson (Dr. Gabriel Chilcott & Team)

Assessment Department

Congratulations to El Cerrito and Hercules High Schools which were both named to the AP School Honor Roll.

The AP School Honor Roll recognizes schools whose AP programs are delivering results for students while broadening access. Schools can earn this recognition annually based on criteria that reflect a commitment to increasing college-going culture, providing opportunities for students

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to earn college credit, and maximizing college readiness. Here is the complete list of the [2023 AP School Honor Roll](#).

Positive School Climate/Student Recruitment & Retention - Sonja Neely-Johnson (LaShante Smith & Team)

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

The first meeting of the MTSS/PBIS district level team came together during training as part of our work with the California Integrated Supports Project (CA-ISP) this week. The work will include professional development in culturally relevant and sustaining practices, trauma informed practices, and social emotional learning. In addition, the project will provide systemic support that is grounded in MTSS and PBIS evidence-based practices and data for equity practices that serve the whole child.

Student Recruitment and Retention

Professional Development Opportunities:

In response to the ongoing need for professional development, capacity building, practical tools, and resources designed to strengthen team culture and increase site staff knowledge to support the diverse student population, the Student Welfare and Attendance Team has partnered with the Contra Costa County Office of Education to host a variety of trainings for school site staff at our upcoming School Attendance Review Team Collaborations in November and December.

On November 15th and December 20th, the [SART Collaborative](#) will facilitate professional development during the morning session of the collaborative and will continue to conduct its regular collaborative discussion in the afternoon as scheduled.

Truancy Reduction Efforts:

In an effort to ensure site staff serving the School Attendance Review Teams (SARTs) have continuous support, Truancy Technicians have offered over 50 individual site training opportunities and have successfully conducted 1:1 training sessions with 20 school site teams.

Currently, eleven SARTs have achieved a 100% truancy conference completion rate and have addressed and closed all attendance conferences in the Attention 2 Attendance (A2A) intervention queue. In addition, there are seven SARTs with a 75% and higher attendance conference completion rate.

Lastly, as of Wednesday, November 8th, 27 students at the highest tier of truancy intervention (Letter 3 in A2A) have reflected attendance improvement.

Communications

Legislative Updates:

Counseling Not Criminalization in Schools Act

“The Counseling Not Criminalization in School Act” would prohibit the use of federal funds to maintain police presence in schools and instead provide \$5 billion in new grant funding to help schools hire more counselors, social workers, and other mental and behavioral health personnel as well as implement services in schools that create positive and safe climates for all students. The Counseling Not Criminalization in Schools Act would:

- Prohibit the use of federal funds for maintaining police in schools: Since 1999, the federal government has spent more than \$1 billion to increase the number of police in schools. However, evidence does not show this investment has improved student outcomes and school safety. This legislation would prohibit federal funds from being used to hire or maintain police in K-12 schools, diverting that funding toward other uses related to school safety within applicable grant programs.
- Invest billions to help schools hire counselors, social workers, and other trauma-informed support personnel necessary to create safe, supportive learning environments for all students: The legislation helps schools build safe and positive learning cultures by establishing a new \$5 billion grant program to support the hiring of counselors, social workers, school psychologists, and other personnel. The grant would also help schools implement programs to improve school climate, such as school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports, and invest in trauma-informed services and professional development. As more schools move away from policies that criminalize students and push them out of school, this historic investment will ensure districts have the resources to provide students with the supports they need to feel safe in school and thrive.
- Incentivize states and school districts to end the criminalization of young people, particularly Black, Native American and Latino students, immigrant students, students with disabilities, LGBTQ+ students and other historically marginalized students, and instead invest in safe and nurturing learning environments where all students thrive.