

Questions and Written Responses from the Superintendent

Question:	Response
I would like to know if there are support programs for child victims of bullying.	<p>Twin Rivers Unified School District has support systems in schools for students who have been victims of bullying. Administrators have been trained on supporting students who have been bullied, and have been trained to investigate, make determinations and develop bullying resolutions plans for all allegations of potential bullying. Counselors, school psychologists, teachers, and other staff are also aware of the importance of having a safe and supportive school environment, and requirements to intervene and stop bullying behaviors. The Safe School Ambassador Program, a nationally recognized anti-bullying program is in all of our middle schools and high schools. Our K – 8 schools are exploring the idea of adopting this program as well to further scale up anti-bullying strategies within Twin Rivers Unified School District.”</p>
Why there is no communication in Noralto school staff with parents to participate in the programs?	<p>The principal and staff of Noralto School place high value in developing strong relationships with the parents of their students. Information is provided on a regular basis through fliers and backpack newsletters, through monthly parent education meetings, and through phone calls and text messages sent by teachers and staff. These publications and messages include information about upcoming events that may be of interest to parents as well as information about schedule changes, upcoming holidays, and learning targets. Three times each year Noralto’s staff invites all parents to Academic Parent Teacher Team meetings. In addition, I encourage our parents to look to our schools’ websites as a source of information.</p> <p>Parents are encouraged to call their school’s office with any request for additional information about programs, or with questions about how to visit the school or volunteer.</p>
Can you explain the LCAP in a manner that the parents can understand?	<p>The LCAP is a long and inclusive document. Twin Rivers provides several opportunities during the year for stakeholders to meet to discuss and review the document. This happens early in the year during the annual review and again during the drafting process. In addition stakeholders are encouraged to provide feedback and access the information via the district website at twinriversusd.org. We are currently working on a summary document that will include a graphic to help everyone have a better understanding of the overview.</p>

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<p>Who or what grade levels receive VAPA services?</p>	<p>All students in TK-6 (with the exception of Foothill Ranch and Rio Linda Prep) receive 35 minutes of VAPA prep. Students in TK-2 receive Visual Arts Instruction and students in 3- 6 receive general music instruction.</p>
<p>You mentioned an increase in counseling services, however at Madison the counselor is being removed. How do you reconcile this? Parents want more counseling services at elementary level.</p>	<p>We understand and support the interest in social-emotional learning for our students. Our largest schools are provided counselors out of our district's base funds. Through LCAP's supplemental-concentration funding, we fund an additional number of counselors who are placed at our largest schools and our schools with highest demonstrated need. As is sometimes the case in schools, there is often more of an interest in services than there is funding to provide them. The district considers input that includes conflicting priorities and then makes difficult decisions about how best to use resources.</p>
<p>Parents at my table would like to see adult English classes.</p>	<p>We offer adult multi leveled ESL at the Twin Rivers Adult School at 5703 Skvarla Ave, McClellan, CA 95652. This year we piloted satellite ESL classes at Strauch and Harmon Johnson. Next year we will offer ESL classes at five satellite sites. In addition, we offer GED, HSC and have opened a CTE construction program being taught at Foothill High School.</p>
<p>Make art classes starting in kindergarten to help in their social development.</p>	<p>All students get visual art in kindergarten once a week for 35 minutes.</p>
<p>Cafeteria at Harmon Johnson promised to acquire adequate nutritious quality food for children without preservatives, which is needed for your physical and mental health.</p>	<p>Our District belongs to the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs and the nutritional components of our meals are mandated by USDA. However, because of the extensive modifications required, the kitchen in Harmon Johnson does not qualify for an unrestricted health permit. Our restricted health permit is in place for the safety of our students and it requires that all potentially hazardous foods be individually wrapped. Staying within USDA mandates and our health permit restrictions, we provide the most nutritious foods possible at Harmon Johnson.</p> <p>This summer, the district will begin a multi-million dollar demolition and reconstruction of the kitchen so that we may begin providing freshly prepared meals for our students at Harmon Johnson in the 16/17 school year. Currently, the projected completion date for the project is September 30, 2016. Superintendent Dr. Martinez and Deputy Superintendent Bill McGuire were instrumental in securing the funds for this major project that will have a significant impact on student achievement at Harmon Johnson.</p>

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<p>Why the goals of graduation and dropout rates are not also with more focus on?</p>	<p>The focus is to increase all graduates and decrease the dropout rate for all students in TRUSD. We look to decrease disproportionality at all areas where it exists.</p> <p>TR Cohort Dropout Rate: 2012-13: 16.4% 2013-14: 15.3% 2014-15: 9.2%</p>
<p>Why are they removing the Madison school counselors? The need is present and no waiting list of students to have this service in school.</p>	<p>We understand and support the interest in social-emotional learning for our students. Our largest schools are provided counselors out of our district's base funds. Through LCAP's supplemental-concentration funding, we fund an additional number of counselors who are placed at our largest schools and our schools with highest demonstrated need. As is sometimes the case in schools, there is often more of an interest in services than there is funding to provide them. The district considers input that includes conflicting priorities and then makes difficult decisions about how best to use resources.</p>
<p>Why they are putting in the bilingual intervention specialists, rather than the Bilingual Paras?</p>	<p>As our English Learner population, and state and federal requirements are changing, specific site needs for our English Learner population have changed. The English Learners Services Department (ELSD) has spent this school year assessing student and site needs, and the efficacy of the current system of support.</p> <p>Based on that information, our needs included addressing the inconsistent practices for English Learners, the specific needs of our English Learners in terms of monitoring and assessment, effective programming, master scheduling that allows English Learners to expand the courses open to them, and instruction specific to English Learners.</p> <p>We have increased the professional development offerings for teachers by grade level and English Learner level. Critical to this site work is a bilingual specialist who communicates with teachers, students and parents regarding identification, assessments, and programs. The Academic Intervention Specialist, Bilingual will help build and maintain English Learner systems needed to support our English Learners' unique learning needs, and working closely with site administrators and teachers, help ensure their academic growth and achievement.</p>

