

Leadership St. Vrain is a program designed to provide parents and other community members the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of our district's mission, operations and strategic priorities. The program is especially beneficial for those who want to obtain a foundation in district operations and governance and become more active participants in St. Vrain Valley Schools.

The following notes are from the 1st meeting of "Leadership St Vrain" 9/16/22.

Kerri McDermid- introduction of Leadership St Vrain platform with several SVVSD staff, parents, and community members

Dr Don Haddad:

Lots of new hires for this year- very few concerns about staff shortages in SVVSD.

Lots of applicants in teacher pool, a few challenges filling special ed - 'working on it'

Covid Learning Loss...

SVVSD I-Ready scores (K-8) as a district, showed 128% growth. (Our students grew more than a year in 1 years time in Reading) 108% in Math.

CMass scores- all but 1 school finished in top 2 levels of achievement at state level. Highest 3rd grade reading scores in history of district. 8th grade math scores, highest we've seen.

Feel excellent team effort making a good impact on our kids. Expecting highest graduation rate. (Grown from 75% to 92%)

2M Grant- recently received. Will cover cost of extending increased instruction in June (Project Launch). Close to 30M Dollars in grants brought in in recent years.

Safety measures: continues to be a priority. SVVSD works in partnership with all local agencies. Campus supervisors increased. School resource officers. School safety drills. Inside buildings: safer entry ways, camera systems. The single most effective strategy: everyone's ears and eyes. Anything you see or hear, please report it, it will be investigated thoroughly.

Laws changed for testing water for lead- SVVSD aims for 0%. Working with municipalities to ensure SVVSD schools are meeting standards. Filters applied. Progressing from elementary to middle to high schools.

Co-Curriculars. 2 years now top 15% of music programs in country. Athletics, arts, debate, flourishing. Increased participation- from 50% participation previously to 80% participation now— connection to graduation rate. Robotics team- 200 teams now grown from 3. District won both small and large division world championships. PK-12th grade robotics.

Build out of cyber security and AI - mobile lab- \$800,000 lab- building 2 more mobile labs for these other areas of cyber security and Artificial intelligence. These will travel around district and throughout the state.

Inclement weather plan: Plan to continue with virtual connection to school on "snow days" a few hours in the morning to connect with teachers and get work. The rest of the day will be free to do your work and play etc. Typically 93% participation on those days... if parents choose for their kids not to participate- that's OK and parent's choice, no consequence.

69% of CO school districts are now on 4 day school weeks. This is NOT being entertained in SVVSD.

Discussion of inappropriate behaviors among SVVSD students: Racial issues. Shooting (outside of school and off campus) recently involved incident with SVVSD student- gang related. Misuse of social media. There is NO TOLERANCE for this. Kids that engage in this behavior will be sent home or removed from our schools. Addressed in Q/A Below... Exclusionary justice vs. Restorative Justice.

Podcast with Don Haddad a few times a month. <https://championed.simplecast.com/>

QUESTION/ANSWER SESSION:

*Q: Inclement weather - what strain does this put on teachers who are also parents- what is feedback.

A: mixed reviews from teachers. 2 hours is the expectation. They are being paid for the entire day & given the equipment to make it seamless. Have made it work and will continue to make it work. Wanting to do our best to work against learning loss.

Q: What measures are being taken to address bullying, racism, gun violence:

A: Board policies addressed with students and staff. Provided presentation “champion mindset” perform like a champion. Getting kids out for productive activities. Parent groups- working closely with us to address these issues when they arise. It’s not a program or event, its an ongoing push with all students, teachers and staff. Balance our approach: there is an education that comes with consequence to actions. Want to re-invite kids back into the system.

— follow up- Kids can continue education online, Restorative justice. Proactive rather than reactive. “We reserve taking kids out of schools for the most serious behaviors” Alternative environments, counselors, interventionists.

Q: Exclusionary justice does not work per ‘data’ why do you take that approach vs restorative?

