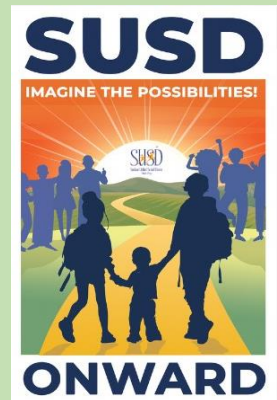*Ask Dr. Rodriguez*

Ten Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Edition #31 2024-25 School Year – Week of April 7, 2025
Questions are quoted as I received them directly from our community.

1. **I just heard that there is a big Earth Day event this weekend. How come this has not been advertised at the schools or on the website?**
We began promoting the Earth Day Celebration on both the District website and our social media platforms starting March 4th. This week, we are rolling out another round of messaging across those same platforms to ensure families and staff are reminded of the event. In addition, we plan to send a text message reminder to our families a few days before the event. You may also recall that we included information about this event in a previous Ask Dr. Rodriguez FAQ. Here is a brief excerpt:

   We are excited to share that our district is actively promoting Earth Day through a collaborative effort with community and higher education partners. Our upcoming Earth Day Celebration will be a vibrant street fair-style event near Stockton Alternative High School on Saturday, April 12, 2025, from 12:00–5:00 p.m. This event will feature food vendors, free activities, and games, all geared towards fostering environmental stewardship.

   Below is the event flyer with more details:

2. **This school year I celebrated 10 years with the district. Last year gifts were sent out to teachers that had reached this milestone. Will this be happening again this year?**
To recognize the efforts of our staff, the anniversary gifts, at specific five-year intervals starting at 5 years, will occur every year as a new tradition during employee appreciation weeks. Each identified employee will receive a <u>lapel pin</u>, a <u>certificate</u> and a <u>"swag gift"</u>. The gifts were different based on years of service; however, they were identical based on classification, certification, or management.

3. **The Cell Phone policy survey link posted on Instagram does not work. Someone left you a comment informing you of this as soon as you posted it but it has not been fixed. Why is this crucial survey not being pushed out like other surveys like the Panorama ones? Why have you not made it easily accessible to ALL stakeholders? Why not post a bitly so it can easily be typed out on mobile versus posting the full link? Why only provide one week for the survey to be completed after sharing it on a Friday after school has been let out?**
The current survey was intentionally designed with separate versions for students, staff, and families to help us identify both commonalities and differences in perspective among stakeholder groups. The staff and parent surveys were already conducted through our normal communication channels earlier in the process. We are now focused on gathering student feedback to complete the full picture.

The survey link shared via Instagram was functional at the time of posting; however, we understand that access issues can arise on certain platforms. We ensured the Instagram link is functional and accessible.

The one-week completion window was intentional to allow us to collect, analyze, and act on feedback in a timely manner and use it for the upcoming Cell Phone Policy Taskforce. The survey was released on a Friday to provide access over the weekend, giving students time outside of the school day to respond. To date, we have almost 1,000 student responses.

4. **When are you going to start the Cell Phone Policy Taskforce? When will we know what the policy is?**
The Cell Phone Policy Taskforce is scheduled to meet on April 15 and April 24 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. If additional time is needed, a third meeting will be held on April 29 during the same time frame. Our goal is to bring a recommended policy to the Board Policy Committee in May. This timeline ensures that students, staff, and families will be informed of the finalized Cell Phone Policy for the upcoming school year before summer break begins.

5. **I am an instructional assistant who received a computer way back in 2020 with COVID. How do I get another staff computer because mine does not work anymore?**
    Please submit a helpdesk ticket and the site technician (NST) will assess the computer. If deemed that a new computer is needed, the Technology and Innovation team will work with the school site to provide you a new computer.

