

Wiseburn Unified School District

Independent Evaluation of the Child Development and Before/After
School Programs

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Independent Evaluation Report

- Significant detail and data provided in the report and will be happy to answer any specific questions.
- We will focus tonight on the Commendations and Recommendations.

Commendations and Thanks

- Wiseburn Unified Board of Trustees
- Dr. Blake Silvers
 - Wiseburn Superintendent of Schools
- Cathy Waller
 - Director of Psychological and Child Services

Wiseburn Unified

- Leadership focused on improving services for students and families
- Responsive to many requests for information and data
- Continuous improvement and receptive to ideas for increasing outcomes for all students

Commendations

Recognizing the great things happening in Wiseburn

Commendations and Overarching Trends

- Superintendent and Board for Undertaking Study
- Highly Qualified Staff
- Staff Heralded by Administrators as being dedicated, knowledgeable and committed to high standards
- Strong mission statement and LCAP that recognizes the priority of serving the needs of all students and ensuring a strong positive culture is established

Commendations and Student Outcomes

- Wide range of programs in areas of preschool education and before/after school programs
- Creativity for moving a successful program from the private sector to the public domain within the District
- Strong Achievement Results for all students in both ELA and Math, outperforming Los Angeles County and statewide results

Commendations and Improvement Efforts

- Attempting to increase transparency by employing the School Mint program and dashboard to allow parents to track their status regarding the admission process into both preschool and before/after school programs
- Pursuing a standardized methodology for assessing student readiness at TK and kindergarten and moving forward with implementation at elementary schools

Commendations and Staff Efforts

- Staff commended for their interest and efforts to collaborate between special education and general education for both preschool and before/after school programs
- Directors are commended for their awareness of standards and efforts to review performance and achievement of students coming from their programs
- Principals are commended for including preschool classrooms in their walkthroughs of classes and attempting to include these programs in the daily operations at each site

Commendations - Before/After School Staff

- Before and After School program staff are commended for ensuring that students complete homework assignments during the time that they are in the program
- Parents particularly noted their appreciation for this service
- District efforts to attempt to eliminate waitlists by expanding services

Commendations - Preschool Classrooms

- District is commended for providing full inclusion classrooms that model inclusion of students with disabilities - modeling the least restrictive environment philosophy
- Range of preschool programs that allow for maximum interaction between students with disabilities and non-disabled age appropriate peers

Commendations and Parents

- Parents are commended for completing a parent survey, attending focus groups, and providing additional valuable input to this process

Moving Forward

Continuous Improvement

Overarching Recommendations

- Separate the two programs under CDC and establish individual identities for both programs
- Consider using the CDC designation only for preschool program
- Establish separate name for the before/after school program

Staffing and Organizational Recommendations

- Consider placing staff at school sites under direct supervision of respective School Principal
- Consider adding Account Clerk support to assist with collection of parent fees
- Consider a lead instructor for before/after school program at each site to assist with oversight during time School Principal would not normally be on site
- Create certificated administrative position to oversee both programs
- Integrate vision and shared expectations for both programs in the District's strategic plan efforts

Follow up on Inter-District Permits

- Conduct short survey, exit interview, or other means to determine reasons for requested inter-district transfers out of the district
- Aggregate data and review at Cabinet level to determine trends and whether any mitigation is possible regarding reasons for inter-district permits being sought

Before and After School Recommendations

- Program Operations
 - Goal to eliminate waitlists
 - Expand time when Program open to be in concert with businesses
 - If not possible to guarantee program access to all, improve time frame as to when parents know whether their student is admitted into program
 - Increase utilization of facilities, including multi-purpose rooms, music rooms, libraries, technology labs, classrooms, adjoining campus space, etc.

Before and After School Recommendations

- Financial Considerations
 - Cost effective and competitive
 - Consider increasing staff:student ratios to 1:18 with flexibility up to 1:20
 - Consider blending classrooms, rather than having individual grade levels
 - Continue to consider whether the early/late schedule structure is contributing to the fiscal challenges for the program. Delay action on this issue until the extensive study undertaken by the District can be completed, with the following exception. Consider implementing a consistent start and end time for third graders for the next school year.

