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Meeting Room A

Facilitated by:
Dr. Stephen Glass



Meeting Room A

Name: David C. Aguirre

The role of teachers in supporting students towards being college and career ready in a pathways high school

Students that graduate high school College and Career Ready are more likely to be successful in postsecondary and in a career (CDE, 2017). Students who meet the criteria of being College and Career Ready are more likely to obtain meaningful employment and achieving economic success that can help improve many life outcomes (Dow, 2019; Xing et al., 2019). Although there are several indicators that students can meet to be considered College and Career Ready, completing a CTE pathway meets those requirements and provides students additional meaningful learning experiences where they can learn important transferable life skills. This study examines the role that teachers play in supporting students in CTE pathways. Twenty-two teachers at a wall-to-wall pathways high school were surveyed to examine their familiarity with the College and Career Readiness indicators as well as their familiarity with the Linked Learning CTE pathway model. Findings show that most teachers were familiar with the term College and Career Readiness but lacked a deep understanding of the term or what is required for students to be considered College and Career Ready. Interestingly, most of the teachers surveyed indicate that there is a clear connection between pathways and supporting students towards being College and Career Ready and an overall benefit of students from the Linked Learning pathways model. Findings from this study revealed a need for additional teacher training related to College and Career Readiness.

Meeting Room A

Name: Dennis R. Bond

The Trifecta Contributing to Mounting Rates of Chronic Absenteeism

Amongst the Socioeconomically Disadvantaged

Chronic absenteeism among the socioeconomically disadvantaged is a growing problem in the education system. This study examines the factors contributing to this issue, including chronic illness, aversion to attending school based on anxiety or social-emotional concerns, and disconnectedness between parents and teachers. The research is guided by a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Through interviews with site and district personnel and analysis of attendance records and survey data, this study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the root causes of chronic absenteeism and effective strategies for addressing it. The results of this study inform effective strategies to improve attendance rates among this student population and ensure equal access to educational opportunities. It also highlights the significance of collaboration between school personnel and the wider community to address the multifaceted issues contributing to chronic absenteeism. The findings of this study could have important implications for educators, policymakers, and parents seeking to address chronic absenteeism and ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed in school. By identifying the underlying factors contributing to chronic absenteeism among the socioeconomically disadvantaged, this research informs targeted interventions to support these students and improve their attendance rates.

Meeting Room A

Name: Tyler L. Chavez-Feipel

Resources & Barriers to Access In Order to Increase College and Career Readiness for Hispanic Students at a Southern California Public High School

This paper describes the inequities in regard to College & Career Readiness (CCR) rates existing at a public high school in southern California. This paper will address the problem of Hispanic students at the school site declining in CCR in a severe manner compared to their California counterparts. The English Learner population at the school site is 100% Hispanic, underscoring that inequitable CCR rates are affecting more than one sub-group at the school site simultaneously (LAUSD, 2023). This inequity is problematic since if the Hispanic student population at the school site is declining in CCR then that means English Learners at the school site are also declining. In this paper three years worth of district and school site trend data are discussed and analyzed using relevant literature and other sources. Additionally qualitative and quantitative data collected at the school site from two samples, one student group, and one teacher group, are reviewed using thematic and descriptive analysis. Finally, based on the implications, and analyzed literature and school site data, an action plan is proposed for school leadership to implement to address the inequity and provide solutions to increasing CCR among Hispanic students at the high school. Furthermore, the themes of the data and the literature discussed were Professional Development (PD), Rigorous Coursework, and Social Emotional Learning (SEL), all of which are discussed and analyzed in works by Contreras and Oropeza (2019), Green, et al. (2010); Howard, et al.(2014), Griffin (2018), Hurtado (2020), Sattem et al.(2021), Tinto (2004), Villavicencio, et al. (2013), and Zinth (2013). Moreover, via surveys aligned and differentiated based on each sample group, both teacher and student perceptions/experiences with CCR were analyzed and common themes and differing understandings of CCR and the supports provided were compared and analyzed in order to inform the action plan presented.

