

Pittsburg Unified School District
District English Learners Advisory Committee Meeting
DELAC Meeting January 11, 2021
Via Zoom while on Distance Learning

Present:

Foothill: Martha Carabantes

Heights: Carmen Amezcua, Martha Torres

Highlands: María Rosales, Monica Vallejo

Los Medanos: Elvia Gracían

Marina Vista: Ana Pérez

Parkside:

Stoneman: Gudelia López

Willow Cove: Miguel Alvarado,
Heliodoro Moreno

Hillview JH: Alma Rodriguez, Martha
Carabantes, Maria Magallón, Monica Vallejo,
Martha Torres

MLK, Jr. JH: Ana Pérez

Rancho Medanos JH: Miguel Alvarado, Silvia
Portillo, Dulce Bernal,
Elvia Gracían

PHS: Martha Carabantes, María Rosales, Elvia
Gracían, Adriana Medina, Gudelia López,
Martha Torres, Heliodoro Moreno

Black Diamond HS:

Educational Services: Sandra Guardado, Lorena
Asdourian

Other: Dora Villa

Welcome and Introductions:

Mrs. Guardado introduced herself and asked Mr. Alvarado, DELAC President to introduce himself. The rest of the members introduced themselves and stated the schools of their students.

Mrs. Guardado, welcomed everyone and asked for permission to record the session. The members of DELAC agreed to record the session. Mrs. Guardado went over the agenda and mentioned that a change was made to reflect that for the next meeting of February 9, 2021 with the DAC would be LCAP Part 1.

Mrs. Carabantes asked Mrs. Guardado to explain the DAC is. Mrs. Guardado stated that DAC is the District Advisory Committee that meets regularly to review and discuss our district programs and give input on our initiatives and LCAP. This committee is the counter part of DELAC and it is composed of members of the School Site Council from each school in the district.

Mrs. Guardado asked if there were any questions regarding the agenda. There were none.

Approval of Minutes.

Mrs. Guardado mentioned that there was an update on the minutes previously sent for review regarding name of a member and school and it was sent for review earlier today. Mr. Moreno made the first motion to approve the minutes and it was seconded by Mrs. Torres. All members as committee agreed to approve the minutes of December 7, 2020.

Parent Involvement Policy – Board Policy 6020

Mrs. Guardado went over the PUSD Board Policy for Parent Involvement. As a district we recognize the importance of parent involvement and engagement. The stronger our relationships are with parents the better educational program that we can provide our students. Parents are an incredible resource to us and partnering with them enables us as a district to provide the best educational opportunity to our students. This policy serves as a reminder of our responsibility to involve parents in the different processes to allow for input, discussion, be part of the decision making process and in some cases approve the plans.

Mrs. Guardado reviewed the policy with the members and emphasized that as a district we have to inform and notify parents about the importance of participating and attending school and district meetings. Parents are informed annually about this policy since it is included in our Parent Handout that is shared every year through the registration process.

It is important that the school sites and district make strong effort to involve parents but a larger effort needs to be made to promote the involvement of parents that have students that are English learners, foster youth, free and reduce priced meals and students with disabilities.

Parents must be involved in the LCAP process and have an opportunity to give input and make recommendations with regards to how the district and school sites intent to use the different funds to meet the needs of all of our students. As members of DELAC you are an integral component of the LCAP process and your feedback and recommendations are always highly valued and considered.

Any site that receives Title 1 funds must share the plan with the parents in SSC and ELAC to approve how those funds will be used to target the needs of the students. The SSC votes to approve the school plan every year. This normally take places in the Fall (September – November).

Our district also partners with a lot of outside agencies to help provide parents the support and information needed to best support your student. Mrs. Leticia Preciado-Gomez provides our parents with a number of workshops and opportunities for parents to get the information they need.

Our commitment to parent involvement is something highly valued in our district. Mrs. Guardado thanked the members for being parent representatives and being such great partners with us.

She asked the parents if they had any questions. No questions were asked.

