

**Gilroy Unified School District**  
**SUPERINTENDENT'S PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (SPAC)**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Monday, May 10, 2021**

**Members in attendance:**

Shalini Jampani (Brownell)	Judy-Ann Rosti (Brownell)	Susan Rodriguez (Christopher)
Centeotl Merino (Christopher)	Jenny Swigart (Home School)	Melissa Avila-Carroll (GECA)
Cindy Wargocki (GECA)	Mari-Ann Low Gallagher (Gilroy)	Esmeralda Ramos (Las Animas)
Lauren Moller (Luigi Aprea)	Lindsay Millea (Rod Kelley)	Ashley Bortolussi (Rucker)
Dawn Johnson (Solorsano)	Coyo Anhder (South Valley)	Trevor Van Laar (South Valley)
Teresa Perez (VLA)	James Pace (Board Member)	Melissa Aguirre (Board Member)

**Welcome & Introductions**

- Dr. Flores began by introducing the speakers for the evening, Kathleen Biermann, Elementary Director of Educational Services, Dr. Deb Padilla, Secondary Director of Educational Services, and Maribel Guizar, Director of Technology.

**LCAP/ELO**

- Mrs. Kathleen Biermann and Dr. Deb Padilla shared a presentation regarding the LCAP.
- This is the time of year when they begin to develop the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), and as part of that process, they ask for input from stakeholders, of which SPAC is one.
- The LCAP is a plan that every district is required to have in California, and it is centered around the state's 8 priorities that were shared in the presentation.
- They provided a brief review of LCAP goals as well as the ELO grant.
- GUSD included four main goals listed below. For this presentation, they concentrated on goals 1-3:
  - Goal 1: Provide high quality instruction and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning opportunities to ensure college & career readiness.
  - Goal 2: Provide equitable support for all learners.
  - Goal 3: School Culture and Engagement.
  - Goal 4: Basic Services.
- A link was provided for the SPAC members, which included a survey revolving around the four goals.
- The Expanded Learning Opportunities grant (ELO), is a one-year grant. It has a significant amount of money for school districts, knowing students are going to have additional needs after this year.
- It is designed to support academic and non-academic needs.
- As always there are targeted groups of students including English Learners, students with disabilities, foster youths, McKinney-Vento students, or students who have been disengaged in the learning this past year.
- This is important, how the district can best support the needs of the students academically and socially and emotionally.

***SPAC members went into breakout rooms, and afterwards provided the following feedback:***

***Ms. Biermann's group shared the following information:***

- Concerns were expressed about the gaps in learning for this school year, for DI students, for those homeschooled vs. distance learning.
- VLA needs may have been different-the curriculum was different.
- Students not being held back, when they do not meet the standards to move on to the next grade level.
- Students who have not been on middle or high school campus, such as 6<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> grade students are going to have a big challenge next year.

***Dr. Padilla's group shared the following information:***

- YMCA is amazing. They want to keep it going forever. They want it to be kept as long as you can.
- Sometimes students are failing in the middle and they are left behind. They are passing and sometimes still need more support.
- Middle school students should go on field trips. It might be nice to do something, even the Aquarium. They can write on the walls. Parent clubs could be put towards things like that.
- Getting them out of the immediate area, getting some life back into them.
- The last one was Bruin Time or Tiger Time that they have at middle schools. They hope these will continue when kids are back in school. They used to have similar things when parents used to put on presentations. Thinks that this is something that should be kept and something pushed through all the schools.

***Dr. Flores' group shared the following information:***

- College Readiness was expressed as a priority and gradually teaching kids over time the skills needed.

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---

- If they know beforehand they have to do those things, they can put those on applications.
- Communication-sometimes it is hard to filter out all information from the district. The school hears different things from different sources. Need consistent communication overall in many different areas, i.e. sports.
- Communication makes everything so much easier, what do parents need to do to be more involved and understand what resources are, which is always a challenge, also a big frustration for many people.
- It was great to hear from parents that the district is doing a good job at providing equitable learning.
- When surveys are filled out for students to decide on the career sometimes their answers do not lead to the right end result.
- This group thought that the district was doing as good as they can.

