

District Wellness Council

February 28, 2023

Attendees (47)

Students

Cupertino: Alissa Cheong, Chetana Medam, Rochelle Awuah, Sarah Bae
Fremont: Amy Huang, Ella Hasner, Venkata Siva Ramisetty
Homestead: Henna Chawla, Josh Choi, Rachel Kim, Sophie Park
Lynbrook: Irene Hwang, Vrishank Chandrasekhar, Sharon Lu
Middle College: Varsha Ganesh
Monta Vista: Amy Zhang, Ananya Dua, Vidhi Goel

Parents

Cupertino: Rachel Wei, Teresa Olson
Fremont: Catherine Ackman
Homestead: Alissa Erogbogbo, John Diffenderfer, Maia Elder-Kadar
Lynbrook: Dr. Preethi Bangalore, Jennifer Leder
Monta Vista: Vinu Srivatsan

Staff

Cupertino: Melina Nafrada (Assistant Principal)
District Office: Dina Cuellar (Senior HR Specialist), Lauren Severson (Bond Accounting Support Clerk)
Fremont: Brooke Chan (Assistant Principal)
Homestead: Sarah Loyd (School-Based Therapist)
Lynbrook: Jena Rajabally (Attendance Technician), Ranjani Narasimhan (Paraeducator)
Monta Vista: Doreen Bonde (Media/Library Specialist, Member of Health Course Development Team), Lora Lerner (Science Teacher, Member of Health Course Development Team)

Trustees: Rosa Kim, Stanley Kou

Community Members: Victoria Low

Planning Team: Melissa Duran (Executive Assistant to Teaching & Learning), Lisa Freitas (School Counselor Curriculum Lead), Hayley Giniger (Program Specialist for Mental Health Services), Trudy Gross (Assistant Superintendent), Leila Lurie (School-Based Therapist Lead), Denae Nurnberg (Coordinator of Data and Assessment), Divya Puri (District Manager of Food Services), Nancy Sullivan (Director of Special Services)

AGENDA

The meeting opened at 4:32 p.m.

Introduction and welcome from Trudy Gross, Associate Superintendent of Student and Special Services (slide 1).

Trudy reviewed the purpose of the Wellness Council and meeting objectives (slides 2-3). Council members in attendance introduced themselves in the chat and transitioned to a community builder (slide 4).

Leila Lurie, School-Based Therapist Lead, provided an overview of the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework and how it is being utilized to guide the wellness work in the District (slide 5). Wellness Council meetings will follow the SEL 3 Signature Practices from CASEL: Welcoming/Inclusion Activities; Engaging Strategies, Brain Breaks, and Transitions; and Optimistic Closure. Council members engaged in two inclusion activities: Four Corners and The Hard Scale (slides 6-11).

Hayley Giniger, Program Specialist for Mental Health Services, transitioned to an opportunity for Council members to review the Core Beliefs that guide the efforts in the FUHSD to support student wellness (slide 12).

FUHSD continues efforts to support student wellness (i.e., physical, nutritional, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual) with the following core beliefs...

- *It is imperative to continue this work by building on our longstanding efforts to develop resources and partnerships in support of student wellness.*
- *Any approach at the district or school level will need to be systemic. All people in all roles must understand how they influence student wellness.*
- *Challenges to student wellness come from many sources including, peer and family relationships, academic stress, identity and intersectionality, societal pressures, socio-economic status, racism, and inequities people face.*
- *Student wellness must be addressed through partnerships that include schools, families, and the larger community.*
- *Exploration of this topic must take into consideration and be sensitive to the cultural diversity, and differing cultural norms and values, in our community.*
- *We believe, and research supports the idea that strong nutritional, social, and emotional health benefits academic performance. Efforts to strengthen these areas are an aide to, not a distraction from, academic success.*

Questions to guide the breakout room discussions:

- Which of the beliefs resonates or does not resonate with you?
- Is there a belief you feel is most difficult to see evidence of?