Summative ELPAC Testing

Mrs. Guardado presented information regarding the upcoming ELPAC Summative. ELPAC Summative is administered annually to all identified ELs in the spring. The testing window is from February 1st to May 31st.

Mrs. Guardado reviewed that the ELPAC Initial is administered only once in a student's educational career to identify if a student is an Initially Fluent English Proficient (IFEP) or Limited English Proficient (LEP) student. Once a student is determined to be a LEP student, the student will participate in the annual ELPAC Summative until the student is reclassified as a Reclassified English Proficient (RFEP).

The ELPAC test consist of four sections: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.

- Listening and Speaking scores are combined to give an overall score for Oral Expression
- Reading and Writing scores are combined to give an overall score for Writing Expression.

On those sections, we get a scores ranging from 1 - 4. In order to consider a student eligible for reclassification the student must earn an overall score of 4 on the ELPAC Summative.

The meaning of each level:

- Level 1 - Students at this level are at a beginning stage of developing English skills
- Level 2 - Students at this level have somewhat developed English skills
- Level 3 - Students at this level have moderately developed English skills
- Level 4 - Students at this level have well developed English skills

Mrs. Guardado continued with the presentation and listed the different test ranges for each grade level span.

- Kindergarten – Has its own test – Writing Section is administered in Paper-Pencil form.
- 1st Grade - Has its own test – Writing Section is administered in Paper-Pencil form.
- 2nd Grade - Has its own test – Writing Section is administered in Paper-Pencil form.
- 3rd – 5th Grade – Same test but what differs is the range of score for each level (levels 1-4).
- 6th – 8th Grade - Same test but what differs is the range of score for each level (levels 1-4).
- 9th – 10th Grade - Same test but what differs is the range of score for each level (levels 1-4).
- 11th – 12th Grade - Same test but what differs is the range of score for each level (levels 1-4).

The Writing section for Kinder – 2nd grade is the only part of the test that is administered in a paper pencil form and that's to allow for age appropriate development of writing. For example it allows for letter reversals like a b for a p.

The Speaking section is the only section that has to be administered in a 1 to 1 setting for all students (K-12th).

Mrs. Carabantes asked, is the test administered one on one with the computer or with a person?

Mrs. Guardado explained that the Speaking section is administered using the computer and the test examiner will record the student's verbal responses.

For grades 3-12 all 4 sections will be administered on computer. Each domain (Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking) has its own computer test. Mrs. Guardado emphasized that this year's testing will take place remotely.

Mrs. A. Rodriguez asked, is this test for all the students? And are the teachers giving the test from their own school?

Mrs. Guardado clarified that this test is only administered to students who are still identified as English Learners and have the designation of Limited English Proficient (LEP). This year's testing will be administered by the trained test examiners given that it would be too disruptive to have the classroom teachers administer the test.

Mrs. Guardado highlighted that parents can help get their student(s) ready for the upcoming administration of the ELPAC exam by having their student(s) practice at home using the ELPAC Practice tests. Mrs. Guardado shared a document with the members that gave them the step by step guide on how to access the practice tests. She shared that information would be sent home in a letter to help inform parents of the upcoming test.

Mrs. Guardado walked the members through the process of logging in to access the student practice tests via elpac.org.

Mrs. Rodriguez asked if all of the functions on elpac.org are in English? Mrs. Guardado stated that yes, unfortunately the website is only formatted in English and explained that was the reason why she provided the members a step by step guide in Spanish with how to access and navigate the site to get to the practice tests. Mrs. Guardado modeled from them how to get to the site and start a practice session.

Mr. Moreno asked, when is this information being sent home?

Mrs. Guardado stated that information would be mail home in the next couple of weeks to give time for parents and students to hopefully access the practice tests prior to the actual administration of the exams.

Mrs. Guardado continue demonstrating the practice tests to help the members see how the test progresses from basic, easier concepts, to more complex and challenging questions. Mrs. Guardado had the members listen to a couple of the questions on the Listening test and to show them how students will be assessed and the importance of reminding their students to focus and listen carefully to the directions.

