



SCOTTS VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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January 7, 2010

Dear Families and Friends of Scotts Valley's Students,

Happy New Year and welcome back! I hope that all of you had an opportunity to relax and enjoy your families during the winter break. As we begin 2010, there are a few things you may find of interest:

District Facilities:

For over a year, since the failure of the district's facilities bond measure that was on the 2008 ballot, staff and community members have been meeting as a Facilities Committee led by the district's Chief Business Official, Karen Jelcick. The charge of the Committee has been to determine facilities needs, recommend a priority order for addressing them, investigate potential sources of funding, and present its recommendations to the Board for consideration and possible future action. **The Board of Trustees will be holding a special Facilities Forum at which the Facilities Committee will be presenting the results of its work on Tuesday, January 19, from 6:00 to 8:00 at the Scotts Valley Middle School Pavilion.** Please join the Board for that meeting if you have an interest.

District Fiscal Situation:

It is expected that the governor will release his proposed 2010-2011 budget at the end of this week, and within the next week or two our district will begin to learn what it might mean for us. The proposed budget will continue to be changed at the state level until it is adopted by the legislature and signed by the governor, which may be as late as next fall -- long after our 2010-11 school year has begun. Nonetheless, we must have a budget by June 30 and we will begin the budget development process for the district this month. I will continue to update you on our situation as we learn more. If you have an interest in learning more about the budget, I invite you to join our **Fiscal Advisory Committee**. This also is led by CBO Karen Jelcick and meets approximately monthly. The next meeting will be **Tuesday, February 2, at 6:00**. If you wish to attend, please email Karen at kjelcick@santacruz.k12.ca.us so she can provide a space and materials for the appropriate number of participants.

Race to the Top:

The media have been full of very confusing information about Race to the Top for months. Briefly, this is an initiative from Secretary of Education Arnie Duncan to provide federal stimulus money to approximately 10-15 states, provided the state competes successfully for the funds by committing to a number of specific educational improvement initiatives determined by the federal government. Our state legislators have been attempting to agree on and pass legislation with *additional* mandates to strengthen the state's application in hopes of being selected to receive some of the funds, believed to be somewhere in the area of \$350 to \$700 million for California. Of that, about half would be kept at the state level and the other half distributed to districts, with priority being given to very large districts and districts with a high

poverty level. It is still unclear what specific requirements will be set for participating districts, and what those mandates will actually mean for those districts. Therefore, districts throughout the state have been reluctant to apply, fearing that there will be *ongoing* requirements that must be met in spite of the fact that the money is only one time. **Our district does not intend to submit a proposal at this time;** our best informed guess is that we would receive no more than about \$35,000. This funding would be far too little to allow us to meet all the mandates and requirements for participation, particularly the vastly increased reporting requirements. If the situation changes in some way and it appears that it would be beneficial for our district to apply, we will certainly do so.

If you have any questions about any of the topics above, I would invite you to attend the meetings listed above or our regularly-scheduled board meetings, generally held the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month beginning at 6:00 at the City Council Chambers. Please check our district web site for more information about board meetings:

<http://www.svusd.santacruz.k12.ca.us/boe/calendar.html> Board meeting agendas are posted online by close of business on the Friday before the Tuesday meeting.

These are difficult times for all public agencies, particularly for low-funded school districts such as Scotts Valley Unified. I continue to value the support this wonderful community provides to our schools and our students. Thank you all!

Sincerely,
Susan Silver, Ed.D.
Superintendent