

## **CENTERING EQUITY AND ENSURING WHOLE-CHILD WELL-BEING: PANDEMIC RECOVERY IN GARDEN GROVE**

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29 AND TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30  
GARDEN GROVE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

### MEETING AGENDA

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NOTE: DUE TO THE COVID-19 HEALTH CRISIS AND SHELTER-IN-PLACE GUIDELINES, THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD VIRTUALLY THROUGH FOUR 120 MINUTE SESSIONS

#### DAY I: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29

8:30 am **Convene Meeting.** Joel Knudson will convene the meeting with opening remarks, introductions, and an overview of the agenda.

#### SESSION I

##### *Understanding the Learning Conditions of Vulnerable Students*

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted home and school lives for everyone in our K-12 school systems, including students, educators, and families. However, the experiences of students living in poverty or under-resourced segregated communities and those from undocumented or immigrant families add layers of complexity and struggle that educators must understand and attend to if they are to enable all students to thrive. The purpose of this session is to ground our exploration of student well-being in the concrete experiences of California's most underserved students.

8:45 am **The Conditions of Vulnerable Students and Families.** The session will begin with videos that feature Garden Grove students, followed by remarks from Gabriela Mafi about the ways in which COVID-19 has introduced new obstacles to academic, social, emotional, and mental health for impacted communities.

9:00 am **Perspectives and Experiences of Garden Grove Students.** Participants will break into small groups with current and recent Garden Grove students, who will help us understand how the challenges of the past 20 months have affected them, their friends, and their communities and how districts can help support student recovery and well-being.

10:00 am **Report-Out and Full Group Discussion.** Participants will reconvene to share key takeaways from their small group conversations, then transition to a full group discussion about how best to build educator understanding about students' circumstances and needs.

10:30 am      **Break until Session II** (3.5-hour break).

## SESSION II

### *Exploring a Tiered Approach to Building SEL Competencies*

Developing social and emotional competencies can help equip students to navigate their personal challenges more effectively and thrive despite difficulty and trauma. District approaches to fostering social and emotional learning (SEL) often feature a tiered approach that includes a base program that serves all students and additional supports where they are most needed. This session will explore the ways in which transformative SEL standards can support equity and help to guide district efforts to meet student needs. We will also explore the challenges districts must navigate to address those needs when COVID-19 relief funding offers new resources but constraints on time and capacity limit possibilities for district action.

- 2:00 pm      **Transformative SEL Standards.** Standards originally developed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) and now adapted by the California Department of Education lay out a set of interpersonal, intrapersonal, and cognitive competencies that educators can harness and promote in service of just learning environments and communities. The session will begin with an introduction to transformative SEL standards from Rob Jagers, vice president of research at CASEL, including their relevance to the current context. Small groups will then discuss the potential value of SEL standards and the degree to which they appropriately address matters of social justice.
- 2:45 pm      **Addressing SEL Needs through a Multi-Tiered System of Support Framework.** Building on the areas of focus and priorities articulated in the transformative SEL standards, Garden Grove USD has developed a tiered approach to supporting students that includes both universal and targeted strategies and interventions. District leaders will discuss the ways in which Garden Grove’s collection of policies and practices seeks to build student competencies within the district’s multi-tiered system of support.
- 3:10 pm      **Navigating Tensions in Delivering SEL Supports.** Districts seeking to address students’ SEL needs face several potentially competing priorities. For example, districts must attend to students’ stalled academic learning progress while also attending to their emotional and mental health. The crises that students encounter often require immediate responses, yet a system based on responsiveness can make it difficult to build proactive structures that can foster student health and prevent crises from happening. Additional insights from CASEL and subsequent small group discussions will provide participants a forum to unpack these challenges and possible solutions.
- 3:45 pm      **Summary and Reflection on the Day’s Discussion.**
- 4:00 pm      **Adjourn for the Day.**
- 5:00 pm      **Optional Happy Hour.** Log back into the Zoom meeting to join us for a virtual happy hour!

