

Pittsburg Unified School District
DELAC Meeting
April 12, 2021
Virtual Meeting via Zoom – Distance Learning

Present:

Foothill: Evelyn Costacurta,
Alma Becerra

Heights: Carmen Amezcua

Highlands:

Los Medanos: Evelyn Costacurta,

Parkside: Ana Reyes

Stoneman:

Marina Vista: Dalia Medina

Willow Cove: Miguel Alvarado,
Helio Moreno

Hillview: Alma Becerra, María Magallón.

MLK, Jr. JH: Dalia Medina

Rancho Medanos: Adriana Medina, Mr.

Alvarado, Dulce Bernal,

Janeth Alvarado, María Tapia,

PHS: Maria Zárate, Helio Moreno, Adriana

Medina, Catalina Cruz

Educational Services: Sandra

Guardado, Lorena Asdourian

Welcome and Introductions:

Mrs. Guardado thanked and welcomed the members and site representatives. Then she asked the members to introduce themselves mentioning their names and site. Mrs. Guardado asked the members for their permission to record the meeting. The members agreed. Mrs. Guardado then went over the agenda items for today's meeting.

Approval of Minutes: Mrs. Guardado mentioned that the February DELAC/DAC minutes would be approved in the next meeting. We are going to approve last meeting minutes for March that were sent via email. Mrs. Guardado gave some time to the members to read the minutes. She also went over some of the contents of the minutes on the information that Mrs. Chen gave in the March meeting regarding the 5 priorities of the district and also the survey:

1. Review the process of the Plan of responsibility and Local Control. LCAP.
2. Review the Budget
3. Review the 3 year data
4. Review the actions/services of each Priority Area.
5. Take the LCAP Survey

First Motion to approve the March minutes was by Mr. Moreno. It was mentioned to add the last name of Mrs. Maria Chávez in Rancho Medanos JH in the English version of the minutes. The second Motion to approve the March minutes with the change was made by Mr. Alvarado. All of the members agreed to approve them with the change. Minutes were approved.

Presentation: ELs Needs for upcoming school year. Mrs. Guardado guided the members through the presentation slides.

Considerations for next school year. Page 1.

Focusing on the needs of our students, English Learners. Mrs. Guardado explained that the goal of the presentation today was to look at the things that worked and did not work for to meet the needs of our English Learners this past year that we have been in distance learning to help inform what next year should look like and aspects that they would like to make sure the district takes into consideration and keeps in mind as we plan for the upcoming school year.

Reflection Page 2

“The ability to reflect is crucial for understanding and processing. It is also essential to our ability to move forward and create something from what we have learned.” George Couros, Innovate Inside the Box.

Mrs. Guardado explained the importance of taking time to reflect since we can always learn from our past experiences and those past experiences whether they have been good or bad can help inform what we do differently or the same in the future. She shared that she would guide them through a series of questions regarding our journey in distance learning.

Our Trajectory Page 3

- **2020 March to June.**
Distance Learning (lots of flexibility)
- **2020-2021 August to June**
Distance Learning (more structure/expectations)
- **2021 June to July**
Summer offerings (in person instruction/and distance learning)
- **2021-2022 August to June**
Mode of instructions has not been finalized

Mrs. Guardado reviewed our journey over the course of the last year, starting with March 13, 2020, the day everything changed with regards to how we provided instruction to our students. Our first attempt at distance learning was grounded on flexibility and understanding, our goal was to ensure that our students and families were safe and in good health. Instruction was provided to our students but it varied from teacher to teacher and site to site. From that experience and from the feedback that was gathered different committees worked over the summer to create a more structure and define distance learning program for the upcoming school year. Our school board voted to remain in distance learning for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year once again prioritizing the health and safety of our students and staff. Information was shared that students would have access to a robust summer program and that it would be offered in person and distance learning. Mrs. Guardado stated that nothing has been identified with any specifications with regards to the opening of the school year.

Mrs. Guardado asked the members if they had any questions regarding the previous slides.

Mrs. Carabantes asked if the enrollment process has started for summer school.

Mrs. Guardado responded that we have not started the application process but that those details will soon be shared with parents. She explained that once the summer school information was finalized it would be communicated with the parents and through multiple methods, email, social media, and actual mail.

What has worked.... Page 4

- What aspects/practices of distance learning have been effective that we should maintain/continue to integrate into our instruction?

Mrs. Guardado then transitioned to the next slide. She asked the members to identify the things or aspects that have worked or been effective during distance learning.

Mrs. Zarate stated that the communication between parents and teachers has been effective during distance learning. It seems like the teachers are really taking the extra effort to connect with parents and keep them informed.

