

The Connection

San Bruno Park School District

January 2017, Volume 5

Superintendent's Corner

As we usher in 2017, we wish for each family we serve a happy, healthy, safe New Year. We thank you for allowing us the honor and privilege of partnering with you in the education of your precious children. We do not take that honor lightly. I trust you had a fulfilling holiday season with those you love. Now, we are back, ready to work hard for the last half of the school year, preparing our students for achievement tests, and the next school year. We also will be creating our long term plan for fiscal solvency. We have also created a Budget Advisory Committee comprised of 17 members, including parents, community members, teachers, classified staff, district office staff, administrators, county office personnel, and our fiscal advisor. We will meet two times in January and two times in February to look at the expenditures, revenue, suggestions and input from stakeholders, and then develop a long term plan to present to the Board on February 22 for discussion and subsequent approval. We will keep you informed all along the way.

We will also continue holding additional study sessions for the Board through the remainder of the year as we develop our three year plan.

The dates of upcoming Study Sessions:

WEDNESDAY, January 11 at 6:30 pm at the District Office. The purpose will be to begin discussing our plan moving forward.

Wednesday, February 22 at 6:30 at the District Office. We will propose to Board the three-year plan.

Wednesday, March 22 at 6:30 at the District Office.

Wednesday, April 26 at 6:30 at the District Office.

Wednesday, May 24 at 6:30 at the District Office.

Wednesday, June 28 at 6:30 at the District Office.



We invite the public to these sessions to learn and grow with us.

Thank you again for your support and care.

Cheryl Olson

SBPSD Mission Statement:

“San Bruno Park School District educates and empowers all students to thrive academically, socially and emotionally to be contributing members of society.”

SBPSD three year goals, in no priority order:

- **Attract, develop and retain highly qualified staff**
- **Implement 21st century learning strategies and methodologies**
- **Achieve and maintain fiscal solvency**
- **Develop, expand and implement quality programs and courses to enable academic success for all students**
- **Engage and promote parents as partners with our schools**

Student Nutrition

Student Nutrition Services is pleased to continue partnering with the San Bruno Park School District's Health Center. The department will be working together on programs with Marie Lukehart, wellness coordinator and SBPSD Health Center manager, with the goal of providing information and support to students and their community through culinary, nutrition and wellness workshops.

SNS wishes everyone a safe and happy holiday season with family and friends. Look for more things to come in the new year!

Thank you, Jerry Waki, Director of Food Services

Tech as a Learning Tool

With technology becoming cheaper, more powerful and more mobile, a new trend in education is emerging – bring your own device (BYOD).

Borrowing from the business world, bringing your own device simply refers to students bringing in their own portable phones, tablets and computers to use in the classroom.

Much attention has been paid to the financial and infrastructure issues associated with this trend, like problems with network security and the toll it takes on wifi networks. There are also important equity issues – after all, not every student can afford an iPad.

But less attention has been given to how it will impact student learning. And there is some evidence that it could be distracting students more than it's helping them.

The pros and cons

Schools around the world are putting BYOD policies in place, but each school has to weigh the risks and the potential benefits.

In a practical sense, it can allow students to carry a device with them that they are familiar with and do not need to learn how to navigate. The availability of apps and easy access to information via wifi or the cellular network also opens up a world of possibilities for enhancing the learning experience when students are at school.

The downside to students bringing their own devices is that there is a need for better infrastructure and support services that can work across multiple platforms and operating systems. There is also the problem of supporting students in class. Teachers are not necessarily able to troubleshoot any problems that arise across diverse technologies as students undertake learning activities.

Practical issues aside, when considering the implications of BYOD on learning, there are both benefits and drawbacks.

The advantages build on the capabilities mobile devices provide for connecting, and collaborating between students and between students and teachers. In combination, students' devices allow them to spend less time focusing on less important cognitive tasks and more time in connecting and constructing content knowledge.

The downside to BYOD is having constant access to social media, YouTube and other sources of entertainment can be tempting distractions for students that detract from the time they could be spending on assigned learning activities. These learning activities must therefore compete for attention with the mass of information, communication and other distracting elements portable devices now give students constant access to.

Keeping focused

Numerous studies have been conducted with the aim of examining this issue. In some cases, students have been surveyed with more than 80% of them reporting that they use their devices for “non-class purposes” when they are in class.

