



2020

REFLECTIONS

Chapter 42 - We are Kindred Spirits

Karen Timko, Coordinator for Student Support Programs, shared a moving reflection over the weekend.

While I am pausing on sending division-wide emails over the summer, I will continue to share the reflections you send on this website.

Please enjoy Karen's reflection below. Thank you, Karen!

KAREN'S REFLECTION

Dear SHHS Family,

I want to take a moment to reflect with you and to thank you for being such an important and wonderful part of my life.

I taught for 6 years before finally making the transition to the Los Angeles

Unified School District as a School Psychologist in 1987. I had no idea that I would have so many amazing pathways to express my beliefs that all children can learn and thrive despite their circumstances, all people can live harmoniously in a fair and just society, and that world peace truly is possible.

Each of my roles seemed to prepare me for the next miraculous opportunity to serve, whether working individually with students or working on school and community partnerships as a Healthy Start Coordinator and Organization Facilitator.

As the Coordinator for the Early Behavior Intervention Counseling (EBIC) program (later known as the Primary Intervention Counseling Services (PICS) program), I had the honor of working with hundreds of PSWs, PSAs, Elementary and Secondary Counselors, and School Psychologists over a 9-year period. We worked as a team to provide a wide range of professional development in research-based strategies such as Second Step as well as strategies like mindfulness, yoga, and therapeutic drumming that, at the time, were “out of the box.” I am grateful to all my supervisors who supported us in funding and allowing these amazing trainings and for all of the counselors who brilliantly implemented these strategies so successfully.

I am thankful for being able to work with the Ready-For-School centers that served the early childhood population, and for my work with the Neglected or Delinquent Program.

The Foster Youth Achievement Program gave me the opportunity to actualize my ultimate dream to serve foster youth and to participate in transforming the systems that serve them.

Now, as the Student Support Programs SHHS Coordinator for Local District South, I have been able to assist with the restructuring and delivery of services to our foster youth, youth experiencing homelessness, and youth involved in the juvenile justice system.

Our administrative team is phenomenal, dedicated, and compassionate. The counselors continue to amaze me with their resilience, adaptability, and resourcefulness. Our highly productive District Support Team has

been a joy to work with, making each day happier and more fulfilling for our staff.

Of course, none of us could have known that our 2020 Vision would include an unprecedented pandemic necessitating a district-wide shutdown, immediate shift to remote working and learning, and an historic protest for social justice and racial equality.

As I retire from this part of my life's journey, my heart is overflowing with hope that we are finally going to work together to make "liberty and justice for ALL" a reality where every person on our planet will feel valued, respected, safe, and loved.

I feel so fortunate to have worked with so many dedicated professionals in so many different roles, many of whom have become dear and lifelong friends. We are kindred spirits on a mission to make the world a better place and there simply are not enough words to say how much that has meant to me personally and professionally.

If you wish to stay in touch, please send me a friend request on Facebook and/or via email at ktimko143@att.net. Thank you and may you each be abundantly blessed in every way.

Sincerely,

Pia and Karen

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