Teaching and Learning

Common Core Work Continues

After a break to allow for STAR testing, Cohort A has resumed its work on Common Core Standards implementation. Cohort A is comprised of grades Pre-K-12 teachers from schools across the district that meet monthly to develop interim assessments. Cohort A teachers are developing curriculum and assessments for English Language Arts.

Students Perform in Carnegie Hall Link UP Program

Eight hundred students from five SCUSD elementary schools that participate in the Carnegie Hall Link UP program performed on Thursday at Capital Christian Center. Carnegie Hall’s Weill Music Institute, in partnership with the Sacramento Philharmonic and the Vocal and Instrumental Teaching Artists Academy, brings music instruction to students at William Land, Sutterville, Elder Creek, Abraham Lincoln and Maple schools.

Very Special Arts Festival

Student artists from across the district pounded drums, danced, sang and acted today during the Very Special Festival of the Arts at the Coloma Center. The one-day event was sponsored by I Can Do THAT!/Very Special Arts, the only program in Sacramento County that provides instruction in the arts to students with and without disabilities together through artists-in-residence at schools. Sixty SCUSD schools and 10 developmental centers participate in the program. The festival included “funshops” led by local artists where kids and adults participated together to make crafts projects.

This was the 25th annual Very Special Arts Festival held in conjunction with SCUSD.

Operations

LAO Weighs in on Governor’s May Revise

The nonpartisan Legislative Analyst’s Office released a report today that says California's budget deficit is likely worse than Governor Brown's estimate of $15.7 billion. The LAO’s just-released report finds the Governor’s revenue forecast "reasonable" but warned that Brown's estimate of money available from former redevelopment programs could be overstated by $900 million.
The LAO calls for “realistic budgetary solutions” and suggests reducing the Proposition 98 minimum guarantee by $1.9 billion. “This would free up funds that could be used to mitigate proposed reductions in other areas of the budget,” the report states. It also suggests fewer programmatic funding cuts for schools in the trigger reductions. Budget staff is currently analyzing the report and its possible implications for SCUSD.

**Community Engagement**

*Parent/Teacher Home Visit Project Conference*

About 150 district principals, teachers and staff are attending a two-day Parent/Teacher Home Visit Project (PTHVP) Conference today and Saturday hosted by SCUSD and San Juan Unified. Panels at the event include sessions on how to start home visits at a school, the role of union, district and community partners and how to tie home visits to teaching. Teams from Rosemont, Luther Burbank and McClatchy high schools are scheduled to make presentations on promising home visit practices on Saturday. PTA members will also discuss the formation of partnerships with PTHVP.

Forty-five of SCUSD’s 82 schools participate in the project. Some, like Luther Burbank High School, have expanded the work to include on-campus Parent Universities where families can learn valuable skills that can help them help their children, such as English language skills. PTHVP currently has programs operating in a dozen states across the country and has been recognized by the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government. The George Lucas Foundation’s *Edutopia* publication also named it one of 10 “Big Ideas for Better Schools.”

*Wells Fargo Adopt-A-School Initiative*

Wells Fargo team members visited James Marshall Elementary School today to deliver its “Hands on Banking financial education curriculum, a fun interactive tool that teaches kids fundamental money management basics. In addition, Wells Fargo is giving schools in the area $24,500 in grants to support education and is pledging to provide volunteers to help students with reading and financial literacy throughout the year. James Marshall received a $500 check.