

West Contra Costa Unified School District
Office of the Superintendent

Friday Memo
October 1, 2021

Upcoming Events – Dr. Kenneth C. Hurst

October 6: Board of Education, 6:30 PM, DeJean Middle School

October 11: Citizens Bond Oversight Committee, 6:00 PM

October 11: No School (reserved day)

October 10-16: Week of the Administrators

Next Board Meeting October 6 – Dr. Kenneth C. Hurst, Sr.

Closed session will begin at 5:00 PM.

Tick Tok Challenges Superintendent Message - Kenneth C. Hurst Sr., Ed.D.

As you know, the safety of our staff and students is our highest priority. As your Superintendent, I take any possible threats very seriously and I wanted to make sure you were aware of recent “challenges” that have been appearing on social media that threaten our staff members and the safety of our schools.

The “Devious Licks” trend on the social media network Tik Tok encourages young people to engage in violent and destructive behavior on campus, while filming themselves. Previous challenges have involved stealing and destroying school property. Students across the country have been engaging in this trend, and getting arrested. It is completely wrong and destructive behavior that puts our staff in harm's way, and it won't be tolerated.

We recently became aware that the October “Devious Licks” challenge on Tik Tok is to slap a teacher or a school staff member. We have heard from teachers in our own district who are concerned about our students engaging in this trend. The safety of our staff and students is our top priority, and we take any possible threats very seriously.

This issue is urgent, and I want to make clear to the Board of Education, our staff, students and families that we take this very seriously. This is a dangerous challenge, and we have encouraged all staff to be vigilant, look out for one another, and report any incidents of violence.

Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Early Learning/Elementary- LaResha Martin (Christi Roscigno & team)

In collaboration with the Department of English Learner Achievement, the Literacy team was pleased to host the 1st ever TK-12 Language and Literacy Teacher leader professional development on September 28th. Focus of this collaboration was to strengthen support for our emergent bilingual students, increase ties between language and literacy for our students and collaborate with one another in order to support all WCCUSD teachers with service for our English Language Learners.

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

September in Review Update

Focus Areas: (EL Instruction, Assessments, Interpretation/Translation)

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Instruction

Focus: Site Support, Curriculum, and Ellevation

Considering the teacher shortage, the EL Achievement staff focused on supported sites as teacher and principal substitutes. Additionally, staff supported with assuring teachers and students had district approved curriculum, both hardcover and online access. Furthermore, a new data platform for ELS called Ellevation has been launched. Ellevation supports teachers and schools to create and implement EL instructional plans.

Difficulties: Having all of our staff substituting at the beginning of the year made it difficult to provide coaching to teachers and EL site professional development (PD) planning. Furthermore, PD once school began there is lower turnout than previous years. Teachers and administrators have reported limited time and capacity.

Successes: PD prior to the school year was high, especially for Ellevation. This training is essential and a good start for Ellevation to be a useful tool for site and classroom instructional planning.

Key Data:

- 56 site administrator, 100 teacher leaders participated in initial Ellevation PD trainings (5 thus far)
- 100% of ELD secondary teachers have access to the online National Geographic ELD curriculum.
- As of 9/24 most EL Achievement members have returned to assigned roles of Coordinator, IS, Coach. Still have a coach serving as a substitute teacher.

Assessments: Initial ELPAC Assessments

Focus: Home Language Review (HLS) and Initial ELPAC testing.

All out of state new student district enrollees completed a HLS which helps inform our district if a student is an EL. This review process identifies new English Learners, their English proficiency and potential class placement. All Initial ELPAC assessments are administered by trained RAP Center Testers.

Difficulties: The high turnover rate of testers and student absences (potentially due to covid) have made completing the Initial ELPAC assessments more difficult. Furthermore, no Initial ELPAC testing was administered in the month of July because we prioritized the extended window for Summative ELPAC testing which connects directly with an ELs opportunity to be reclassified.

Successes: Even with the difficulties, we are on pace to completing Initial ELPAC testing by our early October goal.

Key Data:

- 1010 **(87% complete)** Initial ELPAC assessment completed for English Learner Placement
- 126 Initial ELPAC assessments to be completed by October 4th

Interpretation & Translations Services

Focus: Covid Communications, District-Wide/ Large School Events, Timely Requests

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A large portion of translation requests are for Covid Communications. This additional type of communication has made it essential that other requests are made in a timely manner 7 days in advance.

Difficulties: Currently, we are in search of Cantonese and Khmu translators. Our past providers have become inconsistent or unavailable.

Success: Available translators/ interpreters have made themselves available during the weekend to support essential covid communication tasks.

