October 5, 2012

**Teaching and Learning**

*More Than 800 Attend SCUSD College Fair*

More than 800 people, including at least 350 high school and middle school students, attended the SCUSD College Fair last Sunday at Rosemont High School. About 70 colleges were represented at the event, including many University of California and California State University campuses and many private institutions such as Stanford. Students and their families learned about financial aid, college entrance exams and the application process. College representatives reported that they were really impressed with the poise and enthusiasm of students that attended. Special thanks to Rosemont’s AVID students who helped welcome the guests and assisted during the event!

*Special Education Redesign Team Update*

The Special Education Redesign Team hosted three Community Forums to review the work and recommendations of the team. The Community Forums were convened on September 27 at Rosemont High School, Tuesday at Serna Center and Wednesday at Caroline Wenzel. Approximately 40 participants, representing parents, teachers, para-educators and community members attended the forums and provided input to representatives of the team.

An overview of the redesign process was provided. This process includes: Setting a vision, reviewing best practices, brainstorming ideas and rating each idea for impact and feasibility. This process resulted in a set of year-by-year recommendations to achieve our goal, which is to put the foundational pieces in place to build and expand Inclusive Practices across the district over time.

At the same time, these foundational pieces will also serve to strengthen the current Special Day Class programs by raising expectations, providing targeted and focused support and an emphasis on teaching and learning.

The forum participants provided valuable feedback to the team and another perspective to consider. Generally, there is support and enthusiasm for strengthening our current programs and setting a strong foundation for expanding Inclusive Practices. Concerns were
heard about collapsing too many Special Day Classes and the need to maintain a full continuum of services for our students. Also, the need to provide clear and consistent communication to families as well as the need to be proactive in our parent engagement was a strong message brought to the team.

This feedback will be compiled and analyzed alongside our current recommendations and needed adjustments will be made to our multi-year plan. The Redesign Team is excited to begin the implementation of our Year One recommendations.

Help Your Student on the Path to College

For a student to be prepared for the rigor of college they must understand the importance of taking challenging coursework and they must be prepared to do well on college admission tests. In an effort to build awareness around the value of taking Advanced Placement (AP) course work, the SCUSD GATE Department hosted the first in a series of college readiness events.

The Path to College workshop on Wednesday was attended by more than 100 parents and teenagers. The session featured a panel of students from around the district who shared their personal experience with AP classes, the benefits of taking AP classes and the challenges they encountered. They also provided tips on how to succeed with a heavy course load.

Keynote speaker Ben Tucker, an education consultant who worked in admissions outreach for the University of California system, emphasized the importance of doing well on the upcoming PSAT and explained the feedback that the PSAT provides on each student’s strengths and areas of improvement. In addition, he discussed the advantages of taking Advanced Placement courses in high school and responded to various questions from the audience regarding college admissions.

Operations

Health Services

SCUSD students are not the only ones back-to-school. This month, nursing students from the Charles A. Jones Career and Education Center licensed vocational nursing program and Sacramento State begin their community health and pediatric clinical rotations here in SCUSD.

A total of 55 nursing students will have meaningful and relevant learning experiences facilitated by Health Services nursing staff, while also supporting the work of our department to provide prevention and intervention services such as trauma prevention, dental screenings, mentoring and health education. These important partnerships support
lifelong learning in our community and extend the mission of SCUSD to prepare our students for college and career.

**Community Engagement**

**SCUSD’s FACE Office Partners with MALDEF, DeVry**

A new collaborative partnership between the Family and Community Engagement Office (FACE), DeVry University and MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund) has resulted in a free, two-day “training of trainers” for SCUSD parent leaders, staff and community partners. The trainings will focus on the key elements of building parent-school partnerships.

While the original MALDEF training model was specific to the Mexican American community, this training is open to all those interested in becoming SCUSD Parent Engagement Trainers.

The MALDEF training series is designed to give parents the tools to help their child attain a college education and become a community leader. Following certification, SCUSD Parent Engagement Trainers will conduct workshops in which parents will: Learn about their rights and responsibilities; discover ways to partner with their children’s teachers to ensure academic success; learn about the many educational programs and resources available at school and in the community; meet community leaders and explore a local university with their families.

The training will take place from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday, October 19, and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, October 20, at DeVry University, 2216 Kausen Drive, Elk Grove.

**FACE/Project LEAN Workshops Planned**

In partnership with California Project LEAN (Leaders Encouraging Activity and Nutrition), a joint program of the California Department of Public Health and the Public Health Institute, SCUSD is conducting a six-workshop series to train parent leaders, staff and community partners as Wellness Trainers.

Led by Katherine Hawksworth, Health Educator for California Project LEAN, training areas include:

- The new SCUSD School Wellness Policy and new California State Nutritional Standards
- Facilitating parent/school collaboration to improve student health
- Promoting healthy food and beverage choices at schools
- Understanding the scope and importance of P.E. and physical activity on campus
- Supporting the wellness of the youth in our communities

Upon program completion, the Wellness Trainer will work with SCUSD schools and families to promote healthy habits in the lives of our students to promote their health, development and well-being.

‘CalWorks to College’ Event for SCUSD Parents

Sacramento City College and the Family and Community Engagement Office (FACE) are collaborating on the first-ever “CalWorks to College, Making It Happen!” event for SCUSD parents who are currently on any form of assistance and interested in pursuing career certification or a college degree.

The free, half-day event on October 18 will include breakfast with the Sacramento City College president, tours of the SCC campus and panel discussions with past CalWorks parents who have achieved their dreams of career certification or a college degree and are currently working in their selected careers.

The event also includes lunch with college counselors in three focus areas: Allied Health, Technology and Behavioral and Social Science. Participation is limited to 50 parents and is open to any interested SCUSD parent regardless of their assistance status.

City Year Kick-Off at the Capitol

City Year held a celebratory kick-off event Wednesday morning on the west steps of the Capitol. Mayor Kevin Johnson, Karen Baker, California State Secretary of Service and Volunteering, and City Year CEO/Co-Founder Michael Brown presided at the celebration, which Superintendent Jonathan Raymond attended.

During the event, 50 City Year “near peer” mentors pledged to provide support, care and attention to students at the SCUSD schools participating in the City Year partnership: Fern Bacon, Rosa Parks, Father Keith B. Kenny, Oak Ridge and Leataata Floyd (formerly Jedediah Smith).