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PCI Management Team

Cynthia D. Park, Ph.D.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR /TRIO DIRECTOR
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI)

Rochelle Hancock

FISCAL SPECIALIST

Tomaso Mauricio, M.S.

DIRECTOR OF SUMMER RESIDENTIAL
PROGRAMS UB/HCOP

Christina Ortiz, B.S.

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Nadia Rohlinger, M.A.

PCI DIRECTOR OF SERVICE LEARNING

Halan Stanfield

EVALUATION RESEARCH SPECIALIST

Nada Stevens, M.A.T.

TALENT SEARCH
ADVISING COORDINATOR

Executive Office,

Alpert Center (DAC)
Room 100
4283 El Cajon Blvd.
San Diego, CA 92105
Phone: (619) 594-2349

**F-SMP Undergraduate
Research Lab/Office**

North Education 75
San Diego State University
San Diego, CA 92182-1103
Phone: (619) 594-4223
Fax: (619) 594-4217

Website:

<https://education.sdsu.edu/pci>

Facebook:

@SDSUPCI

Instagram:

@sdsuprecollegeinstitute

Staci Monreal, Chief of Staff, Superintendent's Office
Sofia Freire, Area Superintendent
Christina Casillas, Area 3 Superintendent
Monika Hazel, Area 4 Superintendent
San Diego Unified School District
4100 Normal St,
San Diego, CA 92103

Dear Mesdames:

Because San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) will continue with distance learning for Fall 2020, the Pre-College Institute's Pathways Office for Careers in STEM Education (Pathways) informs SDUSD personnel that we will also continue to provide virtual tutoring to coincide with the beginning of your academic year 2020-2021. We initiated online tutoring services in mid-March 2020 when San Diego County school districts and San Diego State University shifted to online learning. In Spring 2020, Pathways tutors increased student engagement online through over 500 hours of virtual tutoring with students at eleven different schools across two school districts.

To increase the impact of our tutors' work, we will need the following supports from your district:

- Online access to work collaboratively with teachers and students both synchronously and asynchronously for the Academic Year 2020-2021.
- To individualize instruction, Pathways requests that partner school districts allow teachers to assign students and tutors to Zoom breakout rooms, or the equivalent in other video conferencing platforms.¹
- Pathways requests access to synchronous class meetings teachers conduct for tutors to work alongside teachers in real time and for staff to be able to observe the tutors in the virtual classrooms. This may entail providing district email addresses to be assigned to our program staff and tutors to allow them to access the synchronous virtual classroom and the Learning Management System (LMS) used by the district.²
- Access and authorization to work directly with parents of students so that asynchronous tutoring can be conducted outside of the classroom setting (see footnote 3).
- The federally funded Talent Search Program fiscally supports the Pathways Office to administer the service-learning tutoring program. Therefore, it is necessary to collect student data forms as documentation

¹ Cooperating teachers are concerned that allowing tutors to be in break-out sessions without their presence allows an uncertificated person to be "alone" with students.

² Pathways will submit necessary documentation to the district to facilitate this request.

for each student we serve. Pathways requests that partner schools include a Student Data Form in a school's summer packet. This will ensure that Pathways tutors are able to serve the students at the school sites.³

Teachers who worked online with our tutors in spring 2020 said Pathways tutors excelled at:

- Providing small group instruction
- Serving as moderators in whole-class discussions
- Supporting students' social and emotional needs

The impact of small-group instruction is well documented in educational research. We know that all students, but especially English language learners, benefit from small-group and individualized instruction. Students who benefited from online tutoring with Pathways tutors stated the following:

- "I felt comfortable during our meeting and enjoyed all the help I received." (Rising senior at San Diego High School).
- "I'm really grateful for her helping me because this was my first-time taking AP world history so it was difficult for me to understand the learning and pass the class. Going from not passing the class to passing the class was an important achievement for me." (rising junior at Crawford High School).

Pathways Staff is confident that our tutors' online interaction with students and parents poses minimal risk to the district. Tutors are screened and trained thoroughly. Though Pathways tutors are not yet student teachers, they are part of the School of Teacher Education Early Field Experience. They are vetted in the same way student teachers are and thus are in compliance with education codes pertaining to any person working with children in a classroom. Their vetting and extensive preparation include the following:

- All Pathways tutors are interviewed by the Pathways staff that helps the staff discern the tutors' skills and dispositions to best support the students.
- The tutors also must complete a background check through San Diego State University Human Resources.
- The tutors must complete a Live Scan.
- Before starting in school sites, tutors must complete a TB test.
- Tutors complete the California Mandated Reporter Training for School Personnel and General Training.

Pathways tutor preparation help tutors increase student engagement online because they:

- Develop time management and accountability skills
- Incorporate feedback from peers and supervisors to continuously improve their service.
- Develop interpersonal skills to effectively work with students and cooperating teacher(s).
- Develop reciprocal negotiating skills by interacting with a Pathways instructional coach who observes them in their cooperating teachers' classrooms.

³ Our Talent Search Program will work directly with the school administration to complete Student Data Forms. Pathways successfully implemented this model of school-wide collection of Student Data Forms at Bell Middle School in the 2019-2020 school year. This will give permission [from the Parents] for Pathways Tutors to work directly with students outside of the classroom hours.

If the school districts require additional clearance beyond the steps that Pathways follows, Pathways will identify and contact a point person in the San Diego State University School of Teacher Education or at the San Diego State Research Foundation who can work collaboratively with various school districts to offer training that would allow tutors to work in Zoom breakout rooms.

We appreciate your continued partnership. We know this is a unique and challenging time for everyone. We are doing our best to be proactive and support students, teachers, and the community. We would love to continue to connect and collaborate.

Sincerely,



Cynthia Park, Ph.D.,
Executive Director
Pre-College Institute



Nadia H. Rohlinger, M.A.
PCI Director of Service Learning
Pre-College Institute



Katie Bodie
PCI Tutor Specialist
Pre-College Institute