Los Gatos-Saratoga
UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

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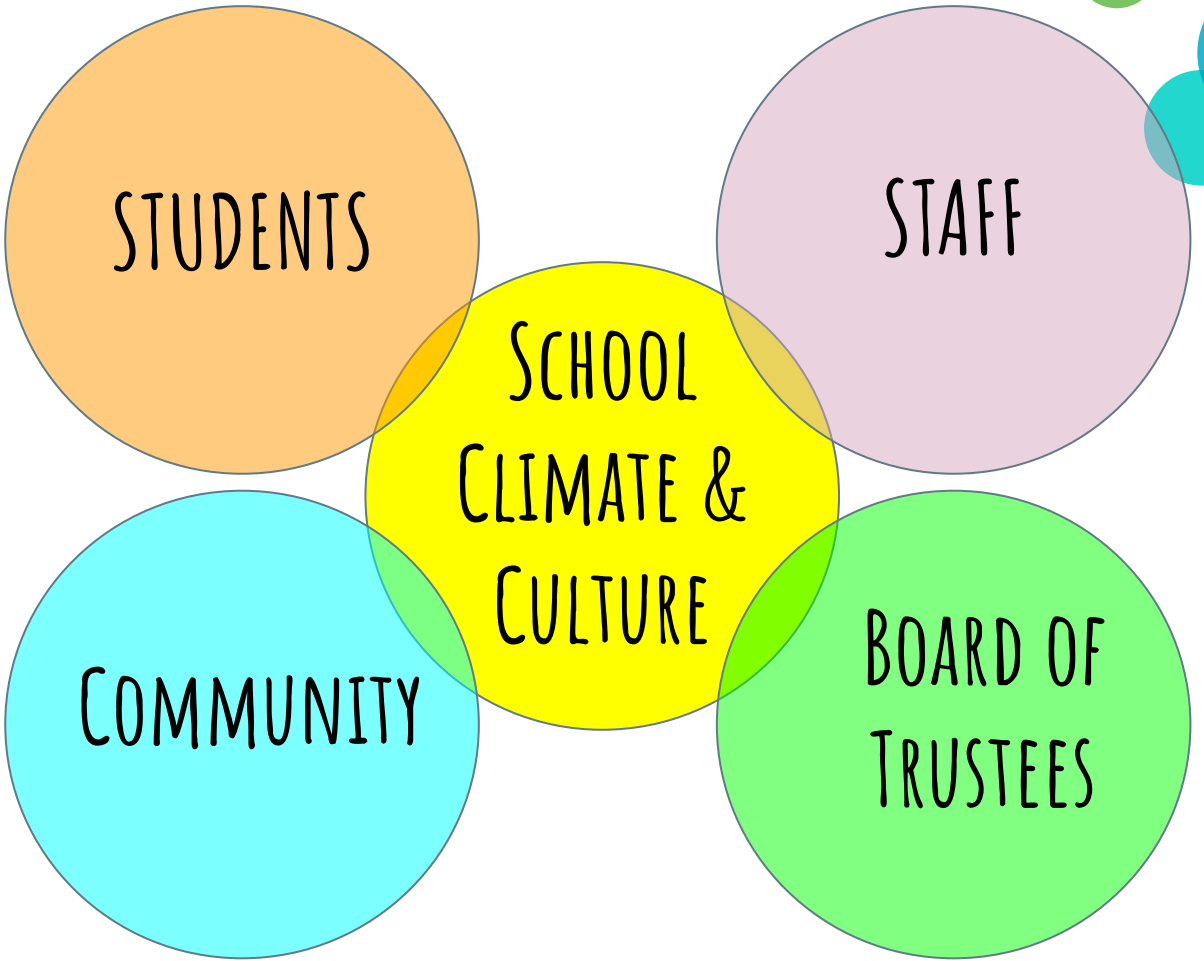
"If a school does not stand for something more profound than raising achievement levels, then it probably does not make a memorable difference to teachers, students, or parents."

— Terrence E. Deal, Shaping School Culture: Pitfalls, Paradoxes, and Promises


STUDENTS
STAFF
SCHOOL CLIMATE & CULTURE
COMMUNITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

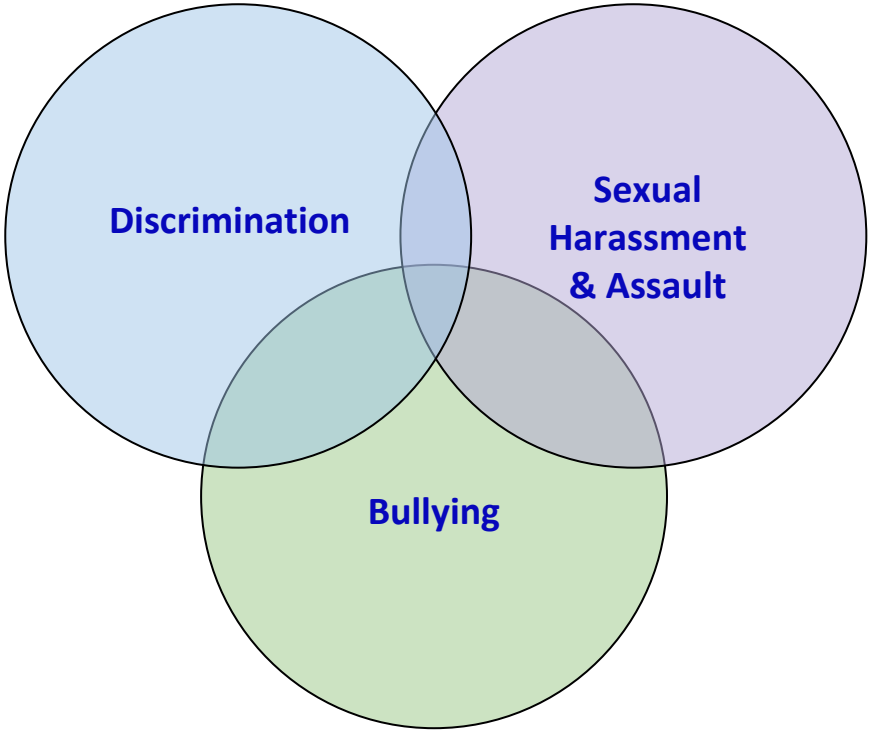
OUR POLICIES, OUR PROMISE

The LGSUHSD Board of Trustees and staff are firmly committed to ensuring that all learning environments are free of discrimination, bullying, and sexual harassment for all students and staff.