Before and After School Recommendations

- Communication Issues
 - Revise District website to provide clear and user-friendly access to information regarding the Program
 - Hold an informational meeting at appropriate times during the year to walk parents through the process for applying for the program and explain options
 - Continue to increase transparency with the admission process by explaining the parameters around how the School Mint dashboard works and is structured

Before and After School Recommendations

- Collaboration Between Before/After School Program and General Education Staff
 - Principals consistently visit and do a walkthrough of program
 - Encourage staff to visit general education classroom and meet with teacher at least once a year to discuss methods to support general education
 - Provide training on ways to support general education curriculum and standards
 - Annual meeting to discuss issues that exist that create perception of program being siloed and develop action plan to mitigate issues

Preschool Classrooms Recommendations

- Program Operations
 - Goal no waiting lists
 - Expand program to include full-day option to meet needs of working parents
 - If not possible to guarantee access to all, establish priority for 4 year olds and then 3 year olds
 - Ensure parents know whether child accepted into program early
 - Consider other facilities, including centralized facility, to procure adequate facilities for program

Preschool Classroom Recommendations

- Full Inclusion

- Establish meetings with general education and special education administration to develop collaborative guidelines
- Communicate continuum of offerings, curriculum, and types of students who would benefit from each placement and service
- Expand focus of regular department meetings, align with PLC and Guiding Coalitions, ensure means to set department goals, review progress, address issues
- Continue design PD for instructional assistants to facilitate student independence
- Establish clear written expectations and consistent accountability for schedules, responsibilities, and workloads. Produce written protocol, guidelines, job descriptions, and/or operating procedures

Preschool Classroom Recommendations

- Full Inclusion Cont.
 - Establish means for regular feedback
 - Adopt goals for department and communicate in writing with employees, along with organizational structure and chain of command

Preschool Program Recommendations

- Financial Considerations
 - Cost-effective and competitive with other operators
 - Staff ratios are operated in concert with licensing requirements of 1 teacher to 24 children and a pupil/adult ratio of 1:8

Preschool Program Recommendations

- Communication
 - Revise District website to provide clear and user-friendly access to information regarding the Program
 - Hold an informational meeting at appropriate times during the year to walk parents through the process for applying for the program and explain options
 - Continue to increase transparency with the admission process by explaining the parameters around how the School Mint dashboard works and is structured
 - Annual meeting to discuss issues that exist that create perception of program being siloed and develop action plan to mitigate issues

Preschool Program Recommendations

- Collaboration Between Preschool School Program and General Education Staff
 - Principals consistently visit and do a walkthrough of program
 - Encourage staff to visit TK and K classroom and meet with teacher at least once a year to discuss methods to support general education
 - Employ consistent assessment tool and protocol for measuring school readiness of students entering K. Aggregate results and share with parents, preschool staff, and private providers
 - Design PD based on aggregated results where children need greater targeted instruction. Consider inviting other preschool providers
 - Schedule and conduct regular meetings with preschool, TK and K teachers, and administration to review results and discuss potential areas of growth

Financial and Human Resources Recommendations

- Fiscal Review -
- Explore options to make programs sustainable and cost-effective, so the District is not in a position of subsidizing
- Re-evaluate the decision as to whether a third party could operate a program to make it more cost-effective and still achieve the goals of the District

Financial and Human Resources Recommendations

- Program Budgeting
 - Segregate revenue and expenditure reporting for the preschool and before/after school programs
 - Implement time accounting for staff who span both programs to proportionally allocate costs
 - Establish program budgets in conjunction with program management
 - Produce, analyze, share and discuss monthly budget-to-actual reports with program management

Financial and Human Resources Recommendations

- Cost Containment
 - Reorganize administration of programs
 - Establish higher adult-to-student ratios in concert with licensing requirements for preschool and for before/after school care to 1:18 with flexibility up to 1:20
 - Implement position control to track and maintain ratios
 - Implement simple time reporting for consistency with payroll allocations
 - Evaluate cost-benefit of options for reducing food costs such as reducing portions, ordering nutrition options not requiring preparation, utilizing in-house nutrition program, doing vendor cost comparisons, and/or supplementing with parent-provided nutrition

Financial and Human Resources Recommendations

- Tuition and Fee Collections
 - Research and select appropriate and affordable online payment solution
 - Discontinue/discourage collecting check or cash at each site. If continued, implement paper receipt given to the payor and two employees utilized to verify payments
 - Analyze and determine if discounts will continue. If discounts continue:
 - Adopt and communicate clear discount policy
 - Institute process to track qualifying parameters for each discount, and discontinues when no longer applicable
 - If programs can improve financially, consider whether a priority and discount can be offered to District employees, particularly classified staff, for either or both preschool programs and before/after school programs

Closing

Continued Progress Noted
Applaud Emphasis on Serving All Students

Appreciation to the Wiseburn Unified Leadership Team
For their commitment to meeting the needs of ALL students