

***Coffee With the Superintendent at
Lorbeer Middle School
October 19, 2017 – 8:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.***



Welcome and opening comments by superintendent to attendees. Three things he wants to know:

- 1. What do you like and why did you choose this school district?***
- 2. What things do you not like, what concerns you?***
- 3. What other programs have you seen in other districts that you would like to see here?***

You can also share a complaint but you will need to give us the solution to the complaint.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS/QUESTIONS:

- ***Happy with the dual immersion program at Pantera Elementary, but would like to know if this program will continue to support students until they finish the elementary school.***
- ***If you have one teacher rotating schools for the Arts program, why can't we do it for language too?***
- ***Why can't all students have the option to select a language as an elective?***
- ***Want to thank the District for continuously taking the time to listen to our parents' concerns and answering our questions.***

When can we incorporate more black history into the PUSD curriculum?

We make resolutions to ensure that students learn about each other. We have a diverse community at Lorbeer and Diamond Ranch. Word learned recently particularity. "When I talk about Latinos, you might think of one group of Latinos, but the group might have people from Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico, Ecuador, they may represent different areas of the world. It's not a paint brush of one group so it's a challenge because you might be talking about 30 or 40 groups." Our African American community is about 4.5%; Asian is about 4.5% (China, Taiwan, and Japan). How do we appreciate multi-culture? This question is a bigger question, have discussed this with Board Member, Frank Guzman. This is something I'm looking for suggestions on.

What steps has the District taken to strengthen the reporting of abuse and/or assault at schools?

We are required by law to provide information not only at District level but at different State and Federal levels. It depends on the type of assault. Letters are sent to families when incidents or threats happen. Pomona Police Department will order lockdown; normally it's done as a precautionary measure. If there is a threat by a student -- maybe someone with a gun, we will go into lockdown and will contact parents by text or phone.

What is the procedure when it's a sexual assault?

We are required to file a report with DCFS within 36 hours and we also report to California Teacher Credentialing (CTC). If it's a classified employee we report to the Police and DCFS. We cannot give facts of incidents to the community due to investigation in progress.

Also want to know about looking at respect of privacy of the victims.

What does the district do to protect the rights of parents?

The question has to do with an issue that came up on social media regarding bullying. Something was posted with a lot of speculation. The question is how does PUSD handle this? We don't engage in social media warfare. Normally, if there is something that needs to be communicated to the parents it will be in a letter. As far as the Diamond Ranch situation, it was fully investigated, it look about a week. Spoke to the team, coaches and principal. The aunt is the one that posted the comments but we will never engage. We are learning as this is something new to Districts across America.

What if District personnel are slandering a student or a parent in a public meeting?

You can file a complaint with Pupil & Community Services and you can send a copy to the Superintendent and Board President.

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What are you doing about bullying at Diamond Ranch? We have heard of many cases of bullying at Diamond Ranch.

We have counselors, but sometimes it's difficult for some students to seek the proper help. We have brought Rachel's challenge to our schools. We have talked to some parents because they've had traumatic events very recently. Rachel's Challenge has been cancelled at Diamond Ranch but services are available to students. We are ensuring that our policies are being followed. Rachel's challenge assemblies are also scheduled for parents.

“Concerns about bullying and drugs, you said we could ask for support. We need more safety and security for our students. My son told me of a bullying situation and I would've liked to have learned about the issue from the school.”

The school has CSO's (Campus Security Officers) or CSA's. Schools might have 2 to 3. Pomona Police is always available.

Parent asked about the map to find out who represents what area?

Mr. Martinez mentioned that it's on the website under Trustee Areas.

A parent made mentioned about Los Angeles having an Awareness Day. What is the District doing to make parents aware about threats made by students such as “Going to blow up the school” when students mention “suicide”.

In Pomona if a student makes a threat he is expelled for a year. Assembly bill 922 says we can do this as long as there is a rehabilitation plan. There is no guarantee the student will return to the same school where he made the threat. Consequences are very serious.

What is the District doing to educate students and parents about threats?

There is a parent handbook. There are assemblies for students. The state has become stricter on Bullying.

