2/3/19

Good morning!  I hope each of you had a nice weekend, especially with the rain!  It's nice to have a change in weather every now and then (and sometimes other changes are good, but not always easy).

Gradebooks:

There have been some recent issues lately related to keeping grades, specifically the grades being entered and having them available to students/parents and not just when report cards come out.  There is language in both EdCode and CVUSD Board Policy that applies to each of us regarding grades.  The key thing to remember here is we are responsible for keeping an accurate accounting, and keeping them updated (but there is no requirement to submit a certain number of grades each week, as some principals have stated). I am bringing this to your attention just to make sure you are confident in your gradebook, should any questions arise from adminor a parent.

EC 49066 (a) When grades are given for any course of instruction taught in a school district, the grade given to each pupil shall be the grade determined by the teacher of the course and the determination of the pupil's grade by the teacher, in the absence of clerical or mechanical mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetency, shall be final.

EC 51101 (9) [Parents have the right...]To be informed of their child's progress in school and of the appropriate school personnel whom they should contact if problems arise with their child. (10) To have access to the school records of their child.

BP 5121 The Governing Board believes that grades serve a valuable instructional purpose by helping students and parents/guardians understand performance expectations and identifying the student's areas of strength and those areas needing improvement. Parents/guardians and students have the right to receive course grades that represent an accurate evaluation of the student's achievement.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish a uniform grading system based on standards that apply to all students in that course and grade level. Principals and teachers shall ensure that student grades conform to this system. Teachers shall inform students and parents/guardians how student achievement will be evaluated in the classroom.

A teacher shall base a student's grades on impartial, consistent observation of the quality of the student's work and his/her mastery of course content and district standards. Students shall have the opportunity to demonstrate this mastery through a variety of methods such as classroom participation, homework, tests, and portfolios.

Grade Level Leads/Department Chairs:

I have had a few members contact me with questions and concerns regarding the role of a Grade Level Lead or Department Chair.  While there is nothing contractual regarding this topic, other than the stipend attached to the role, your team may want to communicate about what works best for your team in terms of what the lead/chair responsibilities should be.  For example, at some sites leads report out to their team after every meeting, either a copy of notes or an email.  At other sites though, leads have been told not to report out (typically by admin).  At some sites, leads speak to their team prior to voting on anything that would affect them, but at some sitethis doesn't happen.  Most importantly, leads should be selected by their team, and NOT by the admin.

Again, I'm bringing this up to encourage your team to have this conversation, because communication is key in representing a group of people in any situation.  One thing I would caution against, though, is voting on something in leadership meetings that violates anyone's contractual rights.  Also, an administrator cannot prevent a lead from taking notes during a meeting...it is their right and also their obligation to take notes on what pertains to their team.  Let me know if you have any questions.

Designated ELD District Task Force:

I've been asked to help find 6 individuals to volunteer to be part of a group that will look at our Designated ELD time at the Elementary level.  Right now we are supposed to level and rotate our students.  This group will look at that option as well as other options to see what would be best for our students.  There will likely be a few meetings after school, and you would be paid extra services.  Please let me know if you are interested...I'm going to provide the names of the first 6 people to respond, provided they aren't all at the same site or in the same grade level.  Variety will make for a well roundedteam.

Reminders:

When you are called into a meeting with your admin, make sure to ask for a rep if the meeting has anything to do with discipline or could lead to discipline, even if you need to stop the meeting to request one.  We have a lot of members lately going to these meetings without the support and witness of a rep.

Bargaining is beginning this week.  Dates scheduled so far are February 5th, February 22nd, and March 1st.  Wear your CVTA shirts on these days to show your support for your bargaining team!

Please check your pay stubs each month and verify the accuracy of any deductions, as well as your sick leave balance. You will want to make sure you are having dues deducted as a CVTA member...we've found instances where they weren't being deducted and the person didn't actually qualify for member benefits, including representation.

You do not need to set SMART Goals or provide date reports to admin unless your team decides to do so.  The only documents required from a PLC are an agenda and minutes.

All combo class teachers get 2 extra days prep.  Please see your admin if you didn't get the days.

Let me know if you want me to show you how to set up your STRS account online...you should be checking your account for accuracy at least once per year!

Listening Tour/Site Visits:

Dr. Gomez and I will continue to visit sites this week during lunchtimes, and we are lucky to have Isadora Jimenez from CSEA beside us.  Please come visit us to share concerns, ask questions, or just to say hello.  Communication is key in keeping things running smoothly, so I truly hope you come see us!

For those of you who work out of the DO, please find one of our other site visits that you could attend, perhaps JK or a site you visit each week.

Here is our schedule of visits:

DATE

LUNCH TIME

SCHOOL

February 6 -  Wednesday

12:00  -   1:18

CAHUILLA DESERT ACADEMY

February 7 - Thursday

10:15 - 12:30

SEA VIEW

February 12 - Tuesday

11:10 -   1:10

JOHN KELLEY

February 13 - Wednesday

9:45 -   11:15

WSHS/WSMS

February 19 - Tuesday

10:15 - 12:30

MECCA

February 20 - Wednesday

10:55 -   1:20

PETER PENDLETON

February 27 - Wednesday

10:30 - 12:50

OASIS

March 5 - Tuesday

10:45 -  1:30

MOUNTAIN VISTA

March 6 - Wednesday

10:45 - 12: 40

PALM VIEW

March 12- Tuesday

11:44 -   1:10

TORO CANYON

March 13 - Wednesday

12:40 -   2:10

BOBBY DUKE

March 15 - Friday

10:30  -   1:30

SAUL MARTINEZ

March 19 - Tuesday

10:30 -   1:30

VALLEY VIEW

March  21 - Thursday

11:05 -   1:05

VALLE DEL SOL

Professional Development for our Members:

On April 2nd we will have a Self-Care PD for you.  This is such an important thing to do, to take care of yourself, but is so often overlooked because we are too busy or too tired.  Please plan to make time to attend.  Registration information will also be coming for this.

