



# DISTRICT DIGEST

## TRACY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

April, 2019

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~ ~ ~ ~  
*Spring Break*  
*April 19-26*

### SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

March was an exceptional month celebrating the arts in our schools. The displaying of student art in the district office is always a highlight for staff. Students, parents and community members have stopped by to enjoy the talent of our students. The All-District Music Festival was once again a smashing success. It was a great night of music and song. The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Festival of Cultures was held this year for the first time at the Grand Theater. The students enjoyed performing in such a beautiful facility. Thank you to the staff and volunteers who have helped to make these events a success and who support arts in our schools.

Last fall, the Camp Fire resulted in very poor air quality in our county. One result from that experience was that Jamie Mousalimas, San Joaquin County Superintendent of Schools agreed to host a meeting to talk about what to do the next time there is a severe air quality issue in our county. The meeting took place on Friday, March 15 and was attended by many superintendents and representatives from all districts. Also present was Dr. Kismet Baldwin, M.D., San Joaquin County Public Health Officer. Dr. Baldwin made several key points:

1. No public health officer in the state of California recommended that schools should close due to poor air quality. There is no established cut-off for air quality for school dismissals or closures.
2. Schools are likely to have better air filter systems than are found in the homes of our students.
3. The decision to close schools in Contra Costa County was made by the county superintendent of schools and not the county's public health officer.
4. Respirator masks such as N95 are not recommended for students or staff.
5. Dr. Baldwin cannot foresee a time that she would ever recommend closing schools for air quality.

Due to social media, there was widespread misinformation regarding which schools or districts were open or not. New Jerusalem Charter School was the only facility to close at that time. SJCOE has agreed to coordinate communication between the districts so that misinformation can be limited and corrected when possible. Should another event of the Camp Fire nature take place again, the district will do its best to communicate clearly what we know and what decisions have been made.

On March 26, our Board of Trustees approved the salary increase for 2019-20 school year for both TEA and TSMA. Salaries will be increased by the approved funded state COLA (Cost-of-Living-Adjustment). Currently, the proposed COLA is 3.46% but could change slightly up or down by the June state adoption. The district will be offering the same salary increase to our CSEA members.

At the end of the month (April 29), Central School students and staff will be moving to their new school. The facility will be a wonderful addition to the district and school community. The official ribbon cutting will take place on Monday, May 13 at 6:30 in the multi-purpose room. Please feel free to stop by and tour the campus.

Lastly, thank you to everyone for helping to make this a successful school year. It is amazing how fast the end of the school year is approaching with summer soon here. Enjoy the sprint to the end of the year.

**Brian Stephens, Ed.D., Superintendent**

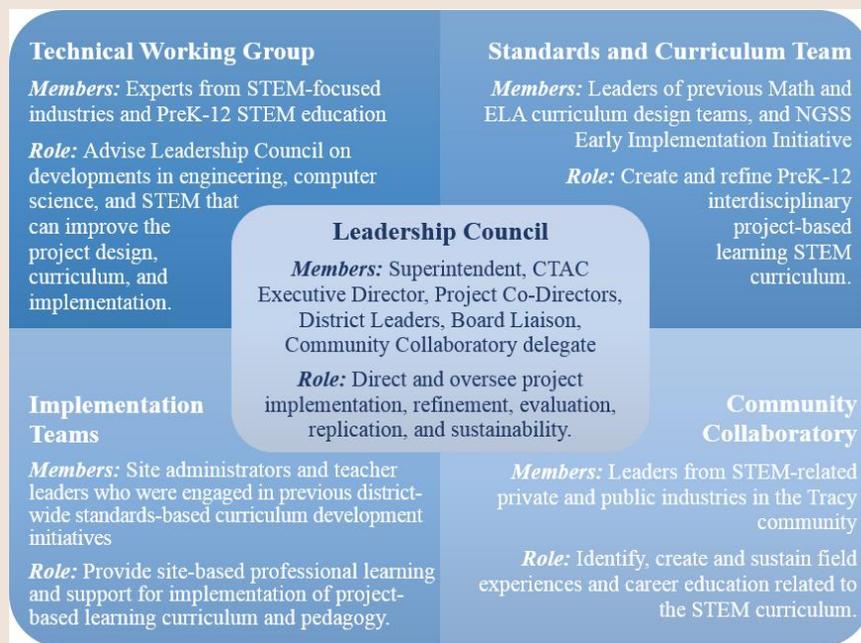
### **Staffing**

Our open positions have been posted, and administrators have been attending job fairs to recruit candidates for these positions. We have already interviewed for and offered some positions. Our next job fair event will be at the San Joaquin County Office of Education on April 16. As a reminder, certificated employees may continue to submit voluntary transfer requests to the Human Resources office as new openings are posted. For more information regarding voluntary transfer and reassignment, please refer to Article XVI, Transfer/Reassignment, of the collective bargaining agreement.

