Superintendent's Parent Advisory Committee

Highlights: October 1, 2026

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

Superintendent Bassanelli presented information regarding the strategic goals for the current school year, noting that the goals are aligned with the district's strategic plan. Staff have identified or adjusted several focus areas (goals) for the 2026-27 school year:

Strategic Direction 1 – Advancing and supporting student success

- Early literacy (grades 1-3) – Continue focusing on the science of reading and building foundational literacy skills.
- Math (grades 3-8) – Continue strengthening students' math skills.
- Integrated Math (IM 1) – Improve course completion rates.
- English Language Development – Expand the use of interim assessments to identify learning gaps and determine where additional support is needed.

Strategic Direction 2 – Prioritizing equitable practices

- Special Education Co-Teaching in Secondary Schools – Expand the co-teaching model at the high school level and develop a co-teaching model for middle schools.
- Special Education Continuum of Elementary Services – Review the continuum of services to ensure continuity of support and provide services aligned with students' individual needs.
- Budget Rightsizing – Reduce the district's structural deficit over time to align expenditures with revenues. The district previously operated with an intentional deficit to support the recruitment and retention of high-quality employees.

Strategic Direction 3 – Focusing on employee support

- Strengthening System Alignment of Human Resources Practices – Implement high-impact standard operating procedures to improve employee experiences and address operational needs.
- Strengthening Human Resources Information System Reliability – Strengthen the consistency, accuracy, reliability and usability of employee data in HR information systems.

Strategic Direction 4 – Engaging students, families and community as collaborative partners

- TK-2 Student Behavior and Classroom Disruptions – Reduce repeat referrals by strengthening schools' capacity to provide proactive, tiered supports and early intervention.
- Reducing Chronic Absenteeism – Continue efforts to reduce chronic absenteeism rate, which has improved since the pandemic.
- Strategic Plan Update – The strategic plan will be reviewed, and potential updates will be considered by the board.

Families can help support these goals by ensuring their children get a good night's sleep, getting to school on time, having space at home to review what's been covered during the day, reviewing homework or providing other family support that helps encourage learning. Another way to provide support is by volunteering at your school or on one of the various district committees.

Q: Are BCBAs in place for Strategic Direction IV and how many are in the district?
A: There are approximately four to five new board-certified behavior analysts (BCBAs) and behavior support assistants (BSAs) supporting students who don't have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and approximately eight students with IEPs. These positions help support students who have behavior plans.

Q: Can you elaborate on what Tier 3 supports are and are they focused on the TK-2 students?
A: Yes, Tier 3 support is focused on TK-2 students because it's a more targeted and structured invention focused on repetition in the behavior that staff hasn't been able to address with Tier 1 support (supporting classroom routines and procedures) or Tier 2 support (includes external support outside of the classroom, such as social workers, short term consultation with a social worker or school administrator).

Q: Several years ago, the district set a goal to have an IA in every elementary classroom. Is that still a goal?
A: With COVID funds, the district was able to add IAs to many of the classrooms. When that funding ended the district was able to use some one-time funds and money set aside from the ending fund balance that the board approved. Once the one-time funds have been spent, the district will no longer be able to fund the positions.

Start-of-School Highlights

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 declined by approximately 1,000 students, bringing total enrollment to 40,207, and that the district hired more than 250 new certificated and classified employees. The district will explore reasons for the enrollment decline, noting that many school districts throughout the region are experiencing similar trends.

Dr. Dale highlighted welcoming activities and key facility projects, including new modernization projects and ongoing safety and fencing improvements. Approximately160 teachers attended the two-day teacher induction (Smooth Start) onboarding event for new teachers. The district also held a leadership summit for school administrators, operations leaders and teaching and learning leaders. This year's theme is "collectively strong." A classified office staff in-service was also held for secretaries, clerks, intermediate clerk typists and controllers. In addition, 816 teachers and site leadership participated in training for the launch of the TK-8 math curriculum.

