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Response from Pioneer Union Elementary

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**Letter dated March 30, 2023 RE: Information Memo for
Pioneer Union Elementary School District**

Response from Pioneer Union Elementary



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Telephone: 559.589.1441 Fax: 559.589.7000

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Kings County Office of Education
Joy Santos, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services

DATE: March 30, 2023

RE: Information Memo for Pioneer Union Elementary School District

- LCAP and Annual Update:** In accordance with Education Code Sections 52070 and 42127, the Kings County Office of Education has reviewed the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) and adopted budget of the school district for fiscal year 2022-23.

The 2022-23 Pioneer Union board approved LCAP and Annual Update may be found at:

 - 1 Pioneer 2022-23 LCAP FINAL 20220913C.pdf

The 2021-22 Pioneer Union board approved LCAP and Annual Update may be found at:

 - *2021 Pioneer FINAL Board Approved LCAP.pdf
- Charter District Annual Site Visit:** The County Office of Education charter team visited Pioneer school sites on November 15, 2022.
- Technical Assistance offered by KCOE:** The Kings County Office of Education Superintendent of Schools supports all districts and schools within Kings County by providing the following Level 1 Supports: Accountability Updates, Leadership Network, WASC participation and writing support, Technical Assistance for Content Areas, State/Federal programs, Local Control & Accountability Plan (LCAP), and School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA), Curriculum updates and professional development, Coordinating services for Foster Youth and students experiencing homelessness, Charter school support, College and Career Readiness resources and support, Tobacco Use Prevention Education program support, Data and Assessment resources and support.
- County Office Acknowledgement:** The Kings County Office of Education has commendations for the educational programs offered at all three schools. All school sites have participated in MTSS professional development and have refined their practices to meet the social emotional needs of students. District and school staff are committed to professional learning, and have planned for training in trauma informed practices. The Associated Student Body (ASB) hosts activities to promote school connectedness. As a charter, parental involvement is a high priority. This includes ongoing parental committees, parental education, and student events. Our team is fortunate to work and learn from the district's staff and students.
- Success of the Charter District:** The Pioneer District Charter emphasizes the well-rounded education of their students. Through the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) and consistent with its charter, the Pioneer Union Elementary Charter School District has identified and implemented actions to provide the highest quality education for its students. The relative high performance of the Pioneer district is evidence of the effectiveness of the district's charter. Offering and delivering an exceptional educational program allows students and subgroups to perform at high levels. Additionally, a fundamental premise at the inception of California Charter Act governing charter schools was the opportunity charter schools and districts offered parents when making educational decisions for their children. The Pioneer Charter affords the opportunity, not only to residents of the district but to families from outside the district's boundaries, to access the high quality program offered within Pioneer District and, thereby, fulfilling a principle tenet of the California charter law.

**Pioneer Union Elementary School District – Academic
Memorandum Response**

Pioneer Union Elementary School District Academic Memorandum Response

General Information

Address: 1888 Mustang Drive, Hanford CA. 93230

Website Address: www.puesd.net

County-District-School (CDS) Code: 16- 63990-0000000

Charter Number: D1

Charter Term: 2019-2026

District Description: Union Elementary School District

Grade Levels Served: TK - 8

2021–22 Enrollment: 1574

Site Based or Non-Site Based: Site Based

Areas of Greatest Progress and Need

Based on the charter district's internal spring and fall 2022 assessments, and the 2022 California School Dashboard (Dashboard), identify the charter district's areas of greatest progress and greatest need.

1. What internal assessments (not California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress [CAASPP]) are being used to demonstrate the charter district's areas of greatest progress? Are any of these assessments on the approved verified data list? If so, which ones?

The district uses multiple measures to assess student progress. Students in elementary grades take FastBridge assessments by Illuminate in both Reading and Math to demonstrate areas of greatest progress. This academic progress indicator is on the State approved verified data list. Additionally, students in grades 1st-3rd and struggling readers in 4th and 5th take Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System reading tests to monitor reading progress more in depth. Students at the middle school take Illuminate standards-based benchmark assessments to monitor progress.