**Tammy Jalique, Associate Superintendent for Human Resources**

### **STEM Education Innovation and Research Program Grant: Project Management Plan**

In October, 2018, TUSD was awarded a \$4 million, 5-year Education Innovation and Research (EIR) Program grant from the US Department of Education (USED). This grant is designed to bring a PreK-12 STEM pathway, with a focus on engineering and computer science, to *all* students in TUSD.



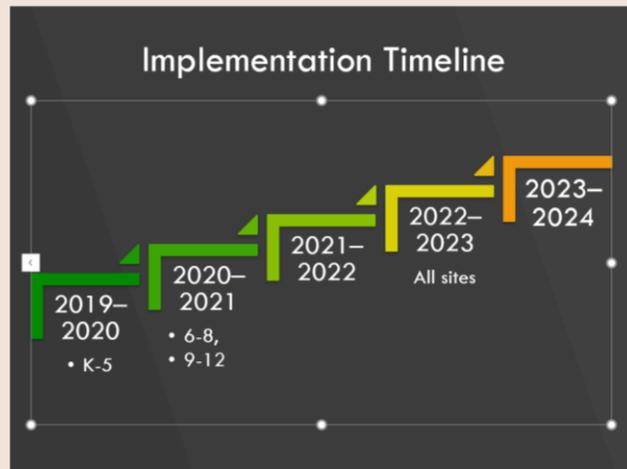
The management plan for this project has five integrated, complementary teams:

- 1) The Leadership Council whose members oversee the project's direction, implementation and improvements, and the accountability of the entire effort;
- 2) Standards and Curriculum Teams who will use the Rigorous Curriculum Design process to create interdisciplinary units of study centered on design challenges that require students to apply knowledge and skills of engineering and computer science;
- 3) The Technical Working Group of STEM-industry and STEM-education experts who advise the Leadership Council on developments in engineering, computer science and STEM education that can improve the project design, curriculum, and implementation;
- 4) Implementation Teams at each site in the study, convened by the site administrator and including site teacher leaders, who will guide, monitor, and support the implementation at that site. A District Implementation Team will support the project through the four District Early Release Monday trainings;
- 5) The Community Collaboratory, which includes the leaders from STEM-related industries (health, agribusiness, manufacturing, technology, civil engineering, and more) in the Tracy region. These leaders advise the Leadership Council to help identify, create and sustain field experiences and career education related to the STEM curriculum. The Collaboratory is dedicated to collaborating across industry lines to spur STEM educational innovation that benefits Tracy's students and the regional economy.

The Community Collaboratory has committed to work with TUSD to provide out-of-classroom experiences that connect to students' in-school experiences. The members meet quarterly to learn about the grant progress and to inform the

Leadership Council about best practices that connect school and career. In this early stage, the Community Collaboratory has worked to identify a broad field of local STEM industries and discussed with TUSD to how best to connect school and career with regard to students' developmental stages, PreK-12.

In upcoming District Digests, there will be more information about the Implementation Teams and how school sites and their stakeholders will be supported to both begin this implementation and to continue over the next 5 years.



You can learn more about this project in a series of informational videos posted on the [TUSD Libraries YouTube channel](#).  
**Debra Schneider, Ph.D., Director of Instructional Media Services and Curriculum**

### ***TUSD Math Night, March 2019***

Our first district Math Night was a huge success! Over fifty TUSD students and parents attended and engaged in rich conversations about mathematics! Our goal was to engage the community in a conversation about the shifts in thinking and learning that occur with the California Math Standards. Flyers and announcements were sent out by sites across the district to get the word out to our students and parents.

Matt Haber, SJCOE mathematics coordinator, facilitated the evening with excitement and led our students and parents through a variety of activities to engage them in mathematics. Through a “Which One Doesn’t Belong” activity, participants saw how people see different patterns and structure in numbers and the value in group work and sharing those perspectives. A Number Talk activity demonstrated the many approaches we have to solving problems and immersed participants in the mathematical practices of constructing arguments, critiquing the reasoning of others, and reasoning abstractly. Parents commented on the value they found in learning other people’s strategies, for example – “doubling and halving” when multiplying multi-digit numbers.

