

Superintendent's Parent Advisory Committee

Highlights: October 2, 2025

Welcome/Announcements/Introductions

Superintendent Melissa Bassanelli welcomed participants to the Superintendent's Parent Advisory Committee (SPAC) meeting and invited everyone to introduce themselves.

Strategic Goals, Start-of-School and Summer Learning Highlights

Superintendent Bassanelli presented information regarding the strategic goals for the current school year, explaining that each goal was selected from the district's [strategic plan](#). This year, staff have identified one focus area (goal) within each strategic direction:

Strategic Direction I: Advance and Support Student Success

- Evidence-based instruction aligned to state standards and frameworks is provided, ensuring equitable access for all students, including student groups identified by data as high priority.

Strategic Direction II: Prioritize Equitable Practices

- Professional development opportunities are systemically expanded and accessible for all district employees, with particular emphasis on special education and improving our practices and service delivery model for students receiving special education services.

Strategic Direction III: Enhance Employee Systems and Supports

- Internal practices and procedures are streamlined and regularly evaluated to increase efficiency and balance workloads.

Strategic Direction IV: Engage Students, Families and Community as Valued Educational Partners

- Safe and supportive environment for all students, staff and families are cultivated through positive and collaborative partnerships.

Superintendent Bassanelli shared a few of the celebrations from the beginning of the year, highlighting the schools that were recognized for their positive behavior interventions, supports and growth in attendance.

Timothy C. Dale, Ed.D., Deputy Superintendent of Schools and Student Support, provided an overview of the start of the school year. He reported that enrollment has increased by approximately 1,000 students, bringing the total to 40,207, and the district hired nearly 400 new certificated and classified employees. Dr. Dale highlighted various welcoming activities and key facility projects, including new modernization projects, ongoing safety and fencing improvements, and expanded technology access. Over 175 devices were deployed to new teachers during the Smooth Start onboarding event. He also noted that the Transportation Department added 35 new propane buses to its fleet and Nutrition Services served 69,000 summer meals, including meals offered through the new Halal meal pilot program.

SPAC representatives participated in small group discussions about welcoming activities at their child's school and shared ideas for future events. Groups then shared highlights and reflections with the full committee.

Dr. Dale introduced Brett Wolfe, Director of K-12 Counseling and College/Career Readiness, who provided an overview of summer programs offered at the middle and high school levels. These included credit recovery courses, enrichment opportunities and summer internship programs. Participation was strong with 5,277 elementary, 515 middle and 2,738 high school students taking part in various summer programs. Mr. Wolfe also provided details on the extended school year (ESY) program for students receiving special education services. ESY is available to students from preschool through age 22 and provides support to those who qualify through their Individualized Education Program (IEP). This year,

over 600 students participated in ESY, many of which continued receiving their designated instructional services, such as speech and language therapy, adaptive physical education and more.

Crista Koch, Director of Equity and Student Schievement, shared an overview of the summer programs that were offered through the Office of Student Learning Assistance. These included Camp Kinder, a nine-day program designed to help children prepare for kindergarten, and the K–1 Boost Program, which focused on early literacy for students entering kindergarten through second grade. The district also offered Camp Invention, a hands-on, project-based program that encouraged problem-solving and innovation. Across all programs, 206 high school students were recruited, hired, and paid to serve as classroom interns. Additionally, the Newcomer Summer Program supported refugee and immigrant students in grades six through eight who have been in the country for less than one year. This program helps students acclimate to the U.S. school system and provides primary language support, English language development, academic engagement, and mentoring. The district also offered the Native Wisdom Program, which served students in the American Indian Education Program and focused on literature and cultural identity awareness.

Mr. Wolfe shared information about the middle school career technical education (CTE) enrichment program, which introduces students in grades 6–8 to various high school CTE pathways such as theatre, computer science, and medical assisting. Summer high school internship programs were offered to students interested in construction, medical, banking and heavy metal (construction). Interested students were required to apply for the internships. High school credit recovery programs were also offered throughout the district in both seat-based and independent study formats, with transportation provided from various sites across the district.