6. **I saw you are going to get multi-carrier hot spots. When will they arrive and how does it work with the three carriers?**
    As part of SUSD's commitment to 24/7 learning and the District's 2-to-1 initiative, the recent Hotspot RFP bid recommendation was approved by the Board of Trustees. The next step is to receive the approval to utilize E-Rate funding. With both approvals, the hotspots should arrive by next school year. The multi-carrier hotspots will automatically jump from between the three carriers, AT&T, Verizon, and T-Mobile, depending on the best connection of the area.

7. **I saw a message about a training on AI and now I can't find it. Can you provide me the information as I am interested?**
    Artificial Intelligence is rapidly changing the landscape of society, providing both opportunities and challenges. The SUSD AI Steering Committee is inviting teachers, counselors, and administrators to *AI Unplugged,* an exciting professional development opportunity, on Saturday April 26, 2025, at Caesar Chavez High School. Artificial Intelligence (AI) experts, Benjamin Cottingham from Stanford University and Joe Marquez from Clovis Unified, will be presenting on how to safely, responsibly, and effectively utilize AI in the educational ecosystem to enhance student learning and increase efficiency. Staff are asked to bring their laptop as for built-in breakout sessions with time dedicated to creating with AI tools. Teachers, counselors and all other participating staff will be compensated for their time. Please register on kickup at bit.ly/AIunplugged.

8. **I am a student at School for Adults. I heard that there will not be summer school for us. Can you do something about that?**
    At this time, the School for Adults does not have sufficient funding to offer a summer school program. The funding we receive is specifically allocated for adult education through a regional consortium, and unfortunately, state regulations do not allow us to use District funds designated for TK–12 students to support programs for adult learners over the age of 19. However, we recognize the importance of year-round learning opportunities for our adult students. We have submitted a request to the consortium for any available carryover funds that could help us offer a summer session. As soon as we receive confirmation, we will share the update with staff and students.

9. **When is the 1% retro pay scheduled to be disbursed for CSEA 318?**
Retroactive payments related to the ongoing salary increase for CSEA 318 are scheduled to be issued no later than May 31, 2025. The District anticipates that these payments will be provided in a separate check. We appreciate your continued dedication and patience as we work through this process.

10. **There are multiple non fingerprinted individuals that enter our campus and remain longer than 15 minutes. I am concerned about the safety of the students and staff.**

All SUSD schools should be following the same protocols. The District's Fingerprint and Criminal Background Protocol aims to allow access to our school campuses without impeding the educational process, jeopardizing the safety of our students and staff, and ensures to comply with state law, education code, and board policy. The district identifies three groups of persons who seek access to our school campuses and provides guidelines to their registration/fingerprint requirements.

Visitor: Any person who is not a student, staff, volunteer, consultant, contractor, or vendor.

Volunteer: Any person who assists at a school site or program on a regular or semi-regular basis on an un-paid status.

Consultant/Contractor/Vendor: An entity contracting with the District to provide specified services who may have contact with students.

Group Type	Registration Requirement	Fingerprint Requirement
Visitor	Yes	No
Volunteer	Yes	Yes
Consultant/Contractor/Vendor	Yes	Yes

California Penal Code 627.1 requires all visitors at our school sites to register if entering or remaining on school grounds. This is facilitated through our Hallpass Visitor Management System which requires all visitors to scan a government issued I.D. This registers the individual's information in the system for the school sit and conducts a search through the National Database for Registered Sex Offenders. Once approved as a visitor for the site, an identification badge is printed for the visitor to wear on campus.

Education Code 49024 and 45125.1 require all volunteers and contracting entities who will or may have contact with students to obtain a background and fingerprint clearance through the California Department of Justice. This consists of a criminal background

check which is reviewed by the chief of police for clearance. Both volunteers, consultants, contractors and vendors are still required to register on campus. This provides us with accountability and safety in the event of an emergency so that we may know who is on campus.

Persons on our campus are defined by these three group categories and not per the amount of time they spend on campus. Our school staff is trained in responding to various safety threats on campus and may contact our District police department at anytime they feel a person may be a safety risk to our staff and students.