

PSUSD Seeking Community Input for New 3-Year LCAP

Palm Springs Unified School District is currently preparing for the seventh year of our Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) and, once again, is seeking input from staff, students, parents and community members on changes, additions or deletions to our current plan. This year we will be working to write a new three-year plan which will be in place for the 20-21, 21-22, and 22-23 school years.

As part of the state's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), all districts in California are required to prepare a LCAP, which describes how we intend to meet annual goals for pupils, with specific activities to address state and local priorities identified. PSUSD has been able to provide many additional support programs and services for students using supplemental LCFF funds. As a result of the input received from stakeholders, additions funded during the past year through the LCAP include:

- ELA, Math, Science, Social Science, & Special Education Coaches
- Expanded Access to Technology
- Counselors at all Elementary Schools
- Additional Security Guards
- Extended Day and School Year Interventions
- Additional Staff Development
- Career and Technical Education
- Class Size Reduction
- Increased Arts Opportunities
- Additional Support for Full Day TK and K

As the District prepares for its 2020-21 plan, stakeholders are being asked to provide feedback and suggestions. Two community forums are scheduled for February 20 from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. at the Edward Wenzlaff Education Center 11625 West Street, Desert Hot Springs; and February 27 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Palm Springs Unified District Service Center at 150 District Center Way, Palm Springs. Each school site will be hosting a

LCAP Input Meeting between January 27 and March 6. The specific dates for these meetings will be posted on the home page of the PSUSD website at www.psusd.us.

Our LCAP Input Survey (in English and Spanish) will also be available to all stakeholders from January 27 to March 6. We strongly encourage all interested community members to provide suggestions for our 2020-21 LCAP.



District Committee Working on Connectedness, Social/Emotional Learning Strategies

PSUSD's Student Support Services Department has brought together a diverse committee of District stakeholders including students, parents, classified and certificated staff members, administrators and community members who are focused on assisting the District in developing strategies for improving: adult/student interactions, equitable practices, Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and disciplinary practices.

About 50 committee members comprise the new group including: four site administrators, two behavior professionals, one dean, two counselors, seven District Office staff members, a psychologist, three parents, nine teachers, two security officers, one supervision aide, six students and one site office staff member. When the group convened for the first time in August, they reviewed student data including: site suspension and attendance rates, student interviews, two student surveys, parent interviews and student and parent focus groups. They then spent time formulating "why" questions based on the data they reviewed.

Following the first meeting, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services Dr. Mike Swize organized the questions into theme areas including: relationships (between students and students, parents and school and students and teachers); equity; site-specific issues: mental health and social emotional health; behavior, discipline



and safety; and community connections. At the second meeting held earlier this month, the group reviewed the questions and then took the "why" questions to formulate "What if?" questions (i.e.: "What if students felt so connected to their peers, teacher and school that they made sure not to miss school?")

As their work progresses, the committee members will be seeking input from the groups they represent as they work toward developing ideas for implementation. When the committee meets next in December, they will develop "how" questions based on the "what if" questions.

"At the end of the journey, we would love to have this group develop recommendations to the District on ways to improve in our areas of focus," said Swize adding that the goal is for those recommendations to be solidified by the group's final meeting of the year in May.

STEMCon Set for Nov. 16 at Desert Hot Springs High

Palm Springs Unified families are invited to the Family Engagement Center's 3rd Annual STEM Conference set for Saturday, Nov. 16 at Desert Hot Springs High School.

Called "STEMCon," the event focuses on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and will include hands-on activities and a wide array of workshops including: Cardiovascular Health Heart Dissection, Chemical Reaction: The Effervescent Launcher, Virtual Reality Field Trip, Esports and the Impact of Gaming, STEM and Stories, Building Homopolar Motors, Everyday Math and Games and Math Family Breakout Edu.

"We strongly believe in the importance of family engagement and know that creating these opportunities for extended learning has a positive impact on our students," said Family Engagement Coordinator Ruby Rivera, who encourages full family participation.

Dinner, child care, translation services, conference material and prizes will all be offered, free of charge, to all who attend the event from 3 to 6 p.m. In addition to the workshops, StemCon will also include Makerspaces where families can show their creativity together.

"Parents and students love creating, playing and learning in the makerspace room," said Rivera. "There, families will be able to move

from one activity station to another for all hands-on activities such as coding a robot to move through a maze, making a coloring page come alive with augmented reality, mixing up their own batch of slime, building structures using simple materials and connecting circuits to make music or power lights. While some activities utilize purchased technology, many are implemented with everyday household items that can be replicated at home."

Rivera said she hopes that families will see the conference as a way for them to garner tools and resources that they can put to use on a regular basis.

