



CADA

California Association of
Directors of Activities

SERIES 2020 - 2021

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ISSUE 2



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Allison Gadeke
CADA President
agadeke@cadaboard.org

Hi there CADA Friends! Autumn is one of my favorite seasons. It brings new beginnings -- for our kids, our schools, and the changing foliage. It is also the time when we begin celebrating things near and dear to us -- like our close friends and families. This year will look a little different for many of us as celebrations are smaller in size or even virtual. No matter what or how you choose to celebrate, I hope this special time brings you joyful memories and time to relax and rejuvenate.

As I reflect upon 2020, I choose to think about all the things I have to be

grateful for. We were blessed to welcome a new daughter-in-law to our family in September, we currently enjoy great health, and we have come even closer together as a family during our time of intermittent quarantine. I also have wonderful classes of truly awesome kids, an incredible team of colleagues, and a school community that is an extension of my family. Being grateful for things big and small is helping me to keep everything in perspective. Yes, I have frustrations, fears, and concerns, but by focusing (as often as I can) on gratitude, I am able to keep everything in perspective.

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Two books I read recently are helping me to remember this. The first is a book I originally read several years ago. *A Simple Act of Gratitude: How Learning to Say Thank You Changed My Life*, by John Kralik, gives a detailed look into one man's life and the mistakes he made. We also witness the lessons he learned by remembering to show sincere gratitude. I am also thankful for the wonderful lessons and reminders in my friend, Houston Kraft's new book, *Deep Kindness: A Revolutionary Guide for the Way We Think, Talk, and Act in Kindness*. Houston's book is another great reminder to show gratitude for the people and things that are really important in our lives and to show genuine kindness to others. The book is thought-provoking and inspires us to do work within ourselves. I love these opportunities for self-reflection and growth. I am also keeping a gratitude journal to help focus on all of the positives that surround me. This has been therapeutic and has helped me to help others whom I love.

Our CADA Board also focused on gratitude during our Fall Board Meeting. The board worked diligently all summer to help support our members and pivot our programs to address topics that are relevant and timely. This work was important but left us a bit weary. Therefore, we took some time to reflect on what and whom we are most grateful for. We also watched a few videos and had some great discussions. Additionally, we helped the

area coordinators plan for our statewide virtual area conferences. We all left the meeting energized and ready to put on some exciting programs!

I am very grateful for the time and energy of all of these voluntary board members. We have a hardworking group of dedicated people whose primary mission is to provide advisors and students with opportunities for growth and support. Our advisor and student conferences were incredibly successful. This would not have been possible without the combined efforts of such a talented group of CADA friends, sponsors, and board members. In addition to these incredible people, our two CADA employees, Sandi Kurland, our

Leadership Development Coordinator, and Jeff Culver, our Professional Development Coordinator, invested an incredible amount of time and energy (behind the scenes) to make these events a great success! These humble heroes are always willing to help us create and innovate to keep CADA on the cutting edge, and we are so grateful for them! Additionally, our CADA Central team -- principally Erica Gomez, Stephanie Munoz, Betti Phillips, and Erin Avila, helped to provide information to members, give guidance to our organization, and help steer us through the uncharted waters of 2020. These ladies are dedicated to CADA's success, and we are so grateful for each of them and for all they do!

Lastly, I am grateful for each of you and the difference you continue to make -- despite the frustrations and moving targets, to keep your school's sense of community alive and well. Our kids need us and the work we do, now, more than ever. I am so thankful for each of you and your commitment and dedication to our profession. I have great hope for 2021, and I believe our students do also. Thank you to each of you for making that happen for our kids, and for not giving up. Please take care of yourself and continue to be gritty and grateful!





CADA Leaders Need Apply...

Margaret Noroian, CADA
 Immediate Past President
mnoroian@cadaboard.org

Ever wonder how you can become a leader in the CADA organization? Ever think, “I might like to serve on my Area Council or the CADA State Board?” Do you want to begin a journey of service to the CADA organization providing leadership training to advisors and students, skills for leadership development, opportunities to serve advisors and students in California and beyond, and cutting edge educational practices? If so, this article is for you!