Lastly, Mr. Wolfe shared information on Camp Winthers, the district’s outdoors summer program that is a favorite among students.

Q: Are the elementary expanded learning enrichment classes free?

A: Yes.

Q: Can any high school student enroll in the summer internship program?

A: It depends on the program. Students should check with their high school counselor.

Q: Could the district incentivize teachers to teach summer school?

A: We can explore that possibility.

Instructional Materials

Nicole Kukral, Director of Professional Learning and Curriculum Innovation, and Nicole Naditz, program specialist, world languages and instructional technology, provided a summary of the approval process for instructional materials and an update on the instructional materials currently under consideration for the 2026-2027 school year.

Ms. Naditz explained that instructional materials adoptions occur almost every school year and take about eighteen months to complete. The process typically begins in the spring with a call for committee members from the school community, including teachers and administrators, to review instructional materials. The committee first prescreens materials and narrows down selections that best meet the needs of students. Over the summer, the district provides support and training to teachers who begin piloting the new materials in the fall, when school begins, through winter break. Throughout the pilot period, data is collected from students and teachers. After winter break, the committee reconvenes to review the data and develop recommendations for board approval in April or May. The district also offers in-person and online public review periods for people interested in reviewing the materials and providing feedback.

Information about the process and upcoming reviews can be found on the curriculum [webpage](#).

Q: Are the courses being reviewed now for next fall?

A: Yes.

Q: Does each site have teachers who are piloting materials?

A: No, teachers are given the option to pilot new materials. The district looks for a diverse population of teachers; however, no sites are excluded from the process.

Q: Could someone bring a translator with them to review the materials?

A: Yes.

Q: How long does it generally take to review materials for one course?

A: Reviewers are encouraged to review all materials for a specific course. The amount of time it takes to complete a review varies and is something that can be added to the feedback form for future reference.

Q: How many families have contributed over the years?

A: Participation started small but has grown significantly over the years.

Q: Are reviewers given any kind of coaching?

A: General guidance is available on the website, and program specialists are available to provide additional support.

Q: Do the materials consider support for newcomers?

A: Staff reviews the details in the rubric and looks for a variety of accessibility and language supports as part of the work that they do to help the district's English learners.

Reading Difficulties Screener

Heather Brandt, Program Specialist, English Language Arts and History-Social Science, provided background information on the new Reading Difficulties Screener mandated by SB 114. She shared that beginning in the 2025–26 school year, all students in kindergarten through second grade are required to participate in a universal screening process designed to identify potential reading difficulties, including the risk of dyslexia. The screening process includes phonological awareness, knowledge of letter names, reading fluency, decoding skills and reading comprehension.

The goal of screening is to support early identification and intervention by helping teachers determine which students may need additional assessment or support. Results from the screener will inform instructional decisions but will not be used for diagnostic, eligibility, or high-stakes purposes. The screener is a brief assessment administered by trained staff and is not a substitute for formal evaluations or special education determinations.

Ms. Brandt also explained how the screener would be implemented with multilingual learners, noting that assessments will be available in both English and Spanish. For students whose primary language is neither English nor Spanish, alternative processes will be used to evaluate risk. She also reviewed the exemption criteria, which allows parents or guardians to opt their child out of the screener under specific circumstances. These include students with a diagnosed reading difficulty or disability, students already receiving services through special education or a 504 Plan, and students currently being evaluated using similar assessments.

In accordance with the legislation, families will be notified at least fifteen calendar days prior to the screening. This communication will include the scheduled dates and information on how to opt out. Results from the screening will be shared with parents or guardians within 45 days of the assessment and will include the areas where students may need support along with strategies that families can use at home.

The Reading Difficulties Screener Selection Committee selected mCLASS (Amplify) with Dynamic

Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Eighth Edition, and mCLASS Lectura for Spanish-speaking students.

Over the summer, the district provided training for more than 500 staff members. Refresher courses are also provided to all practitioners before they administer the screener in the fall, and extended learning opportunities are provided for teachers and principals to help them interpret the data and determine the next steps.