We want to extend a big thank you to Dr. Silver, Ms. Ryan, and Ms. Ryan’s AVID students who did an incredible job hosting the event. A big thank you to all who supported the effort and an especially big shout out to our teachers throughout the district for rallying our community to attend!



We plan to continue and grow this conversation with the Tracy community through more Math Nights next school year. Please keep an eye out for flyers and announcements.

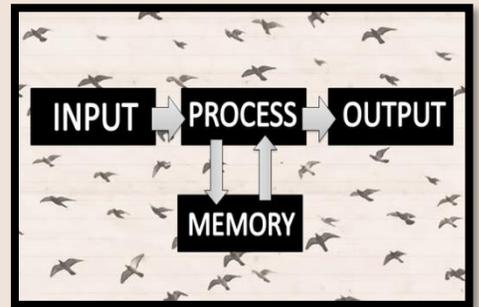
**Jennifer Kassel and Richard Newton, Professional Learning and Curriculum**

### **How We Think and Encourage our Students to Think Matters ~ Good News for Teachers of All Content Areas.**

The TUSD Coding Committee has some activities that promote student engagement, discourse, and reasoning! Who knew that all of these high leveraging strategies could be in one activity?

Reach out to your committee members for the opportunity to engage your students with tasks that take advantage of their digital native mental framework. According to Marc Prensky (an award-winning, internationally-acclaimed speaker, author, and “practical visionary” in the field of education), “They are used to receiving information really fast. They like parallel process and multi-task. They prefer their graphics before their text rather than the opposite. They prefer random access (like hypertext). They function best when networked. They thrive on instant gratification and frequent rewards. They prefer games to “serious” work.”

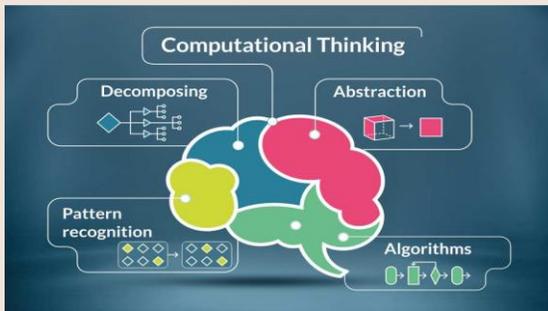
During both the PK-12 Math Committee and Management meetings this past month, teachers and administrators engaged in a variety of “unplugged coding” activities that gave them all a taste of Computational Thinking. Following the activities, and through the lenses of *The Math Practices*, *The Science and Engineering practices*, the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills* (communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity), and *The Computer Science Standards*, the groups reflected on the types of thinking they had experienced during the two activities. The number of targets reflected was uncanny. All of this, through one integrated, engaging task.



#### **What is Computational Thinking?**

Jeannette Wing brought the term to prominence in her 2006 essay *Computational Thinking*.

In her essay, Dr. Wing suggests that thinking computationally is essential – for everyone, across all disciplines.

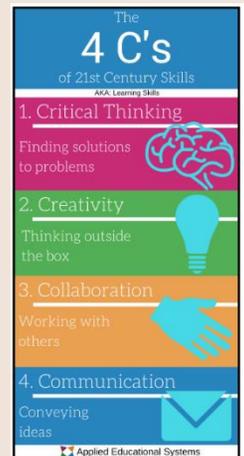


- **Conceptualizing, not programming. Fundamental, not rote skill.** *Think big picture- like a computer scientist.*
- **A way that humans, not computers, think.** How we use cleverness to work through problems and find innovative solutions.
- **Complements and combines mathematical and engineering thinking.** *Building systems as we interact with info from our world.*
- **Ideas, not artifacts.** *“Concepts to... solve problems,... manage our daily lives, and communicate... with others.”*
- **For everyone, everywhere.** *“Spread the joy, awe, and power of computer science, aiming to make computation thinking commonplace.”*

Your Site Math Committee Team is excited to share the activities with you! Your quest will include distinguishing patterns, breaking down problems, creating processes and traveling back and forth between the tangible and abstract. Phew! Sounds like a lot, but trust us – it will be fun!

