September 14, 2012

Teaching and Learning

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

Last November, SCUSD received a $250,000 Planning Grant from the NoVo Foundation to begin integrating social and emotional learning (SEL) into the work of the district. Funding for the CASEL Collaborating Districts Initiative gave SCUSD the opportunity to build a coordinated framework for SEL district-wide with a common language and common goals. The grant provided the resources to determine how and where SEL was being practiced in the district and how to move forward with systemic implementation.

Next week, SCUSD will submit a proposal to the NoVo Foundation for a three-year, $750,000 implementation grant to continue the work of integrating SEL into the district. The SEL Planning Team has outlined a strategic three-year work plan that starts with building awareness of SEL and ends with gearing up for district-wide implementation. The planning team believes that these activities will lead to a climate and culture that supports the development of social and emotional competence district-wide. With professional learning and practice in SEL, highly skilled and capable staff will be better prepared to support social and emotional development for all of SCUSD’s students.

During the first year of the grant activities will be centered on creating awareness of SEL so that stakeholders begin to understand how it contributes to college and career-ready students. SEL will be implemented through vertical teams, with the McClatchy Network -- Leataata Floyd Elementary (formerly Jedediah Smith), Sutterville Elementary, California Middle School and C.K. McClatchy High School -- as the first group of schools. During the second year we will integrate our learning and deepen our work. During the third year we will gear up for district-wide SEL implementation the 2015-16 school year.

Operations

Counseling Positions Restored Through Title III Funds

The district has received permission from the California Department of Education to use Title III categorical funds to restore 7.6 full-time high school counseling positions. Title III
funds are earmarked for English Language Learners and, as such, the counselors being returned will focus on the needs of these students. Six schools will receive additional staff ranging from 0.4 FTE positions to 2.0 FTE positions, depending on need. The schools are: Rosemont, John F. Kennedy, Health Professions, C.K. McClatchy, School of Engineering and Sciences and West Campus. Luther Burbank and Hiram Johnson – our two Quality Education Investment Act schools – are already staffed at QEIA required counseling ratios.

Open Enrollment Health and Wellness Fair

The Compensation and Benefits Department held a 2012 Open Enrollment Health and Wellness Fair from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Wednesday, September 12 at the Serna Center. More than 200 employees attended and were able to ask questions and get information from medical, vision, dental and disability income protection providers in attendance. Also present was the district’s 403(b) Third Party Administrator, two 457 vendors, UC Davis Medical, EPIC (Benefit Broker) and Schools Insurance Authority (Self Insured JPA). All vendors were available to answer questions, provide information and assist employees with the online enrollment of their health coverage. In addition, attendees were given the opportunity to have their blood pressure checked and to test their grip strength.

Community Engagement

Assemblyman Dickinson Hands Out Backpacks at Harkness

Assemblyman Roger Dickinson and his team handed out 300 backpacks filled with school supplies to students at H.W. Harkness Elementary School on Wednesday. Dickinson’s office worked with partners at Comcast and Bag King to launch a drive to bring the tools of school to SCUSD kids. River Cats mascot Dinger and Sacramento’s Veteran of the Year Staff Sgt. Sharon Stallworth also attended.

‘Green Apple Day’

SCUSD schools are participating in the first-ever Green Apple Day of Service sponsored by the Center for Green Schools at the U.S. Green Building Council. On September 22, volunteers from Starbucks, Rebuilding Together, State of Being and the West Campus High School community will work on revitalizing the spaces surrounding two West Campus classroom wings. Plans called for decomposed granite walkways, raised planters boxes and new sod. On September 29, volunteers will install a garden at McClaskey Adult Center and clean up the garden at Bret Harte Elementary School. Other schools are expected to join in with Green Apple Day of Service projects as word of this first-ever initiative spreads.