



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 9, 2018

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Whittier Union Spending Plan Includes Expanded Credit Recovery Programs, Academic Mentor Training

WHITTIER – The Whittier Union High School District in 2018-19 will expand an after-school credit recovery program, build on its Academic Mentorship program and ensure students and parents have the opportunity to experience college. The programs are part of a larger effort to support student achievement as part of the District's \$173 million 2018-19 budget that supports the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP).

The budget is based on a funding system that is designed to allow Districts to decide how best to use the funding. The LCAP – built with extensive input from parents, students, community, teachers and staff – is a three-year spending plan that guides District efforts to improve student learning and identifies goals for each year, strategies to achieve those goals and funding sources.

For 2018-19, Whittier Union will invest \$21.7 million in supplemental and concentration funds to develop programs specifically targeting its high-needs groups: economically disadvantaged students, foster children and English learners.

“Over the last year, our dedicated team has worked closely with community stakeholders to identify the needs of our students, including those who would benefit from additional support,” Superintendent Martin Plourde said. “This LCAP builds on our efforts by providing students with a strong foundation to ensure their success in high school and beyond.”

To increase graduation and college-eligibility rates among its English learner students, the District will improve support courses at various sites to ensure they master content the first time they take the course, enabling them to stay on schedule and take advanced coursework while in high school.

The District will also increase Guided Study sections to provide intensive support for and monitoring of struggling freshmen and sophomores through interpersonal engagement, instruction in organizational skills and time management, and daily homework checks. During these classes, students will meet with Academic Mentors, upperclassmen who provide them with homework help and emotional support.

“Guided Study eases the transition for our higher-risk students, lowers the dropout rate, fosters a connection to the school and results in students wanting to attend on a regular basis,” said Carlye Olsen Marousek, director of Accountability, Staff Development, Curriculum and Instructional Materials. “The program also strengthens the student-teacher connection, with teachers checking in with students throughout the day to ensure they are on track with homework, class assignments and tests.”

Additionally, the District will expand after-school courses during the second semester for students who did not receive passing grades during the first. The program, which was successfully piloted at two schools during the 2017-18 school year in English and social science, will allow students to complete courses and take on advanced classes.

Other programs and services that will continue to support Whittier Union students include:

- Academic Mentor training and support
- Expanded school media center hours for access to computers, internet, printing and tutoring
- Advanced Placement test fee reduction/waivers
- Field experiences/college visits for English learner students and parents
- Academic/career counseling services and freshman support programs
- Online credit recovery program and new technological devices
- Credit recovery summer program in partnership with Mt. SAC
- Books and supplies for low-income students
- Funding for Horizons Program, which includes tutoring, college field trips and parent workshops
- Transportation for English learners attending the Newcomer Program at La Serna
- After-school transportation for English learners attending tutoring programs at four high schools
- Student Well-Being counselors to support student mental health services
- College and career pathways (CTE Academies/Puente)
- Parent workshops in conjunction with partner elementary school districts
- Community liaison
- Intervention specialist and targeted intervention counselors
- Summer professional learning and best practices
- Professional and leadership development
- Coordinator of curriculum and assessment and coaches

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The Whittier Union High School District provides all students with an engaging, quality standards-based instructional program delivered by a well-trained staff resulting in improved student achievement. Whittier Union High School District works to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education for all students.

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