Keywords: Equity, Inequity, College Readiness, CCR, Hispanic students, EL students, English Learner, Rigor, Professional Development, Social Emotional Learning

Meeting Room A

Name: David Dekker

Addressing the Problem of Chronic Absenteeism for Socioeconomically

Disadvantaged Students: The Importance of Socioemotional

Learning and Connectedness with School Staff

This research study and action plan explore correlations for socioeconomically disadvantaged (low SES) students who are chronically absent in a large middle school in Los Angeles County. Further, it examines the impact and effect of socioemotional learning and connectedness between these students and faculty/staff of the campus to answer the question of what impact SEL can have on low SES students that are chronically absent. The study draws upon current research (mostly within the last 5 years) and both quantitative and qualitative studies done on this campus with teachers and students around chronic absenteeism with students of low SES. The findings show that a vast majority of low SES students that are chronically absent do not have a feeling of connectedness to their campus or to adults on their campus. Additionally, teachers largely state that they do not specifically plan for and include SEL lessons or objectives in their classrooms and they rely strictly on the office for tracking and determining resources/support needed for chronically absent students. Strategies currently in place on this campus need to be changed and updated to specifically address the “whole child” including mental health to ensure that these students have at least one program or adult that they feel connected to.

Meeting Room B

Facilitated by:
Dr. Erin Biolchino



Meeting Room B

Name: Jill Dolan

Elementary-Aged African American Student Perceptions of Suspensions

The research project investigated elementary aged African American student perceptions of suspensions and their social emotional learning needs at a Southern California elementary school. Previous studies indicate that African American students are suspended at greater rates than their peers, but these studies fail to examine suspensions from the perspective of previously suspended African American students. This study used qualitative semi-structured interviews and quantitative social emotional three-point Likert-type rating scales of 10 previously suspended elementary aged African American students grades 1 & 3-5. Participants were randomly selected to participate in the voluntary study. Overall, African American students perceived themselves to be 75% competent in all five social emotional learning competencies. The highest rated competency area was in relationship skills (M=2.85). However, participants who were suspended rated themselves lower on self-management (M=2.20) and responsible decision making (M=2.20). Thematic analysis of interviews found that students believed they needed help with calming down (i.e., self-management) and evaluating the impact of decisions (i.e., responsible decision making) to avoid future suspensions. Researchers should continue to investigate the impact of social emotional learning and other alternatives to suspensions as a way to reduce suspensions for African American students.

Keywords: Suspension, African American, perceptions, elementary, education, social emotional learning, self-management, responsible decision making

Meeting Room B

Name: Cristina Flores

College Preparation and Critical Race Feminista Praxis: Testimonios of Mentoring College Bound Chicanas/Latinas in Community Spaces

This qualitative study employed a Critical Race Feminist approach to explore how community-based mentoring impacts the higher education aspirations and college preparation of first-generation Chicana/Latina youth.. While there is an abundance of studies of mentoring in academic settings and mentoring has been recognized as a significant factor in the post-secondary success of Chicana/Latina students, the impact of mentoring in community -settings on the pathways of college-bound Chicanas/Latinas youth is less understood.

Participants in this study were recruited from a womxn’s talking circle organized by Chicana/Latina college graduates for Chicana/Latina youth hosted at community spaces. The circle did not explicitly form as a college prep program and participants did not initially identify as mentors or mentees but during the span of their participation in the talking circle their interactions evolved into mentoring relationships. Individual and group testimonio interviews were conducted with two mentors and three mentees. Mentors participated in individual interviews and mentees participated in individual or in pairs interviews. The mentoring group interviews, formatted as conversation between mentors and their corresponding mentee(s), allowed for reflective testimonios on how mentoring impacted their post-secondary pathways. The findings include two themes relating directly to the research questions and third theme was also developed from the testimonios. Informed by the participants lived experiences and desire to identify mentoring style grounded in feminista strategies, I propose a Critical Race Feminista Mentoring model. The model consists of three core elements: compromiso, reciprocity, and transformative. The study concludes with implications and recommendations for future research.

Meeting Room B

Name: Jennifer L. Friedlander

Chronic Absenteeism: Effects of the Implementation of Updated Attendance Policies and Practices on Unduplicated Students

Since the pandemic, schools across California are seeing increased rates of chronic absenteeism, and for unduplicated students, this rate remains “very high” according to the California Dashboard (2022). Drawing on an ecological perspective of chronic absenteeism (Childs & Scanlon, 2022; Sugrue et al., 2016), this study examined the effects of updated attendance policies and procedures in one urban elementary school on fifty-eight unduplicated pupils in grades kindergarten through five, beginning August 2022 to March 2023. Data analysis included calculating a mean, median, and range for student absence rates. I developed an inductive coding scheme to aggregate qualitative data from interviews with the counselor, office manager, and principal. I used the median and frequency distribution table to analyze data from teacher surveys, including a coding scheme for the open-ended question. Data revealed that chronic absenteeism rates for unduplicated pupils remained unchanged and parental understanding of chronic absenteeism increased. Findings suggest that elementary school student attendance may benefit from a greater focus on family support from an ecological perspective, considering the student’s interactions with the environment that affect attendance and building teacher capacity in this area.