"When our families attend StemCon, we hope they will leave with knowledge that they plan to use in their personal or professional lives. We want the learning to continue year-round, and we always connect what we are doing at the conference to ways that they can do this at home as well."

To that end, every family that attends the conference will receive a Science and Engineering activity kit that will have materials and instructions that they can use at home.

For more information on STEMCon, visit familycenter.psusd.us or call (760) 416-1374.

District Digest



Relationships Matter: Keynote speakers Donna Porter and DJ Batiste, center, pictured with Supt. of Schools Dr. Sandra Lyon and Assistant Supt. of Educational Services Dr. Mike Swize, talked about the power of positive relationships and the importance of making sure that every student matters at this year's staff Welcome Back events at the Richards Center for the Arts. Staff members left moved, motivated and inspired to make the 2019-20 school year the best year yet!



New Student Board Members: The 2019-20 student Board of Education members recently took their oaths of office during a Board of Education meeting. Pictured, from left, Brandon Ulin, Desert Hot Springs High student board member; Board of Education President Richard Clapp; Mount San Jacinto High student board member Modesto Martin; Cathedral City High student board member Leo Rincon; Board Member Timothy Wood; Palm Springs High student board member Kelley Libretti; Rancho Mirage High student board member Salma Delgado; and Board of Education members Madonna Gerrell and John Gerardi.



Former Mayor Shares City History with RCMS Students: Former Palm Springs Mayor Ron Oden, the city's first African American mayor, recently talked about his experiences as a city leader and city and family history with Corinne Grisworld's 8th Grade History classes at Raymond Cree Middle School. Students were inspired by the presentation and asked for photographs and autographs at the end of the classes.



Over 3,500 Attend Regional College Fair: It was the largest crowd yet at the Fourth Annual "Next: Think Big!" Regional College Fair at the Agua Caliente Resort. The event Kick Off, hosted by NBC Palm Springs' Manny the Movie Guy, pictured above with several high school mascots, featured entertainment from each school district and Xavier Prep. More than 100 institutions of higher learning, financial institutions and military academies, hosted information booths in the Agua Caliente ballrooms, and breakout presentations featured Maria Furtado of Colleges that Change Lives, financial aid overviews in English and Spanish and College of the Desert and CSUSB PDC campus overviews.



Mission Graduate Leaders Honored: The Board of Education recently recognized teachers who led this summer's Mission Graduate program for high school students to enrich their academic language as they work through A-G courses to ensure on-time graduation through exposure to challenging State academic standards. The program gave 19 seniors the opportunity to graduate on time and helped 13 students complete additional coursework to get back on track. Those recognized, pictured with Assistant Supt. of Educational Mike Swize and Board of Education President Richard Clapp (rear) include Coordinator of English Learners Mandy Gonzales and teachers Claudia Miranda Marcela Nevarrez, Anel Ayon, Doris Rodriguez, Rita Martinez, Wendy Herrera-Lopez, Cesar Hernandez, Victoria Meza, Antonia Inda, Robin Hinchliffe and Colleen Bannon. Missing from photo are: Ioana Robles, Melanie Jimenez-Aleman and Victoria Diaz.

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Katherine Finchy Culture Club: Katherine Finchy Elementary's Culture Club, formed last spring, is working hard at developing interpersonal skills, team building and growth mindsets. The members are learning about the important contributions of African Americans to our country and have also been taught art techniques and visited by Tolerance Education Center in Rancho Mirage. The club is advised by Keith Howard and Debbie Olvera.



Soroptimist of Palm Springs Honors Palm Springs Teachers of the Year: Soroptimist International of Palm Springs recently honored the PSUSD city of Palm Springs site Teachers of the Year at a Board of Education meeting. Thanks to a donation from SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union, each of the nine honorees received a \$100 check. The Soroptimist club presented each with a tote bag filled with certificates of recognition from the Palm Springs City Council, County Supervisor Manuel Perez, Assemblymen Chad Mayes and Eduardo Garcia, Senator Jeff Stone and Congressman Dr. Raul Ruiz. Following the presentation, the Soroptimist club hosted the teachers and their guests at a reception at Nicolino's in Palm Springs. Pictured above are the honorees (or their representative who accepted on their behalf) and members of Soroptimist of Palm Springs in attendance.

Family Engagement Center, PTA Latino Host Hispanic Heritage Event: The cultures of Latin American countries were celebrated through music, performances and activities at the Hispanic Heritage Month event held at James Workman Middle School earlier this month. Entertainers included Palm Springs High Ballet Folklorico, pictured at right; performances by siblings James Workman students Isela and Nazareth Canchola and Palm Springs High student Juan Canchola; Conny Velly's Club; Folklorico Group Son de Mexico; James Workman trumpet ensemble; and Rancho Mirage High School Rattler Regiment.

