

PANORAMA

January 2021



FROM YOUR EDITOR

Katie Crichton
Teacher Librarian
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Welcome to our “rebooted” *Panorama*! As the new editor, I am so pleased to see the wealth of member voices included in this edition. I received so many contributions that I will be publishing another edition next month. Welcome to any new ESTA members who are joining us this year! I hope the *Panorama* helps bridge some of the distance we may feel right now.

In my seven years in East Side, I have worked at six (!) of our schools and have belonged to many school families. Moving around so much has helped me see the commonalities across our schools and learn to see the “bigger picture” across the district.

Being “apart” as we have in recent months has underscored for me how important it is that we foster relationships and continue to work together both as site colleagues and within our union. We are not strangers from opposite ends of the district; we are part of a larger ESTA family. This relationship starts with knowing one another better. I hope the *Panorama* helps bridge some of the distance we may feel right now.

FIND ESTA ONLINE!

ESTA website: eastsideta.org

Facebook: East Side Teacher's Association

Webmaster: Jayson Chang - changj@esuhsd.org

A PLEA FOR SUPPORT FOR OUR SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

Jennifer Black
English Teacher and ESTA Site President
Oak Grove
blackl@esuhsd.org

Distance learning has created an extra difficult year for all of us--but perhaps especially for our SPED students and their teachers and case managers. Our special education teachers are under particular scrutiny this year as the state and federal government are demanding evidence that special education students are being served appropriately during distance learning.

Our special education case managers and counselors need us to:

- Post assignments and grades regularly in a way that is visible to students, parents, and case managers
- Respond promptly when asked for feedback on a particular student's progress
- Promptly answer Yes or No when invited to IEP and 504 meetings
- Attend any IEP and 504 meetings held during our prep and tutorial

For all teachers, supporting our students and colleagues is a vital professional responsibility. Please reach out to your ESTA site leadership for help. We have a lot of expertise within our union, and despite the difficulties of distance learning, we CAN support each other in supporting our students!

From Our Members

IC NEW STAFF INTERVIEWS

Greg Adler

Instructional Coach - Many Sites

adlerg@esuhsd.org

Welcome back ESTA! Hope the 2021 Spring Semester is off to a strong start. I am Greg Adler, an instructional coach working at several schools in East Side High School District. The instructional coaches knowing that an "online year" makes it difficult to meet new staff are hoping we can start to introduce a few of our new ESTA colleagues via Panorama. This month I want to introduce Zaray Pelayo-Sanchez, who teaches at both AHHS and EVHS.

GA: Morning Zaray, I hear you are a very local hire?

Zaray: Yes in fact, I was born and raised in San Jose and I am an East Side graduate. I actually got inspired to go into teaching as part of the Teaching Academy at IHS. It's been great to come full circle and be back in East Side, this time as the teacher.

GA: How long have you been teaching ?

Zaray: This is my first year full-time teaching after graduating from SJSU with a M.A. in U.S. History. I am enrolled in the Induction Program to clear my credential and volunteered to be part of the District's Social Studies Curriculum Committee ... so needless to say it's busy.

GA: I know you are also teaching at two sites and wonder how that's going?

Zaray: Well I start my week "at Andrew Hill" teaching a sheltered US History class. Some of my students have only been in the U.S. for a very short time. No surprise, they are very shy about speaking in Zoom sessions. I am using closed-captioning and Google Translate as supports. The election also made it a particularly interesting semester. My World History classes at EV are also working on current events and academic vocabulary at individual levels through Newsela.

GA: What has been your biggest takeaway this year?

Zaray: Of course Distance Learning is difficult and at the beginning I had some doubts about how well I could do this. I am really grateful to be in East Side and to be working with so many supportive colleagues. Through some of the site and district PD I've been linking up with staff who have the same mentality: We can do this! I really appreciate some of the teachers out there modeling persistence and caring.

GA: Any hobbies you enjoy in your free time ?

Zaray: I love to go hiking with Herschel (pictured here) and I enjoy photography and craft projects.



