

Staff Bulletin

For the employees of San Diego City Schools



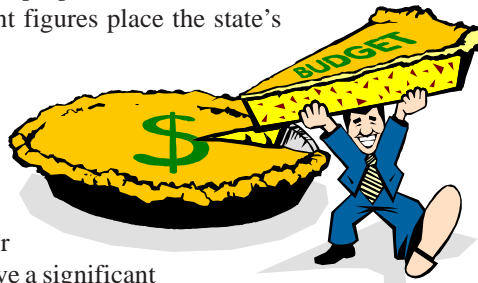
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No. 25

The Budget Crisis: A Message to Staff

Governor Davis has released an initial proposal to address the State of California's growing budget crisis. Current figures place the state's 2002-03 budget deficit at more than \$10 billion and the 2003-04 budget deficit is projected to be more than \$21 billion. In the Governor's proposals he has recommended a mid-year budget cut of \$1.7 billion K-14 education. This cut, plus state deferrals, means a \$60 million cut for us for this current school year. These cuts will have a significant impact on San Diego City Schools as they will on all school districts in the state.



In anticipation of the budget situation and potential cuts, district staff last spring began work to streamline operations and reduce spending for this current school year. This included the implementation of Administrative Directives this past summer.

This budget shortfall will have an effect on this school year. State budget deficits can and should be anticipated for the next several years. It is anticipated that this will result in program cuts and layoffs. We will continue to make the classroom our funding priority. While the state's actions are only proposals at this point, we are actively taking steps to reduce spending and introduce cost avoidance strategies for 2002-03 as well as in our development of the district's budget for the next school year, 2003-04.

The district projected in its First Interim Report to the Board of Education on December 10, the need to reduce the 2003-04 district budget by \$38 million. This could be impacted by an additional tens of millions of dollars of anticipated state budget cuts for 2003-04. This report is available for your review on the district's website, www.sandi.net, under the Board of Education page.

Our pledge to you is to provide regular information as we learn it on the budget situation and its impact on our district. We will work together as a team to manage this situation.

A Holiday Greeting from Superintendent Alan Bersin and Board of Education President Ron Ottinger

The end of the year is properly a time of reflection. During the 2001-2002 school year, the students of San Diego City Schools showed remarkable improvement in their academic achievement due to the tremendous effort and dedication of district staff at all levels, from teachers to support staff to bus drivers to building service supervisors to principals to program managers. We should all be proud as we look back upon the gains made by our students on the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program tests and by our schools on the Academic Performance Index (API). We have all played an important role

in teaching and supporting our schools and students in accomplishment.

We should also celebrate the beginning of the modernization process taking shape under the leadership of Ronne Froman and her business operations team. By moving from a 1950s style of operations to a modern one, we will save resources - already precious due to the state's financial situation - and can better direct these resources to the classroom. We can look forward to improved administrative processes and the implementation of a districtwide computer software system that will provide benefits

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Understanding the Budget Process

In November, the Legislative Analyst's Office, a non-partisan body providing policy analysis to the legislature, highlighted a growing state budget concern for both this current fiscal year and projected budget in the future. Current state estimates now indicate that the current year deficit could reach as high as \$10 billion.

In order to address the budget problems for the current fiscal year, the governor unveiled his proposals for expenditure cuts on December 6. These include suggestions for spending cuts that are likely to have a serious impact on San Diego City Schools. Beginning December 9, the legislature will start discussions on the current-year budget in a special session. Over the next few weeks, some legislators will submit legislation supporting the governor's proposals; others will submit legislation reflecting different ideas about addressing the state's budget problems. The entire process may take months. While rumors of imminent drastic cuts in K-12 spending will appear in the media throughout this process, budget cuts for the current 2002-03 fiscal year will probably not appear in their final form until late-January or early-February.

On January 10, 2003, the governor will propose additional cuts for next year's 2003-04 budget. The budget proposal for 2003-04 will overlap with ongoing discussion to resolve the current year deficit in the special session. It is anticipated that budget discussions for 2003-04 could continue at least to June, but may not be finalized until late in the summer.

Next Issue . . .

- * More Budget News
- * Outreach to Parents

Student Salutes

Marvin Elementary second-grader Jessica Bardo is the winner of this year's San Diego County Credit Union Holiday Bowl Parade Float Design Contest, meaning she'll be able to see her winning design take life as a float and be able to ride on it during the parade! The contest annually produces hundreds and sometimes thousands of entries. As the winner this year, Jessica wins a yearlong pass to Legoland California for her entire family, plus four tickets to the Holiday Bowl and a gift package to the San Diego Zoo.



The perks extend beyond Jessica, too. Her entire class will receive a Lego DACTA educational software program, grandstand tickets to the parade and two tickets each for the San Diego Zoo. Marvin Elementary will receive a special field trip to Legoland and \$1,000 in computer equipment from Technology Integration Group.

Patrick Henry High School senior Sarah Scorgie is the winner of this year's National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Writing Achievement Award. This is a highly competitive, national writing competition that identifies the "best student writers in the country."