As you enter the home stretch and even begin thinking about the next year, consider these questions: Where do the elements of computational thinking live in your classroom routines? How much excitement and relevance can you generate in your lessons to maximize students’ thinking? **Your imagination is the limit.**

**Deborah Coker M.Ed. and Richard Newton M.Ed., Professional Learning & Curriculum**



## LCAP Stakeholder Engagement Opportunity

LCAP Community Engagement Meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm-7:30pm in the board room. The agenda will include a student panel in which we will have student representatives from grades 7-12. Students will engage in a facilitated question and answer protocol in which community members and parents will have the opportunity to hear TUSD Student experiences and perceptions of our school programs and services. Directly following the student Q and A panel, attendees will engage in reflecting on TUSD climate and safety data and have an opportunity to provide feedback for continuous improvement of student programs and services.

**Julianna Stocking, Director of Continuous Improvement, State & Federal Programs**

## AVID Program

During the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter AVID site teams are preparing for annual certification, teams are using the Coaching and Certification Instrument (CCI) to develop a systematic pathway to impact more students through the implementation of AVID on campus school wide. AVID program domains include: Instruction, Systems, Leadership, and Culture. The process of certification is no easy task. Our teams are working hard and we look forward to celebrating our successes. Keep up the great work!

### INSTRUCTION

promotes:

- WICOR Strategies
- 21st Century Skills
- Student Leadership Skills
- Goal-Setting/Monitoring
- Rigor for All

### SYSTEMS

support:

- AVID Site/District Teams
- Professional Learning
- Secondary AVID Elective Classes
- Equity and Access to Rigorous Courses
- Data Collection and Analysis

### LEADERSHIP

ensures:

- Strategic Planning
- Modeling of Expectations
- College Readiness Mission and Vision
- Career Readiness
- Distributed Leadership Approach

### CULTURE

fosters:

- College Awareness and Preparation
- Common Belief in Student Success
- Family and Community Involvement
- High Expectations for All
- Positive and Safe Learning Environment

TUSD AVID Elective and Site Team Instructed Student Portfolio Coversheet 2018-2019

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: Mr. Murch

Course: Mr. Murch AVID Only: Signed Contract Yes or No

Number	Criteria	Description	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1.1.1	Writing to Learn	Receive instruction on writing-to-learn techniques and spend time at least weekly writing reflections of learning and/or completing learning logs.	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.1.2	Writing Process	Receive instruction on the writing process and spend time at least weekly writing to clarify and organize experiences (e.g., in essays, letters, and reports).	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.1.3	Focused Note-Taking	Receive instruction on Cornell notes and other focused note-taking strategies.	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.1.4	Higher-Level Thinking	Receive instruction on asking higher-level questions using Costa's Levels of Thinking during tutorials, class discussions, and problem-solving activities.	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.1.5	Structures for Inquiry	Receive instruction on the use of structures for inquiry such as Socratic Seminars and Philosophical Chairs.	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.1.6	Access Digital Information	Receive instruction on how to access digital information from multiple sources and evaluate that information effectively.	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.1.7	Technology as a Tool for Collaboration	Receive instruction on how to use technology and ICT resources as a tool for collaboration both synchronously (e.g., texting, social media, video conferencing, and WebEx) and asynchronously (e.g., forums and blogs).	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.1.8	Structures for Collaborative Study Groups	Receive instruction on the use of structures for collaboration on projects.	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.1.9	Collaborative Study Groups	Receive instruction on how to participate in tutorials* and collaborative study groups. *required 2x/week for AVID Elective students only	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.1.10	Leadership Skills	Develop leadership skills through collaboration with others.	✓	✓	✓	✓

What do we need inequalities for?

### Intro to Inequalities

Ex.  $6x + 20 < -4$

Inequality (mathematical term)

What is an inequality? → a mathematical sentence formed by relating 2 expressions to each other, where the expressions are **not equal** to each other.

What do we need inequalities for? → Inequalities allow us to describe real-world situations that have minimums and maximums.

Why does the extra line in the symbol mean? → why does it mean that?

Why are Math Symbols important? → Why should we know/understand what they are and mean? → Will they only be used for Inequalities?

Examples:

- Ex. 1:  $x > 4$  → "x is greater than 4"
- Ex. 2:  $x < 5$  → "x is less than 5"
- Ex. 3:  $x < -2$  → "x is less than -2"
- Ex. 4:  $x \leq 3$  → "x is less than or equal to 3"

