



# Staff Bulletin

San Diego Unified School District

Published by the Office of the Superintendent

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## News You Can Use: Budget Update

The economic news from Sacramento continues to worsen. Tax receipts through March were \$1.2 billion below the Governor's January estimate. The projected state budget deficit for 2008-09 continues to increase as economic conditions worsen. We will get a better picture in two weeks of the true amount of the state deficit when the Governor presents his May Budget Revision and the Legislative Analysts Office (LAO) presents its analysis of the Governor's budget.

Both Republican and Democratic members of the Legislator have expressed support of public education. However, they have not been able to  
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## The Long-Range Facilities Master Plan



### Improvements Boost Learning Environments

San Diego Unified School District has more than 200 school sites; the majority built between 20-50 years ago (50% are over 45 years old). As the buildings get older, facility improvement needs increase. The Long-Range Facilities Master Plan serves as a road map for how the district plans improvements that align with the educational needs of our students.

Since 2004, the district Facilities Management staff has been involved in a comprehensive evaluation of existing and future needs in order to update the Long-Range Facilities Master Plan. They have covered the district's 200 square miles; inspecting each school from top to bottom, identifying needs and setting priorities.

Preliminary estimates show there's more than \$5 billion in unfilled educational facility needs currently in the district. New educational programs (K-8 and magnet schools), technology upgrades, safety/security systems improvements, Americans with Disabilities Act compliance upgrades, ventilation/heating/cooling repairs and replacement, and repair and replacement of deteriorated

building systems are just a few of the critical projects identified in the Master Plan.

Proposition MM, which is nearly complete, provided only \$1.51 billion toward \$4 billion in facility improvements that were identified prior to its passage in 1998. Potential sources being considered and evaluated now are: excess property income, developer fees, redevelopment funds, leased property income, State School Facilities Fund and a general obligation bond.

In February, the Board of Education directed staff to evaluate the feasibility of placing a local general obligation (GO) bond measure on the November 2008 ballot. A bond would provide much needed funding for school facilities improvements to boost the teaching and learning environment throughout the district. In addition, improving or replacing aging buildings and infrastructure systems with new more efficient facilities could save the district money. It's important to note that bond funds can only be used for capital ("bricks and mortar") improvements.

The bond measure and ballot language are subject to San Diego Unified Board of Education approval. The Board will revisit the bond proposal in June.

## SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

### Critical Language Courses:

### Students Get Head Start in Global Economy

Kindergarteners carefully use calligraphy brushes to stroke Chinese characters onto white sheets of paper. Teachers study local customs and pack gifts as they prepare to visit the district's sister school in Suzhou, China. High school students eagerly await the opportunity to use their Mandarin skills in the field of international business. Just a few scenes from the 21st century education currently offered in our district.

In 2006, President Bush launched the National Security Language Initiative to strengthen national security and prosperity through education with an emphasis on developing foreign language skills. Critical needs languages include Mandarin Chinese, Arabic, Russian, Persian and Hindi, among others.

see **Spotlight** pg 3





## In Memoriam

**John Archbold**, retired Teacher with Florence Elementary, February 19, 2008.

**Benny Frank Edens**, Bus Driver Instructor with Pupil Transportation, April 9, 2008.

**Peter Goings**, Bus Driver Instructor with Pupil Transportation, April 9, 2008.

**Bob Jones**, retired Salary Administrative Supervisor with the Education Center, April 9, 2008.

**Ian Kelly**, Teacher with Special Education Business Office, October 30, 2007.

**John Kloska**, retired Teacher with Madison High School, March 9, 2008.

**Wilbert Lindwall**, retired Resource Teacher with the TRACE Program, April 3, 2008.

**Myra Low**, retired Teacher with Johnson Elementary, October 6, 2007.

**Jose Martinez-Cortez**, School Psychologist, March 26, 2008.

**Carolyn Meredith**, Teacher with Burbank Elementary, February 1, 2008.

**Stephanie Stratton**, retired Food Service Worker with Mann Middle School, March 26, 2008.



# Straight Talk from the Classroom

## New parent communications tool for teachers

The Connect-ED web-based communications system is already helping schools improve parent involvement. Soon teachers will have their own system to communicate with parents, direct from the classroom, with the new Connect-ED Teacher.