If you want to make a difference in the CADA organization, I encourage you to get involved at your local level first. Volunteer to lead a SWAP group at a local

Area Conference, present a workshop, or help organize the day’s events. Find out who your Area Coordinator is, to see how you can contribute by visiting CADA1.org. Ask to join the Area Council; a group of like-minded Activity Directors who share their knowledge, interest, and passion for leadership development. After serving on the council for one year, you will be eligible to run for Area Coordinator. At the 2021 CADA State Convention Areas A, C, E, and G will be electing Area Coordinators. (Area B, D, F elect their Coordinators in even years.)

Qualification to run for Area Coordinator (BP 6.2)

- After serving one (1) full year on the Area Council, all council members (elected and appointed) are eligible to run for the position of Area Coordinator.
- Former council members are eligible to run for Area Coordinator up to and including five (5) years after leaving the council.
- The Immediate Past President is responsible for running the election process if the Area Coordinator is up for re-election.
- The intent to run form will be sent out by the Immediate Past President by December 1st and will be due to the Immediate Past President by January 1st.

Becoming an Area Coordinator or being appointed to one of several positions on the State Board makes you eligible to run for CADA VP after one full year of service. If serving on the CADA State Board as the

Vice President is a goal, the following Board Policy outlines the process for running for CADA Vice President.

Board Policy 6.1 Vice President Pool

- After serving one (1) full year on the CADA State Board, all Board members (elected and appointed) are eligible to run for the position of Vice President.
- Former Board members are eligible to run for Vice President up to and including five (5) years after leaving the Board.
- Once elected, you will proceed through the positions of Vice President, President-Elect, President, and Immediate Past President.
- Each position has specific duties, obligations, and responsibilities. Refer to Board Policy if you have any questions about these duties.

The CADA Vice President application process for 2021-2022 is complete. Eligible candidates had until November 1st to express their desire to run. There was one candidate who did so, and she will be elected by a vote of acclamation at the convention. Congratulations to our candidate Bonnie Bagheri from Area G!

There is still time to throw your hat in the ring for Area A, C, E, or G Area Coordinator. The deadline to submit your Intent to Run Application to me is January 1st. Watch for the email with all the information on November 9th, December 1st, and again on December 15th.

If you aspire to make a difference in the CADA organization for the advisors and students we serve during these challenging times, I encourage you to find out more by visiting the CADA website, talking to other Area Council or State Board members, or contacting me at **831-320-2234**. I am looking forward to your service!

DAY of SILENCE to UNITE

Bonnie Bagheri

Area G Coordinator

bbagheri@cadaboard.org

The students decided that we needed to unite everyone on campus through a Day of Silence. Sometimes saying nothing speaks louder than words. Also, it was decided that stickers would represent different groups on campus. Our club presidents came together through a forum and decided on a plan of action. Everything was voluntary but they wanted to make sure that all students and staff were invited to join in the Day of Silence. The following steps were taken:

1. Held a forum for students to consider the plan
2. Admin on board to support us
3. Chose the Day
4. Students designed stickers and ASB printed them
5. Talked with Staff
6. Advertised to the student body
7. Student News covered the Project before the Event
8. Day of Silence - Passing out the stickers
9. Debriefing the Day of Silence on the next day in English Classes

The passing out of stickers was done by club presidents. Every student and staff member was allowed to take up to three stickers. Some highlights for the day were teachers and students used different ways of communicating with each other. Some teachers planned lessons that fit with the day of silence. The stickers were a hit! Bravo to our English Department who did the debrief the next day! [Click here for stickers.](#)



CADA PRESENTS

MIXTAPE TRIVIA TUESDAYS!

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE BEST TRIVIA, MUSIC, AND POP CULTURE OF THE 80S AND 90S!

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1
7:00 P.M.

READY PLAYER ONE?
REGISTER TODAY
AT CADA1.ORG/MIXTAPE

How Strong Are You?

Denise van Doorn

Area H Coordinator

dvandoorn@cadaboard.org

What does it mean to be strong?

