



Board Update

From the Desk of Jonathan P. Raymond, Superintendent

March 1, 2013

Teaching and Learning

SCUSD Joins Eight Other California Districts in NCLB Waiver Proposal

SCUSD has joined with eight other California K-12 districts in supporting a joint application for a No Child Left Behind (NCLB) waiver from the U.S. Department of Education. This application is non-binding. Should the application be accepted by the USDOE, a memorandum of understanding will come before the Board of Education in June and will determine SCUSD's participation.

The waiver application was submitted on Thursday by the California Office to Reform Education (CORE) on behalf of member districts: Clovis, Fresno, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Oakland, SCUSD, San Francisco, Sanger and Santa Ana. Approval of the waiver would allow districts more local control over federal funding and accountability. In SCUSD, a waiver would free up \$4 million in federal funds now spent on outside vendors through NCLB's Supplemental Educational Services stipulation for Program Improvement schools.

The waiver application proposes to replace federal NCLB rules with a new, higher level of locally driven accountability that will support college and career readiness. Districts would collect and share data and be responsible and accountable for preparing every student for college and career with a focus on equitable outcomes. To ensure that schools are succeeding on these measures, SCUSD would participate in a school support system and professional learning community with the other CORE districts focused on supporting a culture of excellence, collaboration and continuous improvement at each school. For example, elements of our School Quality Review process would become a critical part of new criteria.

To be eligible for a federal NCLB waiver, the CORE proposal addresses three critical principles:

- College and career ready expectations for all students;
- A new system of differentiated recognition, accountability and support for schools; and
- Support for effective instruction and school leadership.

As a participant, SCUSD would commit to fully implementing the Common Core State

Standards and transitioning to aligned assessments by the 2014-15 school year, which aligns with our own commitment to Common Core State Standards and work schedule. In the waiver, CORE districts also commit to sharing student and school data to collectively measure progress in preparing all students for college and careers. The shared data system would also be used to strengthen teaching and learning and identify elements common among effective educators. Each district will be developing new effectiveness and evaluation systems individually (all in collaboration with respective bargaining partners) during the 2013-14 school year and implement them by the 2014-15 school year.

If the U.S. Department of Education approves the CORE consortium waiver, CORE will work with federal education officials to finalize provisions of the waiver plan. Once finalized, other school districts in California will be eligible to participate in the waiver provided they sign an MOU which commits them to participate in the new accountability system, commitment to share data and similarly reorient their work around preparing all students for college and careers with a strong focus on equitable outcomes.

Sutter Middle School Pilots DUI Court in Schools Program

Sutter Middle School became the first middle school in our region to participate in the DUI Court in Schools when it hosted the program in its gym this morning. The program has been staged in high schools over the last three years – including West Campus this fall -- but Sutter is the first middle school to participate. The school's gym was transformed into the courtroom of a local judge, and a driver arrested for DUI was sentenced and given an opportunity to address an assembly of eighth-grade students and their parents. Funding for this program is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Due to the younger age of the students, the program was shortened to be more sensitive. Students did not watch a graphic video about drinking and driving that is one of the centerpieces of the program. In addition, parents were invited to attend.

Academics Office, SEL Leadership Team Collaborate on Common Work

SCUSD's Academics Office presented information about the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) to the Social and Emotional (SEL) Learning Leadership Team at its second meeting on Thursday at California Middle School.

After the presentation, the team discussed the many connections between CCSS and SEL and how these similarities relate to the three main SEL work areas: Standards and assessments; professional learning; and communication and engagement. Workgroups in these areas will continue this discussion at meetings scheduled for later this month. The next SEL Leadership Team meeting is scheduled for April 25 at Sutterville Elementary School.