San Diego Unified is participating in the pilot project for this classroom-level tool. Teachers will be able to send brief, pre-recorded messages to parents and guardians with important reminders and feedback on dozens of timely issues. "Real voice" recordings can be personalized with student names as well as programmed in various languages and for a specific delivery time.

"I can't wait to get parents more involved with test preparation, school projects and something as simple as paying attention to homework assignments," says Serra High teacher Elizabeth Ward. "This is going to be

a very useful tool, especially to reach parents who speak other languages."

The pilot launch date is mid-May. Approximately 30 school sites, mostly year-round elementary and middle schools along with several high schools, will participate. The goal is a district-wide launch in fall 2008, at no additional cost to school sites.

Is your school interested in participating in Connect-ED Teacher pilot? Simply complete and submit the Application for the Connect-ED Teacher Pilot Program form at [http://www.sandi.net/connected\\_teacher\\_pilot.doc](http://www.sandi.net/connected_teacher_pilot.doc) by Friday, May 9. Schools will be selected based on a variety of factors. For more information, contact [jbreister@sandi.net](mailto:jbreister@sandi.net).

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Budget Update	
NEWS YOU CAN USE	<b>News You Can Use</b> cont. from Pg 1
	agree upon an overall budget balanced solution strategy. This gridlock may result in the 2008/09 State Budget not being adopted until late summer, at the earliest.
	The Governor's May Revise budget, due out May 14, will update the state's economic situation and give the Governor the opportunity to propose changes to his budget balancing strategy. It is generally after the May revise when the Senate and Assembly roll up their sleeves and engage in building a budget compromise.
	The San Diego County Superintendent of Schools has notified the State Department of Education that San Diego Unified submitted a positive certification, which means the district will meet its financial obligations for the current fiscal year and subsequent two years. This was contingent upon the board taking steps toward a balanced budget for 2008-09, which included issuing the layoff notices and developing a budget balancing plan. Lack of these actions by the district would have given the county the grounds for reevaluating the district's fiscal situation and taking necessary oversight actions.
	The Board of Education must approve the district's 2008-09 budget by June 30, 2008, whether the State budget is approved or not. As the deadline approaches, the board continues to hold budget workshops to address the budget reduction implementation strategy and a restoration process if additional resources become available. Board members are slated to approve the budget at the June 24 board meeting.
The bottom line for the district is the 2008-09 school year will likely open with the budget passed in June, regardless of what happens at the state level. For more information, visit <a href="http://www.sandi.net">www.sandi.net</a> .	

# KEEPING Our Schools as Jewels



*Necessary Improvements, Inside & Out: Landscaping not only adds curb appeal, but also extends the learning environment beyond the classroom walls.*

## Improvements Make a Difference

Research suggests a correlation between the condition of school facilities and learning. Learning tests student motivation, mental concentration and physical condition. Faulty indoor conditions such as poor acoustics, inappropriate lighting and glare, inadequate fresh air, mold, odors and uncomfortable temperatures make it challenging for even the brightest children to engage in learning activities.

Many studies point to better attendance, improved test scores, and reduced disciplinary problems as evidence that the physical environment of

a school can make a difference in education. Research findings link improved student achievement with building quality: newer or modernized buildings, improved lighting, thermal comfort, acoustics and indoor air quality. Studies also show a relationship between safe, secure and well-maintained schools and performance, attendance, and dropout rate.

Safe, comfortable and inspiring schools communicate to students and teachers that they are important and respected. Education is a critical component of our society. It's important that students, teachers, parents and community members want to come to our schools.

### Spotlight on Success cont. from Pg 1

The K-4 Mandarin Chinese Language Magnet Program at Barnard Elementary offers students the unique educational opportunity to experience the Mandarin language through art, music, drama and physical education while maintaining a rigorous standard curriculum.