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<p>Why it is federal funds that are not state included in the LCAP program such as Riptide summer program, this program is paid with federal funds?</p>	<p>We put certain items into LCAP to ensure we are transparent. We did note Riptide was funded from Title III (Federal funds). This merely demonstrates that we are effectively using LCAP in conjunction with other funding sources, in this case Federal funding.</p>
<p>Where is the Star King program? Why are there only two TOSA teachers for English learners around the district if there are 1/3 of learners of English?</p>	<p>We believe the Star King being referenced is program in the San Juan Unified District. TRUSD has the ASES grant which provides after school programs for our K-9th grade students. Over the past two years there has been a deep commitment to increase services for students. Next year we will greatly expand opportunities for students before, during, and after school. The added engagement activities will include opportunities for academic enrichments, as well as co-curricular.</p> <p>While there are only two dedicated EL Teachers on Special Assignment, additional resources have been added to support English Language Learners. For example, the RIPTIDE program has been expanded this summer to include our secondary students. Further, 10 additional TOSA's were added to support Multi-Tiered Support Systems which includes students with second language needs. Additionally we added psychologists and Behavior Therapists who will support the social emotional needs of our students.</p> <p>Central to the support for our schools, are our Teachers On Special Assignment, who work with classroom teachers to develop their teaching, and maintain learning environments that ensure High Quality First Instruction.</p>
<p>Why are you teaching a pedagogy that is rich in cultural deficit thinking E.D. Hirsh's 27 chicano related terms are: 1492, Adios, Alamo, Alto, Aztecs, Basta, Chicanos, Conquistadores, Diego Rivera, Fiesta, Gracias, Gringo, Hector, Macho, Maestro, Manana, Mayan</p>	<p>We review all curricula and we are limited in grades k-8 to adopting from the California State Board of Education approved adoption list. In grades 9-12 culturally relevant pedagogy is constantly examined. The course Race and Social Justice that is offered is one such example of providing culturally relevant curriculum to students that allows students to satisfy the US History requirement.</p>

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<p>Civilization, Mexican War, Mexico, Mexico City, Rio Grande, Senior, Senora, Seniorita, Siesta, Zapata.</p>	
<p>Why does TK have a larger class size than Kindergarten?</p>	<p>TRUSD strives to keep both TK and kindergarten class sizes close to 20. As of June 6, 2016, the district-wide class size average for kindergarten was 19. The district-wide class size average for TK was 20.5. These low class sizes help our young learners to get off to a great start.</p>
<p>Will the PK-8th grade schools receive the same services as the other Middle Schools? These sites are still in “elementary mode”. These students’ counterparts will have 2 years of middle school before high school. How will you address this disproportionality? (Student Alliance Teachers, funding, etc.)</p>	<p>Each school in the Twin Rivers Unified School District uses the same instructional programs and teach to the same standards regardless of grade level configuration. It is true that some of our schools offer TK-8th grade programs while others offer 5-8, 6-8, or 7-8 configurations. Each model carries benefits. Many parents whose children attend TK-8’s like the “family nature” that these schools offer.</p> <p>TK-8 schools offer programs in which students rotate to three different teachers during the course of the day. This helps them to be ready for the six-period day at the high school level. In terms of readiness for high school, our students who attended a TK-8 have similar rates of success in high school as those from other models.</p>
<p>Will there be more after school programs available? Will these be staffed with TRUSD employees?</p>	<p>TRUSD is consistently looking to provide more opportunities to engage students before, during, and after school. These opportunities can be tied to academics, athletics, and other activities.</p> <p>Often school based activities are staffed with TRUSD employees. Other times we work with outside providers and others, depending upon interest and capacity of sites.</p>
<p>Can there be a parent liaison to the school board?</p>	<p>Parent voice is a very important component of the educational process. The gathering and collaborating for community input is ongoing and continuous. Twin Rivers offers many opportunities for parents to have a voice in these processes. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● District Language Advisory Council DELAC ● Parent Advisory Committee PAC ● School Site Council SSC ● Parent Teacher Committees PTA, PTC, etc.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Parent Volunteer process● Community Forums● Spring Parent Retreat
What happened to the Community Liaison position that was created in DAC?	The CA Department of Education provided districts with guidance regarding parent committees as they transitioned to the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) and Local Control Funding Formula. The new requirements called for a Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) instead of a District Advisory Committee. District staff worked collaboratively with stakeholders as TRUSD transitioned to a more inclusive model that eliminated the need for committee positions.
When will all elementary schools have counselors? Why is the allotment formula based on student ratio instead of student need?	Prior to LCAP, TRUSD did not provide counselors to elementary schools unless they have more than 700 students or are a K-8 site. Through LCAP, and with LCAP's emphasis on providing augmented services to students in low socioeconomic areas, we now fund six counselors whose services touch seven elementary schools.