Who do you think of when you think of a strong person?

Strengths are tasks or actions you can do well. These include knowledge, proficiencies, skills, and talents. There are different kinds of strengths. What do you think are your most important strengths? What are the strengths you would most like to develop?

Click on this link to do a personal Character Strength Inventory

[Character strength inventory](#)

There are different types of strengths!

- Character strengths
- Social Strengths
- Language Strengths
- Literacy Strengths
- Math and Logic Strengths
- Study Skills Strengths
- Other Strengths and Talents

What are Character Strengths?

- Hard-working
- Resilient
- Independent
- Cooperative
- Eager
- Curious
- Trustworthy
- Caring
- Kind
- Helpful
- Empathetic
- Loyal

What are Social Strengths?

- Can share, take turns, and can compromise
- Tries to be a good conversation partner and not interrupt too much
- Puts an effort into making friends and keeping them
- Is a good listener
- Likes to help and is sensitive to the needs of others
- Accepts differences in others
- Asks for help when needed
- Has ways of coping when frustrated
- Knows when it's OK to follow the crowd and when to resist peer pressure
- Accepts personal responsibility for

actions (good and bad)

- Can be redirected away from a negative situation to a positive one
- Doesn't argue when told by adults what to do
- Tells the truth and can apologize when needed
- Has a good sense of humor

Other Strengths and Talents!

- Being Creative
- Likes drawing and doodling
- Can dance, sing, act, or play a musical instrument
- Can swim, skateboard, or play sports
- Practices yoga, mindfulness, or meditation
- Is gentle with animals and/or younger siblings/children
- Likes doing community service projects
- Likes problem-solving in video games

Demonstrating and focusing on our strengths can be visible by creating Strength Chains and displaying them in the classroom, hallways, and around campus. After all, you get what you look for, so let's look at our strengths! Watch this video to see it in action:

[My Strengths chain.](#)



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2021 CASL STATE CONFERENCE

MS: APRIL 8-10 || HS: APRIL 10-12

SANTA CLARA CONVENTION CENTER 5001 GREAT AMERICA PKWY, SANTA CLARA, CA 95054

The CASL State Conference unites student leaders across California through exhilarating training that leaves them inspired and equipped with practical skills to enact change within their campuses and the world.

For more information, contact Sandra Kurland at leadership@cada1.org

STATEWIDE NETWORKING • KEYNOTE SPEAKERS • STUDENT-LED WORKSHOPS • MEET THE PROS SESSION • SERVICE LEARNING



CADA NEWSLETTER SEEKING CONTENT CONTRIBUTORS

**Do you have a great idea
you would like to share
with the CADA membership?**

**We are looking for content
contributors for the quarterly
CADA Newsletter.**

Articles and accompanying
graphics and/or photos can be
submitted to Lindsey Charron
at pic@cada1.org



#ICANHELP

www.icanhelp.net

#ICANHELP is a student-led, student-run organization that is backed by mentor and educator support. We celebrate youth innovation, empower student changemakers, and promote digital safety. Our organization works with students from our Internship Program to create a curriculum written by students for students. The Internship Program is composed of students from over 17 states and 4 countries with 9 interns, 50 specialists, and over 150+ volunteers. These students receive mentoring from industry leaders and highly skilled professionals to grow and develop their skills.

We work with our students to cover

topics in our curriculum such as student voice, digital safety, and our most popular topic: Digital Wellness. We have teamed up with Providence Health and WellBeing Trust to create our curriculum. Our Digital Wellness Training is perfect for educators, parents, and student leaders looking to find balance in our digital world. Topics covered in the training include: Self-Care and Mindfulness, Stress, Anxiety, Depression, and E-CPR (Emotionally-Connect, Partner, Respond). We also provide various tips and tricks on how to balance the digital world, while taking care of your mental health.

