

November 12, 2019

Demographic Information and Disproportionality

At the last school board meeting Ms. Ford requested additional demographic data for SWDs regarding ethnicity, EL status, and those categorized as socioeconomically disadvantaged. For context, demographic data is presented for all students in the district in the first table below. These numbers were pulled from Dataquest for the 2018-19 school year.

All SBUSD Students

| | | |
|--|--------|-----|
| Total Students | 13,475 | |
| Total SpEd | 1,752 | 13% |
| | | |
| White | 4,348 | 32% |
| Latinx | 8,143 | 60% |
| EL | 2,294 | 17% |
| Socioeconomically Disadvantaged | 7,836 | 58% |

It is our belief that the distribution of students with disabilities should reflect their representation across the district as a whole. The table below demonstrates significant discrepancies across all four subgroups.

SBUSD Students with Disabilities

| | | |
|--|-------|-----|
| White | 315 | 23% |
| Latinx | 1,349 | 77% |
| EL | 555 | 32% |
| Socioeconomically Disadvantaged | 1,342 | 77% |

CDE has identified SBUSD as having a disproportionate number of Hispanic students eligible for Special Education in the category of Specific Learning Disability. The district is currently working with CDE through a process that looks at our policies and procedures, as well as student-level data from IEPs and assessment reports. We have submitted our initial self-review to CDE to determine next steps including any whether there are any corrective actions needed.

Child Find Information

The term Child Find refers to our affirmative responsibility as a school district to identify, locate, and evaluate children with disabilities who live in our area regardless of whether they are in our public schools or attending private schools. Our Child Find obligations apply to children we suspect may have a qualifying disability and need special education services. Note that the bar to suspect a student may need special education is lower than the bar to actually qualify for services.

In order to ensure students who need special education do not fall through the cracks there are three developments this year aimed at improving our processes. First, all school site administrators, school psychologists, and counselors attended a half-day training on Child Find presented by our special education legal counsel on September 16th. Second, several schools are piloting a revised Student Study Team (SST) process this year. The SST is often the first team that addresses concerns related to struggling students. They work to identify issues, implement supports, and monitor whether they are working. Ultimately the SST team may refer a student for a special education evaluation depending on how the student responds to the supports over time. SST teams include a school administrator, school psychologist, general education teacher, parent/guardian, and at times other staff who have expertise. Lastly, the district is developing an early warning system through AERIES that will flag students based on criteria we set that may include grades, attendance, and discipline. This system will help remove a level of subjectivity with regard to which students are referred to SST and for special education evaluations.

Academic Achievement

Students with disabilities (SWD) continue to lag behind their non-disabled counterparts on measures of academic achievement such as the CAASPP. On one hand this achievement gap is good cause for concern. On the other hand, it is important to understand that many if not most students qualify for special education services based in part on low academic scores. The CDE acknowledges this reality by setting targets for LEAs on the percentage of SWDs that score at or above a 3 on the CAASPP. During the 2018-19 school year, the statewide target and SBUSDs scores are listed below.

| | Statewide Target (3 or above on CAASPP) | SBUSD (2018 CAASPP) |
|-----------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| ELA Achievement | >14.9% | 11.11% |

| | | |
|------------------|--------|-------|
| Math Achievement | >12.6% | 8.12% |
|------------------|--------|-------|

As a result of not meeting our target in either ELA or Math, SBUSD is working with CDE to address the gap through a process called the Performance Indicator Review. We have not yet received the statewide target or our performance on this measure for the 2019-20 school year. However, SWDs showed improvement overall on the 2019 CAASPP. The preliminary data by school is listed below. Color added to show growth or regression.

| School | ELA (Dist. from 3) | Change | Math (Dist. from 3) | Change |
|---|--------------------|--------|---------------------|--------|
| Adams | -73 | 10 | -84 | 20 |
| Cleveland | -115 | 12 | -132 | 42 |
| Franklin | -61 | 7 | -60 | 15 |
| Harding | -118 | 14 | -155 | 26 |
| McKinley | -133 | 7 | -167 | -34 |
| Monroe | -116 | -4 | -140 | -27 |
| Roosevelt | -95 | 25 | -90 | 15 |
| SBCA | -93 | 11 | -103 | 7 |
| Washington | -64 | 10 | -67 | 18 |
| GVJH | -105 | 11 | -143 | 17 |
| La Colina | -91 | 0 | -123 | 6 |
| La Cumbre | -100 | -10 | -121 | 12 |
| SBJH | -133 | -8 | -176 | 1 |
| DPHS | -145 | 2 | -217 | -47 |
| SBHS | -118 | 42 | -224 | -12 |
| SMHS | -115 | -2 | -203 | -11 |
| La Cuesta/ AVIS (Excluded due to sample size) | | | | |

