

Conversation with the Superintendent  
Follow Up Questions  
Mar Vista Elementary School

1. **Is there a plan to provide tools (electronic classroom, physical safety plans, procedural behavior tracking, student information dissemination) to “release” teachers?**

With the implementation of Synergy, we added all elementary sites with master schedules so all release teachers now have access to view information on their students. Release teacher can work with their office staff to schedule the students. The Technology Department has been assisting with the training on this and is willing to support if more help is needed. In addition, PVUSD has purchased a new tool, the MTSS Module, for all teachers which will be released to sites after it has finished the development phase through Synergy and has been personalized for our District based on our needs. It will help to track discipline and Check In Check Out data like SWIS.

2. **What is Rio doing to support students in math?**

Over the last several years, math achievement at Rio del Mar has not increased as measured by MAP and the CAASPP test. District coaches are working with the site to support implementing Bridges and have created math units for students who are GATE identified.

3. **I am curious about how to best support students that transition from small class sizes with reading intervention to larger classes with less support. Our intermediate students have no reading support and none of our students have any math intervention resources. Can we please get more math and reading intervention teachers and programs here at Mar Vista?**

As we know what to be true, that good first instruction helps support students most at all grade levels. Until we started using structured programs in PVUSD, such as SIPPS, we did not see the growth in our students. As both SIPPS and Benchmark are implemented at Mar Vista with fidelity, we will see growth in students at all grade levels as this is the best first instruction. The district coaches and Math Coordinator can work with teachers to set up small group instruction during math time, using Bridges, to support students who may need a double dose of instruction or work on specific discrete skills. I recommend teachers reach out to our district coaches, Kelly Marquez and Jodi Louderback. In addition, we are now using digital programs such as MAP Accelerator that can help support students at their point of need.

4. **I believe that our school has a real need for intervention services. Especially the upper grades—they have none.**

Site funding is based on the number of students that you serve and the type of students that you serve. Sites serving more students living in poverty, English Learners and Foster Youth receive more LCFF Supplemental funding than other sites. Through the School

Site Council, individual sites can determine how to utilize their site-based funding to best meet their students' needs. Currently, Mar Vista has a 0.45 K-3 Intervention Teacher, a 0.45 K-3 Intervention Teacher and a 0.60 K-3 Intervention teacher that is District funded through LCFF Supplemental.

**5. Can we have smaller class size in upper grades (at least 4, 5 grades, maybe 6<sup>th</sup>)?**

This year we have the lowest class size that we have had in several years due to declining enrollment. Class size is a negotiated item. Currently, our latest offer has prioritized a raise on the salary schedule for any additional funds available.

**6. How can we encourage funding/hiring of more social emotional counselors for elementary school sites?**

We have found that many of our students need more intensive services than can be provided by our socio-emotional counselors with a PPS credential. Therefore, we have been supporting PVPSA as they expand their level of services. This past year, PVPSA increased services and served more than 7,000 of our students. We also know that school-wide practices in PBIS and our SEL curriculum, Sanford Harmony, has been shown to reduce the number of students needing counseling. As we add in more Tier II practices such as Check In, Check Out and Zones of Regulation, we will see improvement in both mental health and behavior of our students. The Socio-Emotional Counselor will work to help families access services through a variety of community agencies or private insurance. However, it is more effective when schools develop Multi-Disciplinary Teams or Wellness Teams (Consisting of admin, teacher, nurse, psychologist, PVPSA counselor, Socio-Emotional Counselor, etc.) to discuss students in need and plan interventions and referrals.

**7. Will there be someone at the district-level to support with PBIS? Without it, we're on a tricycle with one flat tire.**

Yes, the Coordinator of Student Services, Greg Fry, is the main District lead for PBIS. We are working through a trainer of trainer's model to mirror training that is being done by the PBIS Technical Assistance Center with the middle school teams. The focus on middle schools was intentional and the plans to move the model forward with all elementary PBIS teams in the Spring are on track. This means that Elementary will be receiving training (2 sessions - 3 to 5 participants per site) this school year with follow-up as needed. These trainings are anchored to the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) which is used to ensure that PBIS is being done with fidelity, and is also used by the state PBIS Coalition to determine PBIS "Status" awards. Additionally, 63 people attended the State PBIS Conference in October, and 50 people are slated to attend the Nor-Cal PBIS Symposium in Santa Clara in April. Participants were from all levels and equally distributed.