What is the definition of bullying and what are the steps that a parent needs to take?

Bullying is listed as a separate item. An investigation will take place to ensure that it's been addressed and we will identify if it's chronic. Parent needs to address the issue with the teacher and the principal. Document everything and ask for a copy.

How come they stopped the busses for our kids that have been taking them since they started?

This service was offered under NCLB (No Child Left Behind). The Board of Education decided to allow students to continue taking the bus until they finish the last grade at the school they are attending. Parents have asked if Kindergarten students can take the bus with their siblings but unfortunately that would require an additional bus because K students get out earlier. The Board of Education decided to end busing on a gradual basis.

Will you continue transportation to High school?

New freshman will not get bussed but 10th graders will continue with bussing.

Why don't you get nicer buses with air conditioning?

We only have two buses and they have air conditioning and seat belts. Durham does our transportation. We have asked for clean and green buses.

Dual Immersion Program – What can the parents do at Pantera? Want to know if language is so important in the form of dual immersion, why don't they offer extra classrooms starting at Kindergarten. Are you thinking of doing away with English only classes? Seeing combo classes.

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The District is not planning to do away with English only classes. We do not want to eliminate the option. The program is at the elementary level because it's easier for children in the early years. We want children to learn Mandarin because it's a global language. We want to make sure students will be gainfully employed.

Why can't all students have the option to pick a language? Like all students get opportunity to select music. We want the kids to learn a second language they want to learn and have the opportunity early on. This is the time to learn, just like they have the opportunity in high school. Early on is better.

Mr. Martinez said that we don't have the solution now because of resources.

If you can have one teacher for music who keeps rotating through the schools. Why not do this with a language teacher. Introduce it.

Let's support the children in school by attending the different events such as family night for math or science. Parents can get involved by volunteering.

The PTSO person that was present from Lorbeer shared that PUSD is a wonderful school district, they listen to the parents. She invited parents to volunteer. Tutoring is available in school for the subjects that parents find it hard to get help with. Parent shared about the various opportunities for parents to get involved.

COFFEE WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT – LORBEER EVENING SESSION

A month ago a shooting happened down the street from Diamond Point 30 minutes before school got out. Why didn't a text or alert go out to parents? Found out from a campus supervisor.

Oliver Unaka, Public Information Officer, will send out correspondence in coordination with our Risk Management department and we encourage parents to provide email address so we can text you or send you an email. We also use autodial through parent connect. If an incident is under investigation we cannot be as quick. Sometimes threats such as bomb threats happen at the high schools and law enforcement will not let us use electronics. This happens during test times or right before holidays. This is an ugly way to do a prank and consequences are very serious.

Parent inquired about PUSD's disaster plan. In case of a disaster, how long will the kids be kept at school? Will they spend the night?

Parent would like to volunteer to be part of a committee to help with a disaster plan; he has experience from serving in the military and working with Police unit. His biggest concern is in case of an earthquake.

What are the district boundaries? Would like to have more choices, how far do we need to live?

There have been some changes in the last few years, such as Fremont Academy of Engineering and Design 7-12 Palomares Academy of Health Science 7-12; we also have Village Academy for multi-media and technology. We have CISCO Academy at Ganesha High School. We also just started the 1 to 1 Program where students will be receiving a Chrome Book with internet access. Families have received hot spots. There is a young lady on the cover of People Magazine who attended Garey High School and is going to Princeton. We have a relationship with Michigan University and they offer a full ride to 10 students.

Parent made a recommendation to create new programs where new housing developments are coming that will attract the new people moving in.

A mother said that parents need to find out what programs are offered at the high schools so they can decide which school they should consider for their children.

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How do parents find out about the steps to get scholarships? She has 2 students that will be going to college at the same time and need to find out where to start.

Mr. Martinez asked parents when you think parents should hear about the AP tests, college information. A parent said that middle school would be the time to learn about it.

Mr. Martinez indicated that Dr. Krystana Walks-Harper and Ms. Maria Garcia do college fairs on a regular basis.

Parent said that maybe parents should learn about college preparation as early as elementary school to learn about the different levels of math that students will need to take.