Keywords: chronic absenteeism, attendance, unduplicated, elementary, students, ecological perspective

Meeting Room C

Facilitated by:

Dr. Maiyoua Vang



Meeting Room C

Name: Gladys Garcia

Impact of Professional Development and Intervention Supports to Increase the Reading Achievement of English Learners

A review of current research indicates that English Learners (EL) overall continue to score below their native speaking peers in the area of reading as indicated on state assessments. In an attempt to address this achievement gap at the research site, this study aims to examine the efficacy of professional development for teachers in the area of intervention supports for struggling readers and specifically EL. Reading diagnostic data was collected from students in the 1st-8th grade and analyzed for effect size. Surveys were given to reading intervention teachers who took part in professional development opportunities aimed at supporting students in a pull-out intervention program during the day. Preliminary findings indicate the EL who participated in the intervention program improved in the area of reading, though some grade levels showed more improvement over others. In addition, teacher survey responses revealed a positive impact on building their capacity to support struggling readers including EL. This study outlines implications of professional development for teachers in the area of intervention supports to increase the reading achievement of EL.

Keywords: English Learners, reading instruction, professional development, reading intervention class

Meeting Room C

Name: Javier A. Gonzalez

Intervention Models for Language Skills in Students with Disabilities at Hollydale School

Both English Language Learning students (EL) and students with disabilities (SWD) consistently perform below other student categories at standardized testing at a national and state level. At the Hollydale School, over the course of the last 5 years of CAASPP data, results reflect improvements in language skills in EL students, while SWD have not had the same level of improvement. Isolating the strategies proving effective in education into “accommodations and modifications” through differentiated instruction practices as well as instructional intervention models, will allow this research into how those two models have been practiced in the school. In this study, data from CAASPP over the previous five years and iReady diagnostic assessments from the current school year will identify where the gaps exist within language skills. Ready diagnostics further disaggregate those language skills into areas of concern such as vocabulary and comprehension. Teachers have been surveyed for their experience with facilitating SWD language growth - looking specifically at their current level of accommodations and modifications, and their experience with the school site’s instructional intervention models. Hollydale teachers spend substantial amounts of planning time on accommodations and modifications of the classroom materials but report that the efficacy of those efforts is stymied. Ultimately, the discussion of materials, questionnaire, and data findings illuminate the need for greater efficacy and communication of resources available for students with disabilities. The school site has access to many tools that researchers suggest, but both teachers and principals would benefit from being able to coordinate and collaborate on ways to improve SWD language skills. The site would likely see improvement by increasing the reach of their instructional intervention models to SWD.

Meeting Room C

Name: Scott K. Guzman-Peterson

How Teacher Perceptions of SPED Chronic Absenteeism Rates Can Drive Change at a Public Middle School

This study was completed at a middle school consisting of a population of 1,026 students, 109 of whom are SPED students. The school site's current data shows a rate of 29.4% of chronically absent SPED students during the 2021-2022 school year, the highest among all student subgroups. This rate was alarming as SPED students comprise only 9.7% of the school's population. This research focused on investigating the perceptions of teachers, administrators, classified staff, counselors, and psychologists about factors affecting SPED student chronic absenteeism at the school, including possible solutions to SPED chronic absenteeism. The study gathered data from structured surveys given to teachers, staff, and the administration team, including a careful review and analysis of current school and district policies, attendance data, and open-ended questions. The rate of chronically absent SPED students is perceived by GENED and SPED teachers, administrators, and school staff as an issue that can be impacted by relationships between SPED and GENED students, student-teacher relationships and struggles academically, socially, or emotionally.

This study revealed that SPED student attendance rates are affected by their academic, social, emotional, and parental support as major all factors for their chronic absences. Still, chronic absenteeism rates are not improving at the school site because there needs to be more understanding and collaboration among teachers, administrators, and staff concerning the current attendance data and chronic absenteeism research strategies. Research shows effective strategies for combatting SPED student chronic absenteeism include professional development for teachers and staff, providing current attendance data to teachers while implementing school-wide attendance awareness and incentives, and providing training for parents regarding the importance of attendance with long-term student academic success.

