

11.18.25 CEC- Castle Rock SAC Meeting Virtual 5:30-6:30

Meeting notes:

- **Head of School Updates and Enrollment Trends:** Maren provided updates on the new school tagline, current and projected enrollment figures, and highlighted the school's continued growth, with input from Danielle, Mike, and committee members including John, Kristina, and David.
 - **New School Tagline:** Maren announced that the governing board approved a new, shorter tagline for the school network: 'Student centered, innovation ready and future focused,' intended for marketing and strategic planning purposes.
 - **Enrollment Figures:** Maren reported that the school had 412.5 FTE (full-time equivalent) students and 418 actual students as of October 1st, reflecting an increase of 18 students from the previous year, and noted the significance of this growth during a period of generally regionally declining enrollment.
 - **Open Enrollment and Network Comparison:** Open enrollment for the 2026-2027 school year began on November 1st, and Maren presented data showing Castle Rock leading the CEC network in enrollment interest, with color-coded statuses indicating stages of application completion.
 - **College Direct Program Introduction:** In response to John's question, Maren explained the new College Direct (CD) program, which allows students to take college classes directly on a college campus starting as freshmen, a program previously only available at other campuses.
- **Unified Improvement Plan and Academic Performance Data:** Maren and Danielle discussed the school's Unified Improvement Plan (UIP), focusing on increasing student engagement through attendance and GPA improvements, and presented supporting data and strategies to the committee.
 - **UIP Goals and Rationale:** Maren outlined the UIP's primary goal to increase student engagement, measured by GPA and attendance, and explained the correlation between higher attendance rates and improved GPA, supported by recent school data.
 - **Attendance and GPA Trends:** Data presented showed that students with higher attendance rates consistently achieved higher GPAs, and while the school did not meet its 90% attendance goal, significant improvements were noted in both attendance and GPA.
 - **MTSS and Staff Engagement:** Maren described the implementation of a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) to identify and support students falling behind, and highlighted efforts to engage staff in supporting student attendance and academic performance.
 - **Academic Dean's Data Review:** Danielle reviewed average GPA trends, MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) scores, and noted areas for improvement, particularly in reading, with plans to provide updated winter testing data at the next meeting.
- **Course Offerings, Certifications, and Pathways:** Danielle and Cindy detailed new and existing course offerings, certificate options through ACC, and efforts to align courses with college pathways, with additional clarifications provided to John and other committee members.

- **New SP 26 Courses and Faculty:** Danielle announced the addition of Environmental 1111, Political Science 1050, and a horticulture class for the spring semester, and introduced Professor Kark as the new psychology adjunct.
- **Certificate and Credit Options:** Cindy explained that students completing 30 college credits through ACC concurrent enrollment can earn a general studies certificate, which counts toward graduation requirements similarly to professional certificates.
- **Clarification on ACC Certificates:** Cindy clarified for John that ACC certificates typically require multiple courses, with examples such as early childhood education and certified nursing assistant certificates, while some single-class options are available on the CEC campus.
- **Pathway Alignment:** Danielle discussed ongoing efforts to restructure courses and establish clearer pathways aligned with ACC, aiming to create more stackable credits and facilitate student progression.
- **School Security Officer and Student Activities Updates:** Mike provided updates on the hiring process for a new school security officer and shared information about upcoming student events and community engagement activities.
 - **Security Officer Hiring:** Mike reported that Precision Security has identified a candidate for the school security officer position, with an introduction to administration scheduled for December 5th and a potential start date in January.
 - **Student and Community Events:** Mike listed upcoming events including character awards, participation in the Castle Rock start lighting ceremony, a book fair, a music ensemble, the winter dance, and a new prom venue at Hudson Gardens and Event Center, reflecting increased student involvement in event planning.
- **Calendar, Bell Schedule, and Communication Improvements:** Maren and John discussed the school calendar, bell schedule, and strategies to improve communication about rotating schedules and state testing, with suggestions for newsletter updates and direct outreach.
 - **Calendar and Bell Schedule Approval:** Maren explained that the school calendar and bell schedule for the next year have been submitted for governing board approval in December, with plans to communicate the finalized calendar to families in January.
 - **Blue and Gold Day Communication:** In response to John's concerns about tracking rotating Blue and Gold Fridays, Maren agreed to send out a detailed schedule to families and consider adding reminders to the school newsletter.
 - **Testing Communication Strategies:** David raised the issue of communicating the importance of state testing to parents, and Maren outlined plans for targeted email blasts, newsletter updates, and possibly an information night to increase participation.
- **School Meals Program and Facility Limitations:** David inquired about the impact of new school lunch legislation, and Maren explained that the school will continue its current vended meal program due to facility and staffing constraints, with no major changes anticipated this year.

- **Continuation of Vended Meals:** Maren confirmed that the school will maintain its vended meal service through the end of the year, as the kitchen lacks the capacity for on-site meal preparation and staffing challenges persist.
- **Facility and Staffing Challenges:** Maren provided background on the school's kitchen limitations, including the inability to wash dishes on-site and difficulties in staffing both meal preparation and delivery, which have influenced the decision to continue with vended meals.

Follow-up tasks:

- **Meeting Materials Distribution:** Send the meeting slides and minutes, including the RIT and MAP data, to committee members for review and approval. (Maren)
- **Blue/Gold Friday Communication:** Send out the list of all Blue and Gold Fridays for the year to the school community and consider including the upcoming Friday's color in the newsletter. (Maren)
- **State Testing Communication:** Develop and implement a communication plan (including newsletter, email blast, and possibly an information night) to inform families about the importance of state testing and encourage participation. (Maren)
- **School Calendar Release:** Communicate the approved school calendar for next year to parents as soon as it is approved by the governing board in December. (Maren)