

Galt Joint Union Elementary School District
Board of Education
“Building a Bright Future for All Learners”

Board Study Session
Wednesday February 12, 2020

Galt Joint Union Elementary School District
1018 C Street, Suite 210, Galt CA 95632

Board Members Present

Grace Malson
Thomas Silva
Wesley Cagle
John Gordon
Matthew Felix

Administrators Present

Karen Schauer
Lois Yount
Claudia Del Toro-Anguiano
Donna Mayo-Whitlock

MINUTES

- A. Study Session** was called to order at 6:02 p.m. followed by the flag salute.
- B. Public Comments**
 - 1. There were no public comments.
- C. Session Goals to Advance District Direction**
 - 1. Review and discuss CalSCHLS survey and Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Karen Schauer: The District is working to be thoughtful and strategic in light of a new 3-year LCAP cycle. She welcomed Dr. Lesli Poyner, CalSCHLS State Coordinator, Health & Justice Program, and Brent Malicote, Prevention & Early Intervention Director, Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE).

Leslie Poyner: Presented information on the California School Climate, Health, and Learning Survey System (CalSCHLS). She shared reasons why districts may collect this data. They include Tobacco-Use Prevention Education (TUPE) funding, Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) funding, Bullying Prevention, Suicide Prevention, and School Safety Plans.

Ms. Poyner: Described the Maclean’s Triune Brain. She identified the areas of the brain representing survival, emotions and thoughts. She indicated students cannot learn if they don’t feel safe because they will be stuck in a state of fight, flight or freeze. They cannot learn if they do not feel connected to the school and cared about by the teachers because they will be focused on being loved and accepted. However, when students feel they are safe and loved, then they are ready to learn.

Ms. Poyner: Described Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. They include, biological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, cognitive, and self-actualization. She indicated when these physiological needs are addressed, a student is motivated by values which transcend beyond the personal self.

Ms. Poyner: Described HALTS learning. She indicated students cannot learn if they are Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired or Scared. She indicated data from the survey may provide information on these areas that could be shared with parents.

Ms. Poyner: The trends are almost the same over time. When students have a teacher, who cares about them they are more likely to believe they can achieve academically, they skip school less and they are less likely to feel unsafe at school. She indicated that as School Climate Index (SCI) scores increase so do Academic Performance Index (API) scores. Additionally, California high schools that do better (Beat the Odds), then would be predicted on their standardized test scores based on their student demographics have extraordinarily more positive climates than those that don't. Consistently, the poorest performing schools have the poorest climates. Ms. Poyner stated all things being equal if school climate is positive, school academics will be higher.

In conclusion as to why Collect CalSCHLS Data. Ms. Poyner indicated the most important reason why is to inform districts about their system of universal supports provided for all students. Their data can help them identify which supports are robust and which supports need strengthening.

Ms. Poyner: Described what CalSCHLS Data Shows. She indicated data allows districts to get a picture of the supports they provide to all students. CalSCHLS starts with three data points: caring relations, school connectedness, and school safety. All three areas are foundational to promoting a climate of academic achievement. Ms. Poyner referenced selected GJUESD LCAP Goals and Actions as they relate to questions on the survey. She indicated areas where there may be room for growth.

The Board took a few minutes to review the summary sheets and select one action to discuss further.

Wesley Cagle: The middle school summary asks the question, "the school encourages me to know and use my strengths". GJUESD has invested significantly in strengths-based learning, however the numbers don't seem to correlate with what we are doing.

Ms. Poyner: Just because we know what we are doing, it does not mean students know what we are doing. Sometimes it means asking the question differently. She would recommend that the district form a focus group of students for whom school is not working and find out what it would be like for them if the adults knew what they were good at.

Ms. Poyner: Once districts have examined their data, CalSCHLS helps them act on their data.

John Gordon: There does not seem to be a consistent way in how strengths is recognized or implemented across the District.