Digital Wellness Tips:

- Put your cell phone on Do not disturb when doing work
- Set a timer for 25 minutes when working to stay focused with no distractions

- Check your phone after you get ready for the day instead of the first thing when you wake up
- Turn off notifications on specific apps that are distracting

Our new website is full of Free Resources and Events for you and your students. Join our #ICANHELP family and empower student changemakers in your life by checking out our website, <https://www.icanhelp.net>.



Talk to Someone About It

Johan Khalilian

johankhalilian@gmail.com

I remember having a conversation with a young man after one of my speaking engagements - before the pandemic. He approached me and said, "Can I talk to you for a second?" These are the moments I live for. Communicating from the stage is a privilege, but honestly, I care more about the one-on-one moments where I get to connect, listen, and hear stories.

He shared what impacted him during my message, "When you said we can produce beauty out of pain, that hit me. My mother passed away two months ago and I've been holding it in. I don't want to do that anymore. I want to create beauty with it."

I could hear the emotion welling in his voice and see the pain in his eyes. I can't

imagine what it's like to lose a parent at that age and feel like you have to be strong, like you can't just let it out and be a grieving teenager.

When did we teach our kids to hold their pain? That's right, WE did that. Every time we refuse vulnerability. Every time we act like we're stronger than we really are. Every time we keep secrets. Every time we blame others. Every time we choose resentment and bitterness. Every time we play the victim. Every time we cut off someone who does us wrong - we pass that on as an example to the next generation.

We don't have to hold in our pain. We

can open up and be vulnerable. We can admit we have weaknesses and that's okay. We can take the weight off and share our secrets. We can admit responsibility. We can choose forgiveness and freedom. We can heal and reclaim our power. We can embrace those who have done us wrong. We can set our little ones free.

As we walk through this pandemic, please share what you're going through with others. The temptation is to keep it to yourself. The easy route is living in isolation. It takes courage to walk up to someone and say, "can I talk to you for a second?"



CASL VOICE

In the spirit of shared ownership, the CASL State Board has created an update highlighting the different projects CASL has completed these past months.

Curriculum Packs

The CASL Curriculum Committee has been hard at work to provide resources for student leaders all across the country. With middle and high school campuses turning virtual, the Curriculum Committee wanted to provide leadership resources that are applicable to online environments. Recently, the committee has released their second pack titled "Leading Towards Tomorrow" which was released in early November. It includes information about providing leadership opportunities for students, supporting mental health, and increasing accessibility. Check it out at www.caslboard.com/curriculum!

- **Ernie Padilla**, CASL Southern Director

Service Project Resources

The CASL Service Committee is providing ways to make change through service even in a virtual year. Our new initiative, Service Project Resources, are comprehensive planning guides including everything needed to plan a specific service project.

Our Equity Panel Resource is out now at caslboard.com/service-learning. It includes planning steps, sample emails, technology tips and more to guide planners along the way. Utilize this resource to plan an equity panel to address and find solutions for issues on campus!

- **Nosheen Ullah**, CASL Northern Director



CASL Merchandise

The CASL Visualizations Committee has spent the past few months perfecting the launch of our online merchandise store and we are happy to announce that it's now up and running! Visit caslboard.com/merchandise to shop brand new CASL merchandise designed by the State Board. We would also like to give a huge shoutout to Kustom Imprints for sponsoring us and for helping us set up the store! We hope you enjoy all our store has to offer, and stay tuned for new designs in the future!

- **Daniel Anunne**, CASL Northern Director



Elections & Meet The Pros Applications

The Elections Committee has been hard at work with the creation of guidebooks, Meet the Pros applications, and the application for the 2021-2022 CASL State Board. We have worked to create a process our delegates would like to be a part of along with creating new questions and creative components. We are so excited to announce our applications will be dropping **November 3rd, 2020!** Check out our website for more information and to see applications when they go live at caslboard.com/elections.

- **Erin Shaffer**, CASL Southern Director

Get Involved With CASL

CASL Outreach Program is so excited to publicize two amazing resources for student leaders across California. The first opportunity CASL has is to join our Ambassadors Program which connects students from across California. Visit caslboard.com/casl-ambassadors for more information. Additionally, the CASL Connect newsletter produced bi-monthly has all types of resources that can be found at caslboard.com/caslconnect. Reach out to tanner.schinderle@caslboard.com with any questions!