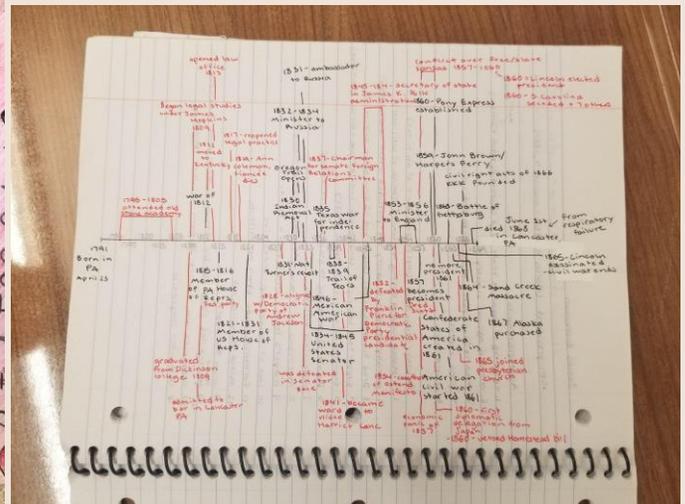
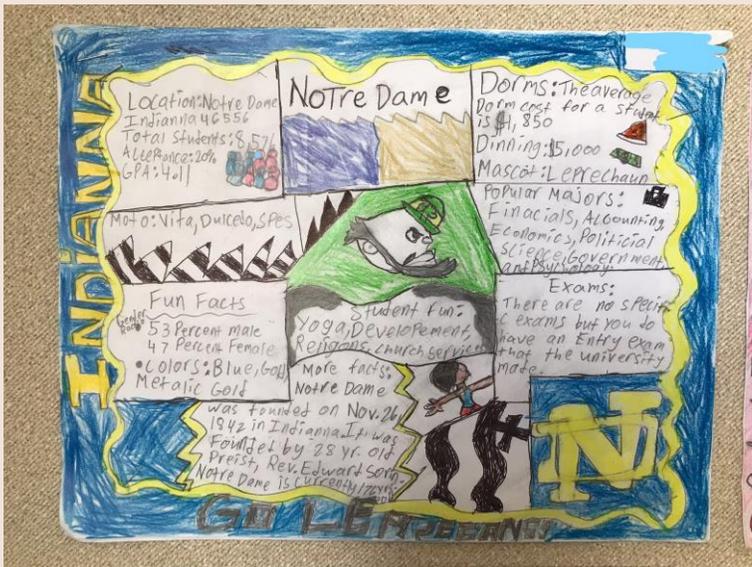
Math Symbols

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**Dave Brown District AVID Coordinator**

**English Learner Program and Services**

The Department of Continuous Improvement continues to provide professional development opportunities to staff on Designated ELD, Instructional Strategies, and ELD Standards to support our English Learners. In addition, selected staff are receiving training on StudySync Designated ELD and Newcomer ELD. The district will be hosting a CA ELD Standards Institute July 17– July 19 for K-12 teachers. The presenter will be Karin DeVarenes from San Joaquin County Office of Education, Language and Literacy.

Some of the DELAC parents and Parent Liaisons were able to participate in the California Association of Bilingual Education Conference (CABE 2019). The parents were very appreciative to have had the opportunity to attend. The next District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC) meeting will take place on **May 7, 2019 at 3:30 pm in the District Boardroom**