Before the school year began, staff assessed 452 newcomer students and provided families with school information, support and resources. A back-to-school resource fair was also held, where students and families could receive backpacks, school supplies, fresh produce, diapers and books.

Dr. Dale also shared updates related to operational services. The Transportation Department transported 1,047 students, with projected ridership to exceed 1,100 students by the end of the school year. Nutrition Services served 53,657 summer meals across 33 sites and provided professional development for all nutrition services employees.

Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) Update

Gwyn Dellinger, Director of the Office of Student Learning Assistance, provided an overview of the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). Ms. Dellinger shared that the LCAP is a three-year plan that addresses academics, school climate and engagement. The superintendent and district goals align with and fit within this plan. The LCAP outlines goals, services and spending priorities aligned with state requirements, with a focus on supporting equitable outcomes for students, particularly English learners, foster youth, homeless youth and low-income students.

Key components of the plan include:

- **Actions**: Programs and services, such as summer programs, instructional assistants, and supplemental curriculum, that help students reach grade level and succeed.
- **Metrics**: Measures used to evaluate whether actions are effective in achieving their intended outcomes.
- **Expenditures**: The costs associated with programs and services and how funds are allocated to best support student needs.

Below are the 2024-2027 LCAP goals:

1. **Student Achievement and Implementation of State Standards** – Improve achievement and outcomes for all students as measured by performance on statewide assessments, English proficiency, and college and career preparedness.

2. **Student Engagement and Course Access** – Provide students with engaging programs, course work and opportunities that address attendance, dropout, graduation and access to broad course of study.

3. **School Conditions, Climate and Family Engagement** – Address factors both inside and outside the classroom that impact student success such as family engagement, health, safety, discipline, connectedness, facilities, materials and staffing.

Staff asked participants to reflect on which district programs/actions have been most impactful to student success and to share one change or investment they think could improve programs and services.

Impactful programs/actions:
- School Community Intervention Specialist
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program
- Infinity groups and clubs
- Expanded counseling department
- Expanded after school tutoring
- Math co-teaching

Area for potential improvements:
- Tutoring
- Expanded after school programs
- Clothing closet
- Bolstering participation in sports
- Instructional aids
- Teacher training (professional development)
- Safety

Attendance / Enrollment

Dominic Covello, Director of Student Support Services, and Brian Ginter, Director of Admissions and Family Services, provided an overview of district enrollment, student attendance and efforts to reduce chronic absenteeism, which the state defines as missing 10% or more due to whatever reason.

Mr. Ginter provided an overview on the district's enrollment, noting that enrollment has declined by 1,211 students this year. Research identifies several factors contributing to declining enrollment, including a nationwide decrease in birthrate, greater migration out of California than into the state, and an increase in charter school enrollment. To better understand why families are leaving the district, staff will begin

reaching out to families to learn more about their decisions. One positive effect of declining enrollment is fewer families need to be overloaded and can attend their neighborhood schools. However, declining enrollment also affects district revenue, which impacts funding for programs and may lead to layoffs. California is one of only six states that base school district funding on average daily attendance (ADA). Mr. Ginter also shared that registration for the 2027-28 will begin on November 2, earlier than in previous years, when registration typically began in February.

Q: Other than funding, is there a problem with enrollment being down?
A: Over time, declining enrollment creates challenges because reduced revenue affects funding for programs and can lead to layoffs.

Mr. Covello provided information regarding student attendance. He noted that it is the district's goal that by May 2027, the chronic absenteeism rate will decrease by 1.5 percent. Planned strategies include:

- Develop a community of practice for the ten sites identified for chronic absenteeism.
- Develop targeted family engagement and support through tiered systems of support and engagement activities.
- Provide Attendance Academy professional development and updated resources for participating schools.
- Develop and implement targeted support for schools with higher chronic absenteeism and grades TK-1 and 7-8.
- Conduct a monthly analysis of absenteeism at each school with supervisors and support services teams.
- Pilot the TalkingPoints Attendance Dashboard at five sites.

