

# R.I.S.E. News

Independence High School

Spring 2019

Edition 2 Volume 2

## *Umbrella Expectations*



## *Monthly Themes*



September	Respect
October	Enthusiasm
November	Caring
December	Giving
January	Optimism
February	Reliable
March	Perseverance
April	Accountable
May	Motivated

In the 4th year of implementation of RISE on the Independence High School campus, there has been much progress in the past year, as well as new programs implemented and new staff added to help support students.

## **RISE Recognition**

In the spring of 2018, Independence submitted an application to the California PBIS Coalition for recognition of the implementation and progress of RISE. The process included the submission of our Tiered Fidelity Inventory results, which is an evaluative process and form used to track the progress of RISE and provide feedback to our site for the upcoming year. Our site was awarded “Silver Medal” recognition for our PBIS Implementation for the 2017-2018 school year, our first year of implementation of RISE. Thanks to all staff for teaching the expectations and monthly themes to students, recognizing students with wristbands and raffle tickets, and taking the time to integrate these ideas into your classroom. Last year was a solid foundation for Independence to continue to build on for the years to come.



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## Culture Club/RISE Ambassadors

The Culture Club started this year as a student focus group and designed to engage students in campus-wide activities based around RISE and the monthly themes. The Culture Club Representatives meet on campus monthly and welcome student members that want to advocate for a positive school climate. If you want to get involved or have students that you would like to recommend, please contact **Jessica McDonel** or **Kristy Towle**. The club is always looking for other student groups to get involved, so if you are a club advisor or coach on campus and want your students to help with an activity, please let them know as well.



## Tier 1 Team



Dean Juola  
Nicole Adame  
Claudia Walsh  
Tab Taber  
Travis Boos  
Kelly Hardin  
Kristy Towle  
Angela Lorraine  
Lee Varela  
Derek LaRosa  
Sandy Melendez  
Ben Amey  
Crystal Barker  
Amanda Hart  
Jessica McDonel  
Kim Bravo  
Annie Elrod  
Jackie James

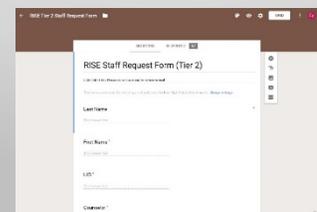
## Tier 2 Team



Traci Elrich  
Sandy Melendez  
Ben Amey  
Tami Richardson  
Kristy Towle  
Annie Elrod

## Tier 2 Staff Request Form

Two years ago, we introduced the beginning of additional Tier 2 services for students, which includes small group interventions focused on specific topics based on student need. During back to school meetings, the staff was introduced to the [Tier 2 Staff Request Form](#), a Google form designed to allow staff members the opportunity to refer a student they believe has social-emotional/behavioral concerns or needs. Once a request is



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completed, the information goes to the student's Counselor first and is also reviewed by the Intervention Specialist. All requests are eventually reviewed by the Tier 2 team to decide on the appropriate next steps for the student. The Tier 2 Staff Request is available to all staff and should be used if you feel a student needs extra support with social-emotional concerns.

## **Intervention Specialist**

Independence welcomed Mr. Ben Amey full time this school year as our Intervention Specialist. Ben is on site 5 days a week and works with the counselors to serve those students in need of extra support and Tier 2 Interventions. This year, Ben has run multiple small groups on campus that help students appropriately manage difficult feelings, such as anger, aggression or anxiety while teaching and emphasizing the use of coping skills. Ben also conducts mentoring on an individual basis when needed and tracks the effectiveness of all small groups using pre- and post-data. Ben has been a great addition to the staff and the group work he has completed is showing good results.

## **School Social Worker**

In May of 2016, Independence was provided with a full-time School Social Worker to begin the process of expanding our support for students. In her first full year, Sandy Melendez has become a valuable member of the Independence team working with students, families and school staff by providing the following services: support a positive school climate, member of the Tier 2 team, participating in student support team (SST) meetings, providing crisis response/intervention and support, and many other services. Students are referred to Sandy via the Tier 2 team or in response to a referral process through the counseling staff on campus. This new role in the district and on our site is continuing to be defined, and Sandy is at the forefront of developing this new position for all schools within the district.

## **SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEYS**

Student voice and input has become a focus this year at Independence High School and across the Kern High School

The logo for 'directionsurvey' features the word 'direction' in a bold, dark grey sans-serif font, followed by 'survey' in a bold, blue sans-serif font.