8. **Where are we with training PBIS coaches at the district level for site leaders and staff? Possible incentive is offer credits for units—to motivate new teachers and support school sites.**

The PBIS Training with the Elementary will include how PBIS teams and administrators can coach their staff in PBIS procedures and best-practices. In addition, the Coordinator of Student Services is also participating in a “trainer of coaches” model and is working with the curriculum coaches to include classroom management and PBIS practices in their district-level coaching. Credits/units for coaching is a negotiated item and cannot be determined independently. Many site principals are using some Extra Work Assignments for PBIS teams, but all sites are encouraged to build in PBIS Team meeting time during Wednesday Collaboration time.

9. **How are we meeting our legal obligation to provide all students’ with a FAPE when we have so many students with social and emotional needs, that not only can they not access their FAPE but neither can many of their peers?**

If a student with an IEP has social-emotional needs, there are tiered resources to address these needs (i.e. social-emotional teaching, PVPSA services, Social-Emotional counselors, Children’s Behavioral Health etc.). Additionally, if the child continues to exhibit social-emotional challenges in the educational environment and is not responding well to the aforementioned interventions, Special Services can support the student with Educationally Related Mental Health Services.

These services are provided to individual students and families and are delivered by a Licensed Mental Health Clinician. The process of supporting a student and their family with emotional needs and sometimes trauma is not something that is remedied quickly. It is a team effort of support from our teacher, school psychologist, service providers and mental health clinicians. In addition to special education and students with IEPs, the district is looking at the whole child. At the elementary level, we have adopted Sanford Harmony. This is the Tier I program that should be used in all elementary classrooms. Additional training will be provided next year.

10. **We are hearing about Special Education pushing in to regular education classes instead of traditional pull out model. How will this work for students whose special needs are disruptive to the class? We need help in regular education already!**

We are required by law to provide all support within the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). To do this, we provide the supports needed to ensure students can access the content and social environments to the best of their ability. This requires teachers, parents, and students to work as a team and at times modify how teaching is delivered to meet all learner’s needs. We use evidence- based practices that focus on the whole child. Individual tasks are targeted and mastered one at a time. At several sites, we have started this process by looking at the research and what it is saying about inclusive practices and specifically co-teaching. One of the benefits that have seen is that students with disruptive behavior do better in general education classes. "Students with

disabilities acquire greater mastery of academic and social content in inclusive settings....As for the impact of inclusive education on the learning of other students in the class, a meta-analysis found that 81% of the outcomes reported showed that including students with disabilities resulted in either positive or neutral effects for students without disabilities." (pg. 20 The Inclusive Education Checklist) Making the transition from a segregated services model to an inclusive model is not without its challenges as change can be hard for all of us. The goal of Special Services is to continue to work with school sites as we expand our perceptions of how we serve all students with individual needs (with or without an IEP). This is aligned with the MTSS and PBIS initiatives across the district and state.

**11. Can we offer Special Education training to General Education teachers to be able to support their (our) students with accommodations and modifications and what that looks like so it can be successfully implemented in the classroom?**

Yes. We have just begun training in understanding behavior and reflecting on Tier 1 and Tier 2 strategies. As PBIS continues to grow at the school site, we would like to partner with you all to continue to offer training and coaching to teachers. Identification of and implementation of all three tiers of PBIS is essential for success for all students. Focused training and support is always available. We will be working with principals to provide a series of trainings to support teachers with supporting students.

At three elementary sites, we have worked with the Inclusive Collaborative out of Santa Clara County Office of Education. We have studied the types of co-teaching, collaboration, some aspects of Universal Design for Learning, a focus on PBIS, accommodations/ modifications and breaking down the three tiers of MTSS. These trainings have given us a foundation for inclusive practices and supporting all within in the Least Restrictive Environment.

**12. Do our students understand what is meant by being challenged? Rigor?**

On the Youth Truth Survey, students are asked questions in ways that I do believe they understand. Here are three examples of the academic expectations questions: "Does your teacher ask you to keep trying when the work gets hard?", "Does the work that you do in class really make you think?", or "Do you think that your teacher wants you to work your hardest?".

**13. Can we provide more career counseling for high school students so that they can make better choices regarding college?**

In partnership with UCSC, we have established College & Career Centers at all three of our comprehensive high schools using LCAP funding. Each center has two professional staff that provide support and information to students related to postsecondary preparation. Through in-class presentations (conducted often more than once a month at each school), out of class workshops and events, one-on-one advising sessions, drop in help, College & Career clubs, and a number of other services and strategies, we help students make connections between college and career. These services are accessible to

all students in the school and are publicized broadly. In addition to supporting students, we also have one family involvement coordinator who provides limited college and career awareness information to families. They conduct workshops, coordinate fieldtrips and events, and conduct one-on-one and group advising. The College & Career center staff are all integrated into our school's plans and work closely with counselors, the parent Ed team and administrators maximize and align efforts.

