



Climate Committee Final Report 2012-2013 César Chávez Elementary School

Summary

The 2012-13 CCE Climate Committee continued to work on projects from last year including the climate survey, parenting workshops, and transition teams.

Committee Projects

The Climate Survey

Three separate climate surveys were administered in February 2013 to parents, staff, and students in grades 3 through 6. The surveys, which were available in both Spanish and English, measured perceptions and experiences related to school connectedness, friendship, conflict/bullying, and safety. The committee was pleased with the overall participation which included 55% of parents, almost all of the staff, and 258 students. Data from the climate surveys was shared at the April and May climate meetings.

The committee will continue to work on the data for future use as well and has posted a report that is available for download on the SIPAT website: <http://www.ccesipat.com/index.cfm/programs/climate-committee/>. The climate surveys will continue to appear on the school's official community calendar as a way of alerting parents and staff that the survey will take place again in February 2014.

Counselor Hire and Kelso's Choices Program

In October 2012 Katherine Allgood began working at CCE as the new school counselor. Her position was entirely funded by SIPAT and constituted 10 hours per week. Sra. Allgood began her work by implementing the Kelso's Choices program for K through 3 students. She also began her work with 4-6 grade students in early 2013 by going to each of the classes and discussing problem solving and friendship skills. Sra. Allgood also did small group work with 4-6 grade boy and girls and had just begin small groups with the lower grades when she went on maternity leave. Sra. Allgood gave a presentation to the parents on January 17, 2013 (the video can be found at our web page).

Promoting Student-School Connectedness, Social Skills, Healthy Students

Student Council: In its third year, the student council continued to support student engagement and school spirit with assemblies, school spirit days, a book sale to buy new lunch tables, new school mascot competition, and other activities. The Climate Committee wishes to thank the student council for helping promote the climate survey to parents with their thermometer posters. The committee recognized the hard work of CCE teachers Sara Caulfield, Lynn Angelo, and Eva Dopico for guiding the student council through various activities including leadership training, the choosing of a school mascot, spirit days, and other special events.

Playworks: The Climate Committee recognizes the hard work of Raychel Kubby Adler and other parents and staff for bringing and implementing the Playworks program to our school. The program

has given students a new perspective on play and broadened their social skills sets as well. This year Raychel was able to bring 4-6 grade peer helpers (from the student council) to assist with the games. This has made the program very successful and she will continue this practice next year in addition to bringing Playworks to first grade PE.

Parent Resource Library: The climate committee has begun work on a resource library where parents could check out books about parenting and childhood issues. The committee will continue to solicit for book donations through the next school year and will help create a space for the library to be housed.

Parent Concerns

Throughout the year the climate committee fielded concerns and questions from parents regarding the experiences of the students at the school. The committee discussed and attempted to address concerns as was possible and to help parents find both appropriate channels for their concerns and resolutions for their children. The committee noted these concerns among others:

1. Some younger students, particularly first graders, felt scared or intimidated by lunch time yard duty staff.
2. First graders needed extra direction and explanation of the rules with the long lunch time recess.
3. Lunches and other personal items being stolen in some fourth grade classrooms
4. A parental perception of negative social climate and bullying in several grade levels.
5. A lack of civility and respect by parents towards children not their own.
6. Parental concern over the scheduling of classroom rotations for intermediate students.

Transition from MME

The transition of students from MME to CCE has been effected by the changes occurring at MME's Spanish Immersion program. In the past a number of fourth graders would move to CCE since MME's program was K through 3. This year there are still somewhere between 12 to 18 students transitioning to CCE yet they are coming from many different grades and not just fourth. Sra. Beck has held information meetings and school tours for the incoming families. The climate committee will help facilitate buddy families. As of this writing over 25 Chavez families have volunteered to be buddy families. The committee will work with the MME families to pair up students and perhaps have them do a special project over the summer to share with the school in the fall.

Transition to First Grade Playground Supervision and Playground Re-design

The transition from the self-contained kindergarten play yard to the "big play ground" is for some students at the beginning of first grade. This year 1st grade parent Marsha Baird coordinated about 20 first grade parents to be volunteer lunch supervisors. The committee thanks her for her efforts this year and her efforts in finding and training a new coordinator for next year's first grade class.

The climate committee and Sra. Beck have discussed a plan to alter the playground landscape underneath the shade trees where first graders tend to congregate (by the first grade play structure). Parent Mark Damesyn is helping find a landscape architect who can assist the school in making a play area that encourages a creative play alternative to the play structure and organized games.

Sra. Beck is also exploring the idea of having the first graders start the school year by eating lunch in the cafeteria, away from the second and third graders and out of the hot sun (shade was in issue with the hot September/October weather this year). It has been suggested that the lunch yard duty supervisors could use this as an opportunity to get to know the students better and help transition them

to full day. The committee also would like the Student Council to perhaps interview the lunch supervisors and post a display about them for the students to see. The staff could also be further demystified by having them visit the classrooms and introduce themselves at the beginning of the year.

DJUSD Climate Committee

CCE climate co-chair Anastasia Panagakos represented Chavez at the district climate meetings held to discuss the implementation of AB 9 or Seth's Law. Anastasia was able to meet and network with other individuals involved with climate issues such as school counselors, vice-principals, classified staff, and students. The meetings were both informational and collaborative as the group discussed how DJUSD should address the new law and also efforts already being made across the district. Kate Snow, the district climate co-coordinator, gave a presentation at the last CCE climate meeting in May about Seth's Law. She discussed the implications of the law for schools and in what ways the district will help with compliance. She noted that climate committees would be taking an active role in helping disseminate information about the new law to parents and their site community.

SIPAT and the Climate Committee

During this school year we were pleased to have a diverse membership on the climate committee including an administrator, two teachers, and several parents. Amy Duffy & Anastasia Panagakos co-chaired the committee for the third year. The climate committee and SIPAT have created a close working relationship and several climate committee members attended the SIPAT general meetings to give updates and gather feedback. SIPAT provided hospitality support with the counselor's presentation, helped spread the word and encourage participation in the climate surveys, and is now hosting the Climate Committee's webpage on their website. SIPAT and Climate Committee have also worked closely (and successfully!) in hiring the school counselor. The climate committee is pleased with the close relationship with SIPAT and hopes this will continue.

Future Ideas

1. Build parent & counselor resource libraries.
2. Design a creative play space near the first grade play structure and establish a subcommittee to work on plans to build this new play area.
3. Work with staff to implement a fall transition lunch/recess plan for first graders (a separate space to eat, introduction to lunch and play yard supervisors, direct instruction on lunch rules & routines, etc.)
4. Participate in District Climate Committee meetings and collaborate with other site climate committees.
5. Facilitate the transition of students from MME
6. Continue to improve on the climate surveys

Conclusion

The 2012-13 school year was, overall, a productive year for the climate committee. We continued working on several long-term projects such as the climate survey, student council, and school-wide counseling support. The committee also continues to bring parents and school staff together and provide a format to share ideas and concerns about school climate, and intentionally look for new opportunities to build a safe, positive, inclusive school community. We hope that next year's climate committee members will continue this work, implement some of the new ideas, and also attract new members.

Comments or questions about this report may be directed to:

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