District. To assist with this new focus, our site has started the process of using a School Climate Survey with our students to gain insight into their ideas and experiences on campus. In October 2018, our site completed the semester one Climate Survey with the assistance of selected PE and Social Studies classes.

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There were 1,470 surveys completed throughout the selected classes and all grade levels. The results provided a good start in the process and some initial data to help drive our discussions in various leadership groups on campus. A second survey was completed in March with the help of the English department with 1750 students surveyed. Results were compiled and shared to begin the discussion around school climate at Independence and how decisions can be made with student input included during the process. This survey is administered twice a year and results are reported to all staff at the August and January in-services.

## STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS

To supplement and support the data collected from the School Climate Surveys, it was clear that having the opportunity for students to provide input in person and expand upon the results



was important to the process. In February 2017, the first Student Focus Groups were conducted in the conference room to help

better understand student concerns and gather ideas for future changes or to maintain well-received and established practices on campus.

Three groups of students were asked to respond to questions facilitated by a counselor and student leaders. The students involved were professional and insightful, providing a number of ideas useful to inform future decisions and staff members working around student climate. Another round of student focus groups are planned for April and May of 2017.

## Counseling Request Form Online

In an attempt to help students submit a Counselor Request Form with more ease, the Counseling department has created an online form for students to access at home, on their phone, or anywhere they have access. All students need to do is go the school website and they can find a Counselor Request Form

## Counseling Staff



Anna Calvillo	Class of 2020
Nicole Adame	Class of 2019
Lori Churchman	Class of 2018
Alicia Martinez	Class of 2017
Lisa Stephens	AVID/At Risk 11/12
Traci Elrich	Intervention/Foster

## New Student Support Staff



Ben Amey	Intervention Specialist
Sandy Melendez	Social Worker
Kristy Towle	Dean of Student Services
Annie Elrod	OCI Teacher

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for each counselor. If students ask about submitting a form, staff can direct them to the Independence High School website to locate the new form. Students can still come in the office before school, at lunch or after school and submit a form from the Career Center.

## Intervention Counselor



Independence benefits from having a full-time intervention counselor on campus. Traci Elrich was hired last summer as our Intervention Counselor. Traci works with our Tier 2 Team matching interventions with students in need, works with our At-Risk 10<sup>th</sup> Graders, and facilitates mediations in specific areas to help students work through conflicts and issues. This new position and the addition of Traci has been wonderful for our staff and students.

Pictured Above: Left to Right

Top Row: Anna Calvillo, Alicia Martinez, Nicole Adame

Front Row: Lori Churchman, Lisa Stephens, Traci Elrich

## R.I.S.E. OVERVIEW

RISE is the Independence High School approach to PBIS (positive behavior, intervention, and supports). During the 2014-2015 school year, the Independence High School staff met throughout the year and defined school-wide behavior expectations. The acronym R.I.S.E was established through that collaborative process and was completed in the summer of 2015. These “umbrella expectations” are **RESPONSIBILITY, INTERGRITY, SERVICE, and EXCELLENCE**. This collective process has helped provide positive expectations for students and staff to help prepare students to be successful on and off campus. Monthly themes were also established and recognized by staff to enhance the culture of our campus and provide students with positive guidance about behaviors that will help them be successful.

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## Teaching Expectations

During the first month of school teachers are asked to introduce students to RISE by teaching each expectation to students during class. Student leaders helped create videos to assist teachers introduce and teach students the RISE expectations. Also, members of our RISE Leadership team created lessons for teachers to use during the year as monthly themes are introduced on the first Tuesday of each



month. Many teachers created their own lessons and provided students with creative and hands-on lessons to reinforce monthly themes. As RISE develops on our campus, the Independence High School staff will continue to improve the teaching process to ensure all students learn and are engaged in RISE on campus.

## Student Recognition

Acknowledgement of positive behaviors among students by staff members started in September of 2015 on the Independence High School campus and has continued through the 2016-2017 school year. Teachers are provided with a number of bracelets that display the schoolwide expectations and monthly themes, along with raffle tickets. When students display these expectations or themes in their actions throughout



the month, teachers can recognize these students by giving them a bracelet and entering them in a bi-monthly drawing. Student names are pulled in a raffle for a chance to win gift cards to local restaurants and dining establishments. The RISE drawings have continued into the 2016-2017 school year and students can be seen on campus sporting their RISE bracelets. In years to come, student recognition will continue to expand and evolve to increase student recognition and provide diverse rewards opportunities to all students.