Key Data:

Interpretations	Translations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 87 interpretation requests● 78% of request completed● 100% of request completed 7 days in advance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 58 translation requests● 52 of request completed● 89% requested completed

More Data:

- Translations/Interpretations provided in 8 languages: Arabic, Hindi, Portuguese, Punjabi, Spanish, Tagalog, Urdu, Vietnamese
- Chief Translator Interviews have begun and are ongoing

Coming in October:

- Year PD Offerings
- ELAC & MDAC formations
- MPEL review sessions
- SRI and Early Reclassification

Kennedy & Richmond High School Site Specific Facility Master Plan Update - Luis Freese

Staff completed the procurement process for site-specific facility master planning services at Kennedy and Richmond HS. The procurement process included a formal request for qualification, proposals, and interviews with site principals and facilities staff. Staff is recommending approval of two contracts one for each site at the upcoming Board meeting on October 6th. The funding for the contracts is part of the existing Board-approved site budgets for Kennedy HS and Richmond HS. The site-specific facility master planning process will include data gathering, site investigations, community and stakeholder engagement, development of school space program and goals, options developments with cost estimates, and will result in a final recommendation to the Board.

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West Contra Costa Schools In the News: September 27-October 1 - Communications Department

September 25, 2021

Richmond Confidential: [We look to you for bold leadership': WCCUSD board president asks county health officer for vaccine guidance](#) - Buddy Terry

"The West Contra Costa Unified school board president is urging the county health officer to issue guidance on a COVID-19 vaccine mandate for the school district. Phillips asked Farnitano to exercise his legal authority "to issue official guidance or orders regarding a COVID vaccine mandate for all schools in our county as you said you would." In his Facebook post, Phillips said Farnitano had previously sent him a letter in support of a possible vaccine mandate."

September 26, 2021

Richmond Confidential (via Instagram) - [WCCUSD Teachers have filed a complaint with California over COVID safety concerns](#)

Frustrated with the lack of protocols to protect staff and students from COVID-19, West Contra Costa County teachers have filed a state workplace complaint against the school district. The complaint was filed on Aug. 31 with the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health.

September 29, 2021

The Mercury News - [West Contra Costa Unified may be next in mandating COVID-19 vaccines for students](#) - Shomik Mukherjee

"West Contra Costa Unified is considering joining a few other East Bay school districts in requiring students 12 years and older to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. West Contra Costa Unified's proposed mandate would exempt anyone with legitimate medical reasons for not getting the shots. Everyone else 12 and older would need to receive their first dose no later than 45 days from the date the resolution is adopted and a second dose no later than 75 days afterwards."

September 30, 2021

Fox KTVU 2 - [West Contra Costa Unified School District issues mandatory student vaccination rules](#) - Debora Villalon

West Contra Costa is the latest school district to adopt mandatory COVID-19 vaccination for students. The vote came close to midnight after a marathon meeting in Richmond on Thursday evening. "First and foremost, it's about safety," said Superintendent Chris Hurst, who has championed the mandate to the Board of Education.

KRON4 - [West Contra Costa Unified School District approves vaccine mandate](#) - Sara Stinson

Another Bay Area school district is putting a COVID-19 vaccine mandate in place not only for staff but for students as well. For students ages 12 years and older, they must show proof of their first shot by November 15 and their second shot by December 15.

But if a student does in-person extracurricular activities – they must get their first vaccination shot by November 1 and second dose by December 1. Once they turn 12, they must receive their first dose no later than 30 calendar days after their 12th birthday, the school district said.

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NBC Bay Area - [West Contra Costa Unified Passes Student COVID-19 Vaccine Mandate](#)

The West Contra Costa Unified School District board voted in favor of a student vaccine mandate during a special meeting Thursday night that showed parents were split on the issue.

The Richmond Standard - [WCCUSD meeting to discuss vaccine mandates for students, staff](#)

The West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) has scheduled a special board meeting tonight at 6:30 p.m. to discuss a hot topic of concern to local families: potential COVID-19 vaccine mandates for students and staff, as well as others closely associated with the district.

CBS News - [West Contra Costa School Board Votes to Mandate Vaccine for Staff and Students](#)

The West Contra Costa Unified School District voted on whether or not to mandate COVID-19 vaccination but the controversy wasn't just about the mandate. The school board broke the issue down into three motions: 1) a vaccine mandate for staff, board members and volunteers 2) vaccination requirement for vendors and 3) vaccinations for students. The first two passed easily but the thornier issue was mandating vaccines for students. Late Thursday night, the board passed the mandate for students as well.