June 7, 2018

RE: *Summary of Differentiated Assistance Joint COE-LEA Meeting*

Dear Superintendent Kitamura,

We would like to begin this letter by expressing our gratitude toward and appreciation of the Santa Rosa City Schools Team assembled to engage in the differentiated assistance process. It was a privilege to engage with one another as thought partners in authentic and honest conversations regarding how our system is serving students.

The purpose of this letter is to provide a summary of the process that included analyzing data from the California School Dashboard, the LCAP, and local data using the improvement science framework. We will also present an overview of the results of this collaborative process.

Background

Our meeting to discuss the LEA's performance on the California School Dashboard was prompted by requirements under LCFF 2013:

- County Offices of Education are to use the evaluation rubrics to determine eligibility in order to provide technical assistance to any school district that qualifies.[1]
- A school district is eligible for technical assistance if *any student group* met the criteria for *two or more* LCFF priorities.[2]

As you recall, after a review of your LEA's performance indicators in the California School Dashboard, the Santa Rosa City Schools District meets these criteria in the following areas:

State Priority	State or Local Indicator	Student Group
4. Pupil Achievement	ELA and Math	Foster Students
6. School Climate	Suspension Rate	Foster Students

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[1] Educ. Code § 52071(3)(b)
[2] Educ. Code § 52071(b); §52071.5(b)

State Priority	State or Local Indicator	Student Group
4. Pupil Achievement	ELA and Math	Homeless Students
6. School Climate	Suspension Rate	Homeless Students
4. Pupil Achievement	ELA and Math	Students with Disabilities
5. Pupil Engagement	Graduation Rate	Students with Disabilities

Identification of Strengths and Weaknesses in Regards to the State Priorities

During our initial meeting we reviewed and analyzed the California School Dashboard results for fall 2017, including both the State and Local Indicators applicable to the Santa Rosa City Schools District.

Strengths:

- Graduation rates for African American, Hispanic, and English Learners increased.
- Overall, graduation rates for all students (group) is green on the dashboard.

Weaknesses (targeted areas for growth):

- The suspension rate for Foster youth (144 students) is very high and increasing 6.5%.
- Graduation rates for Students with Disabilities is very low (65.7%)
- In ELA Students with Disabilities are performing below all other student groups.
- Graduations rates varies across student groups.

The analysis of the District and Site Dashboards led the team to specific learning questions in order to better understand their local context. From these learning questions, team members identified the data (qualitative and quantitative) needed to better understand the problem.

Using protocols from Improvement Science and Data Wise, the team conducted a trend and pattern analysis overlaying the data from the Dashboard and their local data (surveys, reports from SIS, interviews, etc.) to establish a learner centered problem.

Continuing to narrow focus, the team engaged in a root cause analysis, prompting rich conversations around the areas for improvement in your system. This, in turn, generated the theory of action shown below:

- If we build understanding of the need to change how we serve students and we prioritize relationship building with students, then students in our system, especially foster youth, homeless students, and students of color, will receive equitable interventions to successfully move forward.

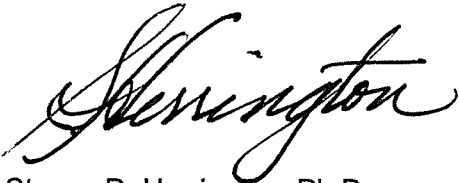**Review of Effective Practices or Programs that Relate to LEA Goals**

Following the root cause analysis and development of the theory of action, the team anchored their focus in Mission, Vision and Shared Beliefs from the "Components of an Effective System" found in the Abridged LEA Self-Assessment.

Next Steps

Following the tenets of the Improvement Science process, the team is poised to engage in the next phase of the improvement process of generating and testing change ideas to support their theory of action related to building a shared understanding of the need to change how the district serves students and prioritizing relationship building with students.

I wish to thank you and your team on behalf of our County Office of Education staff involved in this process. The intent of this process has been for all involved to learn and grow in the interest of continuous improvement. We commend you for your time and your commitment to the students, families, and staff of the Santa Rosa City Schools District. If you have any questions regarding the differentiated assistance process or additional resources and services available, please contact Jennie Snyder, Deputy Superintendent for the Instructional Services Division at 707-524-2786.

Sincerely,

Steven D. Herrington, Ph.D.
County Superintendent of Schools

Jennie Snyder, Ed.D.
Deputy Superintendent, Instructional Services