**Additional/Comments:**

- In the presentation on May 20 as part of the LCAP communication to the Board, how are they addressing those needs, and some of it with the new grants, and how can they make sure those services are placed with students.
- Staff are also looking at curriculum in terms of how does the district support students.
- The gaps in the learning, kids are concerned about it. Teachers are concerned about it. Parents are concerned about it.
- Intervention- having more support for students, making sure that they are equipped with the appropriate technology.
- Engaging activities-, opportunities to socialize and to do things that are fun.
- Opportunities for all students.

**Q:** Is the ELO grant, separate for the additional funds the district would have received if secondary schools opened?

**A:** It is a separate group of funds, for one year. The district has to spend those funds by August 22<sup>nd</sup>. The grant is designed to fill learning gaps and to address those needs. A small portion of the funds can be used for PPE, however, it is primarily designed to target services for students e.g. Mental health, wellness, food. The district did not receive \$3 million because secondary schools did not reopen. The rest of it is focused on helping transition back to full time learning for students in person. The top priority that has come out of all of these meetings and surveys is the social emotional well being of the students and providing support services.

**Q:** For VLA, there is a second informational meeting. She knows that there are going to be some changes. Some of the teachers are advocating to have the curriculum materials provided. Does the district have that information?

**A:** For elementary, we did hear there was some interest. We will provide workbooks and there are other materials that are available. However, the district is not purchasing everything. We are purchasing right now those materials that are available for them to download and print. The workbooks are what has been requested and the district will provide them.

**Q:** Some parents were asking what the funding per student break down is for VLA vs. those in the general ed. classrooms, because the information of the materials not being available?

**A:** The district is providing the workbooks and online resources for accessing curriculum. The district provides the curriculum and funds the teachers. In some models of VLA, the districts do not pay for teachers, they use external teachers. GUSD's is very different model with certificated teachers, and the district pays for contract licensing. Funding is the same for all GUSD students, we do not separate them it is a different delivery system. GUSD funds the VLA teachers. There are 7 elementary teachers, and 14 secondary. The district's commitment is huge, and Edmentum and Cober cost the district, materials cost, there is a cost for those programs, we are still assessing how many students are going to be in the program next year.

**GUSD Technology Update - Maribel Guizar, Director of Information Technology**

- When the district first sheltered in place, staff distributed around 3,500 chromebooks. Since then many have been issued with a total of 7,560 distributed.
- Staff has ordered 6,048 new computers. However, it has been challenging receiving those, due to the demand. Manufacturers are very busy with all the orders received.
- The new chromebooks have just been received, staff is getting those ready to replace existing chromebooks that will expire soon.
- There is a total of 1,815 hotspots that have been distributed. This is a combination of TMobile and Verizon.

**Gilroy Unified School District**  
**SUPERINTENDENT'S PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (SPAC)**  
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**Monday, May 10, 2021**

---

**Q:** It is her understanding that many of the chromebooks that are distributed currently are expired. What is the plan for them after this school year is completed? Would GUSD consider allowing families to keep the chromebooks rather than collect and e-waste them?

**A:** The chromebooks that we have out in the field, have not yet had the auto update expiration date. These will reach that date by the end of June. In either July or August, the district will be able to replace those before they expire. Many of those chromebooks are not holding the charge. Right now, there are many in the field that have to be connected to a wall outlet in order for it to hold the charge. Students are 40 minutes into an activity and then the battery dies. They are no longer the best devices to have in operation. Ms. Guizar said she would not recommend to leave those in the field. Dr. Flores added that the district is required by law, when an item needs to be deemed obsolete, that a process is followed.

- For the secondary level, an item will be taken to the Board soon. Staff is proposing to have two displays per classroom, one main display and then a secondary one. The difference is that the main display will have more accessories. This is the one that will allow the teacher to do the majority of teaching, they will both be 86" displays. The main display will have the keyboard and camera, the teachers will also have an iPad with a case. The licensees is for the management solution and the stand. The stand is so that the teachers can point the camera, and it will free up their hands and allow them to point the camera to that object. They will also have a sound bar. These displays will be wireless, the teachers will be able to connect both displays, and mirror content.
- Dr. Flores added that at the secondary level, the middle and high school is moving in the same direction of having touchscreen that can display everything on the teacher's computer. This was first tested at the Gilroy High School new math building. All classrooms have two displays, which are mounted on mobile carts, and the teachers really like them. All classrooms at Brownell Middle School already have one mounted on the wall and another on a mobile cart. Solorsano and South Valley have ordered them through a grant.
- What is going to be recommended to the Board is to do the same in all secondary classrooms so that this becomes the district's new standard instead of a projector and a projection screen.