2. Identify the charter district's areas of greatest progress:

CAASPP results and internal district assessments show that the district's actions in response to the negative impacts of COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent learning loss are having positive effects when comparing the 2021 to the 2022 CAASPP performance.

3. What data demonstrate these areas of progress? Include any related Dashboard data and internal data.

- Students meeting or exceeding standard on the ELA CAASPP assessment increased from 54% to 57%, with 7 of 8 subgroups increasing the percentage of students meeting or

exceeding standard. Students at or above grade level on FastBridge assessments increased by 1% between Spring 2022 and Winter 2022.

- Students meeting or exceeding standard on the Mathematics CAASPP Assessment increased from 32% to 40%, with all subgroups increasing the percentage of students meeting or exceeding standard. Students at or above grade level on FastBridge assessments increased by 3% between Spring 2022 and Winter 2022.

4. Identify the charter district's areas of greatest need including references to student sub-groups:

- Improve chronic absentee rates for all groups
- Continue to address learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic in English language arts and mathematics.

5. What data demonstrate these areas of need? Include any related Dashboard data and internal data.

The district overall chronic absentee rate is 30.4% with all but two subgroups (Filipino and Asian) having a status of “very high.” The State rate is 30%.

The performance for all students in ELA and mathematics has decreased from the prepandemic performance of 2019 to post-pandemic 2022:

- ELA decreased from 19 points above standard to 8.1 points above standard and three of eight subgroups in the two lowest status levels to five of eight subgroups performing in the two lowest status levels.
- Mathematics decreased from 19 points above standard to 27 points below standard and one of eight subgroups in the two lowest status levels to five of eight subgroups performing in the two lowest status levels.

6. How is the charter district addressing these areas of need? Include references to student sub-groups.

Chronic Absentee Rate

The district is addressing the absentee rate through measures that focus on all groups because seven of the nine subgroups have a status of “very high.” The district has increased the number of counselors based on the SEL needs of the students coming out of the pandemic to address SEL barriers to academic engagement and school attendance. However, the district is placing a greater emphasis and resources on the two groups with the highest absentee rate, SWD (38.5%) and Socio-economically disadvantaged (35.5%). Concerning SWD, the case carrier providing services for these students works closely with the families if school attendance becomes an issue. In such cases, the case carrier, counselor, and the district attendance supervisor work with the family to determine and mitigate the root cause of the poor attendance. The same focus is being placed on other students by running regular student absence reports and responding in a restorative fashion to the students needs in regard to student attendance.

Response from Pioneer Union Elementary

Academic Performance in ELA and Mathematics

The district is addressing the impacts of learning loss resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and school closure through a myriad of actions. The district is identifying students for targeted intervention through regular analysis of data and then intervening during the school day through a deployment program we call “Walk to Learn.” For unduplicated students, we are providing additional learning opportunities and enrichment through the ELOP program after school and during the summer intersession.

Summary of Performance on Measurable Pupil Outcomes

1. Provide a summary of the performance in Element 2 (Measurable Pupil Outcomes) in the petition:

Historically, Pioneer UESD has shown positive growth with each administration of the CAASPP ELA and Mathematics assessments up until the COVID 19 pandemic. The impact of the Pandemic did result in learning loss and a decline in student performance on tests administered upon reopening our schools. However, the district has shown positive growth in ELA and Mathematics each year since reopening indicating that the learning loss is being addressed albeit over time.

The table below shows the percentage of each subgroup meeting or exceeding standards on the CAASPP ELA and Mathematics assessments. In ELA, the district performs better than the county wide performance of each subgroup. In mathematics, the district’s subgroup performance is better than the county wide performance with the exception of two subgroups, Black African American and Filipino.

