

LAS VIRGENES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

4111 LAS VIRGENES ROAD
CALABASAS, CALIFORNIA 91302
Telephone: (818) 880-4000
Fax: (818) 880-4200
www.lvusd.org



BOARD OF EDUCATION

ANGELA CUTBILL

JILL GAINES

DALLAS LAWRENCE

LINDA MENGES

LESLI STEIN

DANIEL STEPENOSKY, Ed. D.
SUPERINTENDENT

**LAS VIRGENES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
CURRICULUM COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING**

March 29, 2023

Present: Cathy Anderson, Sophie Basseri, Chad Bloom, Amy Strachman Borselli, Hillary Boss, Anita Brkic, Angela Carpenter, Adam Corriea, Angela Cutbill, Jana Davenport, Walter Del Olmo, Carina Diana, Dana Dickson, Marlene Didierjean, Aaron Dobson, Sarah Fitzgerald, Tiffany Garrison, Kathie Jacobson, Tina Johnson, Thomas Liu, Kevin Kane, Kelly Lampert, Dallas Lawrence (via teleconference), Thomas Liu, Randi Loeb, Krista Lucas, Mason Markell, Ariella Markowitz, Jessica Mejia, Norman Mejia, Darci Miller, Amy Murray, Kim Patterson, Courtney Peoples, Mariel Pine, Sandra Ritvo, Dr. Michael Roberts, Michael Robkin, Pam Rudy, Kamran Salem, Vanessa Savich, Christina Simon, Allison Stein, Holly Stivers, Brittany Stone, Sarah Stueckle, Lisa Villongco, Michael Yeung

The meeting came to order at 4:02 pm.

Dr. Scifres welcomed the Committee and shared that there would be two agenda items voted on during the meeting. He welcomed and thanked the adoption teams present. He reminded the Committee that information for the action items was emailed to the Committee on Friday, March 24 and included QR codes for each book title that would be presented in the TK-5 DEI Textbook Adoption.

Grades 6-12 Spanish Curriculum Adoption

The Spanish Curriculum adoption team presenting to the Council was introduced: Holly Stivers/ AE Wright, Mariel Pine/ AC Stelle, Norman Mejía/ LCMS, Jessica Mejía/AHS, Walter Del Olmo/AHS, and Marlene Didierjean/ CHS.

The existing curriculum, Que Chevere, was adopted in 2015. In 2019, the State Board of Education approved new language standards and in 2021, the State Board of Education recommended three instructional materials programs. Our team reviewed all three recommended programs and decided to pilot two of them:

- Vista Publishing - Senderos
- Carnegie - Que Chevere

All five secondary schools were involved in the semester-long pilot. Teachers had access to both programs and the option to choose which program they wanted to pilot. Weekly collaboration time was spent discussing the pros and cons of both programs. Site-specific time was utilized to determine which program each site would be recommending to bring

forward for a curriculum adoption recommendation. All five sites were in agreement with the recommendation to adopt Senderos by Vista Publishing.

The team shared that their work with the program and student feedback has proven that Vista is a comprehensive language and cultural learning system that engages students through multi-modality learning which fosters student engagement and mastery. Highlights of Vista's core values and instructional supports shared included:

- Vista uses a six-step instructional approach with updated content and features that makes it fresh and relevant.
- Context-centered approach to language proficiency
 - Updated readings, TV clips, short films
 - *Fotonovela* storyline
- Grammar tutorials
 - Clear and concise explanations followed by visually appealing examples
- Easy-to-use digital platform
 - Authentic, cultural, and instructional media
 - Vocabulary and grammar tutorials with speech recognition
 - Self-check activities with diagnostics and remediation
- Vista Assessment Builder allows teachers to modify entire assessment program
- Student access to readings with audio, instructional, cultural and authentic video presentations with optional captioning
- Digital access to grammar slides for each lesson in each level
- Self-check activities with diagnostics and remediation
- Tiered cultural activities based on ability levels

The specifics of the proposed adoption include:

- Four-year period
- LVUSD technology integration
- Digital textbooks and consumables for students
- Classroom sets of textbooks and consumables
- Professional development webinar and half-day site training for teachers

