

January 12, 2023

Golden Spotlight: (two photos)

Tonight we are celebrating our cross country champions from both Vasquez and High Desert. We have our wonderful student athletes here this evening for this recognition.

We can start off the recognition with the Vasquez Girls Cross- Country team, led by our excellent coaches, Ms. Mari McClaws and Ms. Molly Zorba

Student Athletes:

Marina Costan

Emily Hounanian

Isabella Lara

Leilani McLaws

Marie Pape

Haley Rudd

MacKenzie VanOrnum

Next we have our High Desert Middle School Boys Cross-Country team led by our wonderful coaches, Ms. Mervet Tawfik and Ms. MaryAnn Dahlstrom

Student Athletes:

Eli Alaniz

Ryan Alaniz

Ezra Beaumont

Nigel Bruce

Zach Chambers

Patrick Ellis

Dylan Finn

Wyatt Goodman

Benjamin Heggem

Connor Koopman

Christopher Larson

Vincent Ortiz

Leonardo Rivas

Lucien Rose

Joshua Sandoval-Plouffe

Cole Stueve

Tonight I will cover two strategic initiatives from our existing strategic plan: Student Achievement and Community Engagement.

First off, Student Achievement (show slide with summary of grant)

- Research shows a direct correlation between student well-being and student achievement.

On January 5th, AADUSD received notification of a grant being awarded through the U.S. Department of Education. The superintendent's office submitted the grant Request For Proposal back in early November. Per the Project Director at the U.S. Department of Education, "This year's competition was highly competitive; we received more than 185 applications and made only 67 awards. Our application was among the highest-scoring applications received and therefore recommended for funding."

AADUSD will embark on the grant initiatives with the following projects:

- Hiring of 1 full-time LCSW- Licensed Clinical Social Worker (this would be in addition to the 1 full-time LCSW being hired through the U.S. Dept. of Justice grant recently awarded)
- Hiring of 3 full-time MSWs- Master of Social Workers

- Supervision of 3 Social Worker Interns
- Purchasing an Anonymous Reporting Solution platform for the district website and its coordination
- Purchasing of Suicide Prevention Modules (curriculum to be facilitated by the social worker team)
- Purchasing “Bounce Back” which is a cognitive-behavioral, skills-based group intervention aimed at relieving symptoms of child anxiety and depression among elementary school children (ages 5-11) who have been exposed to traumatic events.

Funding amount awarded: \$3.6 million over the course of the grant’s duration which is 5 years.

Community Engagement: (infographic)

A comprehensive strategic planning process designed to update the District’s previous Strategic Plan began in the fall.

Listening Sessions conducted recently supported us in identifying priorities that stakeholders think we should be focusing on as a school district. In addition, a comprehensive survey was provided to all AADUSD stakeholders to complete. In the next few months, an additional platform for stakeholder input will be provided in the form of a Strategic Plan Leadership Team.

- Key discussion items at our Listening Sessions included the following questions:
 1. What do you see as the strengths of our schools?
 2. What improvements would you like to see?
 3. What changes in our community over the next three to ten years do you see as important for the AADUSD to address?
 4. What are the most important actions the AADUSD should take to ensure all our students are well prepared for further education and a productive role in our society?

5. Upon graduation from high school, what do you hope our students will know and be able to do?

The survey asked participants to provide input on the existing 5 Strategic Plan Initiatives.

The listening sessions and surveys yielded the following overarching strengths and areas of growth needed:

Areas of strength included:

Small district

Strong sense of community

Staff commitment to student achievement

District prepares students to enter college and career opportunities

District signature programs- AVID, CTE labs, Makerspace, etc.

Innovative technology...

Safety protocols in place at school sites

Student engagement through programs, athletics, and extracurricular activities.

Areas of growth needed included:

Impact of an increase in enrollment

Facilities expansion

Staffing shortages

Engaging a diverse community of stakeholders

Allow stakeholders additional opportunities to provide input

Provide comprehensive parent education
Increase accountability across the board
And provide Additional Academic Intervention

Next steps in the process will be developing a Strategic Plan Leadership Team which will be comprised of a group of 25-30 educational partners comprised of parents, staff, and community members. They will be tasked with preparing a summary of key components necessary to update the AADUSD Strategic Plan. A communication piece will be pushed out in the next week or so on how to sign up if interested.

COVID Report:

- In the Acton and Agua-Dulce surrounding areas there have been 70 new cases of Covid-19 since our last report and 24 cases in the past two weeks.
- In our AADUSD school community, only one positive case has been reported since 12/14/2022, and exposure notifications have been sent for those effected.
- We want to remind parents to test their students if they have any illness symptoms, and keep them home for fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or unusual new cough.
- Home test kits are available at all school sites, at your local pharmacy using your Medical/Medicare card, or check with your insurance.
- We ask that all families document their home results on the Primary Health Platform.

- Please contact your provider, local pharmacy, or the LA county website if you want to get your Covid-19 vaccine.

- We are in Flu season and RSV is on the rise in LA County. We recommend getting your flu shot and Covid-19 vaccine now to ensure we keep our students safe from the adverse effects of the Flu and Covid-19.

- The sooner you contact your physician when you are sick, the more treatment options are available to you for the Flu and Covid-19.

Thank you to our District Nurse, Ms. Cari Wright for your insight and knowledge in in keeping our community informed.