Subgroup	Achievement Level	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
		County-Wide	District	County-Wide	District
All Students	Standard Met or Exceeded	43%	57%	27%	40%
Black or African American	Standard Met or Exceeded	34%	37%	19%	14%
Asian	Standard Met or Exceeded	61%	79%	47%	54%
Filipino	Standard Met or Exceeded	78%	84%	57%	52%
Hispanic or Latino	Standard Met or Exceeded	39%	51%	22%	34%
White	Standard Met or Exceeded	59%	67%	44%	50%
EL	Standard Met or Exceeded	16%	24%	9%	11%
RFEP	Standard Met or Exceeded	59%	65%	28%	38%
SED	Standard Met or Exceeded	37%	50%	21%	33%
SWD	Standard Met or Exceeded	13%	21%	10%	12%

- Foster students do not compose a subgroup as there are fewer than 15

The table below displays the percentage increase of each student group in meeting or exceeding standard. All groups made positive growth with the exception of 2 or more races in ELA and students with disabilities in mathematics.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 2022							2 Yr. Growth M/E
	Not Met	Nearly Met	Met	Exceeded	Met or Exceeded	n	
ALL	18%	24%	35%	22%	57%	1025	3%

Black A.A	23%	40%	20%	17%	37%	35	8%
Asian	8%	13%	44%	36%	79%	39	5%
Filipino	3%	13%	58%	26%	84%	31	19%
Hispanic	22%	28%	34%	17%	51%	542	4%
White	14%	19%	37%	29%	67%	326	1%
2 or more races	27%	20%	23%	30%	53%	30	-3%
Foster	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0%	*	0%
EL	48%	27%	23%	2%	24%	66	18%
Econ. Dis.	24%	26%	32%	18%	50%	502	1%
SWD	61%	18%	17%	4%	21%	89	3%
MATHEMATICS 2022							
	Not Met	Nearly Met	Met	Exceeded	Met or Exceeded	n	2 Yr. Growth M/E
All	29%	32%	23%	17%	40%	1025	7%
Black A.A	31%	54%	6%	9%	14%	35	3%
Asian	10%	36%	18%	36%	54%	39	7%
Filipino	13%	35%	25%	16%	42%	31	2%
Hispanic	34%	32%	21%	12%	34%	541	7%
White	22%	29%	28%	22%	50%	325	8%
2 or more races	33%	17%	23%	27%	50%	30	25%
Foster	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0%	*	0%
EL	64%	26%	9%	2%	11%	66	10%
Econ. Dis.	33%	33%	18%	15%	33%	502	2%
SWD	65%	22%	9%	3%	12%	89	-4%

English Learner Performance on the ELPAC		
Pioneer District	Kings County	California State
17.39% of students were proficient on the ELPAC test	12.12% of students were proficient on the ELPAC test	15.57% of students were proficient on the ELPAC test

2021–22 Local Control and Accountability Plan Progress

1. Provide a summary of progress made in meeting the charter district’s 2021–22 Local Control and Accountability (LCAP) goals:

The district consistently performs well in meeting its established LCAP goals. What we have ascertained during this unprecedented period coming out of the pandemic is the goals we established prior to the pandemic need to be benchmarked. As shown by the attached Academic Results Table, academic performance grew steadily year over year prior to the pandemic but has regressed as a result of the pandemic and subsequent learning loss. However, the two years of post-pandemic state assessment results show a trend of increased performance in all indicators except chronic absentee rate which indicates that learning loss is being addressed effectively. The

district attributes the chronic absentee rate to its strict adherence to the CDPH health and safety guidance which took students exposed to or testing positive for COVID 19 out of school and placed them in quarantine for periods. However, to date, the attendance rate for the 2022-23 school year is approximately 96%. We are confident that through the diligent monitoring and the accountability systems we have in place for school attendance, our chronic absentee rate will significantly improve on the 2023 California School Dashboard.