If you have time please reach out and say hello to Zaray and welcome her to East Side! (pelayoz@esuhsd.org)

CLASSROOM OPPORTUNITY!

Wendy Stegeman
Special Education Teacher
ESTA Site President
Andrew P. Hill
stegemanw@esuhd.org

This week my kids went on a virtual tour of the Andrew Hill Library with Robert Crichton, our librarian!!! It was a great adventure! He introduced research sites, talked about books, graphic novels, comic books, horror titles, and so much more! He taught them how to access many helpful places. He showed us the home page and how to see Andrew P Hill, the man, the artist, the conservationist! He spoke of Teddy Roosevelt (who was shot, but had the grit to give his speech for two hours before seeking attention!)!!! He showed the kids Andrew Hill's home at History Park (we did the virtual tour in class after the talk). He told them about plagiarism and some resources for avoiding it by citing sources. He spoke of how to get library cards and what resources are available - including audio books, music, TV/movie offerings. All you have to do is contact him and set up a field trip for your students! Jammies are ok dress!!! Thanks, Mr. C. - we all had fun!!!

All teacher librarians are available to provide this opportunity (and more) for your students! Please contact your teacher librarian via email:

- Sandra Albini (IHS, MP): albinis@esuhd.org
- Katie Crichton (CHS, FH, EV):
crichtonk@esuhd.org
- Robert Crichton (AH, YB):
crichtonr@esuhd.org
- Liza Hartman (SC, WCO):
hartmanl@esuhd.org
- Thoai Truong (PH, JL): truongt@esuhd.org

Santa Teresa and Oak Grove do not currently have a teacher librarian assigned.

DANCE COMPETITION BETWEEN FOUR ESUHSD SCHOOLS

Cristina McClelland
Performing Arts Teacher
James Lick and Independence
mcclellandc@esuhd.org

Back in August, the week before school started, four dance teachers met via zoom to collaboratively choreograph a routine to start the semester off in a unified way-Rhonda Chan from YB, Lydia Martinez from SCHS, Kellye Dodd from IHS, and Cristina McClelland who teaches at both Independence and James Lick. Judy Milner also taught the routine to her students at Silver Creek. In previous years, these five dance teachers have brought their dance students together for a non-competitive festival where students showcase their choreography for each other. Creating this district-wide lesson was a way to keep in touch because festivals are not possible.

Please click [HERE](#) watch our video!

CATASTROPHIC SICK LEAVE BANK

Leigh Spellerberg
Social Science Teacher
Oak Grove
spellerbergl@esuhd.org

If you haven't signed up to be a part of the catastrophic sick leave bank, please consider becoming a part of it. Especially with COVID-19, you never know when access to the sick leave bank could be helpful! Contact me to find out more.

INVESTING IN EQUITY- A PANDEMIC REFLECTION

Valarie Ikemoto
School Social Worker
Oak Grove
ESTA Equity Chair
ikemotov@esuhsd.org

When you reflect back on your journey that led you to the educational work you were called to do, you likely could not fathom a year like 2020 in that projected plan. When reflecting about what called you to this work it was likely centered around connection, relationships, empowering others and/or opening doors for students, families and our community. I think as credentialed staff we are doing the most honorable work to create widespread change in this world. While I don't know what brought you to this work, I can tell you that working in the juvenile justice system providing mental health services to a disproportionate number of BIPOC youth from ESSJ, I instantly knew the largest impact could be made in schools. The reason being, it's the only legally mandated system that youth have to participate in. We have what no one else has; access (well better access than others).

In our last ESTA Equity Committee meeting we discussed how we see that work happening in so many of your classrooms, counseling ISTs, IEPs, individual interactions, zoom therapy sessions, virtual classrooms, parenting workshops and how you are reaching out to help your colleagues. 2020 threw us into some experiential learning. It allowed us to humble ourselves in ways we never imagined. Just like our students, many of us have unreliable internet. Just like our students, many of us have battled with isolation. Just like our students, many of us have mourned for so many lives lost to not only COVID but by brutality against Black, Indigenous, People of Color and Transgender people. Just like our students, we struggle with feeling like we aren't doing enough. Just like our students, we have exhausted our formerly

functioning coping mechanisms and exhaustion has set in.