We will also be holding a Legal Training, but have not scheduled a date yet as we are trying to secure a GLS Attorney to present.  This is a session we offer each year to our site reps, and it is a highly recommended one!  As soon as we have details we will share them.

Professional Library:

Don't forget to take a lookCVTA's professional library!  We have books available for you to borrow if you want to learn new techniques, stay motivated, and more.  If you have any books you would like to donate forthe library, please let me know.  You can find the list of available books here.  The list should also be available on your site's CVTA bulletin board.  Happy reading!

Member Benefits:

CalSTRS Counselors at the CTA Palm Desert Office: Now you can schedule sessions locally (usually we have to drive to either Palm Springs or Riverside).  One way to schedule an appointment with these counselors is on the www.myCalSTRS website. You can also schedule by calling (800) 228-5453 and selecting option 3. A real CalSTRS Counselor will never send you an email advertising his/her services via District email...those are spam and are usually salespeople.

There are three options for meetings: group informational for those just getting started looking at STRS info, smallergroup for those of you 5-6 years out from retirement needing more personalized information, and individual meetings for those about to retire.  Don't hesitate to call...they book up 6-8 weeks out, as space is limited.

Contractual Issues Happening Right Now

Remember that the contract is an agreement between CVTA and the District and it was bargained in the best interest of students and teachers.  That means that both sides agreed to abide by what is included in the contract, so when something needs to be cited from the contract, it isn't what "the District said" or what "CVTA said"... it is what was agreed to and is therefore legally binding.

Find the contract here. Here are the things we are working on:

No Grievances at this time.

Grievances need to start at the informal level.  This means that you have a conversation with your immediate supervisor, whether face to face or via email, in order to give them the opportunity to remedy the situation.  It is important that you actually state, "This is my informal grievance."  This will begin the timeline,and will ensure your administrator understands that there is a timeline to follow.

Williams Complaint Form - Some of you have asked for this form, which can be used for complaints about facilities and textbooks or instructional materials. This form could be an option when a grievance isn't the appropriate path to deal with a situation at your site.

Here are some important dates to keep in mind:

February 5th - Bargaining - Please wear your CVTA shirts!

February 11th - Holiday (no school)

February 13th -  Rep Council Meeting, CDA Library, 4:30 pm

February 14th - School Board Meeting @ CC, 5:30pm

February 18th - Holiday (no school)

February 22nd - Bargaining - Please wear your CVTA shirts!

February 26th - CVTA Executive Board Meeting, CVTA Office, 4:30pm

February 28th - School Board Meeting @ DO, 5:30pm

PBIS Tip:

Week of February 4, 2019:

Universal Expectation :Playground

Classroom Survival Skill: Disagreeing Appropriately

Growth Mindset Affirmation: Believe you can and you are halfway there.

Restorative Question: What is something that worries you?

A Tip from Technology Services:

The iCenter Team is excited to introduce a brand new page to our website: Academic Content! On the Academic Content page, you will find links to resources for each of the following areas: English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Special Education, Visual and Performing Arts, Foreign Language, and Physical Education. These pages provide quick access to resources that consist of videos, applications, websites, strategies, blogs, and other tools for you to use with your students. We hope you find these new tools useful. For even more resources, make sure you check out our Digital Curriculum Map for Elementary and Secondary,and don't forget to book our iCenter Team for a deeper dive!

If you need any assistance with incorporating technology tools into your lesson design, don't hesitate to book a member of our iCenter Team.

A Tip from EL Services:

Using photos and other images to support English Language Learners is a tremendous aid to comprehension and communication. Visuals are a great tool for differentiated instruction-- newcomers can label objects in images, and intermediate/advanced ELs can answer questions, write dialogues, and practice their language skills when speaking about images. Why is this important? Common core standards highlight the importance of being able to close-read, analyze and evaluate diverse forms of visual media. Additionally, in the ELPAC Speaking Task "Talk About a Scene" students will be asked to look at a picture of a familiar scene in a school context and then answer six questions about the visual scene. When students close-read images they can apply many of the same strategies used to analyze written text.

Here is one practical activity for using photos and images in the classroom: Close-read photos/images - Project an image on the board and have students answer a series of questions about it (interspersed with pair-share and classroom discussion activities). Click here for examples of questions for Examining an Image and Images to Display from the resource The ELL Teacher's Toolbox, 2018.

If you would like further assistance with using visuals in your classrooms, please schedule an appointment with one of our EL TOSAs by clicking the links below:

Araida Flores araida.flores@cvusd.us, araidaflores.youcanbook.me/

Maribel Carrillo macarrillo@cvusd.us, maribelcarrillo.youcanbook.me/

Please share this email with anyone you know that does not already receive it.  There is a link near the top to sign up on our mailing list.  These newsletters are always posted on our Facebook page, as well, which can be accessed even if you don't have a FB account.  It is a public page and can be seen by anyone who visits it. Thank you!

Carissa Carrera

CVTA President

"You can't do it unless you organize."