Surveys of teachers too have found that over 70% believe that students' devices are having a detrimental effect on their attention span in class.

SBPSD will continue seeking effective ways to utilize technology as a true learning tool so that students have optimum learning opportunities whether with school devices or personal devices!

Thanks,
Don Hopkins
Network Manager

**Technology
& Learning**

Curriculum & Instruction

Our teachers are working hard to effectively implement both “Wonders”, our newly adopted K-5 curriculum, and “Amplify” our new 6-8 curriculum, in English Language Arts.

We are in the process of developing District wide Math benchmarks which we plan to give to student next year to help drive our instruction and fully prepare our students for the State assessments.

Our district also has an active DELAC Committee that meets monthly to ensure equitable services for second language learners.

Additionally, we are very excited about the PIQE (Parent Institute for Quality Engagement) designed to give parents an active voice in their children’s education. So far this year, the 9 week course has been offered at three of our sites, with well over 80 parents graduating from the course! Parkside also offered a 9 week course to parents from PARENT PROJECT, another quality program designed to help parents navigate the adolescent years! Lastly, our DELPAC Committee made up of parents, community, staff and students meets regularly to focus on updating the District’s LCAP (Local Control Accountability Plan) and offer suggestions as to how we might best meet our unduplicated student (Foster Youth, Low Socio-Economic Students, and English Language Learners) needs.

Along those lines, I want to reiterate the importance of the LCAP to the District funding. The California Department of Education requires school districts to write a LCAP plan that is focused on improving academic achievement for all students and allocating financial resources to support goals in this regard. The LCAP is a three-year plan that is updated every year. An important component of the LCAP is the voice of parents. Therefore, we are providing several ways for parent to have input. One important way for parents to have a voice is to take a few minutes to fill out the online survey our DELPAC committee has developed as part of our Needs Assessment. The Parent Needs Assessment survey is available on the District’s Website and in Blackboard Connect on the web. We will also provide paper copies at each school site. Another way for

parents to give input is to attend various parent meetings. Be on the lookout for the posting of meetings.

I look forward to sharing more information about Curriculum and Instruction in the upcoming year.

Sincerely, Cheryl Garrett, Curriculum & Instruction



Student Services

The month of December was Attendance Month in San Bruno. I would like to thank all of our parents and students who made the commitment to come to school every day for the month. I would like to congratulate Portola School as the winner of the attendance challenge with an attendance rate of 95.81%. Second was John Muir School with a rate of 95.19%. The winning school will receive their extra activity in January with a special visit from Superintendent Olson and myself. We had 1,313 students with perfect attendance for the month. GREAT JOB! Even with all of this good news it is important to remember that each day a student is absent they miss essential learning and the school district loses funding. I’ve included a chart below showing how much money we have already lost this year because of absences. It comes to \$39 per day for 5th – 8th grade students and \$45 per day for K – 3rd grade students. Let’s continue to make school attendance a priority every day. For more information and resources go to www.attendanceworks.org. This is a local non-profit organization that supports good school attendance.

Another part of Student Services is student safety. It is important to track our student discipline and monitor school climate as a part of our efforts to keep students motivated, positive, and safe. We have good news as well. In monitoring our student discipline data we have

seen a sharp decline in the number of suspensions this year to date. For this period last year there were 22 student suspensions. So far this year from the beginning of school we have only had 13 suspensions with 5 of our school having none at all. This is due to the efforts of our teachers and school principals, along with being able to provide behavioral intervention support to our students through our Behavioral/Mental Health program started this year. I will be updating you regularly with news about our efforts to improve in this area.

Special Education

Our Special Education team is working on a new initiative to better address the needs of our students with disabilities and support the best educational experience possible. We will be providing a more complete set of services for students while limiting the negative effects that some of those services may have on them. One of the challenges for students with disabilities is they are often placed in classes that limit access to peers in regular education. Even though this may be necessary for them to learn, it still has the affect of severely reducing the experience of being in the regular education environment. We will be developing new programs that will help alleviate this type of isolation. By developing an integrated program model for our special education students it is possible to include more students in the regular program while providing support for their needs in the regular classroom. This is a significant change over past practice in San Bruno but will provide a better experience for our students with the added advantage of lowering special education costs overall. I will keep you updated each month as we work to implement these changes.

Sincerely, Leigh Schwartz, Director of Student Services