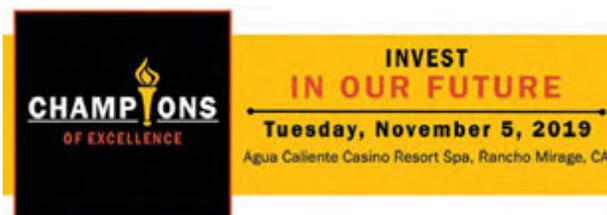


Business Leaders Invited to ‘Champions of Excellence’ Nov. 5

Local business representatives interested in hosting student interns are invited to “Invest in Our Future” at the Foundation for Palm Springs Unified School District’s Fourth Annual Champions of Excellence workshop and awards ceremony on Nov. 5.

Slated for 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Agua Caliente Resort, the event will bring together 100 juniors and seniors from District high school career academies. Keynote speaker Daniel Seddiqui will kick off the morning. Known as the world’s “Most Ambitious Job Seeker,” he has been named by USA Today as the most rejected person in the world, failing over 40 consecutive job interviews. Today he is a bestselling author, highly demanded speaker and director of Living the Map, a career exploration program that raises awareness of the varying cultures, careers and environments across the country through outreach, educational endeavors and community building.

Following the keynote, students will meet with business



representatives currently hosting or interested in hosting student interns with the goal of maximizing student internships to advance workplace productivity, redesign business and student expectations and develop internship protocols.

“This event is about bringing hard-working, career-focused students together with prospective employers, mentors, companies and organizations who care about cultivating a productive current and future work force,” said Foundation Director Ellen Goodman.

The morning sessions will conclude with lunch and the presentation of awards. Each career academy will honor one business partner, and the Foundation will present the “Champion of Excellence” award to an outstanding contributor (to be announced).

Businesses signed up to participate as of press time include: Lowe’s of Palm Spring, Palm Springs Police Department, Westin Mission Hills, I.B.E.W. Local 440, Costco, KESQ, Reliance Hospice, AutoChoice, Fromberg Edelstein Fromberg, Expedia Cruise Ship Centers, HR Advantage Consultants, Ralphs, Fit Fix 24, Courtyard by Marriott, Building Trades Council of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, Palm Springs Fire Department, Friends of the Desert Mountains, Firestone of Cathedral City, Sullivan Real Estate Group and Big Wheel Tours. Businesses interested in participating can register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/champions-of-excellence-2019-tickets-70179413515?aff=ebdsbdestsearch>.

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Be Wary of Children’s Online Activity



This month is National Cyber Security Awareness Month (NCSAM) and the perfect opportunity for educators and parents to reinforce safety rules and tools with our students who are navigating a sea of technology each and every day.

Throughout October, our Educational Technology Information (ETIS) department has been sharing a great amount of information with students, staff members and families relative to Cyber Security. Topics covered include:

- Cyber Safety and online safety training
- Applications that parents and teachers need to know about
- Online bullying awareness and prevention resources
- Online security trends and awareness
- Hacker trends

District technology leaders are providing student lessons and content for staff on cyber security as we move through October. ETIS this month has also launched the third year of our digital citizenship game for secondary students: “Cyber Champions 2019,” which includes updated content on application safety and consequences of misuse, how and when to use social media and what colleges and employers look for online. This program won a California School Boards Association (CSBA) Golden Bell Award after its first year for being a model program for other Districts across the state. For more information on NCSAM visit: <https://niccs.us-cert.gov/national-cybersecurity-awareness-month-2019>.

Our ETIS team has also put together a list of some of the most popular (and potentially dangerous) applications that our students may be accessing. They are listed as part our team’s Cyber Security newsletter, which can be found here: <https://www.psusd.us/cybersecuritymonth>.

As a parent, one of the most important things you can do to safeguard your child’s safety online is to monitor their activity and make sure they are not visiting inappropriate websites or social media platforms or forming dangerous relationships online. Some additional tips on this topic:

- Sit down with your child and find out which apps he or she is using, how they work and whether your child has experienced any issues on them such as cyberbullying or contact from strangers.

- Consider setting up age limits on your child’s electronic device(s).
- Go over some general rules with your child to help keep him or her safe online.
- Consider making a rule that your child must ask permission before downloading any apps (even free ones) so you can review them first.
- Remind your child to let you or another trusted adult know if anyone is acting inappropriately online.

Together we can work to ensure our children remain safe both in their physical space and in cyberspace. Thank you, as always, for your continued support and collaboration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Sandra Lyon'.

Sandra Lyon, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