"There are endless opportunities for Mandarin-speaking students to succeed," says Barnard principal Mary Watry. "It's the most

widely spoken language in the world. Our students will be able to function in a global job market if they embrace their knowledge of Mandarin."

Last year, San Diego High School of Business principal Joe Austin received a proposal from math teacher Ke Xu. He offered to also teach Mandarin if the school wanted to offer another language choice. By the end of this school year, 46 students are expected to

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## HALL OF FAME



Point Loma High School history teacher **Patrick McElhaney** (above left) has been selected by the John M. Ashbrook Center for Public Affairs to participate in the 2008 Presidential Academy for American History and Civics.

Morse High School math teacher **Shirley Miranda** was named the 2008 Greater San Diego Science and Engineering Fair Senior Division Teacher of the Year.

**Dianne Park**, (middle image above) Cherokee Point Elementary music teacher, was selected as the California Music Education Association's State General Music Educator of the Year 2008.

Henry High School teacher **Kathy Schulze** (above

right) has been awarded the "Building the Future Award", presented by the Society of Manufacturing Engineers Education Foundation.

Six San Diego Unified elementary schools were named California Distinguished Schools by the state Department of Education on April 9. The schools are: **Jackson, Kumeyaay, La Jolla, Ocean Beach, William Penn** and **Torrey Pines** elementary schools.

The district **TRACE** Program has been chosen a 2007-08 Leadership Site by CalSTAT (California Services for Technical Assistance and Training), a special project of the California Department of Education, Special Education Division.

## Dates to Remember

### May:

Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month, World Languages & Cultures Month

### May 4 - 10:

Teacher Appreciation Week

### May 5 - 9:

Child Nutrition Employee Appreciation Week

### May 6:

National Day of the Teacher

### May 7:

National School Nurses Day

### May 15:

Law Enforcement Memorial Day

### May 18 - 24:

Classified School Employees Week

### May 26:

Memorial Day

## Classifieds

### For Sale

Thomasville Costa del Sol triple dresser with mirror. Dresser: 77-1/2" x 20-1/4" Mirror: 30" x 51". \$300 OBO. Call Susan at (619) 517-6662.

### For Rent

3BR/3BA custom home with office and large den in Serra Mesa. Nice neighborhood. \$2600/mo includes gardener. Call Jean/Greg (858) 642-1975.

Staff Bulletin accepts classified ads from district employees only. Submit ads by e-mail to [communications@sandi.net](mailto:communications@sandi.net) or send to Communications Office, Room 2145, Education Center. Limit to 15 words (not including phone number). Include work location and phone number (for ID purposes only).

# Out and About Out and About Out and About

**Creative and Performing Media Arts** students and staff participated in the recent Clairemont Clean-up Day. They volunteered their time to spruce-up MacDowell Community Park and the "curb appeal" of CPMA.



Students in Mike Delia's classroom at **Taft Middle School** recently participated in a live videoconference with Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, as part of the California State Parks PORTS (Parks Online Resources for Teachers and Students) Program. To find out more about this free program, visit [www.ports.parks.ca.gov](http://www.ports.parks.ca.gov).



**Sandburg Elementary** called in the Marines to help with its annual Jog-a-thon. So far, more than \$27,000 has been raised in support of the Mira Mesa area elementary school.



**Spotlight** continued from Pg 3

successfully complete the introductory Mandarin course. Plans are now underway to offer AP Chinese and expand opportunities for students to embrace Chinese culture.

"China is the burgeoning economy within the Pacific Rim. Mandarin is going to be as important to future business leaders as Spanish is to those who conduct business across our border," says Austin. "We are thrilled about giving our kids a head start in the business world."

With grant funds, the district is working on developing a middle school link for Mandarin Chinese. Overall, the district has successfully cultivated an extensive language program with more than 120 course offerings. More information is available at [www.sandi.net/enrollmentoptions](http://www.sandi.net/enrollmentoptions). ○



## Staff Bulletin

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Send all news items and classified ads to [communications@sandi.net](mailto:communications@sandi.net), Education Center, Room 2145, 4100 Normal Street, San Diego, CA 92103 or fax to (619) 725-5576.

Terry B. Grier, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

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