We know what it's like to carry all of this yet unlike our students, we likely have a higher commitment to continuing on because we were called to this work. That being said, you're not alone in trying to hold space for all of these things we are still trying to do. I have personally witnessed connection, some of the most beautiful collaborations, among our ESTA Members who are bone tired. I still see hands extending across virtual time and space continuums to create community.

The spirit of the ESTA Equity Team is to not forget this global humbling of us as people and to continue to do the work of creating spaces that ensure equal rights, participation/representation, eliminating barriers and increasing access. 2020 was the mirror of what work needs to be done and let's be honest, we need a mirror every once and awhile. Your equity team members are here to do the work with you, for you, and meet you each where you are in your journey. The goal is move away from isolation and into a community where all students, families and staff teams are valued, seen and represented.

Our goals for the upcoming year are to get some feedback from all of you about what work you would like to see us do. We're getting together a needs assessment to send out to you all sometime in January. We are working with CTA to obtain ideas, resources and linkages to help us all in this imperative Equity work (trainings, conferences, books, etc.)

We will be forming subcommittees to address specific goals around Equity work as well. We would also like to have some more socially conscious people who are passionate about Equity work, join us. If that sounds like you and you're interested and ready to roll up those sleeves, send me an email:

ikemotov@esuhsd.org.



ON BEHALF OF OUR ACTIVITIES DIRECTORS

Virginia Yenter Yanowsky
SS Teacher, Activities Director
ESTA Site President
Evergreen Valley
yenterv@esuhsd.org



RELIEF FUND APPLICATION

Lynn Johnson-Conrad
Chemistry Teacher
Relief Fund Coordinator
Oak Grove
ConradL@esuhsd.org

Did you know that ESTA has a Relief Fund? I'm Lynn Johnson, Chemistry teacher at Oak Grove (well, really, right now from my living room!). I'm also the chair of the ESTA Relief Fund committee. If you have a loss of personal property not covered by insurance or other means that happened on campus or during ESTA related travel you can apply to ESTA to be reimbursed for all or part. You will need to supply three things:

1. police report regarding your loss
2. Receipts detailing your cost to replace/repair
3. completed application (click on [Application form](#))

The usual maximum reimbursement allowed is \$500.00. You can email your documents/information to me and I'll submit the packet to the committee for approval

ESUHSD Activities Directors were recipients of the prestigious Light Award grant for \$30,000 in 2019. Our grant titled "Leadership With Passion" was designed to rekindle our passion for being Leadership teachers and the creation of five year-long UC G approved courses. The ESUHSD Activities Directors have met monthly (now weekly) to develop & design new content as well as reflect upon & improve existing curriculum, best practices & district alignment. Funds have been used to attend professional development, learn from our peers and incorporate curriculum & activities that support our students & courses.

Activities Directors have worked tirelessly to incorporate everything we have learned to improve student engagement and foster positive school climate throughout the district. So far 4 of our 5 courses have been approved by UC and hundreds of our students have been through Character Strong training and the LI leadership conferences. 7 Activities Directors have taken the Character Strong Relational Schools training and 6 attended an in depth curriculum training session with Leadership Inspirations from Chapman University.

This has resulted in a more cohesive approach to academic leadership across the district. Currently 10 ESUHSD schools are offering G approved leadership courses for our students. Our goal for this year is to gain approval for our final course and continue to provide opportunities and activities for engagement during distance learning that keep our school cultures' alive. We look forward to being back on campus in the fall and continuing our passion to teach and lead.

-ESUHSD Activities Directors

ON BEHALF OF OUR COUNSELORS

Lori Martinson
Counseling SAC and Head Counselor
Santa Teresa
martinsonl@esuhsd.org

Dear ESTA Members,

Each year, school counselors are the first in mind to be laid off due to budget constraints regardless of the number of years School Counselors have been working for the district. We have been reminded during this global pandemic of the importance of School Counselors and what it means to be a School Counselor.

