

Inspiring Equity in Education

Snapshots of evidence-based practices, including SEL, PBIS, and Restorative Practices, to help promote a positive and equitable environment for all!



Entrance to Theodore Judah Elementary

December 2016: Perseverance and Perspective-Taking

Upcoming Events

- 12/14 Data Integrity Project – AP Behavior Focus Group @ Luther Burbank
- 12/20 SEL Training: Perspective-Taking and Empathy, ELEM focus – Serna, 3:30-5:30
- 12/21 SEL Training: Perspective-Taking and Empathy, ELEM focus – Serna, 3:30-5:30
- 12/22 SEL Training: Perspective-Taking and Empathy, SECOND focus – Serna, 3:30-5:30
- 12/24-1/8 Winter Break!

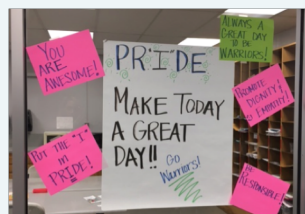
Snapshot of Current Suspension Data

At this point in the year (and with the new calendar year upon us), it seems fitting to pause and reflect on where we are in terms of student discipline. Disproportionality in discipline data remains problematic. This is apparent in the data below.

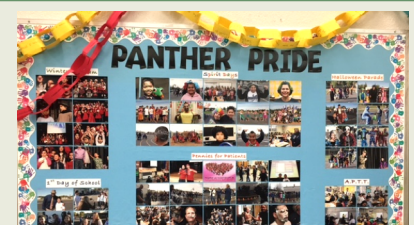
- Total out-of-school suspensions remain virtually unchanged from 2015 to 2016
- The percentage of African American students suspended has dropped from 45% to 39% of total suspensions
- Disproportionality among racial groups continues to be alarming, however, with African American students making up 39% of all suspensions but roughly 17% of the total enrolled student body
- Although out-of-school suspension numbers remain troubling, in-school/in-house suspensions have decreased three times over

Research has shown that implementation of Restorative Practices can significantly reduce school suspensions. We are hopeful that the freeze will lift and the work around Restorative Practices can move forward. We have compiled data analysis resources that we will share soon to support you as you continue to focus on the work at hand. Moving forward with the theme of perseverance, let's stay focused on our goals to keep students in school...learning, engaging, and emotionally healthy!

****Sign-Up Link for Upcoming SEL Trainings****
<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/409044aada92faa8-selstandards>



School pride at Earl Warren and Hiram Johnson!



Current Happenings

→ SCUSD's SEL work is garnering attention nationwide and is specifically highlighted in a recent publication by the Novo Foundation and Education First

→ Restorative Practices Demo Sites are beginning to create restorative alternatives to afterschool detention

→ PBIS schools are continuing to strengthen their knowledge of Tier II interventions/supports and are currently assessing their progress with Tier I implementation using the SET (HPHS scored 88% of the SET and Earl Warren scored 76%!)

Dig Deeper: A School's Journey with Mindfulness

Guest Contributors: Zack Pasillas and Kim Williams

Academic achievement is only a part of every student's education, their social and emotional development is also key to their success in life. The tools of mindfulness offer a way to practice self-discipline, focused attention, and cultivate self awareness and positive communication with others. Many programs around the country are discovering this unique tool as a way to support students through the stresses of school and home life. Washington Elementary school has taken a step further through the pilot Centering Moment Ambassador program. This innovative approach puts the agency and responsibility back into the students' hands as they to master new techniques and instruct other students through Centering Moments in each classroom, helping all to learn other strategies to persevere through difficulties.

Thirteen 5th and 6th graders have taken on the challenge to become ambassadors; leaders of mindfulness to build up the school culture and purpose around these important goals. As we wrap up the final weeks of the training, the group is excited to pass on these tools to their peers! Each week they share how taking a Centering Moment during sports, family arguments, and stressful situations have helped them remain balanced, and actually resolve problems or perform better! One student shared, that because of their ADHD, they generally have a hard time focusing their attention, but after practicing mindfulness and yoga with the group, they find it much easier to focus for the rest of the day. Through this program we are equipping students to respond, rather than impulsively react. This gives them a better chance to adopt a growth mindset, benefiting our classrooms, families and community!

Gema Godina, principal of Washington, says that she gained perspective from her experience at C. K. McClatchy High school. "I saw the benefits that hundreds of students gained from taking Yoga each year. I knew this was something I wanted to do at Washington," Godina stated. "We know that sometimes students come to school with a lot on their plate and Yoga is one way to help center them and get them ready for the day."