The state defines chronic absenteeism as missing 10 percent or more of school days for any reason. Attendance rates have stabilized statewide since the pandemic.

Mr. Covello noted that absenteeism rates tend to be higher among transitional kindergarten and kindergarten students than among students in lower elementary grades and increase again in grade 12. The district is developing a community of practice with selected school sites experiencing high chronic absenteeism to focus on the specific student groups most affected.

Staff are also working with the Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Department to develop targeted family support and encourage regular attendance among younger students. The district will continue expanding its Attendance Academy, which pairs students who may be at risk of becoming chronically absent with mentors. Mr. Covello emphasized that it is important to note that resources are available to support students and families.

Q: What happens if your child has accumulated more than 10 absences?
A: Parent verification is accepted for up to ten days of absences. Beyond that, a doctor's verification or chronic illness form may be required. Absences may also be cleared retroactively. Anything beyond ten days would require a doctor's verification or chronic illness form.

Facilities Master Plan

Frank Camarda, Chief Operations Officer, provided a facilities update.

Bond financing: This year the district was recognized in the *National Bond Buyer Magazine* for its approach to debt management and bond sales. While many districts have a 30- to -35-year debt repayment period, the district's average repayment period is approximately 23 years. This approach helps maintain a steady tax rate for homeowners.

During the 2025-26 school year, the district completed approximately $90 million in projects, including HVAC replacements, roofing, fencing, school modernization, asphalt replacement and new play structures. Three projects are currently in the design element phase, these include Laurel Ruff Transitional School, Ralph Richardson Center and Sylvan Middle School.

Facilities master planning: The district is updating its Facilities Master Plan and assessing facility needs. Projects will be evaluated using a scoring rubric that considers enrollment, state matching funds, school conditions, and equity. The district currently has an estimated $3 billion to $3.5 billion in facility needs and could likely increase to $4 billion. Updates to the Facilities Master Plan are expected to be available on the district website within the next few months.

Q: How can we get our school on the list for repairs?
A: If there is an immediate need, parents should notify their school administrator so a work order can be submitted.

Q: Does the district help with beautification projects?
A: There is support, schools can contact Colin Bross, Director of Maintenance and Operations, for assistance. Many beautification projects are considered self-help projects and are primarily community driven.

Q: Is there an opportunity for parents to provide input on facilities?
A: Yes, the district has a Facilities Committee, whose members are appointed by individual board members. Parents are encouraged to contact the board member representing their trustee area to ask about openings. Interested parents may also submit an online application for the Facilities Committee or the Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee.

Volunteer Program

Natalia Aguirre, Coordinator of Family Engagement Community Partnerships, Field Trips and Volunteers, provided an overview of the district's volunteer process. She noted that volunteers are now required to complete a 35-minute child abuse prevention training and submit the results of a TB risk assessment. Additional information is available at www.sanjuan.edu/volunteer or by contacting the volunteer team at volunteer@sanjuan.edu.

Q: If someone has volunteered outside of the district, can that information be used?
A: The mandated child abuse prevention training must be completed as required by the district. However, a TB test would be accepted if taken within the last four years.

Q: Are the other volunteer requirements still required?
A: Yes, the TB risk assessment and child abuse training are in addition to the other volunteer requirements.

Q: Are there different volunteer tiers with different requirements?
A: No, the district does not have volunteer tiers; the requirements are the same for all volunteers.

Q: Will the district offer TB testing clinics?
A: The district is exploring this option. In the meantime, a list of low-cost TB clinics is available on the volunteer website.

Open Forum

Q: Could breakfast be provided earlier during the two weeks of AP testing?
A: Staff can follow up with Nutrition Services, as a grab-and-go breakfast option may be possible.

Q: How can the district incentivize parents to volunteer, say providing a food truck or something?
A: That would be something that school donations could be used for, or the PTA could help fund.

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/Handouts:

Presentation
Networking Flyer

[The next SPAC meeting will be held on January 14, 2027]