

# District Advisory Committee Questions

**May 13, 2021**

1) 1.12 Intervention Specialist - hiring of 7 more in addition to our current 9 mentions ELA support, but does not mention Math support. In addition, 1.17 spoke of instructional assistants to support learning – this sounded like the same as 1.12. How are these categories different or the same – will they see duplicated students? What is their focus and purpose specifically as they compare to the other?

Each school site will be provided with an allocation of additional intervention specialist time and instructional assistants based on student assessment data. School administration, along with school intervention teams, will develop a process for identification of students and specific needs for each student prior to constructing a student intervention plan. This is a typical process for us but we are fortunate to have additional people resources to support students next year, in language arts and mathematics.

2) 1.12 Will the additional Instructional Assistants be at every school site?

Yes, there will be 1 – 2 instructional assistants assigned to each school site.

3) Implementation with fidelity of the SEL curriculum to increase student well-being in all areas?

The District SEL curriculum is one segment of an overall structure (see addendum) to support student well-being in Santee. Delivery and implementation of this curriculum is important and as our school day continues to move forward toward a “typical school day”, I would expect the implementation of this curriculum will be more easily managed at the classroom and site level.

4) With the new district app, is the goal to combine some of the many apps and places to look to stay informed?

The District App will help parents with managing school events and communications with school staff. School and district websites feed content to the app, which will help parents in viewing content from a more central location. The app also includes “push” notifications, if a parent chooses this feature.

5) High need on campus is social-emotional, support to come from laissez-faire attitudes to get back to work. Two new counselors being hired full time? For the year. This would be a good area of investment – all schools should have their own full time and not share. We don't get to decide what day our students are going to have needs.

We recognize the need and have continued to increase the number of counselors and school psychologists available for student emotional needs. Since all school sites do not have an equal number of students (and needs), we will assign counseling support to maximize the student-to-counselor ratio at each school site. This may not equate to a school counselor for every school. Site administrators work together when a crisis occurs and more support is needed on a particular campus.

6) 1.4 Cost is a lot the first year, is there a particular reason for that?

The first year includes a supplemental investment toward future device upgrades and replenishment as well as significant upgrades to the District's digital network and equipment.

7) Social-emotional learning support: The district will employ two (2) additional counselors for the 21-22 school year, for the total of 9 to help address the social-emotional needs of students as part of learning recover. Also the district will continue to employ the additional psychologist that was temporarily added in 20-21. Does this place a counselor at each campus or will they go where "need" is?

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8) Karl spoke of people responsible for "pupil engagement and outreach" How this would support students and teachers. What are these funds specifically for?

All staff are responsible for pupil engagement and outreach: teachers, administrators, and classified employees. However, staff charged to these programs, as supplemental services, includes our Director of Pupil Services and Student Well-Being. This Director monitors the implementation of policy related to maintaining student safety and emotional wellness, which supports students and teachers in achieving academic goals.

9) How will the district address all students' mental health needs; not just students who are eligible to see a counselor?

We developed a visual framework a few years ago (see addendum) to help communicate all the resources we have available to support student well-being. If supports are exhausted at the site level, the Director of Pupil Services and Student Well-Being and our Director of the Santee Collaborative would support school sites in determining additional resources outside of the school district.

10) 1.3 – Technology devices: Is there the possibility to use Chromebooks rather than iPads in upper grades? Many of our online tools and curriculum have better functionality on a PC rather than a tablet.

It would be a nice transition for those students who will be entering GUHSD after they leave SSD.

Schools have acquired additional technology resources for students who want an additional platform but we've continued to invest in the iPad as a Kindergarten - grade 8 tool.

11) 1.11 Supplemental instruction/intervention first year cost is more than subsequent. Are the numbers based on specific learning loss recovery dollars?

First year costs include more comprehensive licensing and use of certain software programs; such as IReady, Lexia, and various other IPAD apps, that are not planned to continue in future years. In addition, in the first year, schools will receive a \$25 per student allocation to be used for school-specific initiatives to promote learning recovery. These expenditures are being funded by the State and Federal one-time learning loss mitigation dollars.

12) How will the district address the anxiety some children will have with returning to campus next year before being eligible for the vaccine.

It will be important for parents to communicate this potential concern with the classroom teacher and school administration prior to the start of school. This communication would help a school site develop a re-entry plan, particularly if the child has been in long-term distance learning for the 2020-21 school year.

13) Is the district talking about a certain number when it references class size reduction in grades 4-8? And is that number based on resources, money, or the needs of children and effective teaching environments?

Reduction of class sizes in grades 4 - 8 is one method, among other methods, for supporting learning recovery in the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years. The reduction of class sizes is added to the LCAP as a priority area based on stakeholder feedback.

14) 1.1 Core program does not reflect para-professionals. Where do they fall under?

The additional 14 paraprofessionals added for the 2021-22 school year are listed in supplemental services 1.17.

15) Will the amount we are investing in our technology infrastructure, help to limit the disruptions such as this morning when none of the apps worked on the school iPads for many children.

The goal is to increase our bandwidth, which will help with improved connectivity. However, like with any technology in our workplace or at home, systems can become disabled and cause a disruption.

16) 2.1.1 How can we ensure that the Thrively App will work through the student iPads?