The ASCA (American School Counselor Association) national model which aligns with MTSS recommends a counselor to student ratio of 250:1. As a district, we are currently at 435:1 with the ever present threat that it will rise back to 600, 800, or 1200:1 (as it was during the last economic downturn).

What Can You Do To Help Support Your Fellow ESTA Members?

We are not asking to reduce our current caseload to 250:1. We are just asking that the wording of our current contract be tightened so that we have the same job security as teachers.

Here is the exact wording from the contract: 15.13 When students are assigned to a counselor, the maximum number of students assigned to each counselor will be 435.

We want to get rid of "When students are assigned to a counselor" It should now read something like "Every student will be assigned a counselor and the maximum number of students assigned to each counselor will be 435." or "Students shall be assigned a counselor at a ratio of no more than 435:1".

Since Counselors are currently at 435:1 this would NOT cost any additional money and would help your fellow ESTA Members have job security, which during this difficult time is even more important. Please help by urging your ESTA Representatives to fight for us!

In Solidarity,
ESUHSD/ESTA School Counselors

If you would like to know more about School Counselors please read the following or reach out to a counselor at your site. [ASCA National Model--School Counselor](#)

BENEFITS COMMITTEE PLAN REPORT JAN. 2021

Jenny Ludwig
ISP Teacher - Oak Grove
ESTA Benefits Committee Chair
ludwigj@esuhsd.org

I hope you are all having a happy and healthy start to the New Year! Here are the highlights from our Benefits Committee meetings:

- **Wellness:** Please remember to read Melissa Wheeler's emails regarding the new programs which are being implemented with the wellness dollars from Aetna.
- **Taxes:** If you are an Aetna member and have an online account your tax forms will be available there. You can go in and change the settings if you prefer not to go paperless.
- **Vaccines:** We have no real information at this time. Sutter Health website had crashed the last I checked and a member reported that Kaiser telephone hold wait time was over 2 hours. Hopefully things will smooth out. Our directive right now for vaccine information is contact your doctor's office.
- **Prescription Drug Provider Change:** Aetna PPO members will have a change in RX provider in July. This will affect 36 members who may have to change their brand name drugs, for example, some types of asthma inhalers, diabetic test strips etc. More information will come closer to the time, but please read any mail received from Aetna or Lisa Alarcon.

Plan Reports

Projected renewals: Overall 7.9% increase. Approximately \$3,151,687 increase. Click **HERE** to view more about plan usage and increases. Finally, remember to access info on your benefits, please see the:

- **NEA (National Education Association):**
<https://www.neamb.com/>
- **CTA (California Teacher's Association):**
<https://www.cta.org/for-educators/member-benefits>
- **ESTA website:** <https://www.eastsideta.org/member-benefits>
- ecarms.esuhsd.org and click on the **Benefits Hub** tile to access specific plan documents.

SERVICE CENTER COUNCIL REPORT

CTA Trainings/Conferences are free this year, to attend and to apply for units: [CTA.org/events](https://www.cta.org/events)

- Feb 4-7: Good Teaching Conference
- Feb 18-21: New Educator Conference
- Feb 24-27: Equity Conference
- Mar 11-14: Good Teaching Conference for Middle and Secondary school
- Apr 30-May 2: SPED conference

NEA Conferences: www.nea.org/professional-excellence/conferences-events

California Casualty Insurance presents a sweepstakes to win \$2500 - enter at www.readyfor2500.com/CTA

Learn more about the nominee for Secretary of Education
<https://www.nea.org/advocating-for-change/new-from-nea/five-reasons-educators-are-excited-about-miguel-cardona>

COVID Support

<https://www.nea.org/advocating-for-change/covid>

IN THE NEXT PANORAMA...

Our members submitted so much great content it wouldn't fit in one issue! Please look for another *Panorama* in February where members will share about their distance learning experiences, the mental health supports available to us, and more. Take care!