Approval of Vista Senderos Curriculum Adoption for Grades 6-12

Motion to Approve: Carina Diana

Second: Mike Yeung

Approved: Unanimously

TK-5 DEI Texts Adoption

Dr. Scifres introduced and thanked the TK-5 DEI Text adoption team for their work. The team was led by Ms. Courtney Peoples and consisted of 22 elementary teachers. The team attending the meeting to present to the Council included:

Bay Laurel: Anita Brkic, Pam Rudy and Vanessa Savich

Lupin Hill: Tiffany Garrison, Randi Loeb, Ariella Markowitz, and Sarah Stueckle

Yerba Buena: Sarah Fitzgerald and Kathie Jacobson

Round Meadow: Angela Carpenter and Christina Simon

Chaparral: Kelly Lampert

White Oak Lions: Cathy Anderson, Hillary Boss and Lisa Villongco
Willow: Brittany Stone

Ms. Davenport also thanked the committee for their time, their thorough and thoughtful process, and shared the values that drove this work. LVUSD is serving a diverse student community and strives to send our students into our diverse, interconnected world prepared to build community, increase capacity for empathy, and attain an understanding of different perspectives. Experiencing books that reflect not only our students' experiences, but illuminate other's experiences, offers powerful opportunities for this type of growth.

Ms. Peoples recapped the Committee's process to evaluate the texts and support our social emotional learning (SEL) and RULER frameworks. There was representation from every grade level and school site. The text lists were procured through the recommendations from both the California Department of Education (CDE) and the American Library Association (ALA). Grade levels read the books and scored them individually using an inclusivity checklist relating to the LVUSD DEI standards, the RULER framework, the protagonists, the stories, the authors, and the visual representations. The team provided a brief summary of each of the titles and highlighted the attributes represented.

A committee member asked how the books would be utilized. Ms. Davenport responded that these could be used as core novels, in small groups, and/or in book circles.

A committee member acknowledged that it was obvious the committee had done a lot of work. He requested more time to read the books before being asked to vote. Dr. Scifres shared that the list of books, complete with detailed descriptions and a link to each text, had been shared with the Committee the prior week on March 24th. This is the normal practice for the Curriculum Council and gives the Council ample time to review all materials. Dr. Scifres added that the committee member was welcome to abstain from the vote during the meeting and have his vote recorded during a future meeting.

The committee member referenced LVUSD Board Policy 0415 Equity, and asked the committee to talk about the diversity of groups within LVUSD and how the group selected books that reflected the diversity of our students.

Ms. Peoples shared that our students are diverse not only in terms of their ethnicity, but also in their abilities, and their religious and cultural backgrounds. The group looked at the recommended lists and narrowed them down through those lenses. She added that this is an ongoing, fluid process and the District will continue to look at our book lists to evaluate if LVUSD is representing all groups and students.

The committee member inquired further about this subset of books and the process that showed these accurately reflect the diversity among student groups. He added he was assuming the student groups meant Las Virgenes student groups. Board representative Ms. Cutbill shared that the District's goal is to have culturally diverse libraries. For students to not only see themselves in every part of their education, but to also see other students and

cultures. The value is in understanding the world rather than reflecting a data point representative of our students.

Another member of the pilot team shared that many of LVUSD students are not familiar with some of the lifestyles of the characters and each book has the capacity to help our students empathize with others and develop appreciation for another's world.

Ms. Tina Johnson offered more about the process which utilized the inclusivity checklist. The team intentionally looked for diverse representation, language, author and illustrator representation, DEI, which relates to the LVUSD Social Justice standards, and in addition, teacher resources. Under each of these categories, there were specific details considered to make sure these titles met those metrics.

The Committee member asked if the inclusivity checklist could be shared. Dr. Scifres indicated that he would share the inclusivity checklist, and added that the checklist was utilized as a tool to evaluate the books.

Another presenter added that the connection to DEI and the SEL pieces represented in each of the titles are very important aspects of work LVUSD is actively engaging in with our students.

Approval of TK-5 DEI Texts Adoption

Motion to Approve: Darci Miller

Second: Adam Corriea

Approved: 26

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 1

No other business was discussed. Dr. Scifres thanked everyone for their time.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:04 pm.