Mr. Moreno agreed and stated that the communication between the teachers and parents is better, the teachers are being really resourceful and using every method possible to connect with the parents. In his opinion there is more structure and desire to establish rapport with parents. As a parent he emphasized the importance of in person instruction and the desire to be able to have that opportunity not only for summer but for next school year. He stated that there is no replacement to in person direct instruction. For safety reasons we have had to do distance learning but at minimum next year should at least be in hybrid.

Mrs. Guardado agreed that we know the most effective method of instruction is in person, that is our goal and desire but we will only do so when it is safe to do so or the guidelines allow for us to resume in person learning.

Mr. Alvarado agreed that the efforts to communicate in multiple ways have been more effective while in distance learning. He also agreed with what Mr. Moreno stated with regards to in person instruction being the most effective and ideal for every student. Mr. Moreno emphasized that the district must do all it can to open 100% in person. He said that at minimum the district should give the parents the option to return in person or remain in distance learning and not rely on a survey but rather through an official method to that forces every parent to give their input. Parents should be given the choice and the district needs to offer both modes of instruction. It is not fair that the voice of some parents weights more than others. Mr. Alvarado stated that as a district we need to take into account that we do not have a large number of parents who usually give feedback or complete the surveys, so it is imperative that we do not rely on a system that does not represent the majority of the population to make decisions.

Mrs. Guardado asked the members if there were any other aspects of distance learning that have been effective and should consider integrating into our practices in the future.

Mrs. Zárate added that another thing that is working is the strategies that the teachers are using to keep the students engaged since they are so many more distractions as they are learning from home. Teachers are really going above and beyond to make sure that students participate and stay connected. She stated that she would like the teachers to continue with the efforts to engage the students in their classes and make them feel safe and welcomed once we resume in person instruction.

Mrs. Reyes shared that something that she noticed is working for her student and her class is the teacher has established a reward system to encourage them log in to their zoom class on time and attend all their sessions. Students are rewarded with “free” time during group time once a week to recognize their participation and attendance. Mrs. Reyes believes that this keeps the students motivated and minimizes students coming in late or not attending classes. This has really helped keep her daughter engaged and she notices that her daughter pays more attention since she wants to be rewarded.

Mrs. Guardado stated that rewards systems are effective and help students stay engaged and motivated.

Mrs. Bernal stated that she liked what Mrs. Zárate mentioned. She agrees that teachers are making an effort to communicate with students and parents. She notices that the teachers are using Remind and the

features in Google Classroom to alert students that materials are due or missing. She also stated that although these efforts are appreciated and make a difference, some students require more assistance and guidance. She suggested that the schools offer more homework help and assistance to students who are not doing well or participating much. Students can benefit from more social emotional support since many are depressed or feel alone since we have been in distance learning for such a long time. Another suggestion would be for the school offices to have hours that they are opened to help students and parents who have questions and need more support sometimes it is very challenging to communicate or connect with someone in the schools.

Mrs. Guardado thanked the members for their comments and feedback. She stated that their feedback is important since it helps inform our next steps and the areas that we still need to provide additional support or allocate more resources. She reminded them that thanks to their feedback, services for social-emotional support were increased for elementary students.

Mrs. Amezcua shared that she is concerned about the lack of training and level of efficiency in running zoom sessions with the preschool teachers. It has been very difficult for some of the pre-k teachers to manage and run classes effectively because they do not know how to use zoom. She has seen some teachers really struggle with managing that zoom session with the students who are in the session and those that are trying to come in late. She also highlighted the fact that all substitutes need to be trained more effectively in being able to manage a zoom class because they struggle a lot with being able to handle and carry on with the class. This should become a priority for the district especially if we have identified it to be the platform we use to connect and deliver instruction to our students.

Mrs. Guardado asked, if there were any others comments with regards to what is working.

Mrs. Guardado then transitioned the conversations to the aspects of distance learning that we know are not working or effective for students. These are the practices or actions that we want to make sure are not repeated or encouraged when we resume to in person instruction.

What we have learned? Page 5

What aspects/practices of distance learning have NOT been so effective that we must ensure they do NOT continue?

Mr. Alvarado stated that it is a given that distance learning is not as effective for student learning as in person instruction. There is also a lot of challenges in being able to receive adequate technical support to help troubleshoot or address the issues students' experience. The lack of technical support at the site and by the district make it difficult for students and families to be able to connect and be present in classes.

He also mentioned that it appears that a lot of teachers, more at the secondary level than elementary, that assign too much work, without really taking the time to explain and ensure that the students understand the concepts or skills for them to be able to successfully complete the assignments. It seems like teachers are just assigned work for the sake of assigning work instead of serving as a way for students to demonstrate what they know or have learned. Teachers should ask the students more questions and do more frequent checks for understanding to make sure that the students grasp the concepts. Often the lack of completing assignments is because students do not understand what they are doing or supposed to do, so how can they be expected to complete the assignment?