School Transition Work Underway

Work began this week to ensure that families and staff of closing and receiving schools are supported and taken care of during the transition period, which will last through the next school year:

- Meetings have been held with closing and receiving principals to inform them of district-level support for the transition process.
- A District Operational Transition Support Team has been formed to address all facets necessary to ensure a smooth transition for the students, parents and staffs at each school site. This team will be reaching out to stakeholder groups for valuable input in this process.
- School Transition Information Clinics will be held at each of the closing sites over the next two weeks to assist families with questions about Open Enrollment, after-school programs and support programs offered at the school sites.
- Site Transition team members are being identified to help design transition activities slated for spring and summer.

SCUSD Honored for Sustainable Facilities Master Plan

The California's Coalition for Adequate School Housing (CASH) and the American Institute of Architects California Council (AIACC) honored SCUSD with the Leroy F. Greene Master Planning Award of Honor at the 34th Annual Conference on School Facilities held Tuesday. The award recognized the district's 2012 Sustainable Facilities Master Plan. SCUSD was the only district in California to receive an award in this category.

James Dobson, director of Planning, Construction and Operations, SCUSD's Green Schools Fellow, Farah McDill, and Jordan Knighton of NTD Architecture accepted the award on behalf of the district. Of the Sustainable Facilities Master Plan, the presenter stated: "The Sustainable Facilities Master Plan provides a comprehensive living document to seek balance between social equity, the district's Strategic Plan, environmental stewardship, Board policy initiatives, economic development and return on investment strategies... This district-wide master plan is forward thinking in outlining the cost savings for doing sustainable upgrades to their existing facilities. Not only did they highlight the health and performance benefits to these sustainable upgrades, they tie it into the curriculum and make it a learning experience for the students. This holistic approach to school construction is inspiring and should be mirrored in all districts." We are really proud of this recognition!

Five SCUSD Leaders ACSA 'Administrators of the Year'

The Association of California School Administrators has selected five Sacramento City Unified School District leaders to be honored at its annual awards ceremony in May.

Congratulations to: Special Education Director Becky Bryant; Paula Hanzel, principal of Sacramento New Technology High School; Lilia Ibarra Pelegri, assistant principal at Hiram Johnson High School; Dave Rodriguez, principal of Sutter Middle School; and Rachel Lane, principal of Nicholas Elementary School.

They will be honored May 15 at the ACSA Region III Awards Gala of the Year. The five were chosen for promoting the success of all students and for their commitment to educational quality and student achievement. Also that night, the Sacramento Chinese Community Service Center (SCCSC) will be honored as an excellent community partner at Hiram Johnson High School and Nicholas Elementary. For the last three years, the After School Safety and Enrichment for Teens Program (ASSETs) has helped support student achievement by developing and implementing multiple academic support programs geared toward student's success.

The ACSA ceremony in May will start out with the C.K. McClatchy High School Jazz Orchestra performing the national anthem. Way to go team and way to go Lions!

Community Engagement

2013 School, Family & Community Partnerships Leadership Academy

The School, Family & Community Partnerships (SFCP) Leadership Academy has met for five sessions with five remaining sessions. After listening to presentations on a range of subjects, the 26 participants will apply what they have learned in their culminating team projects which they will present at Serna Center on Monday, April 8.

The participants have been divided into seven teams. Each team represents a trustee area. Each culminating team's project will focus on a real-life topic or issue that parents, students, community members and or teachers are facing. Each team will present on a topic, provide possible solutions and describe how their role as a parent or community leader will take action in reaching a positive solution.

SCUSD Foster Youth Services Collaborates on New Report

SCUSD Foster Youth Services and the Sexually Exploited Children and Teens (SECT) Collaborative worked with the National Center for Youth Law in the development of a new report, "Ending Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: A Call for Multi-System Collaboration in California." STREAT (Students Together Reducing Exploitation and Trafficking) Team, a group of local teens, was also involved to ensure youth voice was heard throughout the creation of the report. Report author Kate Walker, an attorney and Equal Justice Works Fellow, stated: "Every day, the unthinkable happens: thousands of America's children are coerced into performing sex for hire...Yet, these children are regularly arrested and held in juvenile detention facilities even though they are victims of crime."