- **Tanner Schinderle**, CASL Outreach Director

CASL Media Ambassadors

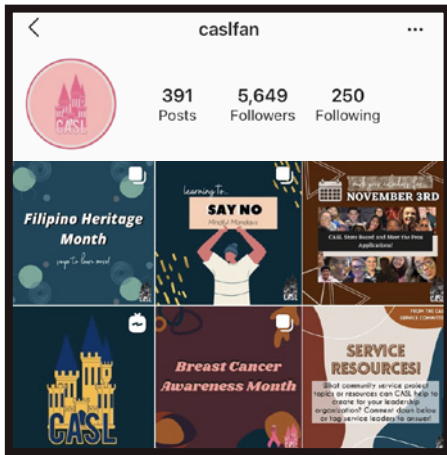
After many months of preparation, the Media Team has finally established the CASL Media Ambassadors Team! Our goal for this group of individuals is to provide creative resources and skills to our delegates for them to bring back to their school as well as providing pathways for potential media directors. We also are striving to find each individual's media specialty and to expand horizons of their creativity. On our first call, the Media Team led the ambassadors through an activity that was able to set a bar for growth. Each member was tasked to create a moodboard introducing themselves. The Media Team also received insight on what resources we could be able to provide for the delegates and schools. We are looking forward to working with our CASL Media Ambassadors in the future!

- **Candice Li**, CASL Media Director



Let's Be Friends

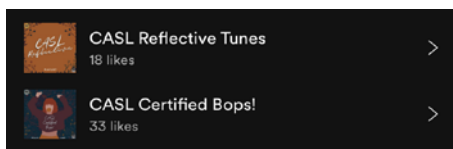
The CASL Social Media Subcommittee is hard at work creating social media content every month for the CASL Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter accounts. A few of our goals this year are to post meaningful resources and bring light to important movements and issues going on in this world. On top of that, we are excited to keep our followers updated on everything CASL is working on, from project resources to our upcoming conference for our delegates! Join our journey on all platforms [@caslfan!](#)
- **Nosheen Ullah**, CASL Northern Director



Spotify Playlists

Grab your earphones and open Spotify! We have playlists ranging from upbeat songs, to reflective music to calm your nerves all brought to you by CASL. Whether in person or virtual, music can be used anyway, anytime, anywhere. In a dancing mood? Need to release stress? Turn up our "CASL Certified Bops Playlist"! This can be used perfectly for pleasing large crowds such as dances, rallies, or even when you need to lighten up a Zoom room! Need music perfect for reflection? Hit play on our "CASL Reflective Tunes Playlist," whether it be for homework or studying! Go follow us [@CASLfan on Spotify](#), & enjoy!

- **Diane Kim & Mason Garner**
CASL Northern Freshman Directors



1..2..3.. Break!

As the CASL Board begins our tradition of rubbing our hands together and clapping on the count of three to end our day, we part ways as the September Board Meeting ends. During the duration of the board meeting we were able to come together via Zoom to take our CASL Workshops from good to great. Each year every board member is required to create a 30-45 minute workshop. These workshops will then be presented at various CADA/CASL events. Some workshop titles included Stars In The City, Plugging Into your Creativity, Culture Shock & so much more!

Additionally, the CASL Board took part in a CASL tradition known as "Presentation Bootcamp." During "Presentation Bootcamp" we really hone in on our board members' presentation skills. This is anywhere from using a variety of tones to refraining from using distracting speech patterns such as "Umm, ah, you know, like, basically." These presentation skills allow the CASL Board to flourish when they are presenting at various conferences.

Speaking of conferences, the CASL Board was able to assist at the Virtual CADA Fall Student Conference. The board was able to lead a SWAP (Sharing With A Purpose) session to guide middle & high school students in sharing ideas that they can bring back to their campus. Furthermore, we had various CASL Workshops presented such as Leaving a Legacy, The Ins & Outs of Emotions, Tackling Transparency and Building Trust & How To Effectively Participate in a Social Movement. Lastly, a handful of CASL Board members were able to sit on a panel with The "Amazing" Tei Street & Keith Hawkins to discuss the importance of Diversity, Equity, & Social Justice in Schools.