Because Washington is a "Leader In Me" school, students have chosen leadership roles that highlight their personal strengths and interests. Teachers started doing simple yoga moves during their morning circles, as a way for students to center and focus their attention at the beginning of the day. Several students enjoyed this time so much that they wanted to take on yoga as part of their leadership role. Thanks to the Yoga Seed instruction, these students are very focused and motivated to share their leadership experience. Several students have shared that they continue to practice their moves at home, and feel a sense of "calm and control" long after the instruction.

For more information about Yoga Seed Collective, a non-profit organization that aims to build healthy communities, please visit <http://www.theyogaseed.org/> or call: (916) 978-1367. There are also a variety of other online and traditional mindfulness or yoga programs, and our own SEL website (www.scusd.edu/social-emotional-learning-sel-1) offers many helpful resources. Speak with your Equity Coach to learn more about how we can support you!

SEL Integrated Literacy Training January 24th

The Equity department has partnered with RedRover Readers to present a great opportunity for elementary teachers, mainly targeting 4th grade and below, to build integrated SEL literacy lessons and skills. Teachers will walk away with 4-5 lessons + materials that can seamlessly be integrated into February's SEL theme of EMPATHY. This training will take place on January 24, 2017 from 3:45-5:45 pm at the Serna Center in the Pennsylvania Room. Teachers will be compensated, and RedRover is providing FREE BOOKS to attendees! Space is limited to 30-40 participants – sign up soon!

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/409044aada92faa8-integrate>

Winning is great, sure, but if you are really going to do something in life, the secret is learning how to lose. Nobody goes undefeated all the time. If you can pick up after a defeat, and go on to win again, you are going to be a champion someday.

- Wilma Rudolph



PERSEVERANCE

noun

1. steady persistence in a course of action, a purpose, a state, etc., especially in spite of difficulties, obstacles, or discouragement

Focus On: Our Library Services Department

Our Library Services Department is a fantastic resource for all things reading! Amanda Turkie, District Librarian, and Sierra Campbell, SCUSD Library & Textbook Services Technician, have done a masterful job of making the library more accessible and user-friendly than ever before. As an example, here is a list of books they compiled that focus on our SEL theme of **Perseverance**:

Grades K-3

Amazing Grace by Mary Hoffman (Fiction)*
Manfish: The Story of Jacques Cousteau by Jennifer Berne (Non-fiction)*
The Most Magnificent Thing by Ashley Spires (Fiction, STEAM)*
Rosie Revere, Engineer by Andrea Beaty (Fiction, STEAM)*
Wilma Unlimited: How Wilma Rudolph Became the World's Fastest Woman by Kathleen Krull (Non-fiction, PE)*

Grades 4-6

Fish in a Tree by Lynda Mullaly Hunt (Fiction, Dyslexia)*
Hatchet by Gary Paulsen (Fiction)*
Pax by Sara Pennypacker (Fiction)
Roller Girl by Victoria Jamieson (Graphic Novel)
Through My Eyes by Ruby Bridges (Nonfiction, Civil Rights)*

Middle Grades

Blackbird Fly by Erin Entrada Kelly (Fiction)*
The Boys Who Challenged Hitler by Phillip Hoose (Nonfiction, WWII)
I am Malala: How One Girl Stood up for Education and Changed the World by Malala Yousafzai (Memoir, Girls' Education)
The Wednesday Wars by Gary Schmidt (Fiction)
When the Sea Turned to Silver by Grace Lin (Fiction)
 *Available in the Professional Library at Serna

Though our library does not house Young Adult fiction books, please check your school's library or public library for these titles:

High School

The Absolute True Diary of a Part-time Indian by Sherman Alexie (Fiction)
Dumplin' by Julie Murphy (Fiction)
Most Dangerous: Daniel Ellsberg and the Secret History of the Vietnam War by Steve Sheinkin (Nonfiction, Vietnam War)
The Nazi Hunters: How a Team of Spies and Survivors Captured the World's Most Notorious Nazi by Neal Bascomb (Nonfiction, WWII)
Salt to the Sea by Ruta Sepetys (Historical Fiction)

Spotlight Book Review

Spires, Ashley. **The Most Magnificent Thing**. Kids Can Press. Apr 2014. Tr \$16.95. ISBN 978-1-55453-704-4. (K-2)
 Our sunny heroine careens into the book on her trusty scooter followed by her best friend, a pug. She soon exclaims that she has the most wonderful idea for making the most magnificent thing. We watch her design process as she sketches and figures, contemplates, and gathers supplies. Then she builds. It is an absolute disaster. Not only is it not magnificent, but it is just plain wrong. So, she tweaks, and saws, glues, and re-fastens, trying all different ways to make her magnificent thing better. Spires does a magnificent job expressing our little inventor's frustration, anger, and eventual fury over her consistent failures by emphasizing the girl and her dog's ever-changing facial expressions. Just as our teary-eyed protagonist is on the verge of quitting, she agrees to take her dog on a walk, and it is that little break that gives her the rejuvenation she needs to get back to work. She sees the "rights" of her previously wrong attempts, and she is finally able to make the most magnificent thing. Students will empathize with the initial enthusiasm and excitement over a project that quickly segues into frustration and anger as things become increasingly more difficult. This is a book that highlights the value of perseverance, and exemplifies the growth model of learning that we are strongly advocating for in our district. A real pleasure!

