



Preparing every student to thrive in a global society.

August 9, 2019

Dear Friends of East Side Union High School District,

As I enter my eighth year as Superintendent, I am both proud and humbled to have served the past 29 years in education. We are fortunate to have tremendously talented and dedicated teachers and staff in our district. A new school year offers every student who walks through our doors a world of opportunities and I wish each and every one of them a bright and successful future!

Last year, we committed ourselves as a district to building capacity amongst all staff members to ensure that equity and inclusion are essential principles of our school system.

Specifically, we set a goal to build capacity to attain equitable ESUHSD communities where:

- ALL students are welcomed as they are
- strengths and areas of growth for all students are known and supported
- adults positively respond to the social-emotional, wellness, and academic needs of every student
- ALL students are provided tasks that demand production through and beyond Depth of Knowledge 3 (DOK 3) so that they can communicate like a scientist, mathematician, historian, artist, literary critic, and more

In support of building equitable communities, we developed a Uniform Behavior Response Matrix to address appropriate interactions in the classroom, we asked staff to reflect on how to respond to bias via implicit bias training, and we restructured our Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) to add counselors to our support system for students. Thank you for your participation in these efforts and your adjustments in practice to address the issues of disproportionality that affect our ability to build equitable communities.

This year, we will continue with efforts to encourage ongoing reflection, professional growth, and explicit practices to build equitable communities. We will again address classroom responses to adolescent behavior by introducing practices and strategies to keep students in their learning environments and classrooms even when students are having difficulty entering classrooms ready to learn. We will offer online guided reading opportunities for you to continue your reflection on the impact and response to implicit bias, share strategies for restorative practices, as well as build out structural reforms for added student supports. Invitations for your participation will be coming soon.

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In addition, we will have to continue to build equitable communities under fiscal constraints. The impact of expenses versus revenue will need to be addressed during this coming year. Over the past years, the Board took action to compensate staff in a fiduciary responsible manner to honor the work of staff within the constraints of increased expenses. These actions will now have to be reconciled with future costs in a manner that allows the District to continue to serve our community and remain fiscally solvent. I say this to you because over the next nine months we will have to work together as an organization of educators to adjust our system to build equitable communities within the realities of our financial situation.

In the short term, we will address how to best communicate student progress and grades and increase communication and monitoring of student progress through increased counseling. We will also work to build equitable communities and respond to the State's informed decision to include ethnic studies into high school programs. These opportunities will allow us to reflect on graduation requirements, the nature and focus of our academic programs, and build equitable communities where students are welcomed, known, and supported. If done successfully, we will be able to analyze our graduation requirements and make a decision that will both build equitable communities and address our fiscal realities simultaneously.

The reflection on bias and the adjustments you have already made to build equitable communities, including the changes you will continue to make, are sincerely appreciated. I invite you to join me this year as a participant in building equitable communities and be ready to engage in an analysis of our system to support our students in an empowering and financially viable vision of the future of East Side in which we all can engage to bring our students to novel success.

It will be an exciting new year! We, as an organization, are working hard to transform how we educate our children and serve our community. Thank you in advance for your continued support and hard work for our East Side Union High School District community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris D. Funk", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris D. Funk
Superintendent