

**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**

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SUPERINTENDENT

**LAS VIRGENES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PATHWAYS COMMITTEE MEETING**

December 13, 2023

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Present:

- Ms. Lesli Stein, Board President
- Mr. Dallas Lawrence, Board Member
- Dr. Dan Stepenosky, Superintendent
- Ms. Kim Patterson, Director of Secondary Education
- Ms. Jana Davenport, Director of Elementary Education
- Dr. Mike Roberts, Director, Educational Services
- Ms. Courtney Peoples, DEI Coordinator
- Ms. Melissa Foster, District Nurse
- Ms. Darci Miller, President, LVEA
- Mr. Scott Foli, AE Wright Middle School Principal, Health Education Committee
- Ms. Julie Herrera, AE Wright Middle School Teacher, Health Education Committee
- Ms. Dana Dickson, AE Wright Middle School PE Dep't. Chair, Health Education Committee
- Mr. Brad Boelman, CHS Social Science Department Chair
- Mr. Jason Busby, AHS Social Science Department Chair
- Ms. Kristen Dizon, AHS CTE Department Chair, Health Education Committee
- Ms. Victoria Marzouk, Lupin Hill Elementary School Principal

The meeting came to order at 1:05 p.m.

**Health Standards Implementation and CHYA**

Ms. Patterson shared that she and Ms. Davenport had initiated a review of how the District covered health and the California Healthy Youth Act (CHYA). The health materials the District is currently using are outdated. With the oversight of Ms. Patterson and Ms. Davenport and the support of Ms. Peoples, a Health Education Committee was formed and has been meeting to assess how the District is currently teaching health. With the Board's direction, the Committee will continue to research options for consideration for the implementation of CHYA and secondary health curriculums. The CDE recently adopted new health standards (separate from CHYA) that will eventually need to be incorporated into the LVUSD health curriculum. Current materials must be aligned with new standards.

**Human Growth & Development (HGD) (Grades 4-5):**

As part of the state's health standards for elementary students, a brief Human Growth &

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Development unit is taught by the District's 4/5 science teachers to all students in Grades 4 & 5. Ms. Peoples shared information and links for a few new videos that will replace outdated materials in the HGD lessons this year. Additionally, the District will review a comprehensive elementary Health curriculum for future adoption. Ms. Peoples shared that they plan to present more details about the elementary curriculum at the next Pathways meeting.

**Secondary Health Education (Grades 6-12):**

Ms. Patterson reported that health lessons are minimal at the middle schools. In our high schools, social science teachers teach health in Freshman Seminar. The current materials are teacher-created and outdated. Our teachers indicated they would prefer to have an actual textbook that has been adopted at the state level.

**California Healthy Youth Act (CHYA):**

CHYA is a requirement mandated by the state to cover comprehensive sex education. It is required to be taught two times, once in middle school and once in high school. It is about a 12-day course or a 2.5-week lesson plan that science teachers teach. It can be taught in a health class or a science class. It can also be taught as a stand-alone unit. Parents can opt-out (waive their students' participation). LACOE offers a lot of support for these resources. Adolescent Sexual Health Work Group (ASHWG) is an organization that functions as a compliance tool to vet any health curriculum addressing CHYA. ASHWG is comprised of program managers from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), California Department of Education (CDE), and key non-governmental organizations (NGO) committed to working more effectively to address the sexual and reproductive health of California adolescents. Publishers submit their materials to ASHWG for review and scoring. The District will be reviewing the following two curriculums that scored highest through ASHWG:

- Health Connected Teen Talk (Digital)
- Positive Prevention Plus

Ms. Patterson reiterated that the current Health Education Committee will work on options for how these might be offered and bring them forward to the January Pathways meeting. Health Education is not presently required but may be mandated as a graduation requirement in the next few years.

**Freshman Seminar**

Ms. Patterson shared that the 9-12th grade health standards equal about one curriculum semester. When LVUSD moved to Freshman Seminar, health became embedded in that curriculum. The

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course code for Freshman Seminar demands that only a social science teacher can teach it, so all Freshman Seminar is taught by our social science teachers. Additionally, there is an ethnic studies requirement forthcoming. Starting school year 2025-2026, LVUSD should consider offering an Ethnic Studies curriculum within a class because it is a graduation requirement for the class of 2029-2030. The team is discussing removing Freshman Seminar as a graduation requirement and adding a year of CP/AP Human Geography. LVUSD could consider offering health as an individual module if this plan is preferred, which many surrounding and comparable districts also do.

**Ethnic Studies**

Mr. Boelman shared that the team would like to be able to pilot a new curriculum next year so they can collect data and be ready to meet the 2025-2026 class requirement. The team presented options for restructuring Freshman Seminar into alternative courses and will bring these forward to Pathways for further review and consideration in January.

**Lupin Hill Learn By Living**

Ms. Davenport introduced Principal Marzouk to present the *Learn By Living* concept being developed at Lupin Hill. The baseball fields at Lupin are being transformed into a learning space called the Outdoor World Lab (OWL). *Learn by Living* brings real-world, inquiry-based, hands-on learning for students across all disciplines. Since enrollment has declined at Lupin Hill each year for the past five years, the teachers there are excited to offer a specialized program to attract new students through our interdistrict permit process.

Leslie Timbers is the full-time gardening specialist helping to build out the infrastructure. She will be able to oversee the maintenance and also work as an instructional specialist. OWL will also utilize parent volunteers for added support. The property will incorporate the following features to facilitate learning:

- 20 Beds
- Fruit & vegetable garden. Every class will be responsible for one bed, tree, and chore.
- Orchard
- Kitchenette area with an outdoor sink, food prep equipment, and refrigerator where students can cook with the produce grown.
- Life Cycles Garden - with pollinator plants that attract hummingbirds, butterflies, and ladybugs.
- Sensory Garden that can cater to all Las Virgenes students, including those with special services.
- Small animal habitat (this will be the 2nd phase)
- Greenhouse (tent)

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- Calm Corner - a Zen garden space where students can have a calm place to be. This could facilitate conflict resolution lessons.
- Developmental Playground for our TK and K families that caters to our youngest learners, including dinosaurs, sand pits, mud kitchen, natural blocks, etc.

The timeline is to have this ready for Arbor Day celebrations in April and hopefully celebrate with a ribbon cutting ceremony. These structures are being funded through Developers' Fees.

**Other Business:**

A request was made for an update on our Dual Immersion pathways, including the history and the current enrollment numbers for students continuing into high school. Staff will prepare to present more on this topic at an upcoming Pathways meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.