Professional Library Hours: Tuesday 12-5 pm; Wednesday 12-4 pm; Thursday 12-4 pm Phone: 916-643-7447

The Professional Library @ Serna has just what you need! It is a review and circulating library of over 25,000 titles including books aligned to California Curriculum. Teachers can check out up to **30 books for 30 days**.

You can also search the entire collection from your school or home!

*Search for a specific title or author *Search for titles in content areas * See if the book is checked out or on the shelf * Create and print a list of books you want * Request a subject/interest area and have the department put together a collection for you.

How to find books (or you can request a number of books on any topic and Library Staff will search for them for you!):

1. Access www.scusd.edu, click **FACULTY/STAFF**. Choose **DESTINY [LIBRARY SERVICES]** and then choose the **PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY** site. Click on **SEARCH THE LIBRARY CATALOG**. (You do not need to Login).
2. You can do a search by topic, author, or title. (For instance, type **Roald Dahl** in the **FIND** window and click **AUTHOR**.)
3. At the far right of each title, you can see if the book is available. Make a list of the books you want by clicking **ADD TO THIS LIST** to the right of each title.
4. When you have finished selecting, go back to the top of the page and select **RESOURCE LISTS** on the left side. Under **MY LIST**, click **VIEW**. You can now review your list and remove any titles. Then click **PRINTABLE** at the top of the page. Then print the list. VOILA! You now have a list of books to request.

Resources for De-Escalating Power Struggles in the Classroom

Become a Second to Last Word Teacher!

Written by: Jacki Glasper

Our goal as teachers is to keep students in the classroom in order to ensure that they are learning. This goal trumps everything else unless there is a safety issue. However, we've all been in a situation in which a student says something disrespectful, is distracting other students, or simply isn't doing what we told them to do. We attempt to redirect them but may find ourselves in an argument or power struggle that escalates into a much bigger issue. If we do not diffuse the power struggle quickly, there will be a loss of instruction time for all students in the classroom. Sometimes we resort to sending a student out of the classroom, but that is not always the most equitable course of action or best for the student. If possible, try to diffuse the power struggle and get back to teaching with these tips:

1. **Recognize that the power struggle is happening.** *"I can see that we are going to get into an argument, so let's talk about this later."*
2. **PEP Talk – Privacy, Eye Contact, Proximity.** Talk to kids privately. This can be just a quick whisper in their ear. If they shout out, ignore them and pretend you don't know what they are talking about. You can also move on and find them later to discuss the issue.
3. **Listen.** Hear what the student is really saying or expressing to you. Difficult behaviors are often a symptom of something else. Is the student seeking attention? Does the student feel "dumb" or hopeless?
4. **Acknowledge & Agree.** Let the student know you hear him or her and acknowledge his or her feelings. Say you're sorry even if you don't think you did anything wrong. For example, you can say: *"I'm sorry if I said or did something to get you so angry. Maybe you can tell me what I did so I won't make the same mistake again."*
5. **Defer.** Let the student know that you will discuss this issue at a later time. Tell students, *"I will not always stop teaching to deal with a behavior. I will deal with it when I am ready."*
6. **Walk Away!** Students don't want to look bad and neither do you as the teacher. Allow students to save face. Let them talk under their breath. If they are doing what we want them to do, then it really doesn't matter who has the last word – you've won the struggle. Use humor and don't take yourself so seriously.

When diffusing power struggles, the goals are to get back to teaching, keep the student present, stop the behavior and allow the student to save face. You are only in control of yourself – you can't CONTROL the students. We should teach students to persevere even when things don't go their way and help them learn strategies they can use to re-focus on classwork when they are feeling frustrated. We must persevere as teachers, also, when we face challenges with a student. Keep in mind that each day is a new day, and what we are doing makes a huge difference in our students' lives, even if it takes awhile to see.

Resource – *Discipline with Dignity for Difficult Youth*, Brian Mendler

Student leaders involved in Centering Moments trainings at Washington!



DID YOU KNOW?

Kindergartners through 8th graders, whose classrooms and after-school programs incorporated social and emotional learning, improved in emotional health, interpersonal relationships, and academic success, regardless of race and ethnicity, location of school, and whether they had presenting problems or not.

THE SEL theme of December is PERSEVERANCE and the SEL theme for January is PERSPECTIVE-TAKING!

Submit comments or questions to Shonna Franzella in the Equity Department at shonna-franzella@scusd.edu.