Mrs. Tapia agreed with Mr. Alvarado's comments. She mentioned that her student has been assigned a lot of work without a lot of directions or guidance with regards to what they are to complete. She

suggested that the teachers need to spend more time when they have the students present going over the information that students need to be able to independently complete the assignments. The work that they are being assigned should directly connect with what was covered in class and not something new. More time needs to be allocated to ensure that students understand what the teacher is presenting. The teachers need to take time to explain the material and give detailed explanations to help the students understand.

Mrs. Zarate stated that teachers need to maximize the time they have with students to deliver instruction and not to just assign work and dismiss the students. Not all teachers are utilizing all of the assigned time to be with students to teach some just direct the students to complete assignments without much explanation.

Mrs. Reyes emphasized that the district needs to do all it can to resume in-person instruction next year since distance learning simply does not meet the needs of the students. The students are not learning or retaining as much in distance learning as they do when they are in person. The priority should be to have all of our students in our classrooms next year, which is the best thing for students.

Mrs. Carabantes shared her opinion regarding what has not worked during distance learning. Mrs. Carabantes stated that teachers are not maximizing the time that they have with students. The teachers are not taking the time to ask the students questions and motivating them to stay engaged with the lesson. The teachers allow the students to be passive learners rather than creating stimulating lessons that encourage students to talk and share what they know. She shared how her own son often does other things while being logged in to his zoom class because the class is boring and there is not real accountability for him to pay attention since hardly any questions are asked of students, the teachers are just busy talking and sharing information but not really seeking student input. She did mention that a technique that she would like to see implemented by other site administrators is what Mr. Whitmire does, he constantly visits zoom classes and gets involved with the students as a sign that he cares and knows what is taking place in the different classes. Mrs. Carabantes wondered how the site administrators are utilizing their time while in distance learning and whether there is an expectation for them to visit classes and know what is taking place in the zoom meetings.

Mrs. Guardado explained that the site administrators are encouraged to attend the zoom classes and a lot of their time is spent helping families and providing support to students and staff.

Mr. Alvarado shared that he does not feel like the current hybrid schedules do not provide the students with enough instruction time. He expressed that should we have to remain in hybrid learning next year, the schedule should closely mirror the traditional school day when we are in person. Longer periods will allow for more student engagement and time for teachers to check for understanding and ask more questions.

Mrs. Bernal shared that something that needs to be explored is to allow the students multiple ways to submit their work especially in math. For some students who struggle in math it is really difficult to work out the math problems on the computer, students should have the opportunity to turn in their work on paper or upload picture of it without any penalty.

Mrs. Cerpas emphasized that distance learning does not work for the majority of our students. She has witnessed her own student grades dropping and not caring about school. The teachers simply do not ask enough questions to keep the students engaged. She also mentioned that her students have been marked absent although they have been present but the camera was off. She affirmed that the goal of the district should be to bring the students back in person.

Mrs. Guardado asked the members if there were any other comments to add regarding on what is not working. No more comments were made so Mrs. Guardado proceed it with the next question.

Mrs. Guardado asked the members to provide input regarding considerations that should be taken into account for next year as we welcome back our students (ELs) into the classrooms.

Considerations for learning Page 6

Recognizing that we have been in distance learning for over a year, what are the needs/considerations we need to keep in mind for the upcoming school year and summer programming?

Mr. Alvarado stated that what the district needs to keep in mind and take into consideration should be the emotional state of the students. The amount of time that they have had to stay in distance learning has really impacted their well-being and the students that were already shy became even shyer because of the lack of interaction with peers. Another factor that needs to be taken into account is the lack of academic progress and low grades. He stated that he does not believe the students had opportunity for deep learning or mastering of concepts since nothing was really explained thoroughly or in a way that ensure that all students understood and learned the concept. Students are not academically ready for the next grade level, they will have a lot of gaps in their learning. He wondered the percent of students that earned good grades (As and Bs) this year in comparison to previous years. When students return to in person instruction they should be assessed to identify how much they know and it should be taken into account when determining where to start teaching. Next year's teaching plans need to be adjusted and taken into account all the stress that students experienced over the course of the last year, many had very traumatic experiences and the schools need to be ready to address both the social-emotional and academic needs of the students.

Mrs. Guardado assured the members that students' need will be taken into account as we prepare the next school year. And, just like every year students will be assessed through various assessments to help us identify students' current levels and where the areas of need are. There will be resources available to help address both the academic and social-emotional needs of the students.