A. there is no targeted exclusion in SVVSD. Avg number of expulsions 0-5 in SVVSD. We are not in the business of excluding kids. If you hold them accountable for behaviors and backfill with support it works. This is SVVSD approach. Some behaviors will absolutely not be accepted. Will we support and educate? Yes. Absolutely.

Q: Several teachers resigned- what is SVVSD doing to support teachers?

A: Prioritized salary schedules. Base pay increase slightly over 9%. Benefits package. - lowering cost for family coverages for family, health, dental. 67,000- 87,000 for teacher salary. Growth and development to provide additional learning opportunities for teachers. Technology provided- laptop refreshed every 3 years. Work to have great facilities for the teachers. Teacher recognition program. Peak teach program- partnership with UCO Denver. In HS students can work towards teaching program at CU Denver- then come back into SVVSD to teach.

Q: Instructional time: The more they’re in school the better the outcomes. Have you ever thought of the idea of changing school year schedule - summer vacation is where kids experience learning loss. Is schedule change being considered?

A: A few things we've done: Started AAA program (3 days/week after school, small setting after school- food and transportation provided for kids to be able to stay after school) Increased the month of June- 20 additional days "Project Launch", 2 weeks before school starts "Jump start" 8th/9th grade transition this is especially important. During summer: robotics camps, music camps, MyOn Reading- English and spanish- encourages engagement in reading from home especially geared towards younger kids. "Reading challenges" for kids to feel encouraged to jump on and do their own reading.

PARENT EDUCATION NETWORK TOPIC:

Diane Lauer: Parent Engagement Network: Parent education, resources in our schools. This is a good opportunity to see district wide resources, education for our families.

Paula Nelson and Stacy Cornay offering survey to determine- Would resources like this be beneficial in SVVSD?

20 years in BVSD. Parent Engagement Network: Paula Nelson: PEN:

Here is the PEN website where you can learn more: <https://parentengagementnetwork.org/>

The idea behind PEN: Access to resources, have a community to rely on. Educational events for parents. Volunteers in schools to help identify needs of parents. Calendar of events based on parent needs. Today's needs- determine need in SVVSD for: Parent University in SVVSD? PEN as a support? Determining what are SVVSD parent need areas. Common topics include: Raising resilient families. Reducing stress and anxiety. Parenting in a digital age. Drugs and alcohol. Getting experts in these fields and getting them in touch with parents to allow for workshops, etc. Is this valuable to you? Survey to come out. Contact information for Stacy and Paula here:

Below are links to some of the resources that were discussed.

- [Click here for the Parent Engagement Network Survey](#) (event flyers also attached). You can also contact Stacy and Paula at stacy.cornay@penbv.org and paula.nelson@penbv.org, or Dr. Diane Lauer at lauer_diane@svvdsd.org.

RESUME QUESTION/ANSWER SESSION:

Q: Curious about Trends in Education: what are you considering in next 3-5 years. What trends are to come or experiment with?

A: 4 day week will NOT be an option for SVVSD. Technology is a focus area. Education needs to go beyond standardized testing. In America Standardized testing IS education. This is not in SVVSD. SVVSD is preparing kids to compete globally. Academics+ several other avenues. Foundation innovation. Cocurriculars, Critical thinking, technology, things happening in the world & keeping up with it.

Unfortunately education becoming politicized. Adults using education to push political agendas. SVVSD trying to keep it all in perspective. Concerning & SVVSD trying to keep the focus on the kids.

Q: As a parent of a special needs student, how can parents better support their students at home and what resources are available to us?

A: Connect to Laura Hess- director of special ed. Many programs available to assist special ed needs. Customized support for individual children. If ever any concerns, parents can connect with Don Haddad and he will respond in 24 hours.

Q: Lunch provided for kids previously, not removed. Hungry students impacting test results, behavior, etc. Some states and districts choosing to provide this. Thoughts on providing this for kids? What does that take for SWSD to make it happen?

A: Don agrees it is important. SWSD provided for students AND families during pandemic. Parents do have to enroll to qualify. If there is a child that doesn't have money- they will be fed, whether signed up or not. No child will be turned out of line, any child who wants a meal will get one.