



PIEDMONT

PIEDMONT HIGH SCHOOL

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Proposal for a New Course

Course Title: Affinity Mentorship

Department: Non-Departmental

Grade Level: 9-12

Proposed date of implementation: 2022-23 School Year

Origin of Request:

Teacher(s): Jean Chen Takazawa

Department: Non-Departmental

School: Havens Elementary, Millennium High School

Date: January 6, 2022

Course Description: (Please write a brief course description)

The Piedmont Affinity and Identity Mentor Program is designed to bring Millennium High School and Piedmont High School students from similar cultural and ethnic backgrounds together with their elementary and middle school peers at Beach, Havens, Wildwood, and Piedmont Middle School (PMS.)

Conversations around identity, culture, and ethnicity are introduced in an age-appropriate way with the use of books, video, music, art and inspirational role models. The mentors are creative and committed members of our high school community and will learn how to hone their skills to be effective mentors for younger students in PUSD.

The Affinity Mentorship course will emphasize community building in a safe and nurturing environment so students get to know their mentors as well as each other.

1. Needs Statement/Needs Assessment

What need will this course fulfill?

The Affinity Mentorship Course is a district-proposed and district-led course created in response to the needs identified in the Racial Equity Board Policy. The following is an excerpt from BP

The Board recognizes that underrepresented groups became underrepresented not of their own doing but rather as the result of the institutionalized power dynamic and

racism that exists in society. In every decision it makes, the Board shall work to ensure equitable outcomes for BIPOC students, staff, and their families and, in so doing, shall not rely on biased or stereotypical assumptions about any particular group. The Board and the Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement school and district policies, procedures, and strategies to promote racial equity in the school experience for BIPOC students, staff, and their families.

BIPOC students not having a BIPOC teacher at any point in their time in PUSD is unacceptable. Changing this system won't happen overnight; taking another approach is necessary. BIPOC students have continually spoken of their need for role models of a similar race to help them process what it is like to be a student of color going to school in Piedmont. For the past two years, students have successfully formed and developed the mentorship program with leadership provided by Jean Chen Takazawa, PUSD staff member, and Ina Bendich, Restorative Justice consultant. The following video was created by affinity mentorship leaders and further explains the need for this program to be adopted, institutionalized, and made available to all BIPOC students who attend school in Piedmont.

How was this need determined?

Piedmont Affinity and Identity Mentor Program started in August 2020, primarily on a virtual basis. Most training sessions and student meetings were held online. With the return to in-person classes, there has been an increase in the time commitment needed from both students and staff to participate and run this program. High school students who serve as mentors should have the option to earn elective credits for their participation in this program.

Below is a link to the Introduction Video for the Havens Mentorship Program. It describes more of the origin of the course and how the need for the course was determined. The goals of the course were to promote the following: Representation, identity, inclusion, cultural awareness, sensitivity, and respect.

[Havens Mentorship Program — Introduction Video.mp4](#)

Why is this need not met by the current curriculum?

PUSD does not currently have a similar course offering.

Have you considered other alternatives to meet this need? If so, explain.

Yes, currently students participate in the Piedmont Affinity and Identity Mentor Program on a voluntary basis as an extracurricular activity.

What prerequisites will there be?

None.

Why do you think this course is the best solution in meeting the need?

Students of color have a lack of representation in the teaching staff. High school students of similar backgrounds step in to serve the role of mentors and positive role models. Offering the Piedmont

Affinity and Identity Mentor Program as a high-school elective course and giving students credit for the work they are doing institutionalizes the work and honors the students' service to their community.

2. Effect on Other Aspects of the School Program

From what other subjects do you anticipate that students will be drawn?

This course will not impact other subjects and/or courses. It will be offered as an 8th period where students will meet with the instructor outside of the school day. Mentorship hours will be logged similar to the way PUSD currently grants credit for independent study PE.

Will the course require specially trained teachers not now on the staff?

At this time, we have a teacher trained to teach the course. If at any point this changes, the District will provide the training needed to ensure the course continues.

3. Projected Cost

The cost of this course is the cost of .2 FTE allocation for the teacher and \$1,000-\$1,500 for student texts and teacher instructional materials.

4. Graduation Requirement

How does this course fulfill PHS Graduation Requirements? Is it UC Approved? Which UC Subject Requirement does it meet (a-g)?

This course will fulfill the PUSD elective requirement.

5. Similar School Comparison

List any schools similar to PHS that have the particular course as one of their offerings.

WISE Mentoring - Tamalpais High School

Peer Tutoring - Acalanes Union High School District

School Service - Palo Alto High School

School Community Service - Mills High School