Ernest A. Becker Sr. MS

Request for Information Response

Nevada Department of Education as Provided by

SB 515, Section 23

Social worker or other licensed mental health professional

December 14, 2015

To:

Victoria Blakeney
Office for a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment
Nevada Department of Education
700 E. Fifth St.
Carson City, NV 89701
(775) 687-9130
vblakeney@doe.nv.gov

Dr. Tammy Malich
Assistant Superintendent
Education Services Division

CCSD Contact:
Brian Adams, Coordinator
Office of Student Adjudication
Education Services Division
(702)799-0761

SECTION II
NARRATIVE

Ernest A. Becker Middle School

Ernest A. Becker Middle School opened in 1993 in the western-most part of Las Vegas. The master planned Summerlin community was just beginning and the growth and building was overwhelming. The community surrounding Becker and the attendance zone has changed dramatically over the past 23 years. For example, in 2000 the population of Becker was 20% minority, with 12% of students qualifying for a free and reduced lunch. Currently, Becker is 62% minority, with nearly 55% of students qualifying for a free and reduced lunch. We have been designated a Title I school for the past four years.

Becker became an Operation Respect/Welcoming School last year. We have taken many initiatives to support a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment with the assistance of ORWS and CCSD's Hope2 initiative. We modify our bell schedule twice and month (increased from once a month) last year to teach "mini-lessons" that encompass many aspects of social and emotional learning. We rotate which periods these lessons are taught so students receive the lessons from all of their teachers. The lessons are posted on the website and shared at monthly parent principal meetings to reinforce social and emotional learning at home. We have enacted several slogans on campus to promote positive behavior such as "THINK" (is it true? helpful? inspiring? necessary? kind?) and Bighorn PRIDE (protect, report, identify, defend, everyone). Recent data revealed a 22% decrease in reported bullying incidents since the initiative began last year. An added position to assist with this initiative would align perfectly with what we have already started to do here at Becker.

The added mental health care professional or social worker would target those students who have behavior and/or attendance issues or are not having an overall positive experience in middle school. We want to target coping skills and strategies students can utilize when they are faced with difficult situations in middle school. We want a professional on campus who can focus on the social and emotional growth of these students. Research proves that students learn better when they feel safe and they are emotionally stable. This professional would also bridge the gap between school and home, providing assistance to families and involving them as much as possible in school activities. In addition, we would utilize this individual in our BELA (after-school program) to expand the program to more students and continue to provide social and emotional growth by a team of dedicated teachers and professionals.