Thrively is a web-based program and there is no app for this program. It can be accessed through a secure web browser on the iPad or any mobile device.

17) I see funds for student recovery in severe areas for gen ed students but not for special education. As a sped teacher, the gap for mild/mod students increased when they didn't receive in-person instruction for the remainder of 19-20 and ESY. What steps are we taking to help these students recover?

Both general education and special education students are invited to participate in the 2021 Summer School Program to address learning loss. Additionally, students with disabilities needs should be addressed on an individual basis. IEP meetings can be held to discuss regression and remedies to provide additional support.

18) Why aren't there full time counselors at each site for more than one grant year when it comes up as a need, year, after year, after year. Kids can't access all this great curriculum if they are struggling emotionally.

Staffing of all programs are reviewed annually and the topic of increasing, maintaining, or decreasing counseling staff for subsequent years will be discussed again in Spring 2022.

19) 2.1.2 Is there an opportunity at the county office or other resource to send PBIS teams to become trained. With the teams consisting of staff, student(s) and parent?

Absolutely. Vice principals will continue to work with our Director of Pupil Services and Student Well-Being in Fall 2021 on training and implementation needs for PBIS.

20) 1.15 What defines highly qualified?

I believe this is in reference to highly qualified teachers noted in core program 1.1. Highly qualified would be determined by an alignment of teaching credentials held and content delivered to students as well as ongoing training in current instructional and assessment practices identified as local priorities.

21) Student attendance improvement 4) Increased focus on chronic absentee students to monitor and track progress – this isn't enough. We need to do more than monitor and track – what are we doing to get them there?

It is our goal to identify barriers contributing to student absences and to provide families with support to overcome these barriers. We use a "tiered-system of support" for connecting with families in order to provide the necessary support, layering in solutions as the need continues. School site teams, including the student attendance clerk, counselor, and school administration, work on family outreach. Home visits are

conducted by both the school site and the Pupil Services and Student Well-being Department, as needed.

22) 1.16 – Class size reduction for grades 4-8: in order better promote learning recovery I think it would be best practice to remove all combo classes in addition to reduced class size. The content standards change from grade level to grade level and if a teacher must split their instructional minutes between two grade levels, it can mean up to 8 different adopted curriculums to prepare for and lessens instructional time for students.

We have prioritized reduction of class size for the next two school years and like in all years, we do our best to reduce the number of combination classes at each school as we finalize enrollment and staffing each summer. We would not have the funding to support the elimination of combination classrooms in addition to all the other identified priorities.

23) What changes are being made to the Alternative School Program besides expanding the access to more families?

Action 1.18 identifies the addition of a specialized academic instructor to the Alternative Home School. This teacher will support students who require an IEP to access core curriculum. We will be hosting a virtual “open house” for parents interested in an independent study program for the 2021-22 school year and in this session, we will address how we are enhancing our independent study option for the 2021-22 school year based on what we’ve learned about instructional delivery this year.

24) Is the need for 3 CRT’s re-evaluated each year? Maybe that money would be better directed to mental health?

All programs and services are evaluated annually. Our CRTs have been pivotal in the onboarding of new teaching staff (and classified staff, when applicable), in the continued support and development of new teaching staff toward their attainment of tenured status, and in providing pertinent, professional learning to experienced staff. Given the high percentage of retirements this past five years, we’ve experienced a high volume of need to support new staff (e.g. those with three or fewer years of experience) and experienced staff value the timely guidance and support.

25) Goal C? What are the plans that have been implemented to “increase parent participation and engagement in their children’s learning process”?

We have used several different strategies to outreach to parents and families. Each school site sends weekly or biweekly messages to all families. In the fall, the District app will be rolled out to families as a means to increase parent communication. However, direct communication between parents and their child’s teacher has the greatest impact on the levels of parent engagement.

In addition to the site level work in this area, our Community Collaborative Director coordinates services with community agencies to support families with parenting techniques and other programs. We have more than a hundred community resources on our District website. Evidence-based parenting programs like *Positive Parenting* have been offered virtually this school year in addition to other virtual programs to address bullying, depression, and other mental health supports.

# STUDENT SUPPORT SYSTEMS

## Counselors

- Classroom Demonstration Lessons
- Educational Goal-Setting
- Small Group Social Skills Lessons
- Individual Social Skills Support
- Crisis Team
- Referral to Community Services
- Trauma Response



## Site Administration

- Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS)
- SEL Professional Learning
- School Climate Committee
- Restorative Practices
- Crisis Team
- Parent Education



## Classroom Teachers

- Personal Connection with Each Child
- Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Curriculum (e.g. Second Step)
- Restorative Practices
- Self Regulation Strategies
- Self Monitoring Tools
- Building Social Emotional Skills Through Play
- Trauma Informed Learning
- Positive Behavioral Strategies



## Community Services

- Parent Education
- Community Collaborative
- Community Assessment Team
- PERT Team
- Medi-Cal Referrals
- Mental Health Referrals
- Anti-Bullying Support
- Family/Community Connections



## School Psychologists

- Mental Health Services
- Crisis Team
- Classroom Observations
- SST/IEP Meetings
- Individual and Group Counseling



## Mental Health Specialists

- Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS)
- Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Services
- Higher Level Services for Students with SEL Needs
- Behavioral Specialist Support
- PERT Team