Mrs. Zarate shared that what the district needs to take into consideration next year is the pacing and time that teachers spend on the fundamental skills. It is going to be important that teachers take their time to make sure students understand and are learning the basic skills rather than just moving along the curriculum. Teachers need to keep in mind that all students learn at different pace and for some students it is going to take more time to learn and adapt to being back to school.

Mrs. Amezcua stated that her students had a positive experience with distance learning and although not ideal, her students were able to be successful and continued to do well like before. She added that it is going to be important that teachers establish a fair method of evaluation for students and do not penalize those students that had a difficult time with distance learning and might have gotten behind since it was not their fault and at the same time balance those students that excelled or were not as impacted as others.

Mrs. Bernal added that is going to be even more important that the teaching staff and even the teacher assistants receive training that help them effectively meet the needs of students who are significantly behind or are English learners. She stressed the importance of working with the younger students to make sure that they are able to read, the teachers must make reading one of their top priority.

Mrs. Carabantes wondered if we should have to stay in hybrid learning, if the students that struggled with distance learning can be forced or mandated to attend in person.

Mrs. Tapia stated that additional counseling support needs to be made available to students when they return. She shared that it has been difficult to get any additional support for her students and has left messages with the school counselor but has not heard back. Counselors will need to be ready to support our students.

Mrs. Guardado stated that without knowing too many of the specifics the conditions in which we will be starting the school year it is difficult to know if we will have to create a hybrid schedule or if we would go back to a more regular schedule. Mrs. Guardado reassured the members that the goal of the district is to open the doors of all of our schools and welcome all of our students back for in person instruction but the goal of the district will always be the health and safety of our students and staff.

Mrs. Guardado asked if there were any other comments. Given that there were no more comments made she thanked the members for participating in the guided reflection process and for all of their input, suggestions/recommendations. She stated that she values the input of the committee and their suggestions often become actions.

ELAC Reports:

Foothill: Mrs. Carabantes reported.

- Our meeting was on Thursday, March 25th.
- Participated in the LCAP process and completed the survey.
- Our last meeting will be on May 20th.

Heights. Mrs. Amezcua reported.

- Presentation regarding ELPAC testing and how to get our students to do their best.
- Next meeting is scheduled for next Thursday.

Highlands. No report

Los Medanos. No report

Parkside. Mrs. Reyes reported.

- Last meeting was on March 11th
- The principal reviewed the LCAP information and went over the presentation that Mrs. Chen had presented at the previous DELAC meeting.

Marina Vista: Mrs. Medina reported.

- A meeting was held but was unable to attend the meeting to be able to make a report.

Stoneman. Mrs. Guardado reported

- ELPAC and reclassification information was shared at the last meeting.

Willow Cove: Mr. Moreno submitted his report via email since he had to leave early.

- Meeting was held on March 16.
- LCAP presentation and members completed the LCAP survey.
- Also completed the District Needs Assessment Survey (ELAC)
- Were informed that District will remain in Distance Learning the remainder of the year.

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- A joined meeting will be held with ELAC and School Site Council in the upcoming months.

Hillview. Mrs. Becerra reported.

- Was unable to attend the meeting but she knows a meeting was held in March.

Martin Luther King, Jr. JH: No report.

Rancho Medanos JH: Mrs. Bernal reported

- On Feb. 16th, they had a presentation on Covid-19.
- March 16th a presentation on LCAP
- Presentation on the importance of attendance and the impacts it has on the student's education
- Next meeting will be on April 20th.

PHS. No member reported but Mrs. Guardado mentioned that she was present in the last meeting.

- Presentation regarding ELPAC testing and reclassification information.
- This year's reclassified students were recognized at the meeting.
- LCAP presentation was shared.

Announcements:

Mrs. Guardado shared with the members that on April 29th we would have an Immigration Forum via zoom. Immigration information would be shared with regards to DACA and Public Charge. Lawyers will be available for 15 minute consultations to be able to answer individual questions.

Mrs. Reyes asked if the district is going to make the COVID vaccination a requirement for all students?

Mrs. Guardado explained that the district will not make the decision on whether the COVID vaccine becomes a required vaccination. At this point the district or state cannot make that decision since the current vaccine is only available for those 16 years or older.

Mrs. Reyes shared that she knows that there are still a lot of parents who do not feel comfortable in sending their student to in person instruction and wonders if parents will have the choice to remain in full distance learning should we resume full in person instruction.

Mrs. Guardado reassured the members that parents will be informed of their rights and options once we know more specific details with regards to what next school year will look like. For now parents will have the choice on whether they want to register their student to attend our summer program which will be offered in person. At our next meeting we will hopefully have more detailed information to share with them about our summer programs.

Meeting adjourned 7:05 PM

Next meeting, Monday, May 17, 2021.