The CASL Board has so much in store for you & we are so excited to share it with you in the coming months! If you want to follow our journey for more CASL updates go ahead and follow [@caslfan](#) on all social media platforms. Likewise, if you have any questions about CASL in general you can email me at [andrew.santana@caslboard.com!](mailto:andrew.santana@caslboard.com)

Much CASLove,
Andrew Santana
2020-2021 CASL State President



First Annual Esports Tournament

Raven Coit

Teacher and Activities Director at Fortuna High School
coit.english@gmail.com

Y'know Friday Night Lights? That's us, in rural northern California. We are a school that nurtures athleticism and teamwork in all the sports we offer. We also have epic student cheering sections and incredible community support for our student-athletes. So you can imagine how hard this time without sports has been for our community. Seeking to create a sense of enthusiasm for players and fans alike, our student leadership team is collaborating with the coach of our brand new esports team to put on our inaugural esports tournament at the end of this month! We chose the game Rocket League because it is free, not

violent, and accessible on several different devices. We began by inviting students to put together a team of two players and fill out a form to apply. Next, we built a bracket. We met with all of the players via Zoom and asked them to send in a photo and a team bio. Our tournament will run for a week, with player bios and updated brackets daily on our social media, and spirit challenges for fans all week. We have students attending in person and from a distance, so we have a lot of Instagram challenges going on, plus a PacMan day (gratefully swiped from CADA Camp!) On our PacMan Day, students can share screenshots of their high scores on Google PacMan, dress in their class colors as "ghosts", and find Pac-Dots (ping pong balls) hidden across our campus, bringing them to a teacher to exchange for a prize of their choice.

On the final day of our tournament, we will be live streaming the final four matches for all to see, and hyping up our fans to tune in and give shout outs to their favorite



teams. We are muting the players as they play, and inviting a teacher and a student to give live commentary. The winning team will receive a homemade trophy, made by our student leaders, and a gift card to buy what they need to advance their gaming careers, donated by our local Rotary group.

It's not homecoming as we know and love it, but it may be a new tradition to connect people, evoke laughter, and celebrate a different type of champion on our campus.



CADA/CASL Leadership Camp Coming Summer of 2021

Check the cada1.org/leadershipcamps web page for the latest information.

Building Relationships through SEL

MJ Smith
Diamond Ranch High School
maryjane.smith@hesperiausd.org

As we navigate these unprecedented times in education, developing relationships with our students is the first step in supporting students socially and emotionally. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) defines Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) as “the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relations, and make responsible decisions.

SEL is made up of five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. At the heart of each of these is connecting and building relationships. Here are some SEL lesson ideas that you can use and share with your colleagues to develop those relationships with your students.



SEL Journaling/Writing Prompts

- [SEL Open-ended Questions](#)
- [SEL High School Writing Prompts](#)
- [SEL Middle School Journal Prompts](#)
- [SEL Dialogue Journals](#)
- [Create a Mindfulness Journal](#)

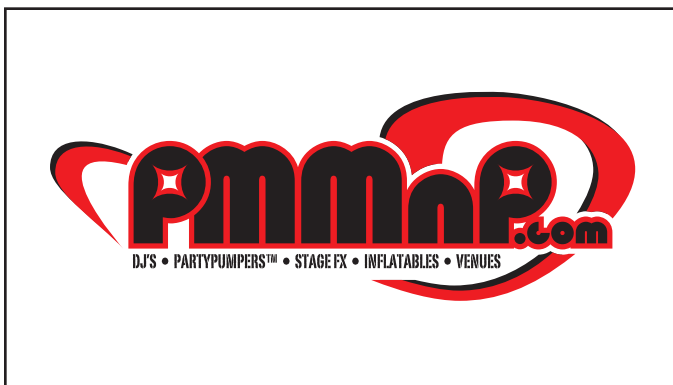
- » 2-word check-in (2 words describing how you feel, no judgment)
- » Facial Feelings (make a face of how you are feeling)
- » Padlet prompt ([example](#))