The Special Education Department continues to focus on improving students' literacy in several ways. As mentioned at the previous board meeting, we are participating in the district wide work to address the needs of Dyslexic students with the Literacy Project. We have now trained 25 special education teachers in Project Read/Lindamood Bell and provided them with the teaching materials. We have teachers trained in this program at each of our schools with the exception of La Colina Jr. High. Training for this program is five days but coaching is provided throughout the school year for teachers who are implementing the program. Our intention is to continue to provide intensive reading intervention to students who require it- especially in the younger grades. As students get older, we know we need to also teach them other strategies and provide them other tools in order to access core content. One way we do this is with Learning Ally, an app that provides audio access to text for students with disabilities. Last school year SBUSD 531 students accessed books through Learning Ally and read a combined 332,970 pages.

Inclusive Practices

Inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education program is fundamentally a civil rights issue, and in a formal affirmation of inclusion (2012) the SBUSD Board issued a mandate to the Superintendent to ensure that inclusion be integrated as a core value and priority of the District. This position was reinforced by Gina Plate, Chairwoman of the State Advisory Commission on Special Education, in a 2016 article [California Moves to Bring Special Education Students 'Into the Fold' of Mainstream Education](#): “we remain committed to merging our two separate systems into one system that serves all students.”

The law requires that students are educated in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). SBUSD has for several years now met statewide LRE targets regarding the percentage of students with IEPs in general education settings. However, inclusion is also not just about having students in general education classes. It also means valuing all students as full-members of the broader school community. After all, we are preparing students to live in a community and society where they will not be separated based on whether or not they received special education in school. According to the CDC in 2013, 22% of adults have a disability- everyone will either have or know someone close with a disability in their lifetime.

None of this is to say that this work is easy. Our general education teachers have a wide range of learners in their classrooms. At the secondary level, we have more classes that would benefit from support from special education teacher than we have special education teachers to provide. This reality requires that we prioritize some subjects over others and that we get creative in how we use the resources we have. Schools around the district are testing different iterations of co-teaching/co-lab in an effort to meet the needs of all learners. Co-teaching and co-lab arrangements require two teachers to work closely together which can present challenges like finding common planning time, how to accurately assess and grade student work, and forming and adhering to agreements about how responsibilities will be divided.

Paraeducator Compensation

At the 10/22 school board meeting a request was made by Ms. Parker to provide information as to whether our pay rates for paraeducators are competitive with other school districts. Below is a table showing pay rates from five LEAs with whom we may be competing for candidates. Note that low equates to step 1, mid to step 3, and high to step 6.

| District | Position | Low | Mid | High |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| SBCEO | Paraprofessional | 17.42/hour | 19.39/hour | 21.7/hour |
| | Paraprofessional - Behavior | 18.21 | 20.26 | 22.66 |
| | | | | |
| Goleta USD | Instructional Asst. Spec Ed | 19.12 | 21.06 | 23.22 |
| | Instructional Asst. Sev Hand. | 20.59 | 22.67 | 25.02 |
| | | | | |
| SB Unified | SE Paraeducator | 16.13 | 17.49 | 19.83 |
| | SE Paraeducator II | 17.86 | 19.42 | 22.06 |
| | SE Paraeducator IBI | 18.65 | 20.24 | 23.02 |
| | | | | |
| Ventura USD | Paraeducator - Special Education | 15.37 | 17.20 | 19.25 |
| | | | | |
| Santa Maria Joint UHSD | Instructional Asst - Special Ed I | 18.29 | 20.16 | 22.23 |
| | Instructional Asst - Special Ed II | 19.21 | 21.18 | 23.35 |
| | Instructional Asst - Special Ed TLC | 19.69 | 21.71 | 23.94 |
| | | | | |
| Carpinteria USD | Instructional Assistant II | 14.39 | 15.27 | 16.68 |
| | Instructional Assistant III | 15.18 | 16.13 | 17.6 |

