

Date: October 9, 2013

To: Board of Trustees

From: Keller McDonald 

Re: Implementation of Common Core State Standards Mathematics

For over a decade, international comparisons of student achievement in mathematics have pointed to the conclusion that the United States must move from math instruction that is “a mile wide and an inch deep” to a curriculum that is substantially more focused and coherent, if this country is to stay competitive with other high-performing countries..

Forty-five states, including California, are leaving behind their individual state curriculum standards in mathematics and have adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The Common Core math standards aim for clarity and specificity, and stress deeper understanding of key ideas and application of math concepts in order to solve complex problems. Common Core math is slated for implementation in California by 2014-2015, when the new Smarter Balanced Assessments, aligned to the Common Core math curriculum, will replace the current California Standards Tests and STAR accountability system.

Forty-five math teachers and curriculum leaders from fifteen middle schools and high schools across West County met on September 18 at El Molino High to begin planning implementation of the new Common Core State Standards mathematics curriculum. Participants came away with a better understanding of the many tasks that must to be accomplished in order to bring a well-articulated CCSS math program to West County students.

Follow-up meetings are being held to continue this work. On October 15, Analy and El Molino math teachers will discuss CCSS math curriculum and course sequencing, and El Molino math leaders will meet the their partner middle school math leaders in early November to tackle the same topics.

Improving math achievement for all students is an exciting and worthy task. A great deal of teacher training, curriculum and instructional materials development, and communication with parents needs to be accomplished in order to implement Common Core math. From all reports, West County is well ahead of other regions in Sonoma County in creating a coordinated middle school and high school math program.

I anticipate more West County grade 6 – 12 Common Core math meetings in the coming months, after schools have had time to reflect and plan at the local level.

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Re: Projected Enrollment Study for Analy and El Molino High Schools

The District has arranged for Catherine Dickson Schwarzbach, Ed.D., to complete a ten-year enrollment projection for Analy and El Molino High Schools. The study will be presented at the November 13, 2013 Board Meeting.

The study will be based on these data:

- Historic 8th grade enrollment in partner schools compared to 9th grade enrollment
- Changes and trends in interdistrict transfers and intradistrict transfers
- Enrollment changes due to charter schools (as data is available)
- Potential impact of projected new housing on enrollment
- Ten-year enrollment projections in each high school attendance area based on existing elementary enrollments, demographic projections (as available) and trends in rates of interdistrict transfers and intradistrict transfer

The study will be collected from:

- WSCUHSD and West County partner districts and charter schools
- California Department of Education website
- County of Sonoma and City of Sebastopol

The District acknowledges that the study will have these limitations:

- The study will not address facility needs for students in regular education versus special education classes
- It is assumed that school capacity will not change given that the district would not be eligible for any matching state funding because there is excess facility capacity at the district level
- 2013 enrollment data will be based on actual enrollment reported by West County schools (because 2013 enrollment will not be available on the California Department of Education website until after the study is completed)
- Enrollment projections are more accurate in the short term than in the long term. Therefore, it is recommended that the District annually update the projected enrollment.

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To: Board of Trustees

From: Keller McDonald *WMS*

Re: New State Laws Effective January 1, 2013 Related to Student Discipline

Education Code 48000(r) has added bullying to the specific behaviors that can lead to suspension or expulsion. In this law, bullying is any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect on the bullying recipient of one or more of the following:

- Placing the recipient in fear of harm to person or property
- Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the recipient's physical or mental health
- Causing substantial interference with the recipient's academic performance
- Causing substantial interference with the recipient's ability to participate in or benefit from schooling services, activities or privileges

AB 1729 restricts the ability of a school district to suspend a student for a first disciplinary offense, unless the student has violated Education Code 48000(a) through (e)* or the student's presence at school causes a danger to persons. School districts can no longer suspend for a first offense because the student's presence threatens to disrupt the educational process. AB 1729 encourages use of alternatives to suspension, such as:

- Community service with parent consent
- Conference with school personnel, student and parent
- Referral to counseling, psychological services or other student support services
- Teams to assess behavior and recommend interventions
- Referral to pro-social and anger management programs

All administrators in our District have received training on these new laws, and have taken steps to ensure these requirements are consistently met, including documenting alternatives implemented prior to suspension.

**Summary of EC 48900(a) through (e):*

(a) (1) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person

(2) Willfully used force or violence upon another person, except in self-defense

(b) Possessed, sold, or furnished a firearm, knife, explosive, or other dangerous object, unless the pupil had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, which is concurred in by the principal or designee

(c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or furnished, or been under the influence of, a controlled substance, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind

(d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell a controlled substance, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind, and either sold, delivered, or otherwise furnished to a person another liquid, substance, or material and represented the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant

(e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion