

LAS VIRGENES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

September 20, 2023

Present: Keesha Amezcua, Chad Bloom, Ashanti Blaize-Hopkins, Amy Strachman Borselli, Julia Carrillo, Adam Corriea, Angela Cutbill, Jana Davenport, Carina Diana, Dana Dickson, Marlene Didierjean, Kristen Dizon, Sheri Given, Michelle Hayashida, Kevin Kane, Kristy Kimball, Dallas Lawrence, Thomas Liu, Krista Lucas, Sandra Maloney, Jessica Marshall, Darci Miller, Kim Patterson, Courtney Peoples, Shelly Pimstone, Madhuri Raum, Kamran Salem, Micheal Siegel, Christina Simon, Michael Strickler, Carrie Trupp, Dominique Vargas, Ella Walsh, Leighton Westerberg, Melanie Wright

The meeting came to order at 4:00 p.m.

LVUSD Director of Elementary Education, Ms. Davenport, introduced herself, and LVUSD Director of Secondary Education, Ms. Patterson, welcomed the Committee and thanked the members for volunteering their time. She thanked and introduced our Board of Education members, Ms. Cutbill and Mr. Lawrence, and asked the Committee to introduce themselves.

Bylaws and Role of Curriculum Council Member Review

Ms. Davenport reviewed the role of the Council and the expectations for the role of the committee members. She explained that the Council serves as an advisory committee to review curriculum and instructional materials, provide input or review of the current curriculum, and review the curriculum the District is proposing or piloting to make recommendations for adoption to the administration and the Board of Education. These processes are outlined in the Curriculum Council bylaws, Administrative Regulation 6141- Curriculum Development and Evaluation.

No Place for Hate

Ms. Courtney Peoples, LVUSD Coordinator of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, thanked the Board, LVUSD Cabinet members, and the Committee for their dedication to making all our students feel seen and heard, and for continuing to ensure that LVUSD is a place of inclusion and excellence for all students. She shared that the District will partner with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) this year by bringing a new program to all our schools called ***No Place for Hate (NPFH)***. ***NPFH*** has been in existence for over 20 years. Each year, hundreds of thousands of students nationwide participate in this program, which helps foster school environments that prevent bullying and bias and creates climates of inclusion. One of the most proactive actions schools can take to prevent biases is to engage in informed conversations around these topics. Ms. Peoples presented an overview of the program, explaining that students will sign an age-appropriate pledge, and their school sites will participate in three schoolwide activities over the course of the year that align with LVUSD District values. Some examples of these activities could be:

- One Book, One School: This activity provides an opportunity for schools to select one book from ADL's Book of the Month collection and engage in an all-school read on a book that addresses important themes, such as identity, culture, diversity, bias, bullying, discrimination, and equity.
- Assemblies around being an upstander
- Guest Speakers

Everfi

Ms. Peoples shared that when bullying, biases, and hate-motivated behaviors occur, consequences are implemented; additionally, we also want to educate our students about their words and actions. We can always use more tools for our restorative practices toolboxes. Everfi is an online program to help educate students on making positive choices. Staff can assign students learning modules covering topics ranging from mental health, bullying, and bias to vaping and drug use. Currently, this program is being used by administrators for secondary sites; however, as the District becomes more familiar with its implementation, it will be a tool for teachers to utilize in grades K-12.

Math Instructional Materials Pilot

Ms. Patterson informed the Committee that the last instructional materials adoption for math was in 2014, and a lot has changed. The California Department of Education introduced new Math Frameworks, significantly shaping how math will be taught. In Spring 2023, LVUSD invited teachers at every grade level to look at materials that aligned with the math standards and included the necessary math practice, to determine which publishers could be viable candidates to pilot for a district-wide math adoption in 2023-2024. Ms. Patterson emphasized how much work it is for teachers to pilot new materials. Every 8-10 years, the California Department of Education requires educators to look at new materials, so there is always a time when teachers have to juggle using the materials they know and introducing new ones. It is a huge lift for teachers, and Ms. Patterson acknowledged and thanked our teachers for participating in this very important work.

AE Wright Math Department Chair, Carrie Trupp, presented an overview of the instructional materials that were chosen unanimously by all grades to pilot this year, **Illustrative Math** by **Imagine Learning**, and shared some of the middle school piloting teacher observations. **Illustrative Math** promotes balancing rigor with conceptual understanding (*knowing the why behind the how*), procedural fluency (*being able to solve problems efficiently and accurately*), and application (*using these skills to solve problems*) with intentional lesson design that contributes to mathematical growth. It includes discovery, problem-based learning and skills, and hands-on lessons focusing on each grade level's standards. It creates opportunities for all students to participate. It offers a spiraling review, which means students have a repeated opportunity to practice skills they've already been taught, keeping skills fresh and building automaticity. Research supports the use of spiral review.

Ms. Trupp presented the following pros and cons the pilot team is discovering about the program:

Pros:

- Problem-based instructional framework
- User-friendly online platform
- Teacher Support (misconceptions, discussion questions, slides for every lesson)
- Embeds Desmos, GeoGebra, other tools

Pros (continued):

- Algebra 1: support lessons, video lessons, spotlight lessons, adaptation packs
- Geometry & Algebra 2: adaptation packs
- Supports for students w/disabilities & ELLs
- Family support materials
- Two sets of practice problems for each lesson
- Assessments can be digital or print

Cons:

- Different from what we are used to (but the extra teacher support helps!)
- In different order than teachers are used to teaching

Calabasas High School Math Chair, Michael Strickler, added that many students know how to solve an equation but cannot tell you what their answer means. What the CHS pilot team likes about this curriculum is that it focuses on developing what the answers mean in context. It is challenging for both teachers and students, but they are starting to understand how to relate and explain what they are learning.

Agoura High School Math Chair, Kamran Salem, added that this curriculum is such a pedagogical shift from a framework standpoint that everyone is exploring new things at the same time. He explained that from a problem-based perspective, students are interactive, engaged, and working. They are exploring the problem-based inquiry. He added that it is too early to determine if the materials are comprehensive enough in terms of their support for students.

Ms. Trupp added that the following supports are in place for teachers:

- Training —2 full days prior to school starting
- Office hours on Wednesdays
- Email support
- Math mentor period at each site

The following supports are in place for students:

- Individual, partner, group, whole class discussion/exploration
- Cool down—check for understanding daily
- Access to lessons digitally
- Digital version available in Spanish
- Videos to watch that read through the lesson summary and highlight focus concepts

A robust discussion ensued around topics of teacher capacity successfully facilitating a brand new curriculum, grading and assessments, and the “quality vs. quantity” of the instructional materials. This discussion prompted questions and observations between committee members, Board members, and the pilot team, emphasizing both the challenges and the opportunities inherent in piloting a program that introduces new frameworks and includes a significant pedagogical shift in instruction.

Ms. Patterson introduced Yerba Buena Elementary Principal Jessica Marshall to speak about the elementary experience. Ms. Marshall commended her secondary colleagues for laying the groundwork and confirmed that her team has similar experiences. She shared that she has asked her teachers to imagine what it might feel like if the students they have currently had this type of curriculum since kindergarten, and had been asked to participate in this way, had been provided the opportunity to construct their understanding to build their fluency, in an age-appropriate manner, using the world around them rather

than a teacher just saying, “This is the number.” She added that it feels uncomfortable now and acknowledged everyone is experiencing growing pains. However, for elementary students, it can elicit their responses in whatever form. These mathematical routines allow the students to interact with the content and then label it. Ms. Marshall added that both teachers and students like the games and centers, and it feels like they are turning a corner as they progress and move into the next unit.

Ms. Patterson closed by sharing that a team from **Imagine Learning** will be available to support our teachers on our staff development days and make themselves available to come for specific days as our department chairs determine they would like/need more support. There will be planned parent nights at the secondary schools, and a parent portal will open in October because many of the materials are online. This will enable parents to explore the materials at their convenience.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.