



BOARD BRIEFS

Authored by the Davis School District Community Relations Department

District continues Social Emotional Learning efforts Employees, students and families receive personalized support

Since the pandemic began nearly a year ago, Davis School District has continued its efforts to find new and better ways to implement Social Emotional Learning for employees, students and their families.

Student and Family Resources Director Brad Christensen told the Board of Education during Tuesday's meeting that efforts have been focused on being innovative without losing the personal touch.

"We wanted to make sure we were providing individual support to schools," Christensen said in reference to the past year's efforts. "The earlier we can intervene with children and families, the better our outcomes can be, so we didn't want to lose ground on that."

During the 2019-20 school year, Social Emotional Learning in the district was targeted towards employees before moving to a student-based focus during the 2020-21 school year.

Social Emotional Learning Director Kathleen Chronister said, "We didn't know there was a pandemic coming, but it really helped us to have a leg up on how to help our adults help kids ... with strategies so they can get through the challenges they are having."

Before school reopened in the fall, the district's SEL team met with each school virtually to provide leadership training and support.

"We wanted to help schools refocus and decide on an SEL plan to meet the individual needs at each school.

We asked them to help students with three things — give them a sense of safety, help them feel connected, and help them with a sense of hope," Chronister said.

Other SEL opportunities also grew throughout the district. Family service workers provided outreach to over 3,000 families in the district and integrative educational therapists continued identifying mental health needs and provided a free clinical support group for parents during the district's soft closure last spring.

Mental health screenings moved to a virtual setting, dropout interventionists identified students who were unaccounted for and helped them return to school, and the Safe School clinical team expanded services to include an educator group during the 2020-21 school year.

"This couldn't have come at a better time. Everything that you've worked on, everything you are doing is just outstanding and it's making a difference," said Board Member Brigit Gerrard.

In other workshop business, the Board:

- Learned that Davis School District was the first district in the nation to host the 4 Corners Latinx Leadership Academy, virtually attended by Latino educational leaders from Utah, Arizona, Colorado and New Mexico.
- Heard the proposed \$5 increase to high school driver education fees to accommodate for higher insurance premiums, gas prices and car parts. The proposal will be considered by the Board for preliminary approval at the next board meeting.

District seeing decrease in COVID-19 cases and quarantines

Positive COVID-19 cases identified in Davis School District have decreased in the last month, going from the mid-200s, down to 157 in the last week with only eight quarantines.

"As a community, in Utah and particularly Davis School District, we have managed this pandemic — along with the health department — in ways that keep us open, keep our kids engaged and keep face-to-face class

time," said Assistant Superintendent John Zurbuchen.

"If we followed most recent national guidelines, we would not be open. It does not mean that our schools, in any way, shape or form, are more dangerous because we are open. It's the fact that we have learned early on how to provide mitigation strategies that keep our employees and students safe."

Vaccinations are being provided to district employees, but the

district is still implementing the Big 5 safety protocols to keep schools open.

"The vaccination protects the vaccinated, not those around them. We know these strategies are the reasons we have been able to stay open and are the reasons we will continue to stay open," said Zurbuchen.

"We'll follow the legislature and see if there is any new legislation in terms of COVID, but at this point, our parameters, our thresholds all remain the same."