**Q:** One of her concerns with technology is what the students can monitor on the chromebooks. MHUSD has put in place some programs where the teachers have more control to what the students have access to, that was a big issue, and responsibility, the chromebooks are owned by the districts, what was done and what can be done moving forward?

**A:** The district is in compliance with all the federal regulations and requirements and they do provide filters for all these chromebooks. One of the issues with filters is that you have to fine tune filters, because you either under block or over block. The district does have different technologies for elementary, middle and high school that is applied on all chromebooks. There is a fine line in this regard and while chromebooks are district property the students are at home and we do not monitor or do not want to monitor the home networks. We do block all inappropriate content, that is different at all levels. For example, at the high school level, they may need a broader selection of images for photo class, than those needed for elementary, so staff try to be more cautious at the elementary level. Dr. Flores received legal advice regarding if the district could monitor what people are accessing even through district computers using their own network. Also many of the students are not on district computers - they are using their own or their parents computers, and the source of internet is funded through the parents.

**Comment:** If a student is in class and they are watching Youtube on campus, they would hope the teacher would stop that. Being that a lot of kids cannot be monitored by parents, it just seems like other districts are taking steps to at least take the steps to keep this from happening. It takes a lot from education, she has also asked the teachers to give her worksheets for her students and she will do them with her kids, because they have gone through at least four chromebooks with one child, two or three with another, she knows they are getting frustrated and side tracked.

**Q:** What happens if district chromebooks are damaged? How will the district deal with returned, damaged equipment?

**A:** It will be similar to textbooks that are returned at the end of the year. If the students have damaged computers or damaged books, they will be fined.

**Comment:** Morgan Hill Unified uses GoGuardian beginning in 3rd grade. It works while students are at home, and they have to be on a district device.

**A:** We have spent a lot of time on this, and based on consultation with legal counsel and others, the district has decided not to use GoGuardian.

**Gilroy Unified School District**  
**SUPERINTENDENT'S PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (SPAC)**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**Monday, May 10, 2021**

---

**Comment:** There is one parent asking if the district can block YouTube because the students were going on the site when they were supposed to be in class. The response was that the teachers need to use this so when they blocked it, then the teachers were not able to access it; it is a shared responsibility of the school and the parents.

**A:** There are so many resources that you can only get through YouTube, that is the district allows it. Many years ago, youtube was blocked so were many other sources. However, software publishers have made the content available online which students and staff access. If the district blocked access, these would not be available, e.g. Benchmark.

**Q:** There have been students in class reaching out to a student and threatening them. Perhaps, later on down the road, the district can see if there are ways to monitor that. When distance learning happened it was during school hours, the student saw others browsing inappropriate things on the phone. The way the students are monitored during school hours it would be great.

**A:** All students signed a written agreement at the beginning of the school year of what not to do, and we have to be able to catch them doing this. We can discipline kids who are using their phones inappropriately. If there is cyberbullying and that is affecting another child's ability to learn and to be in school, they can definitely do that.

**Q:** There are many families with multiple children with chromebooks. Are they returning them or keeping them for the summer?

**A:** At this moment, only seniors, and students not returning, will be returning the chromebooks.

**Q:** What happens if they return a different chromebook to the wrong school?

**A:** What will we do with seniors? Will the schools send them an email? Each chromebook has an asset tag and that is the information that we will send to the students and the parents so they can know how to identify the chromebook.

***Superintendent's Report***  
***Fall 2021 Reopening Plans***

- The reopening plan that was recommended went to the Board for approval on May 6. The plan is for all students to return in the fall, following any recommendations from the Public Health Department (PHD).
- Also recommended was a contingency plan. It is what elementary students are currently doing. This is for the worse case scenarios if the PHD says that schools must close. The contingency plan for secondary is dependent on the classroom technology and it is called simultaneous instruction.
- On May 20, Ms. Guizar will bring the technology item to the Board.
- She told the SPAC members that hopefully they will watch the Board Meetings or read a letter that was sent out.