Notes from the breakout rooms:

- There is a tendency for us to think of wellness as a fluffy add-on. Students can't learn until they feel safe and supported. The most daunting task are the words "systemic change". Wellness affects your academic life; wellness needs to come first before anything else.
- In terms of embracing wellness and cultural values and norms. It is hard for us to get out of our own biases.
- The staff and community need to continue to work together to regroup and COVID taught us how vulnerable we are. There are times it feels like attendance and grades come before wellness (as a parent). The fact that we are a diverse community, and everyone approaches wellness differently and even when they present themselves as caring about one part of the student experience, it doesn't mean that they don't care about wellness as well.

- Immigrant families experience different pressures. Concerned about family pressures, the relationship with the community, and strongly support the wellness centers. Looking forward to having these centers as an option for our students.
- Don't discount what is already taking place. The district isn't starting from ground zero and the process of improving wellness shouldn't feel like we are starting from scratch.
- A student and a parents talked about racism that they are seeing at their school site. They talked mostly about core belief 3. The parent wanted to emphasize the systematic issues that are happening.
- A group member expressed that the wish that physical environment/space was part of the belief statements

After Council members returned from the breakout groups, Trudy reviewed the history of our Wellness Council in the FUHSD (slide 13). She highlighted the Student Wellness Survey that was administered in January 2019 (slide 14). Additional details and results as shared with students, families, and staff in 2019-20:

This survey is part of a research study, "High School Student Well-being and Life Stressors," being conducted by Dr. Stuart Slavin, Board Certified Pediatrician which can be used to give us context to a broader sample. In collaboration with Dr. Slavin the survey was designed to incorporate standardized measures of anxiety and depression to establish a baseline for the level of symptoms experienced by our students along with a standardized measure of resilience as a gauge of progress over time. When thinking about any teen it is important to note that serious concern about the symptoms listed below would be based on them being sustained over time and impeding progress in aspects of their life, including school.

- *Symptoms of anxiety include feelings of worry, indecision and fear; muscle tension and restlessness; difficulty controlling the feeling of worry; and difficulty concentrating.*
- *Symptoms of depression include irritability; feeling sad or tearful most of the time; feelings of hopelessness; fatigue and lack of energy; significant changes in appetite and sleep; and difficulty concentrating.*
- *Resilience is defined as the ability to cope with difficulties.*

The survey was administered during class time, took approximately 20 minutes and was completed by 9,761 students, 89% of District enrollment. For those surveyed, data represent a snapshot of one day in their lives and the following statements can be made:

- ***The majority of responses from students surveyed indicated a moderate level of symptoms related to anxiety.***
- ***The majority of responses from students surveyed did not indicate symptoms of depression.***
- ***The majority of responses from students surveyed indicated a normal level of resilience.***

Input from a medical professional who reviewed this data stated that the reported levels are consistent with this stage of adolescent development. Students are finding their way into adulthood through interactions in school, at home, in the community and in planning for the next stage of their lives.

Trudy shared that the District has now returned to administering the CA Healthy Kids Survey (slide 15). Administration occurred at all of our sites in January and February. The Council will review data during the 2023-24 school year.

Nancy Sullivan, Director of Educational and Special Services, provided updates in District staffing and programming since the Council last met in January 2020 (slide 16).

Divya Puri, District Manager of Food Services, provided an overview of Nutrition Services in the FUHSD (slides 17-22). She introduced Joshua Choi, Nutrition Services Student Board member, reviewed efforts of the Board during this year and the 2021-22 school year (slides 23-31).

The meeting wrapped up with Trudy sharing details about the meeting on March 6 with the Health Course Curriculum Development team and the next Wellness Council meeting on Tuesday, April 25 from 4:30-6 p.m. via Zoom (slide 32). She provided the connection to Deep Kindness and the inclusion activities from Character Strong (slide 33).

The meeting concluded at 5:35 p.m. with participants adding their input to a padlet with the following prompts:

- Fact! What did you learn that is new?
- Aha! What is a new idea or thought that you have?
- Question...what is a question you still have?
- Action! Is there an action item you have created based on today's meeting?
- What would you like to learn more about regarding support for student wellness in the FUHSD?

The information gathered will be provided prior to the April 25 meeting, in preparation for that meeting.