## DAY 2: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30

### SESSION III

#### *Addressing Challenges that Complicate Supports for Student Well-Being*

The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the personal and institutional limitations to meeting student needs. Even as the California education community transitions into a period of pandemic recovery and even with an influx of financial resources in the form of recovery funding, districts confront staff burnout and structures within their systems that are insufficiently equipped to deliver the kinds of supports students need to thrive. They also face challenges of understanding students and communicating with them about the tools and resources that can best meet their needs. This session will use a range of different district contexts to explore some constraints and opportunities that shape approaches to promoting student well-being and how districts might best navigate them.

8:15 am      **Log In to Zoom Meeting.** We encourage participants to log in at 8:15 to enable administrators to make small group assignments. The meeting will begin at 8:30.

8:30 am      **Opening Activity.**

8:40 am      **Small Group Exploration of District Strategies.** Districts face many of the same opportunities and challenges in supporting student well-being, yet their approaches are likely to take different forms based on their student population, workforce, and community context all of which have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This portion of the meeting is designed to give participants the opportunity to learn about some of the strategies currently employed in a range of districts. It is also an opportunity for districts to solicit feedback from others in the group to help navigate ongoing areas of challenge and to identify potential blind spots in their approaches.

10:00 am    **Implications for the State.** Having explored a range of priorities and constraints unfolding at the local level, we will transition to a full group discussion about steps that state policymakers might take that would help districts navigate these challenges.

**Break until Session IV (3.5-hour break).**

### SESSION IV

#### *Employing a Community Schools Approach to Meet Student Needs*

If we understand that circumstances that shape students' readiness to learn extend far beyond school walls, we can recognize that the systems serving these students may need to revisit the way they work for students and with one another. Community schools have attracted increasing attention as a model for school system transformation that supports student and family learning and health, in part because of a \$3 billion allocation in the governor's 2021 budget to support this model. Although a community schools approach may not have been formally adopted within Garden Grove or other districts, many schools have adapted this way of functioning during the pandemic, and these "pandemic priorities" may provide a strong foundation for deepening the work. The final session will explore ways in which the knowledge

base and philosophies behind a community schools approach might inform system approaches to help students and their families thrive.

- 2:00 pm      **Orientation to Community Schools.** The movement behind community schools has returned to its roots and evolved from a sometimes-narrow view of co-locating services for students at a school site to become a community-centered vision for system transformation. Hayin Kimner, Director of the Community Schools Learning Exchange, will join the group to provide an orientation to the principles that shape a community schools approach and the ways in which districts and their partners can leverage those principles to better serve students, their families, and their communities.
- 2:20 pm      **Insights from Practice.** Several district leaders in the Collaborative work in school systems that have embraced a community schools approach. Superintendent Kyla Johnson-Trammell will follow the presentation about community schools with a brief overview of the work in Oakland Unified School District and the lessons that have emerged from it.
- 2:40 pm      **Reflection on the Community Schools Approach.** Participants will break into small groups to consider the ways in which a community schools approach can help position districts to address the realities shared by Garden Grove students at the beginning of the meeting, as well as the system challenges explored in Sessions II and III.
- 3:00 pm      **Fishbowl Conversation.** Having considered the potential advantages and key areas of focus for a community schools approach, the meeting conversation will turn to the steps that districts might take if they are new to this type of work. A fishbowl conversation involving district leaders from both experienced and novice districts with respect to community schools implementation will enable an exploration of how districts can build on their existing assets to grow capacity for a holistic systemwide approach to supporting student well-being.
- 3:20 pm      **Informing Policy.** The details of a state grant program to support community schools growth and development are currently being navigated in Sacramento. We will provide a brief overview of the upcoming decisions with respect to this program and engage in small group discussion about the priorities and potential unintended consequences of state action in this area.
- 3:45 pm      **Summary and Reflection on the Day's Discussion.**
- 4:00 pm      **Adjourn Meeting.**