Q: Prior to SB 114, was there any type of state required screening?

A: Other than the required CAASPP testing for grades 3 and above, there was no universal early literacy screener required by the state.

Q: Is an adult walking the student through the assessment, or is the student on the computer by themselves?

A: There is one assessment in second grade where students are on a computer, and the rest are guided by a staff member.

Q: Do assessments end after second grade?

A: Per legislation, testing is required for students in kindergarten through second grade. However, there may be options to add additional grades/licenses in the future.

Q: Are the results internal or do they get shared publicly?

A: Statewide reporting is not required; results will be used internally to guide instruction and support.

Mobile Device Update

Amberlee Townsend-Snider, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education and Programs, shared an update regarding the use of mobile devices during school. She explained that, in accordance with Assembly Bill 3216, all school districts are required to adopt a policy by July 2026 that limits or prohibits students from using cell phones while at school. In June 2025, the Board of Education adopted a districtwide policy prohibiting the use of devices during instructional time at all grade levels. Some schools have chosen to implement restrictions beyond instructional time. Each site must implement its policy consistently across the entire campus. According to principals, feedback has been positive thus far. Since implementation, sites have observed increased and improved student interactions, contributing to a stronger classroom culture and climate. Staff will continue to gather data throughout the year and make adjustments as needed. The policy must be reviewed and updated every five years.

SPAC members were given the opportunity to discuss the mobile device policy with one another and direct questions to staff.

Q: What is the mobile device policy for field trips?

A: This is a great question that staff will share with principals. However, students would most likely be required to keep their devices in their backpacks.

Q: Since the policy looks different across sites, is information being gathered?

A: Yes. The district will be collecting feedback on policy implementation through a survey tool for families and staff.

Safe Schools Update

Mike Jones, Safe Schools Director, provided information about four safety systems being piloted at Mesa Verde High School, Will Rogers Middle School, Sierra Oaks K-8 School and Pershing Elementary School. These sites were selected based on their expressed interest in participating. The systems include enhanced security cameras, wearable duress alert devices, weapons detection systems for use at events, and impact resistant glass in schools where fencing is not feasible, due to building design serving as the perimeter.

Mr. Jones explained that the cameras currently installed on campuses are no longer adequate. The district has identified two key goals for the installation of new cameras: improving asset protection and enhancing student and staff safety.

He also described wearable duress alert badges that would be provided for all staff. These devices enable faster communication during emergencies. Each badge includes a programmable button that can alert site staff and law enforcement and identify the user's location within five feet. The pilot system is hard-wired, allowing staff to speak into the air and be heard. It can also be programmed with the new camera system.

Q: Where does the funding come from?

A: The district is exploring the use of bond dollars for facility infrastructure. The pilot will help determine which systems are most effective after seeing them in practice.

Q: Will these safety features affect sites that do not yet have fences?

A: No. The district is continuing to move forward with fencing projects and will identify the next phase of sites that will receive fencing next summer and beyond. These projects will continue until all sites are completed.

Q: Will the weapons detection system be used at events?

A: Staff are exploring this option. The goal is not to find weapons, but to deter individuals from bringing weapons onto campus.

Q: Does Safe Schools assist with crosswalk questions/issues?

A: The Safe Schools team can help evaluate and improve efficiency and safety when entering and exiting school sites. Parents interested in getting involved in school site safety efforts are encouraged to contact their site principal to see if the school has an active Site Safety Committee.

Q: I live in an unincorporated area of the district and have seen drivers frequently exceeding the speed limit around schools. Is this something the district can help address?

A: Speed limit enforcement falls under the jurisdiction of the California Highway Patrol, which can conduct assessments upon request. Safe Schools can also contact the Department of Transportation to explore options for additional signage or other safety measures.

Conclusion

Superintendent Bassanelli thanked everyone for attending the SPAC meeting and shared that staff would be available to answer additional questions after the meeting.

Links:

[Presentation](#)

[The next SPAC meeting will be held on January 22, 2026]