As mentioned above, we provide numerous workshops, presentations and opportunities for students and families to learn about college and careers. Among the many topics covered are: college systems, HS requirements vs. college requirements, how to pay for college, financial aid application assistance (scholarships, Dream Act, FAFSA, Cal-Grant, etc.), college application assistance (for four year and community college enrollment), college representatives site visits, career panels, career expose, job shadows, career assessments/inventory surveys, college and career weeks, college/educational field trips, virtual college tours (so that distance and financing doesn't limit students exposure), etc. Further, we provide in-class (to a limited number of classes) and after school tutoring support (open to all) to help students complete course of study and remain college eligible and competitive. We have College & Career clubs at all three sites that create opportunities for students to learn more about colleges/careers and serve as peer mentors and college ambassadors in their schools.

We conduct one-on-one academic advising meetings (this is supplemental to what counselors are expected to do) with approximately 125 students in each grade at each school. In these meetings, we help students develop clear academic plans that map out specific course sequences critical to fulfilling high school and college requirements. We discussed and documented career objectives, benchmarks, educational outcomes, as well as resources and supports necessary in advancing and supporting their postsecondary goals. The meetings help students to more clearly identify their motivation and develop the confidence necessary to move them in the direction of their academic and career goals.

Over the course of the last year, we have made substantial progress in developing and implementing a strategic plan to improve our use of Naviance—a college and career readiness platform that helps align student strengths and interests to postsecondary goals—with middle and high school students/staff. We have developed a grade specific scope and sequence for middle school and high school students. While in the early stages of adoption, we have seen progress in the implementation of this work. It is my understanding that all middle schools have implemented at least two modules per grade. The topics include, career scavenger, understanding my career interest, my career path and my financial aid options. Similarly, high school staff are also implementing modules with students. The foundation that has been established over the last year will ensure that students build upon knowledge over several years to better prepare them to make informed decisions about college and career. Moreover, the district has spearheaded efforts to develop signature career pathways at each school, in

partnership with Cabrillo College. These pathways will prepare more students for postsecondary success by providing access to rigorous college courses, clear guidance on course sequence and required benchmarks, and practical application and/or exposure to specific careers. Further, this work will ensure that more of our students are exposed to careers that lead to jobs that can produce a living wage.

**14. The sub issue I have noticed there is a disconnect between the County Office of Education Office and the PVUSD Office. There should be something online or a clearer list like the Education Office.**

PVUSD and SCCOE have different substitute systems. It is important to keep them separate as the rates or pay and assignments are different. PVUSD substitute teachers have their own contract and union, the Communication Workers of America. For PVUSD, please work with the site Office Manager or contact PVUSD Human Resources Substitute Clerk, Ariana Perez, if assistance is needed regarding clarity on the PVUSD Substitute Pool/List in e-Schools systems for qualified substitutes.

**15. Why do our kinders have ½ days? My children went to Soquel School District that switched to full day. It helped with child care to.**

The Kinder Half-Day was negotiated several years ago by PVUSD and PVFT as part of Article IV. Workload and Hours in the contract. Since teacher workload and hours are "mandatory subjects" of negotiations, changes to the Kinder Day require agreement by the negotiations teams, ratification by the union and approval by the Board. In an effort to gain resources to support a transition to a full day kindergarten, we applied for a grant through the California Department of Education but did not receive the grant. We will apply again once the grant window opens.

**16. When will the holes where our clocks once were be covered?**

The clocks were replaced as part of the technology upgrade. As you know, when the new clocks were not installed, the original holes were not covered leaving the 1' X 2' holes in the walls. Our new Director of Maintenance and Operations, Richard Reid, will be meeting with his staff at Mar Vista on Wednesday to discuss the best option for covering the holes.

**17. Why has our field been unusable, unmanaged for the last six years? What steps are being taken to reduce the closer time?**

Richard Reid walked the field with Mark Edwards this week. We understand that the field is currently open and there was a volunteer group that worked on the field over the weekend. It needs to be mowed, but it is still too wet at this time. I am hoping that our team will be able to mow it as the week progresses. I did notice a gate that didn't work and we will take care of that.

**18. Our office was remodeled last summer and in doing so the staff restroom in the office was incorrectly done. The toilet has been out of order about 90% of the year. When will it be repaired?**

There has been confusion about whether the contractor should cover the work. The M and O team has tried on 5 occasions to repair the problem. I plan to hire a contractor and have them work on the bathroom early next week. The contractor will:

- a. Pull the toilet
- b. Send a camera down the drain line and document the problem.
- c. Provide a proposal to repair the toilet.
- d. Then fix the problem.