Today's Outcomes

- Identify big picture outcomes we want to achieve in our work around school culture & equity
- Seek feedback and guidance on big picture strategies to address school culture & equity
- Conduct a SWOT analysis to inform future work

Three Interrelated Issues



These issues tend to play out in similar ways both inside of and outside of school, can overlap, and can have similar impact on victims. Based upon this, we believe that we should address them together in terms of our big picture strategies, with appropriate differences in area-specific strategies.

OUTCOMES?

- Outcomes vs. Strategies
- In thinking about our work related to the three areas, what are the outcomes or goals that we'd like to achieve?

Big Picture Strategies

- Policy and practice review related to each of the three areas
  - New comprehensive CoC for Board on Sept. 29
  - Hiring practices to explicitly address attitudes toward inclusivity, equity, and empathy
- Comprehensive four-year education and prevention program to address all three areas - to include work with our feeders
- Ongoing staff PD related to awareness, reporting, prevention curriculum, cultural competence, skills to address incidents, student support, etc.
- Establish permanent structure/processes to guide, monitor, and hold accountable (District & Site Teams)
- Engage students/leadership groups in supportive efforts
- Dedicate more District-level leadership of these efforts

Area-Specific Strategies

Discrimination	Sexual Harassment/Assault	Bullying
• Instructional materials review & update to ensure appropriate representation of differing voices and perspectives • Develop a recruitment and hiring plan to ensure that our staff better reflects the diversity of our community in order to provide our students with diverse perspectives and experiences	• An inquiry by an outside, independent agency into recent allegations related to sexual harassment, assault, and school culture • Update Title IX page on District webpage to ensure it is compliant and easy to use • Immediate and ongoing training for our staff members related to Title IX, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and mandated reporting	• Review and enhance student education efforts related to cyber-bullying

Possible Org Structure

- District Advisory Group:
  - Representative of district constituent groups
  - Purpose is to learn together and advise on short and long-term goals and strategies related to the three areas
  - Group can also interact and coordinate with other community groups
- Site Advisory Groups:
  - Representative of site constituent groups
  - Purpose is to develop/tailor site-specific implementation plans aligned with and supportive of the broader district goals/plan
- Task-Specific Groups:
  - Ad hoc small, task-focused workgroups established by the site and/or district advisory groups

Big Picture Strategies:

Questions, Comments, suggestions?

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Strengths

- What do we consider to be our strengths?
- What advantages do we have?
- What might others say are our strengths?

- Unified commitment among stakeholders
- Perhaps not as far to go as some might have to go
- Student buy-in is present
- Feeder Schools share our commitment to addressing the same issues that we are in supporting the whole K-12
- Some time to present educational material already
- Honesty and the willingness of students to come forward with their experiences to bring to light issues on the campuses
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- Already a diverse community and student body
- Baseline of respect and civility in our community to allow us to do this work
- Motivate, engaged and knowledgeable student groups at both schools
- Dedicated staff that is energized to foster change
- Student stories has prompted change
- District approached this with growth mindset
- Already started the work with students, teacher and parents
- Movement statewide/nationally; motivation to learn more

Weaknesses

- What do we consider to be our weaknesses?
- What are we most criticized for or receive the most complaints about?
- What do we seem to have a hard time doing well?

- Change is sometimes hard in very successful schools
- Response to student online behavior
- Changing a system and perspective taking can be very difficult
- Need for more teaching training
- Teacher bandwidth, especially during COVID
- District expertise/bandwidth in current staffing
- Educating parents
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- Communication delays/deficits
- Addressing/disciplining off-campus behavior
- Lack comprehensive and strategic education plan
- Small percentage of staff that reflect all of the students/community we serve
- Lack restorative justice options vs. traditional discipline
- Limiting curriculum options for sexual harassment for high school students
- Some staff do not yet feel equipped to address/discuss many of these issues

OPPORTUNITIES

- What opportunities for improvement do we know about, but have not addressed?
- Where with a little work could we change a weakness into a strength?
  - To be more proactive
  - To further engage in the national and local movements
  - Make our efforts to bring student voice a higher priority
  - To learn from other entities that have already struggled through these issues, gain from their learning
  - Utilize remote work to engage and participate in free, national opportunities to learn
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  - Maximize momentum seen nationally to make substantial change
  - Model behavior we want to see in our students
  - Empower students to be Upstanders
  - Communicate efforts to date to community
  - Another webinar for community
  - We can become a leader in these efforts

THREATS

- Who or what threatens us the most?
- What challenges are coming that we must respond to?
- What might block our progress?

- Expectation of everything being solved today
- The right to confidentiality and due process can be perceived as a lack of communication
- The investigation process is cumbersome and takes a lot of time
- Large amount scrutiny over how and what we communicate
- Need to be thoughtful and careful as to how we move forward
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- Capacity
- Lack of jurisdiction sometimes with discipline for off-campus behavior
- Some families believe schools should not teach values
- Some view as school problem vs. community problem
- If progress is not realized and communicated to community, may impact support for parcel tax, donations, etc.
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