SEL Lessons/Activities

- [SEL Lessons for Middle School](#)
- [Gratitude Journal](#)
- [All About Me Bitmoji Activity](#)
- [Create Vision Boards](#)
- Digital SEL Daily Check In's
 - » [Get to know your activities](#)
 - » Fast 5 (hold up 1-5 fingers. Get a quick visual of how students are feeling)

SEL Resources for Teachers

- [Create a Bitmoji Classroom for SEL](#)
- [Ways to build virtual connectedness with your students](#)
- [SEL Activity Calendar](#)



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**California Association
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**→ Creating Leadership Training
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Take Action, Be Better People,
and Improve Our World.**



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www.casl1.org

www.cada1.org/leadershipcamps

@CASLFAN @CADALEADERS @CADACAMPS



CADA CENTRAL (831) 464-4891



GIVE WHAT YOU NEED!

Keith Hawkins

www.keithhawkins.com

keith@keithhawkins.com

“Education, memories you create, and people you help are the only permanent aspects of your school experience. Everything else is temporary.”

Speaking and interacting with over 400,000 students annually gives me the opportunity to experience first hand, just how much students are affected by temporary situations. Once we understand the importance of focusing on what is permanent, we understand there is always hope and in the end, life will get better.

As an adolescent, youth, and teen I had to go through some of life’s toughest challenges. From physical and mental abuse, abandonment, living in hotels and cars, being homeless, and surrounded by violence, my childhood was horrific much of the time. I felt hopeless because I thought my situation was permanent. Come to find out it was all temporary, not to mention it helped shape me into being the best version of myself.

In a similar way, the current state of the world feels permanent as well. It is hard to imagine something positive will come from the social unrest, political divide, and pandemic affecting all of us. Stress, anxiety, and discomfort can create feelings of hopelessness. Although we can’t control these situations, we can control how we respond. Identifying and writing down the things and/or people in your life that are permanent can help you focus on what really matters. I suggest placing this list on your mirror so you can see it daily. When you put your energy into permanent things you will start to feel better about yourself and life. This list will give you a sense of control even though we are part of a culture that makes us feel out of control.

I have created a series of modules entitled, ESSENTIAL LIFE SKILLS for students and staff with exercises to help with mental health. Each module comes with a short 3-5min video and curriculum for the week. As students and staff continue with virtual learning, these ESSENTIAL LIFE SKILLS will give them support and a sense of hope during these times.

TOGETHER WE WILL RISE.



CADA Memorial Scholarship

CADA/CASL provides several scholarships each year to further promote growth and student leadership. Sponsored by CADA, we will offer students a chance to win a scholarship to the CASL State Conference and CADA Leadership Camps. Apply now!

CASL Deadline: Applications Due **December 15, 2020**

Camp Deadline: Applications Due **March 31, 2021**



Virtual Connection in a Virtual World

Becca Cook
Hillcrest High School
rebecca.cook@alvordschools.org

During normal times recognition and connection are easy: tailgates, Senate meetings, Thankful Thursdays, lunch celebrations, honor roll, and any number of traditions each school has to connect and show appreciation. But in this upside-down virtual world, we have lost the opportunity for real connection not only with students, but with our peers. Everyone is muted, even during a staff meeting.

This year our Renaissance implemented a Friday Recognition program for our staff and students, keeping it simple with Google

Forms, emails, and social media. Each Friday is dedicated to shoutouts between staff and students on a weekly rotation.

- Week 1:** Staff Recognizing Staff
- Week 2:** Staff Recognizing Students
- Week 3:** Students Recognizing Staff
- Week 4:** Students Recognizing Students

Staff to staff week includes a Google Form available all day with 3-4 different questions each round “Who made your week easy?” “Who made you smile?” etc. This past Friday we used questions from *Deep Kindness* by Houston Kraft: “Who first showed you kindness” “Who is the bravest?” At the end of the school day, close the Google form, create the Google sheet, and email a copy to the entire staff. We all benefit by seeing each other’s responses.