Teachers participating in PD  
**Maria Salazar, EL Coordinator**



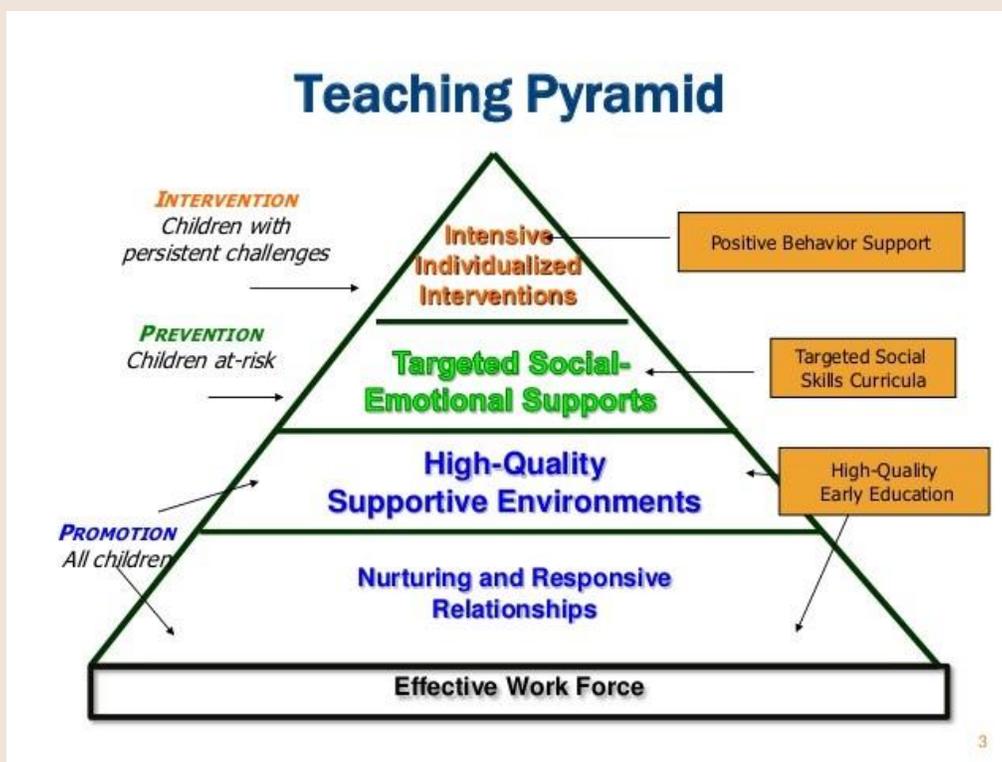
Parents/Parent Liaisons at CABE

## Early School Readiness Program

Congratulations to our school readiness staff for participating and completing their California Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) Teaching Pyramid Framework training. The Teaching Pyramid is a comprehensive approach designed to help educators promote social-emotional competence, address challenging behaviors in young children, and develop safe and nurturing group environments for ALL students. The CA CSEFEL Teaching Pyramid approach is built on the Positive Behavior Interventions and Support model with the incorporation of quality early childhood practices.

The school readiness staff committed to five Saturdays during this school year to participate in this training. We had the opportunity to participate in guided learning experiences, reflective practices and classroom based-coaching throughout our training experience. The coaching piece allowed teachers to reflect on their practices, implement strategies, and use tools to promote social-emotional development.

In the 2019-2020 school year, we will have more/new staff participate in the CA CSEFEL training. Our plan is to build a Teaching Pyramid leadership team that will help with the sustainability of the program implementation and effective social-emotional practices in the classroom. Our TUSD School Readiness staff is committed to ensuring that the students that exit our programs are prepared with the social-emotional skills and strategies that are needed to be successful in their education.



**Rocio Garcia Early School Readiness Program Coordinator**

## LTEL Counselor

Happy spring! As we begin the last two months of school, top on the agenda are end of year meetings with students. It's always exciting to hear students' views on what next year can look like and talking about goals is a highlight of our chats. Two weeks ago, I attended the WHS Cafecito. What a great group of moms! It was my pleasure to answer their questions about EL placement, ELPAC, and other topics. I look forward to attending many more Cafecitos and developing relationships with this amazing group of stakeholders.

I attended two professional development opportunities this past month, put on by Trish Hatch of Hatching Results. Becoming proficient about the Multi-Tiered, Multi-Domain System of Supports (MTMDSS) framework and how it can be utilized in my work as the LTEL Counselor is invaluable as I plan my calendar for the 2019-20 year.

**Jessica Escobedo, Long Term English Learner Counselor**

### ***Intradistrict Transfer Requests***

Student Services is currently processing all Intradistrict Transfer requests for the 2019/2020 school year. All requests are reviewed and considered individually by the Director of Student Services. The department does its best to accommodate families if their request is warranted. Student Services is working to have all families notified of their Intradistrict transfer status by May 24, 2019.

**Robert Pecot, Director of Student Services and Curriculum**

### ***County Interdistrict Appeals***

With declining enrollment district wide over the past five years and enrollment projected to decline in future years, keeping as many students in TUSD as possible has been a continued focus of the district. District funding and staffing is directly tied to student enrollment. This Spring Student Services screened each Interdistrict transfer request closely, denying requests that were not valid criteria for a transfer. Eleven families disagreed with the district's decision and appealed to the County Board of Supervisors. On Wednesday, March 20, 2019, TUSD defended the Interdistrict Transfer Appeals at the County Office. According to the county this was the highest amount of appeals they had ever had at one time. Six of the cases were won by TUSD and five lost. TUSD was applauded by the county for our professionalism and communication to parents.

**Robert Pecot, Director of Student Services and Curriculum**

### ***Retirement Parties***

Please remember if you would like to advertise a retirement party, send in your announcement and we will post it to the staff portal under retirements: <https://staff.tusd.net/sites/Retirements/Pages/default.aspx>

Send announcement to [betcheverry@tusd.net](mailto:betcheverry@tusd.net)



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