Meeting Room D

Facilitated by:
Dr. Devery Rodgers



Meeting Room D

Name: Eric Hutson

Improving College and Career Readiness for English Language Learners

Since California adopted College and Career Readiness (CCR) as an indicator of high school performance in 2018, schools across the state have worked to ensure that their students are classified as CCR-prepared. Unfortunately, English Learner (EL) students have continually fallen short when measured by these state indicators. Data suggest that focusing on career education through increased EL participation in Career Technical Education (CTE) pathways and academic academies could mitigate this educational inequality. This study addresses the existing real and perceived barriers preventing EL students from participating in these classes in a large suburban California high school. Interviews and surveys were conducted with site administrators, counselors, teachers, and EL students to identify these barriers, and an analysis of the data was conducted to identify ways to potentially remove them. Findings suggest that the school's CTE teachers are not adequately prepared to teach EL students, the school's CTE infrastructure is not equipped for the added number of potential students, and many of the EL students do not see value in taking these classes. Furthermore, the study suggests that better communication between school personnel and families of EL students could potentially help them overcome the cultural challenges they face.

Keywords: English Learners (EL), College and Career Readiness (CCR), Career Technical Education (CTE), academic academies, achievement gap, educational barriers

Meeting Room D

Name: Kimberly Jeremia

Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students: Less Suspensions, More Support

The data analysis of an upward trend in suspension rates among socioeconomically disadvantaged students have shown the need for a continuum tiered layer of positive intervention supports. Socioeconomically disadvantaged students have been high-need students who has lived in poverty; many who have been ethnic and racial minorities. Socioeconomically disadvantaged students have had higher adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) that has decreased their adaptability in the school environment; therefore, they have been more likely to be suspended due to externalizing problematic behaviors. With this same trend at the current research site, the objective of this study was to measure the social emotional learning needs and the effectiveness of behavior intervention supports. A semi-structured interview was conducted with the school leadership team that consisted of an administrator, school counselor, and the school psychologist. It gave insight to analyze the school's processes and practices for their School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (SWPBIS) System. A Student Wellness Survey was also conducted school-wide that had measured students' social emotional skills and competencies. The findings of this study suggested the school's current implementation of their SWPBIS system has led to an upward data trend in problematic behaviors. It suggests that the increase is due to the lack of social emotional skills support and the lack of access to equitable behavior intervention supports that reinforced trauma-informed and restorative practices.

Keywords: suspension rates, adverse childhood experiences, problematic behaviors, social emotional learning skills, positive behavior intervention support, trauma-informed practices, wellness

Meeting Room D

Name: Frederick A. Master

**An Examination of Teacher Support Structures in Developing
English Learners' Language, Literacy, and Writing Skills
Across Content Areas**

The number of English Learner (EL) students attending public schools has continued to rise across the United States (CDE, 2022). However, this student group is failing to meet standard academic achievement compared to their non-EL counterparts, especially regarding English Language Arts (ELA) standardized assessments. This issue has been linked to insufficient structures related to teacher training and professional development in supporting language, literacy, and writing skills and inconsistent collaboration practices among teacher teams to support the EL student group (Borda et al., 2018; Maarouf, 2019; Master et al, 2017). Additionally, a lack of targeted training for non-ELA English Language Development (ELD) teachers in supporting EL students may be contributing to inconsistent instruction across content areas related to the preceding skills. This study sought to examine the current professional development and collaboration structures' effectiveness in developing teachers' in non-ELA/ELD roles instructional practices in supporting EL students language, literacy, and writing skills in their subject areas. Thirteen teachers across grades 6-8 and representing all non-ELA/ELD subject/content areas were surveyed to identify trends in potential gaps and deficiencies in supporting the EL student group at the school site. Findings show professional development in supporting this student group is inconsistent across content/subject areas and the collaboration practices amongst teachers is limited in its current state.

Meeting Room D

Name: Robynn Meehan

Engagement Strategies in the Special Education Classroom: A Study of Improving Attendance and Academics Through the Development of a Positive Class Climate

The effects of absenteeism unfavorably influence academic achievement, social development, and mental health, yet it disproportionately impacts students with disabilities. This study explored how teachers engaged students with disabilities in the classroom. It included four teachers and 42 students in grades six through eight. I utilized a pre-observation engagement questionnaire for teachers and a classroom observation protocol. The semi-structured questionnaire provided quantitative and qualitative data that showed how teachers perceive student engagement and the frequency of schoolwide strategies utilized in their classrooms. I conducted a comparative analysis of the data gathered from the pre-observation questionnaire and the semi-structured class observations. The study provided insight into the strategies used to engage students in the classroom and their alignment with schoolwide practices. Preliminary findings suggest incorporating opportunities for students to reflect, write, and converse in small groups enhances comprehension and promotes conversation. However, teachers need support and training on integrating other engagement strategies. Student attention and understanding improved in small groups where clear expectations and positive feedback were evident. Therefore, it is suggested that educators consistently and effectively use engagement strategies to create an optimal learning environment and support the diverse academic and social-emotional needs of students with disabilities.

