

Re: Honors/detracking

From: Baxter, Angela <angelabaxter@ccusd.org>

Wed, Aug 24, 2022 at 4:09 PM PDT (GMT-07:00)

To: McBride, Summer <summermcbride@ccusd.org>

Thank you for your email. I appreciate your kind and thoughtful approach to bringing us all together.

Here are some resources that Dr. Cooper has shared.

Attached in this email:

- [CCUSD Board Presentation Video link 3-22-22](#)
- [English Dept. Video 8-11-22 Link](#)
- Presentation slides 3-22-22 (see below)
- English Dept. Pathway FAQ handout (see below)
- [CCHS Course Description Handbook Link](#)

I am happy to meet, so we can explore your inquiries.

Best,
AEB

On Wed, Aug 24, 2022 at 12:43 PM McBride, Summer <summermcbride@ccusd.org> wrote:

Hi Angela,

First, thanks, again for being so responsive to staff and teachers. I encouraged Ms. Mekemson to reach out to you.

I have some questions about honors and am also wondering if you can share the slide deck presented during the honors town hall back in November? I'm curious about your position on detracking. Our teachers worked really hard on transforming our HS Eng dept, and I never want to undermine the work they do...especially since I'm not an educator. I keep getting questions about honors and there's now a parent group that's been formed to fight detracking. I'm not sure if you know, but they even have an online petition to "save HS honors". <https://www.change.org/p/calling-on-principal-lisa-cooper-and-superintendent-quoc-tran-to-preserve-excellence-in-education-at-culver-high>

I know part of the rationale is that detracking is one way we can address the lack of representation of Black and Latinx students in honors. I also know that honors students are often self motivated and/or students who were "picked" by teachers who see them as exceptional scholars. It hasn't truly been accessible to all students even though we've promoted it as open-access for years. I know quite a few students who had honors ELA and even accelerated math in the middle school but were told by certain teachers things like "maybe this class isn't for you". Similar to the approach previous administrators took when it came to advanced Spanish where a few "very special students" were allowed to skip Spanish 9 and jump to advanced, we have had very subjective and inequitable ways of promoting honors/ap.

I don't oppose detracking and want to see our district's goal of helping every student graduate with college credits, A-G, and have truly open access AP classes. However, I'm still learning how to best serve our students in this area. I'm interested in hearing your perspective because, regardless of who supports or opposes it, I think most people agree that the rollout was less than collaborative, we didn't engage the community early or often enough, and many newer admin (including Mr. Tran) were seemingly caught off guard with the change that was already well underway before the 21-22 school year even got started and many of you were hired.

I am not proposing we backpedal on the issue, but I'm curious to know what we can do to be more responsive to concerns expressed by families and students. I don't believe that if something is deemed "racist" or "inequitable" that the inverse will inherently be anti-racist or equitable. I also don't think it's productive to simply dismiss families in favor of honors as just privileged or entitled parents - which I've heard from many who support detracking. I know quite a few families of color who are also concerned about what this means for their child and how it affects their college options. I'm not an educator, but I feel like this is a really nuanced topic and to make it successful, earning the community's trust, we will have to address the concerns that have been expressed. The main questions I've heard (as I'm sure you have, too) are how will teachers differentiate? How will we ensure no students fall through the cracks while also providing more challenging lessons to students who would have excelled in an honors type class?

I appreciate your input on this topic and also would love to know what messaging I can share with concerned parents who contact me that will support Ed Services as you navigate through these changes.

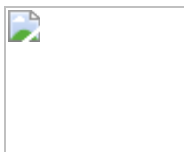
Please feel free to email or call me if that's easier.

Warmly,

Summer

Summer McBride
Culver City Board of Education
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 Image result for ccusd logo
www.ccusd.org

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Attachments

- CCHSEnglishDepartmentPathways FAQ 4-2022.pdf
- English Dept. Board Presentation 3-22-22.pdf