



Date: December 2, 2019

To: Board of Directors

Submitted by: Kirsten Carr

Subject: Strategic Impact Growth Priority

Background

One of the three organizational impact statements for the 2019-2020 school year is:

Establish a viable pathway for continued growth in the changing political climate, while preserving current charters.

For the last several months the Engagement Team has been focused on ensuring all three sites continue to provide top-quality education for all students with a strong focus on organizational health. As shared at the last few board meetings, staff is using a variety of metrics to ensure we are protecting the fidelity of Navigator before pursuing opportunities to grow. Illustrated below is the current status of all three sites as measured against the criteria for success with action steps outlined for areas of concern. Additionally, included is a brief summary of activities related to next steps for growth.

Strong Start at Watsonville Prep School

Watsonville Prep School continues to show growth in all areas, with anecdotal and empirical evidence to illustrate the progress. WPS received a formal letter of approval from the State Board of Education after its inaugural formal visit with a complimentary preview email from Craig Heimbichner, the consultant assigned to WPS. Below is an excerpt from Mr. Heimbichner's email:

"I wish to congratulate WPS in uniformly implementing data tracking that involves the students in their own goal-setting and success. Professional development is well-planned and is being implemented successfully. Moreover, follow-up coaching for each teacher is extensive, the results of which were already evident in the classroom. The use of excellent instructional strategies, differentiation of instruction, and the resulting high student engagement was consistent. The high ratio of adult to student support was noteworthy as well, and integrated and designated English Language Development was evident. A push-in model of Special Education was smoothly evident in the classrooms.

The before-school messaging time, held with the entire staff, the students, and parents, was also noteworthy in fostering good behavior, clear expectations, and schoolwide communication with the students and parents. Parent support and communication is high, much appreciated by the parents interviewed. Social and Emotional Learning best practices were also in evidence. Standards and objectives were posted in student-centered language in the classrooms, easily visible from the back of the room. Central office leadership and site leadership is clear and consistent, and the governing board is involved, knowledgeable, and supportive.

Although the school was only in its sixth week of operation during the visit, the level of implementation of the educational measures noted above was exemplary.”

This level of confidence shared by the SBE is the result of, in large part, the full team approach to ensuring students at WPS are making gains, both academically and socially. Students who started the year with few letter sounds are now reading and, in many cases, reading at grade level. Data will be shared after the first of the year to show results based on STAR and Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing. Additionally, school culture is continuing to make positive progress with daily walkthroughs showing high levels of student engagement and structured routines.

WPS has experienced positive tours with Jennifer Holm and Daniel Dodge, Jr., both members of the Pajaro Valley Unified School District, and Lupe Sanchez, member of the Monterey County Office of Education. The School Site Council has also been established and was instrumental in the Title I funding process.

Strengthening Organizational Health at Current Sites

A second, equally important focus for the Engagement Team is ensuring both Gilroy and Hollister Prep Schools maintain their status among the top-performing schools in California through strong school cultures and solid relationships with both authorizing districts. As shared at the October board meeting, the Support Office (SO) is partnering with the sites to strengthen both staff and student cultures through a variety of activities. The SO has started sharing monthly newsletters which include 2-3 question surveys regarding areas of glows and grows regarding site culture and then discussing these areas of improvement with site leaders. The directors are also going to attend the Site Leadership Team meetings every other month to provide opportunities for organizational dialogue and problem solving.

Family support of the sites is crucial to the long-term success of the organization and the Engagement Team is working in conjunction with the sites to ensure parent voices are heard often. School Site Councils have begun meeting with a focus on the LCAP and facilities. In

addition, family resource nights have been held at all three sites to provide valuable requested information to our families.

Next Steps: Student Culture

As illustrated in the Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAP) for each site, the social/emotional health of students is crucial to the success of the schools and the organization. Through quarterly Panorama surveys students in grades 3-8 are asked a full range of questions designed to gauge their social awareness and comfort. The three questions included in the LCAP are included below with the results from the latest student survey. Also highlighted below are the proposed next steps discussed by the sites and the SO to address the concerns illuminated by these results. Goal for each question is a 75% satisfactory response.

Gilroy Prep School

- Do the teachers and other adults at school care about you? 60%
- Do you feel proud to belong to your school? 56%
- I feel safe at school. 65%

Hollister Prep School

- Do the teachers and other adults at school care about you? 63%
- Do you feel proud to belong to your school? 67%
- I feel safe at school. 64%

Proposed action steps either currently being implemented or to be implemented shortly include: Integrated SEL to ensure fidelity in classrooms, Increased frequency of community meetings while also paying close attention to topics, ask survey questions more often and explain why these questions are important, include social/emotional language in Morning message, school wide community pride activities during enrichment & electives, restorative SEL for middle school - HPS (current) GPS (future), instituting a Cadre of Care to ensure all Tier 3 students have at least one adult who is checking in with them, Check In/Check Out system for Tier 3 intervention, and reviewing all systems of discipline with a focus on the restorative impacts of each action.

Protection Activities Impact on Growth

Although protecting current sites is the primary focus of the Engagement Team right now, initial work has begun on the research for school four. To strengthen Navigator Schools relationship with Monterey County, an Office of Education board member toured WPS in early December after touring HPS in late April. Staff will be following up with her to identify key parent groups and leaders to include in the engagement listening tour. Also included in these conversations will be members of the correctional staff at Soledad State Prison who have expressed an interest in creating a strong educational foundation in their communities. Staff will begin this listening tour this month with a significant push in the start of the new year.