**Q:** Will the district potentially move back to distance learning if the fire season is bad or the air quality is really bad, is that something that is on the table?

**A:** The district has dealt with fires and smoke, before and has strict policies. With new HVAC improvements, the air quality should be fine, if not we will take action. If it is 100 or that high, we take certain steps, a bulletin will be sent out from the district office, if the air quality is not good. We had fires a couple of years ago, with numerous smoke days. One of the reasons we would rather have the students at school, is that the HVACs at the school sites are superior to most home HVAC systems. If there were, a fire nearby then that would be a different story. The district has worked closely with the fire department to plan for smoke and fire

**Q:** Knows that there has been recommendations to have windows and doors open, would that be an issue?

**A:** This was a practice because of COVID. The HEPA filters, circulate the air more frequently. We would just have to evaluate the conditions. Years ago, we had to take special actions during the floods and the district worked closely with the EOC and the county officials. We are anticipating that we are going to have smoky days this year; we will consult with experts on what settings to put the HVAC on, due to smoke.

**Q:** Prior to opening the elementary schools, they provided presentations as far as what schools were going to look like when they reopen. Is there a plan where the district will talk about what it will look like in the fall? Understands for elementary the classes are relatively smaller, now that they are talking about reopening, what policies are in place, as a parent, she is concerned about them not having a vaccine.

**Gilroy Unified School District**  
SUPERINTENDENT'S PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (SPAC)  
MEETING MINUTES  
Monday, May 10, 2021

---

- A:** Schools will have open houses, orientations, communication about what schools are going to look like. The district now has more information, on how to cut down on the spread of illness in classroom, like handwashing procedures. This will still be a major emphasis. Masks will be worn, if needed. For a parent that does not want to send a child to school, GUSD will offer the VLA, for parents/guardians who are not comfortable yet, since there is no vaccine available for children under 12.
- Q:** Knows there will be a deadline for parents in VLA, is there going to be some type of survey: Parents do not always read everything, so they may not know of the VLA deadline because they are not reading what the district is sending out. For those that want to come back, are they still going to be able to say I want VLA. Think a survey may help to give parents those options, maybe in July sometime?
- A:** We can do that. What we are trying to gauge is how many teachers we need in VLA. Those that are not needed for staffing VLA, will be transferred to other schools. We are constantly going to be monitoring conditions. Staff can do something closer to the school year.
- Q:** Kids are required to show vaccination cards for different viruses, are we going to get to that point?
- A:** The COVID19 vaccination is not required by the State of California yet. We do not think that they will require it until the companies get the full authorization. Once they get this then the state may require it. The district doesn't make that decision it is the PHD. The current required vaccinations are made at the state level by the California PHD not the district. It is not their decision. We will see if at some point it is mandated.
- Q:** What about kindergarten enrollment?
- A:** Enrollment started in mid-March for Kinder and TK enrollment. Kinder enrollment started earlier this year. You can go on the GUSD website to get more information. If you are enrolling TK that fills up pretty fast.

**Summer School**

- We are planning a much bigger summer school and are calling it summer program. When you think of summer school, you think of credit recovery.
  - The targeted groups are special education, migrant education, foster youth, homeless youth, students who have significant academic delay.
  - At the high school level, the district is going to offer more classes for credit recovery.
  - The main question mark right now is staffing and if there will be enough teachers to do something big. We would like to have 2,500 students. Our one limiting factor is staff that are willing to work this summer. So far, not as many have signed up as we would hope. We are personally recruiting staff right now. What we offer is dependent on how many staff they can get to work the summer program.
- Q:** Has the district raised the stipend?
- A:** Yes, and we also have given them the option to teach in three week segments. We are trying to recruit.

Dr. Flores ended the meeting, by thanking everyone for participating in this committee. She knows they are a liaison to their school site and values this committee so much. SPAC members ask great questions and are not afraid to address issues. She also thanked the six SPAC members for joining the Reopening Planning Committee. She decided not do to a lottery and just choose the members that volunteered. She said she hopes they have a great end of year and summer.

The next SPAC meeting will take place in September of 2021.