

**District Advisory Council (DAC)**  
**May 10, 2018**

**Students with Special Needs**

**How do we increase mainstreaming opportunities for students with special needs along with general education students?**

Santee School District continues to increase mainstreaming opportunities for students with special needs by shifting the adult mindset to a “One Child/One System” approach. This shift has been supported by various on-site trainings, support from administration, and collaboration between general education teachers and special education teachers.

**When 24:1 and 32.1:1 ratios are calculated, does that include mainstreamed students?**

The TK – grade 3 class size averages and the 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade class size averages do not include children who are mainstreamed from a special day class setting to a general education classroom, since mainstreaming generally occurs for a portion of the day. Children who receive specialized services, generally pull-out or push-in services like speech and language or resource support in a content area, are included in the class size averages. Mainstreaming is individualized based on each child’s needs and the time each child spends in a general education setting varies from child to child.

**Is there professional development for general education teachers on mainstreaming students?**

This year, a training on special education student inclusion was provided at all nine schools. Additionally, all general education teachers and instructional assistants had access to the menu of professional learning options available for special education teachers.

## **How are restorative practices applied to students with special needs?**

Restorative practices have been a school-based trend, not a District-initiated trend, for delivering appropriate responses to student behaviors. Schools who have been trained on restorative practices do consider the student's disability when determining positive behavior interventions or consequences when behavior issues arise.

## **Social-Emotional Student Supports/School Connectedness**

### **In regards to social emotional support and an increase of counselors from six to seven full-time positions, why only seven counseling positions when there are nine schools?**

The District has continued to add counseling support services as student needs have necessitated these services and as the community has continued to offer this feedback through the LCAP process. These services have been funded through LCFF funding and grant funding, when available. Adding additional counselors so each school could have 5-days of counseling support is not a current consideration. Student needs, student sub-groups, the needs of each school campus, and student enrollment are used for determining the number of counseling days on each school campus.

When the LCAP was first enacted in 2014, the schools received support from two counselors and one social worker. Counseling support has continued to increase and current plans are to increase into the 2018-19 school year based on LCAP stakeholder feedback.

### **Other than the California Healthy Kids Survey, what other methods will the district use to measure student connectedness?**

Just as we review multiple academic measures for students, we review multiple measures when determining student connectedness. California Healthy Kids data, our District-created Caring Schools Survey for students in grades 4 – 8, and student attendance data are reviewed for determining our students' feeling of connectedness to school or individuals at school.

**Social emotional training – are we including all classified staff for this training specifically custodians, campus aides, instructional aides, etc.?**

As PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention Systems) plans are designed, these systems will be shared with classified staff on each campus so they too understand student expectations. Also, as the Character Education and School Climate Committee recommends new social and emotional curriculum and services, we will make sure classified staff are included in training options appropriate to their job duties.

**In regards to the attendance incentives currently coming out of site budgets, how will the funding be allocated to schools for attendance incentives?**

Each school site is allocated LCFF funds based on enrollment and the population of low socio-economic, English Learner, and Foster Youth students at the school. A portion of these funds (2.5%) is designated for improving student engagement which includes attendance incentives. However, each school has full discretion over how much of their LCFF funds are used for this purpose. This will be a continued practice for the 2018-19 school year.

**How is moving a coordinator position to a director position improving capacity to achieve the goals?**

The Director job descriptions were created with the notion of improving services (e.g. home-school connectedness, school connectedness, coordinated counseling services, attendance accountability mechanisms, etc.) for students and families. Both Coordinator job descriptions were used as a baseline and additional job duties were added to each of these positions. Job duties of a Director are in line with the roles and responsibilities of a school site principal.

**It was stated that three areas of stakeholder engagement seemed to have a strong connection with each other: attendance improvement, social-emotional learning support, and strengthening student connectedness. It was also stated that attendance improvement and social-emotional learning support had specific actions connected to addressing the theme. How is strengthening student connectedness being addressed as a change in actions in the LCAP?**

Student connectedness is a part of our overall Student Support Systems, which includes social-emotional learning. The District will continue to refine and improve these systems in order to strengthen student connectedness. Goal 1, Action 11, which includes the purchase of social-emotional learning curriculum, and Goal 2, Action 2, which includes counseling services, are two specific actions that we believe strengthen student connectedness. Goal 1, Action 2, professional learning, is also a method for implementing these actions on each campus. Finally, Goal 1, Action 1 incorporates the hiring of a behavior specialist and an additional school psychologist, which can also help to strengthen student connectedness.

**In strengthening school connectedness, the stakeholders identified the need to reduce class size, combos and caseloads. How is maintaining the current student teacher ratios going to provide for that?**

The District believes that strengthening school connectedness is accomplished in a variety of ways. This belief is supported by research.

The following content was taken from an article written and published by ASCD in 2005. The article addresses class size in relationship to school connectedness. <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr05/vol62/num07/A-Case-for-School-Connectedness.aspx>

*When one looks at the research literature across the different fields of inquiry, three school characteristics stand out as helping young people feel connected to school while simultaneously encouraging student achievement:*

- (1) high academic standards coupled with strong teacher support;*
- (2) an environment in which adult and student relationships are positive and respectful;*
- (3) a physically and emotionally safe school environment.*

*Students who experience school connectedness like school, feel that they belong, believe teachers care about them and their learning, believe that education matters,*

*have friends at school, believe that discipline is fair, and have opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities.*

*Connections spring instead from individual action on the part of both teachers and administrators as well as from more elusive factors, such as school environment. Teachers are obviously central to the equation. **Although school connectedness might suggest smaller class sizes, the classroom's culture seems to matter more than its size does.** Effective teachers can create connectedness in the classroom in a number of ways. When teachers make learning meaningful and relevant to their students' lives, students develop a stake in their own education. When teachers create a clear classroom structure with consistent expectations for behavior and performance, they provide a healthy setting in which students can exercise autonomy and practice decision-making skills.*

Teacher/student ratios are part of the District's Core/Base program (Goal 1, Action 1). The District monitors these ratios regularly and will continue to monitor and adjust ratios where appropriate, and minimize combo classes as much as practical; considering special circumstances, including, but not limited to, mainstreaming and student needs.

### **How and when are teachers being trained in restorative practices?**

School administrators who have been working with their staff on restorative practices have chosen to send their teachers to restorative practices trainings hosted by the San Diego County Office of Education. One campus chose a professional book to help with this learning and another campus has chosen to read research articles. Restorative practices is an ongoing school-based effort and training will continue to be offered over multiple years.

### **How do we serve all four-year olds in a preschool experience?**

Fortunately, for the children and parents in Santee School District, we offer multiple pre-Kindergarten options including State Preschool for three – four year old children, a fee-based preschool for children ages three – four, a Transitional Kindergarten program for children ages four – five years old, and an Early Admission Kindergarten program for children ages four – five years old.

We annually serve over 500 children in these pre-Kindergarten programs. Transitional Kindergarten and Early Admission Kindergarten are not required pre-Kindergarten programs but the District has continued to support these programs

for many years. This is because additional pre-Kindergarten schooling experience does support student learning in the latter years.

**Based on Action 1.2 paraprofessionals – were there additional professional development choices for classified staff?**

All classified staff have an opportunity to self-select professional trainings.

**Were the coordinator positions classified and eligible for overtime?**

Coordinator positions in Santee School District are management positions. Managers are not eligible for overtime.