2. Provide a summary of the ongoing 2022–23 LCAP annual update process, including the charter district’s work to engage community members in the process:

The annual update of the LCAP is an ongoing process throughout the year beginning with the reflection and analysis of assessments (both State and local) and communicating results to our educational partners. The district then solicits their input for programs and services of the district to further student achievement and the eight state priorities. Educational partners include but are not limited to the following: parent advisory council; school site councils; English Learner Advisory Committee; District English Language Learner Advisory Committee; comprehensive school safety team consisting of first responders, teachers, administrators, facilities personnel, etc.; parents of students with disabilities; foster parents; teachers; students; administrators; classified personnel; wellness committee; labor representatives; and SELPA personnel. This diverse input then informs the development of the LCAP annual update. To date, the topics that are most prominent when engaging our educational partners are addressing student learning loss and the social emotional needs of students and staff.

3. How is the charter district addressing learning loss from the prior school year?

The district has a schedule of a systematic cycle of assessments including initial screenings of all students learning. This data then establishes the degree of learning loss or gaps due continued impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic. The district also has a schedule of summative assessments to monitor student learning throughout the current school year. Teachers have a variety of formative assessments at their disposal including those within the state adopted curriculum and those generated by the standards based district assessment program allowing them to monitor student learning and areas of need on an ongoing and routine basis. Through the initial screening assessments and ongoing assessments, teacher teams and departments respond to the data by scheduling targeted interventions to address students who may be struggling as a result of the challenges caused by the impacts of COVID-19 and learning loss.

The District has also invested in the social emotional wellbeing of the students by increasing the number of counselors available to students, implementing an SEL program in all grades and classes, and providing training for staff in trauma informed practices.

2022–23 Plan for Independent Study

1. Inform if the charter district is providing independent study (IS) in the 2022–23 school year, including the percentage of average daily attendance enrolled in IS:

The district provides independent study if students are not able to attend school for five or more days.

Pioneer Union Elementary School District – Academic Results

Pioneer Union Elementary School District Academic Results

California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) Test Results

The following data represents percentages of students that met or exceeded standards for English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics (Math). This information was obtained from the CAASPP Test Results for California's Assessments web page at <https://caaspp-elpac.ets.org/caaspp/>.

Results for All Grades and Students

Year	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22
School ELA	58%%	60%	61%	No Data	54%	57%
School Math	45%	45%	48%	No Data	32%	40%
State ELA	48.56%	49.88%	51.10%	No Data	49.01%	47.06%
State Math	37.56%	38.65%	39.73%	No Data	33.76%	33.38%

Results for Student Sub-Groups 2021–22

Student Sub-Group	English Learners	Foster Youth	Homeless	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	Students with Disabilities
School ELA	24%	N/A	N/A	50%	21%
School Math	11%	N/A	N/A	33%	12%
State ELA	12.47%	20.64%	27.79%	35.24%	15.61%
State Math	9.71%	10.30%	15.90%	21.23%	11.41%

2022 California School Dashboard Data Overview

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, state law allows the 2022 California School Dashboard (Dashboard) to only display the most current year of data (also known as Status). For this year only, performance levels will be reported using one of five Status levels (ranging from Very High, High, Medium, Low, and Very Low) for state measures. Please note that the Status levels associated with the Chronic Absenteeism and Suspension Rate Indicators are reversed (ranging from Very Low, Low, Medium, High, and Very High). Additional information regarding 2022 Dashboard data is available on the Dashboard Communication Toolkit web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardtoolkit.asp>. The following information was obtained from the Dashboard website at <https://www.caschooldashboard.org/>.

Performance (Status) Levels

Dashboard Indicator	School Performance (Status) Level	State Performance (Status) Level
Chronic Absenteeism	Very High	Very High
Suspension Rate	Medium	Medium
English Learner Progress	Medium	Medium
Graduation Rate	N/A	Medium
College/Career	N/A	Not Reported
ELA	Medium	Low
Math	Low	Low

This document was prepared by the California Department of Education, Charter Schools Division, January 2023.