Grace Malson: Has grant information related to students and vaping she would like to give Karen Schauer to review to see if it is an appropriate fit for GJUESD.

Karen Schauer: Looks forward to receiving information from Grace Malson. Additionally, she indicated that McCaffrey Middle School has installed a vape detecting

system in student restrooms.

John Gordon: Referenced meaningful participation. He indicated perhaps adults and students have different perceptions of what is meaningful.

Ms. Poyner: Acknowledged that possibility. She indicated there are so many layers to what kids consider to be meaningful. It has been a struggle for public schools for decades.

John Gordon: How does cultural diversity affect equity.

Ms. Poyner: Addressing cultural diversity is a tremendous challenge across the nation. She indicated that most teachers tend to look like her, white. These teachers are working with children of many different cultures. Perceptions are different. When teachers like me are working with brown and black students it is incumbent upon the adult to understand cultural differences.

John Gordon: So much of what we have worked towards is personalization. The culture part is very difficult. Because we are personalizing learning we may not be addressing equity because we need to be culturally competent.

Ms. Poyner: Latino students are less likely to say they have an adult at school that cares about them because of a cultural mismatch. She stated that white students have an automatic advantage over students of color because they are more likely to be a cultural match with their teacher.

Grace Malson: We are personalizing learning academically but we really haven't talked about diversity.

Ms. Poyner: It is hard work but it can be done. One way to do it is to get to know the kids in your class. She understands it is more of a challenge for middle school. She referenced learning resources such as the Climate Connection Toolkit by WestEd to help address this specifically.

John Gordon: Sometimes there is a perception that we treat all schools similarly except middle school. The support systems could look quite different.

Karen Schauer: We are also talking about equitable, differentiated learning that includes special education.

Grace Malson: Referenced the custom questions in the survey. She indicated there seems to be a disconnect in personalization efforts when students have multiple teachers like in middle school.

Karen Schauer: McCaffrey Middle school has had a leadership exploratory class. This year, there is also a cross-section of students that reflect the true diversity of the school that meet regularly called MAC. The students have gone through a strength-based learning process to hone in on areas they are interested in or concerned about at school.

Brent Malicote: This is a way of truly bringing kids together to make their voice the

fabric of the school.

Jennifer Collier, Extended Learning Supervisor: The leadership exploratory consists of approximately 50 students. They created matrices of things that are important to them with action plans growing district ideas.

Karen Schauer: There is a theme of wellness to support every student as learning is social, emotional and academic. We are trying to tap into what youth are thinking about this.

John Gordon: Asked Claudia Del Toro-Anguiano to share the difference between elementary and middle school as she has served as principal for both grade ranges.

Ms. Del Toro-Anguiano: Culturally, when you are in a self-contained classroom you feel more connected to a teacher. She indicated there are things middle school teachers can do to develop connections such as pronounce a student's name correctly. There are things we do better to serve the needs of all children such as serving everyone the same lunch regardless of socio-economic status but how do we address the needs of all students when the majority of staff are white and the majority of children are brown?

Leslie Poyner: It may be helpful to include students with challenges into the leadership committees at the middle school as they are the ones that will go out and message what is happening at the school.

Ms. Poyner shared resources information from californias3.wested.org/tools.

Ms. Del Toro-Anguiano suggested a restructure of middle school advisory time could accomplish more with middle school children.

Lois Yount shared the DELAC committee highlighted Valley Oaks elementary as a school that recognized the dominate culture of the school. Since those students are going to go to the middle school, how do we level that up.

Ms. Poyner: We need to equitably promote a culture that is not white so it better validates black and brown students.

Karen Schauer: Tom Silva, John Gordon, and superintendent attended the Sacramento County School Boards Association Dinner recently. One of the speakers was Kristen Wright, State Director of Special Education. Ms. Wright emphasized: equity equals inclusion and access. While we are talking about ethnicity and race, we are also talking about special education reform.