Meeting Room E

Facilitated by:
Dr. Charlie Slater



Meeting Room E

Name: Teresa Mora

Empowering Newcomer EL students for success in High School and beyond: A comprehensive approach to preparing for academic and social challenges

The continuous increase of newly arrived immigrant students in the United States has brought to light a discrepancy in support for EL students. According to research, EL students accounted for an average of 14.0 percent of total of public-school enrolled students in cities and 9.3 percent of students enrolled in suburban areas. First-born foreign, recently arrived students account for the greater representation of secondary schools than elementary schools' enrolled students. The research highlighted the need for remediation and additional support for EL students in the area of high school and college and career readiness. Therefore, it was crucial to create an action plan to help close the equity gap for EL students, so that all students can be educationally empowered and prepared for high school graduation and beyond. For this study, 13 newcomer students took a survey of their awareness of high school/college and career readiness, experience with the school and their connection. The same 13 students participated in newcomer support group to bring awareness of the expectations, help them transition and connect to the school site. Findings showed that after participating in the newcomer support group, students learned the expectations of high school readiness, felt more connected and empowered.

Meeting Room E

Name: Will S. Safotu

**African American students' perceptions of positive relationships
with their school counselors and how it affects
College and Career Readiness**

Aside from graduation rates, College and Career Readiness (CCR) continues to be one of the benchmark data points schools are evaluated on. While graduating rates for African American students increase year by year, the number of African American students meeting College and Career Readiness requirements continue to be stagnant. There are mountains of research that focus on equity in the classroom, positive teacher relationships with students or strategies for teachers in raising the number of CCR students. But school counselors play a critical role for students in becoming CCR. This research is aimed at how perceived positive relationships between African American student and their school counselors impact CCR. School counselors and African American students were surveyed on how they perceived positive relationships and what CCR meant to them.

Meeting Room E

Name: Elaine Scenters-Zapico

Exploring Teens' Attitudes and Perceptions of Race and Racism Following Participation in a Social Justice Camp

This study explored self-reported changes in youths' knowledge about race and their attitude and perception toward diverse racial groups after attending a social justice camp.

Despite research showing that children are aware of racial differences throughout their development, teachers and families avoid conversations about race and racism. In school settings, teachers may view these conversations as unnecessary or feel unprepared to engage students in this topic. At home, White families often adopt a colorblind ideology to avoid discussions on race, whereas Black families typically engage in conversations that include explicit statements about race, culture, and racism. A phenomenological qualitative research design was used to investigate the experiences of youth who attended a social justice camp, including their self-reported changes and development in knowledge, attitudes, and perspectives of race and racism. Racial-ethnic socialization framework was used to guide data analysis of youth perspectives and experiences. Results based on adolescents' self-report after the social justice camp revealed changes in their awareness and recognition of biases, alterations in their racial attitudes, and novel race-related perspectives. Keywords: race and racism, adolescence, racial-ethnic socialization

Meeting Room E

Name: Jecenia R. Vera

Promoting English Language Development and Academic Success: The Crucial Role of Teacher Training and Professional Development in Designated ELD Classrooms

This research study examines the crucial role of teacher training and professional development in effectively teaching English Language Learners (ELLs) in designated English Language Development (ELD) classes. The study investigates the significance of teacher in-service training opportunities and professional development to enhance teachers' knowledge, skills, and abilities to meet the diverse needs of ELL students. The study draws upon a comprehensive literature review and the analysis of questionnaires completed by four ELD teachers to provide insights into teacher training and to inform an upcoming series of ELL professional development as outlined in the concluding action plan of the study. The findings of this study suggest that ELL professional development and in-service training opportunities can significantly improve ELD teachers' instructional practices and promote positive academic outcomes for ELLs. This study concludes with recommendations for sharpening ELD teachers' pedagogical skills to better meet the needs of ELLs via a comprehensive action plan.

Keywords: teacher training, professional development, English language learners, designated English language development classroom, in-service training