Mrs. Guardado shared with the members that students can only listen to the recording once, so it is important that students are focused and cued in when taking the listening test.

Mrs. Rodriguez asked what if students need more time or need to listen to the recording more than once, can they do that?

Mrs. Guardado explained that students can only listen to the recording once. Only students with an IEP that have that listed as their accommodation can have the opportunity to listen to the recording more than once. Students are encouraged to take notes as they follow along and can preview or read the questions prior to starting the audio, but unfortunately, the test is set up so that the recording is only played once. Mrs. Guardado shared that the tests are not timed students can take as long as they need to complete each section of the test, there are average time for each section but students can take all the time they need.

Mrs. Rodriguez asked how many questions are in each of the sections and if the practice tests are similar to the actual tests.

Mrs. Guardado shared that the practice tests mirror the actual test, the same type of questions and formatting that they see on the practice tests is what the students can expect to see on the actual tests. This is why she is encouraging them as parents to get their students to do the practice tests to help them familiarize them and anticipate the type of questions they will see. Prior to submitting their answers to complete each section, students will have the opportunity to check their answers. She encourages that all students take the time to check their answers and they can flag the questions that they might want to go back to and review.

Mrs. Guardado quickly walked the members to preview some of the questions in the Reading and Writing sections. She highlighted that the questions get progressively more complex and the reading texts get longer with each set of questions. She encouraged the members to talk to their students and encourage their students to take their time and to try their best on each of the sections.

For the writing section she emphasized the importance of reading the directions and making sure students answer the question based on what the prompt asks them to do. It is more important that students answer the question and provide details in their writing than care about correct punctuation and grammar. She encourages students to review their responses and edit their own writing prior to submitting their tests. Our students tend to score lower in the writing section than the other sections and a lot of time is because they are rushing through it or do not add a lot of details to their writing.

Mr. Moreno asked how come you do not get a score on the practice test. How do I know if my student answered the questions correctly? How does this help students practice if they do not know if they are answering the questions right.

Mrs. Guardado clarify that the practice tests do not show a score if they are only accessing them as “guest.” The only way to give feedback regarding the answers is by logging in with a practice testing session and then test is corrected but that’s normally done with the teachers. The goal of encouraging students to try the

practice tests is just to help familiarize them with the testing format and the types of questions they are going to be seeing on the test.

Mrs. Guardado modeled how the speaking section would be administered and how the student's responses would be recorded. She reminded the members that the speaking section is administered in a 1:1 setting to all students K-12th grade.

Mrs. Carabantes asked if the dual immersion students take this test and if they are administered this test in Spanish. Mrs. Guardado clarified that this test is only administered to students who are identified as English Learners, so if we have ELs in our DI program then they will participate in this administration and this exam is administered in English since we want to monitor their progress.

Mr. Alvarado shared his concern regarding ELPAC testing. He feels like this is not the right time to be assessing students given that we have been in distance learning since last March. Students have not made the same kind of progress they normally make in a school year since learning is limited by being in distance learning. As parents we are going to feel guilty if our students do not do well on this test since we know it impacts their eligibility for reclassification. As a parent he feels guilty seeing his students struggle and feels compel to want to help them but he cannot do it all. He asked if there was a way for teachers to help with the administration of this test to help encourage the students to do well and wondered if we can have the students report to school to take the test that way they have a better setting to concentrate and do their best. This will also put the responsibility on the school/teacher rather than on the parents.

Mrs. Guardado explained that testing will take place remotely this year and that only a limited of students will have the opportunity to test in person, and that number is super small. She shared that as a Coordinator she has shared her concern of the upcoming testing (ELPAC, SBAC, CAST) but it is something we must do per our state mandate. ELPAC will be administered by a group of trained test examiners who will encourage our students to do their best. She validated Mr. Alvarado's reservations and concerns regarding the added pressure of students doing well on these tests and the difficulty of being able to accurate measure progress given that we have been in distance learning since last March. But, at this point that expectation is to administer the exam and we will move forward with that plan until notified otherwise.