Tom Silva: The special education module results do not reflect some of the public comment discussions the Board has had about special education over the last year.

John Gordon: Sometimes when you make a change it takes several years to see positive change. Historically, special education has been an area that needs a lot of tender loving care. He was not overly surprised by the results.

Karen Schauer: Survey information was highlighted at a special education meeting with over 30 teachers. There are areas we need to work on. The District has increased

collaboration time and has increased resources reflected in the LCAP.

Ms. Poyner: Shared additional resources information from selcenter.wested.org. to support students with trauma in their history.

Grace Malson: Do middle school students participate in service learning projects the way elementary students do?

Karen Schauer: that is the promise of the MAC leadership committee at McCaffrey.

Jennifer Collier: AVID students are working on a census project.

7:41 p.m. Break

7:52 p.m. Meeting resumed.

Karen Schauer: The District is going through a process to really look at prioritizing and further reform to move forward more effectively. A theme for improvement is the area of social emotional learning. There is an intersection of reserves and best practices when it comes to high needs learners. She asked Mr. Malicote to talk about how the district can consider data with strengths to advance social emotional learning.

Brent Malicote: Thanked the board for inviting him. He indicated these are really courageous conversations to have at a public meeting. He indicated he has served as Director of Standards Support Office at the California Department of Education (CDE) and a school principal prior to his current employment. He stated the CA Social and Emotional Learning Guiding Principles were created by a team he served with at the CDE. The team considered creating standards but educators felt the new accountability system, the Common Core State Standards enough. The team created guiding principles. The principals is 1.) Adopt Whole Child Development as the Goal of Education 2.) Commit to Equity 3.) Build Capacity 4.) Partner with Families and Community and 5.) Learn and Improve. He indicated so much more needs to happen and school climate really matters.

Mr. Malicote: Clearly the Board is committed to equity. The next step may be to create a policy. He quoted an associate SEL Director from Chicago "SEL shouldn't be one more thing on the plate, it should be the plate". The commitment to equity means everyone gets the same approach to education. SEL is a framework the district can use when thinking about equity.

Mr. Malicote: Shared information from CASEL, The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, practical ways to introduce and broaden the use of SEL practices in classrooms and schools. He indicated its about putting people in a place they want to come back to next time.

Karen Schauer: Part of the reason that she reached out to Mr. Malicote was because of the number of stakeholder meetings where they tested the question "Do we fundamentally believe that SEL is a must have" with focus groups from DELAC and DAC. A parent from DELAC stated that "everything goes together to help a child grow".

Karen Schauer: Provided a District Budget Update. She shared past reductions or

restructuring and reserve level scenarios.

Lois Yount: A 1% reserve level is equal to \$445,000 and according to board policy, GJUESD should end 2019-20 with a 6.5% reserve. Additionally, the projected carryover that can be added to the 2019-20 reserve level is 1%. She indicated the Second Interim Budget will provide more information about the reserve and projected carry over.

Karen Schauer: Cost pressures include 1) declining enrollment, 2) PERS/STRS, 3) Special Education expenses, and 4) Fluctuating COLA

John Gordon reflected on the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) presentation and next steps.

D. Study Session Adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

E. Closed Session called to order at 8:30 p.m. to discuss the following:

1. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR, Government Code §54957.6
Agency Negotiator: Karen Schauer, Lois Yount, Donna Mayo-Whitlock, Claudia Del Toro-Anguiano
 - Employee Agency: (GEFA) Galt Elementary Faculty Association
 - Employee Agency: (CSEA) California School Employee Association
 - Unrepresented Employees

F. Closed session Adjourned at 9:50 p.m. Grace Malson announced no action taken in closed session.

G. Pending Agenda Items

1. School District Properties
2. Low Performing Block Grant: Mathematics
3. CSBA Social Media & Training for School Boards

Board Approved: March 25, 2020