



Date: May 9, 2018

To: Board of Directors

From: James Dent (CAO) and Heather Parsons (DCI)

Re: Academic Leadership Team Update

Planning for Thoughtful Growth

The Navigator Academic Leadership Team has begun defining roles and responsibilities for each team member. Here is the [current living document](#). Our increased ability to support capacity building, codification of leadership and teacher development, and curricular and data systems will be significantly upgraded.

In March, twelve instructional leaders attended CCSA for the first time with James. The trip had three main objectives:

1. Feel the power of the charter movement
2. Build team cohesiveness and relationship building
3. Study leadership content using the Five Dysfunctions of a Team

This trip “set the hook” for many of our up and coming leaders. They are very excited about their futures with Navigator, our growth, and their role in supporting our strategic plan. Our senior leadership team feels like we have a very deep bench as we envision being at five schools with comprehensive site leadership teams.

Building and Codifying Academic Program

Navigator continues to expand its codification of the academic program. Our curriculum specialist has finalized the scope and sequence documents as well as archiving all instructional materials and assessments for K-8 math and ELA. Work is well down the road in science as well and should be complete by January of 2019.

We have also created organizational priorities in the areas of mathematics instruction, integrating social emotional learning and codifying our principal development programs. These priorities next year will help Navigator closes its largest gaps in preparation for opening WPS in 2019. The team will be taking advantage of the post-SBAC slowdown to finalize the drafts of the priorities for the board meeting in June.

Healthy Systems

Staffing

Hollister Prep school has five classroom teacher openings for the 2018-19 school year, two spots from growing to seventh grade, one due to an admin promotion, and two more due to maternity leave. HPS plans to fill the majority of these positions with internal teacher in training staff. Debbie Benitez has been named site principal, as Heather Parsons will be moving to Director of Curriculum. The Vice Principal of Culture will be Nick Backich, formally our beloved kindergarten ELA teacher. HPS has selected an outside candidate, Lisa Uccello, to fill the VP of Academics position so that Andrea Hernandez can enter her year zero for Watsonville Prep. HPS is currently hiring additional teacher in training and SGI position to accommodate growth.

GPS has received intent to return forms from all teaching staff. The school currently has two teachers in training who will continue on in that role or fill available spots at GPS or HPS. Missy Corral will be taking on the VP of Academics role as Crystal Toriumi takes over as principal of GPS. Leah Martinez will be taking on the vice principal in training role to support our leadership team should they be offsite.

For our leadership teams at the sites, we have completed our selection process for next year's principals and vice principals. We are very pleased with the teams at each sites and are excited to send eight of our up and coming leaders to the Bay Area RELAY conference this summer in San Francisco. This is a fantastic opportunity to increase our internal capacity around culture, data driven instruction and academic coaching. We have never had so many Navis attend this conference and are excited for their continued development.

SBAC

SBAC testing began this past Monday, and is scheduled to last through the week of May 25th. Students are demonstrating their knowledge in mathematics, ELA and science by working diligently through a prescribed number of problems each day. Navigator knows well that testing time can come with stressors for both staff and students and we have organized activities to get the campuses energized and inspired. Each morning students and staff participate in physical activity to get their blood flowing, which is followed by the motivational tunnel run. When students arrive at the classroom they are met with daily motivational notes from family, and themed snack bars also decorated by families. They settle in quickly and are all up for the challenge.

In the afternoon students get to decompress with pep rallies and a lighter fare of educational activities. Anxiety is at a minimum, and students are reporting they have been comfortable with the content so far, though they have reported the math sections being more complex than in past years, especially in 6th and 7th grades. Even so, they are optimistic about their success.

Innovate Public Schools Award

Navigator was honored in San Francisco last Saturday at the annual Top Schools for Underserved Students Awards that Innovate Public Schools has published for the past three years. For the first time, GPS was at the top of the list in both English Language Arts and mathematics. This is quite a distinction considering the study looked at over seven hundred schools around the Bay Area that serve a high percentage of low income Hispanic/Latino students.

Click [here](#) to take a look at the report.