Mr. Martinez said that he is hearing from parents that their kids are doing better when they are tutored by the teachers they know. We are offering tutoring in different places.

A mother inquired about new programs that could be offered by the District such as golf. Students need to start young. Would like to see better STEM programs. She is not seeing them here. Students need to excel even if they are in GATE. Students should start at 4th grade.

Mr. Martinez shared that there is a teacher in Cluster 4 who is great with STEM.

A parent shared that she went to the counselor to get her son enrolled in honors classes but was told that the class was full. She is concerned about students not getting the opportunity to get into advanced classes. She spoke up and was able to get her son in but he is behind in the math requirements. There are other students who should be considered for advanced classes but they don't know about it.

Mr. Martinez shared a story of a student who is now attending Berkeley. This student said he was ready for college but some of his friends who were just as smart did not get identified. The District needs to offer more AP classes and we want to make sure students do well. Dr. Walks-Harper is working with Mr. Casarrubias and the counselors.

Parent inquired about the paper recycling on campus, there is a lot of paper at Pantera. Can the recycling program be brought back? Mr. Martinez mentioned that Danny Oaxaca has been talking about reinstating the recycling program and maybe the proceeds can to the PTO/PTA. He does recycle plastic and aluminum.

How is PBIS working so far? Do we see improvement and result throughout the schools?

We are focusing on positive behaviors. Students seem to influence other students. There are less suspensions and the expulsions have gone down. PBIS along with other programs such as Capturing Kids Hearts are helping. Noon Supervisors and CSO are helping out too.

Are there counselors at the elementary schools? At what grade level do you have counselors? Do they have regular meetings with students?

Mr. Martinez shared that there is an academic counselor at the middle schools. We also have the APEX Program which is offered at every high school. Mr. Martinez mentioned the SEEO program; students attend 6 to 12 hours a week. They have a Rock n Roll academy built into the SEEO program.

Parent shared about hybrid high school at USC it's a prep school. They meet once a week.

A father shared that smaller schools are better but they also need to have sports.

Does Pomona Unified still see students transferring to other Districts?

Mr. Martinez said that the numbers are decreasing.

A Parent suggested that parents should visit the Middle school to learn about the programs being offered before thinking of enrolling their students at another school district.

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Parent said she is interested in a golf program and Stem at the Middle School. She also wants Spanish at Ranch Hills.

How can we get Mandarin at Ranch Hills? Is there a way to add another language at Ranch Hills?

Mr. Martinez explained that it's not good to have more than a couple of languages. Glendale had 7 languages and it did not work. We currently have 2 languages at the elementary level, Spanish and Mandarin. We have Mandarin at Diamond Ranch and Garey. We also have Spanish and students can test out.

Parent said she liked the idea of 1 to 1 Program

Dr. Wagner recommended going in phases and creating Teacher Technology Specialist who will help roll out the program. We are doing it in 5 phases one each year. We are using a bond measure and part of it was for technology. Training is continuous at the sites on how to use the equipment. Lorbeer will get their Chrome Books next week. Pantera had the pilot program and they started about 6 years ago.

How come we do not have swimming pools especially at Diamond Ranch? It's the newest school and has the space.

Fairplex had offered to bring an aquatics program if we provided the space. Diamond Ranch is built on rock and it would be too costly to put in a pool. We addressed this with the focus group and swimming pools were not high on the list.

Will the elementary schools get solar panels for the parking lot covers?

We currently have solar panels at Ganesha, Cortez, Diamond Ranch and we are looking at Village Academy. What is being proposed is to consider the open land next to Diamond Ranch to put solar panels there. We want to purchase them so it can generate revenue that will benefit the students.

Do we have someone at the district that level that can help with the sustainable gardens on the campus? We were told that Ranch Hills did not qualify

Dr. Kyle Brown has helped and Day One is also helping us. We currently have 17 gardens. Parent shared that gardens are a year round project and it's difficult to maintain them. He suggested that retired community members be invited to help out with the gardens.

Two housing developments will be opening soon. Will the new residents be given priority at Ranch Hills and Decker?

Mr. Martinez indicated that space is not a problem and if necessary buildings could very easily be installed.