Mr. Moreno shared that he feels that testing is important and all that we should expect from our students is to do our best. The student's results in this test and all of the others will serve as markers to let us know how students are doing and measure the impact of distance learning. These tests can serve as an accountability piece and hopes that the state will use them to identify which districts need additional support based on student performance on these tests. The responsibility is on the district and schools not the parents or students. Students just have to try their best.

Mrs. Guardado thanked Mr. Moreno for his comments and agreed with his opinion.

ELAC Reports:

Foothill. Mrs. Carabantes reported.

- Last meeting was in November, there is nothing new to report.
- Parents received the school newsletter to inform them of the upcoming iReady testing administration to encourage students to do their best.

Heights. Mrs. Torres reported.

- The last meeting was on November 19th, nothing new to report.

Highlands. Mrs. Rosales reported.

- Last meeting was in December prior to our DELAC meeting, there is nothing new to report.

Los Medanos. Mrs. Gracían reported.

- Last meeting was in November, there is nothing new to report.

Marina Vista. No meeting has been held due to not having a VP in place.

Parkside. No report.

Stoneman: Mrs. López reported.

- . Last meeting was in December, there is nothing new to report.

Willow Cove. Mr. Moreno reported.

- The last meeting was on December 15th.
- We received information on the importance of daily school attendance and the negative effect of chronic absenteeism. Chronic absenteeism means to have more the 18 absences in a school year. Being absent severely impacts student learning especially for the younger grades (kinder and 1st) since it hinders the opportunity for them to learn how to read. If students do not learn how to read proficiently by 3rd grade they have a higher chance of not graduating from high school or having a difficult time academically.
- If students have excessive number of absences or tardies students are referred to SARB (School Absence Review Board)
- The next meeting is February 9 same date as DELAC

Hillview. Mrs. Torres reported.

- The meeting was today.
- Information on upcoming testing was shared (iReady, ELPAC, CAASPP)
- Important of attendance was reviewed and that impact attendance has on student success.
- Information was shared that Reclassified students are monitored for 4 years.

MLK, Jr. JH. Mrs. A. Pérez reported.

- Next meeting is scheduled to take place next Thursday.

Rancho Medanos JH. Mrs. Chávez and also Mrs. Bernal reported.

- Mrs. Martinez the ELD teacher shared the educational programs and instructional materials that are being used for the students in her classes. The goal is to help students become proficient in English by targeting support to help develop their reading and writing skills.
- Mrs. Guardado went over the reclassification criteria and process.
- Ms. Acosta, one of the counselors, talked about a program for social emotional for the students to think positive and to reduce stress.
- The counselors have a schedule to provide students with academic and social emotional support.

Mrs. Chávez encouraged any member who has a student at Rancho Medanos to access these supports that the counselors are offering to help prepare students to transition to high school.

PHS. Mrs. Chávez reported.

- Meeting is scheduled to take place tomorrow, January 12th.

After the ELAC reports Mrs. Guardado mentioned to the members that she had clarifying information regarding the Uniform Complain Procedure (UCP). Mrs. Guardado talked to Mrs. Chen and found out that part of the written response to the person who submitted the complaint states on whether the claim was substantiated or not substantiated.

Mr. Moreno mentioned that on January 20 the Board would have a Budget Workshop via Zoom and encouraged the members to attend to find out where the district stands with regards to the budget and be informed about any future plans. Mrs. Guardado stated that the meeting link would be shared with the members.

Mr. Alvarado asked since the district is saving money this year since not all of the programs are running like they typically do in a normal school year, can that money be saved and be used for next year's expenses.

Mrs. Guardado reminded that there are certain funds that are designated for certain programs or group of students so they are restricted in the way they can be utilized.

Mr. Moreno emphasized that it important for the members to attend the upcoming Budget Workshop to find out the current state of the district's budget and future plans.

Next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 9, with DAC. Topic LCAP Part 1.

Meeting adjourned at 7:48 pm.