Staff to student uses a similar process:

a Google Form that staff use to recognize students. At the close of Friday, the responses are sent to the students, using the mail merge function to send an email with the comments from their teachers. It is a quick and simple process to celebrate the students who are putting in work, who keep their cameras on during class, who just bring a smile to our face.

Students recognizing staff use the Google Form and a letter-writing campaign. We have used the Google Form, spreadsheet, and email a few times. One month, the students were asked to submit descriptors about their teachers, and word clouds were created. With many of our classified staff back on campus, the leadership students wrote letters and cards to express their gratitude.

Students recognizing students was our biggest challenge. We continue to use the Google Form and mail merge functions. We have used Instagram polls and AMAs, have students tag other students who make them smile, who are brave, and who inspire them. Each month is a different theme.

We look forward to Fridays, not only for the weekend, or a Zoom break, but to see the kindness shared and the school connections continue. When the world goes back to normal, the halls are full of students, and we are back to the Activity hustle, it will be a program that can continue. It will look different, maybe less digital, but still full of kindness, connections, and smiles.

Tips for Inclusivity in the Classroom

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“Hey guys!” These two seemingly innocent words used to greet people may seem inclusive but are actually not. If you regularly greet your class with this opening, you may want to consider just how many students you may be excluding by opening your class with these words. There are a number of different greetings that one can use to make sure everyone feels welcome and included and to make sure that you are not using just masculine words. Below are just a few recommendations:

- “Hello everyone”
- “Hey peeps”
- “Hey team”
- “Hey y’all”
- “Hey folks”
- “Hey pals”
- “Hey crew”
- “Hey all”

On this note, the Facing History and Teaching Tolerance websites have several different community building lessons that help students explore identity and bring awareness to the biases that students may or may not realize they have already developed. These topics are a great way for leadership students to get to know their classmates, labels that others might identify with, and recognize the numerous groups there are on campus.

The lesson linked below is useful for students to explore their own identity and examine common terms, labels, assumptions, and stereotypes. This lesson can be done at any point during the school year and will help bring awareness to the experiences that students face each day. Help do the work now, and bring lessons about equity into your classroom.

[Facing History Lesson: Finding Your Voice Identity, Labels, and Assumptions](#)

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Self Care Challenges

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Going to the kitchen to grab some “snacky snacks” has been a task all too easy to accomplish during quarantine. Many students and staff alike have not participated in the same amount of physical activity due to distance learning. Unfortunately that might have resulted in some of us putting on a few extra pounds. Also everyone’s mental health has been affected by the pandemic. The term “self-care” has never been more important. At my school site, we decided to put together a number of physical and mental “challenges” to get both staff and students alike focused on their physical and mental health.

At my school site, we started a virtual steps challenge in which both students and staff were able to fill out a virtual form if they wanted to participate. Each week, those that signed up to participate in the challenge were sent a weekly goal as well as a Google Form on which they could report the steps they took that week. To encourage people to participate, we had a weekly drawing for those that reported their steps. All of those that participated received a school headband for working out, and we reported the total amount of steps taken by the whole group after five weeks.

Other challenges that we created included an “Eating Healthy Challenge” as well as a Mindfulness health challenge. For the healthy eating challenge, participants were asked to create a log sheet of their daily meals. Some of the items they were asked to give up for thirty days included chips, ice cream, fast food, chocolate, soda,

and white bread. Each week they were sent a Google Form to report their progress. For the mindfulness challenge, students were introduced to a new exercise or practice that would help them live more mindfully. By the end of the week, they had learned seven new practices that they could then work into their daily routines. We also provided a way for people to report their progress here.

By creating challenges that focus on one’s physical and mental health, we hope that participants at our school will learn to take and set aside sometime each day for themselves. These practices will hopefully become apart of their daily lives and will carry on with them for the rest of their lives. We challenge you now to try out one of these challenges at your school site to get students and staff focused on their own physical and mental health.



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