La Jolla High School's Girls' Varsity Tennis Team won their fourth consecutive CIF team title recently. The school's Speech and Debate team captured division sweepstakes in the Congress Tournament at Grossmont College. Finalists included Chava Nerenberg, Natalie Edwards, Nick Oswald, Julie Soic and Noha Salem. David Popkin captured first place in Extemporaneous Speaking and David Cohen reached the semi-finals in the Lincoln-Douglass competition. Others to reach the finals included Albert Wu, Matt Valji and Justin Glavis-Bloom.

The Oak Park Elementary Advanced Band joined their Partners in Education, the San Diego State Music Department (a.k.a. the Marching Aztecs) to play the Star Spangled Banner at the pregame show for the November 16 Aztecs football game.

News You Can Use!

The district website, www.sandi.net, continues to undergo improvements based on staff and parent feedback. To start, there is a new **Standards, Assessment and Accountability (SAA) web page**, accessible through Offices and Departments or at <http://www.sandi.net/saa>. SAA oversees a variety of district, state, and federal assessments, reporting and compliance activities. It is comprised of five offices, each with a specific focus. The scope of the SAA Department includes the administration, processing, interpretation, and reporting of district assessments; compliance with categorical programs; analyses of district programs (such as those for English Learners); and evaluation of accountability measures such as the **Academic Performance Index** and **No Child Left Behind**. The SAA department also works closely with the district's Testing Unit to administer, process and interpret state- and federally-mandated assessments and accountability programs.

Additionally, there is a new web page for the **Grants Office**, available at www.sandi.net/comm/grants or through the Offices and Departments directory. The Grants Office identifies educational grant opportunities and assists the district and

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Future Problem Solving at Ellen Browning Scripps Elementary

Imagine, if you will, the following scenario:

The year is 2025. Nanobots, microscopic robotic machines, are being used in hospitals everywhere. Nanobots can be injected into patients where they will fight disease, remove plaque from artery walls, even take better pictures than X-rays. What would happen however if these tiny machines were able to copy themselves like a virus?

Back to 2002 and Ellen Browning Scripps Elementary, where some 4th and 5th grade students are among the first in San Diego County to participate in a new academic competition known as the Future Problem Solving Program (FPSP). This program brings together 250,000 students in the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and several other countries to participate in futuristic thinking and problem-solving efforts.

Students focus not only on the exciting details of emerging science but also on the creativity necessary for guiding modern science into the future.

In FPS, the students begin by reading a scenario set in the near future and based upon a theme in emerging science. Topics range from overpopulation to ocean resources, extinction to e-commerce. Incorporating background research and imagination, the students use a six-step process that includes brainstorming and defining potential challenges, writing and evaluating solution ideas, and creating plans of action based on the ideas they have developed. Diverse perspectives and unique abilities are highly valued throughout the process, in which students collaborate to produce a lot of ideas, but in a flexible way so they can approach a particular subject from many different angles.

In the classroom, FPS activities offer an excellent way for teachers to integrate cross-curricular activities into meaningful discussions about the world in which we live. A component of the program that is new this year to all California participants is Community Problem Solving, in which students apply their



problem-solving skills to their own time and place. The activity not only includes added steps as the class works to define what *community* means but also the additional opportunity for the students to actually implement the action plan they have developed as a service learning project.

Through the Future Problem Solving Program, student participants have opportunities to practice and improve a variety of skills, including:

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News you can use!

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individual schools in securing grant monies. A staff consisting of a program manager, secretary and editorial assistant are available to guide schools and individuals applying for grant monies through the sometimes daunting grant process. The new Grants Office web page includes guidelines on getting started writing a grant application, the necessary forms/templates, links to grant web pages, and a listing of available grants.

Two different **online communications surveys** have been added to the website's front page to solicit ideas and feedback on both the main website, and those for individual schools. Participants rate a variety of features including user-friendliness, timeliness of information and

more. Please consider mentioning the surveys in your next school newsletter or at a parent-related school function and encourage participation. Parents will also have the opportunity to sign up for inclusion



in an email feedback focus group on parent communications. These surveys are provided through a grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Don't forget the **directory of Fact Sheets** available on the website! There are now more than **50 different topics available**, from dropout rates to the district wide applications (DWA) and from Food Services to the Focus Schools. These are all available

on the For District Staff page, and many are available in Spanish as well as English. Fact Sheets are idea for posting on school bulletin boards as a resource for staff, parents, students and your community.

Did you know schools can conduct a **'Saturday School'** which allows students to make up missed instructional days and enables schools to recover lost revenue? Eligible students must have at least one absence since the beginning of the year, and their participation in Saturday School will clear up one day of unfunded absence. Forms and a sample letter for parents are available on the district website, in the support staff online resource guide. For additional information, please contact Leona Jarstad in Pupil Accounting at (619) 725-7570

EBS' Future Problem Solvers

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- √ Develop creative thinking abilities
- √ Increase awareness of and interest in the future
- √ Learn and employ problem-solving strategies
- √ Develop team work skills
- √ Improve oral and written communication
- √ Exercise critical and analytical thought
- √ Engage in real-life problem solving
- √ Extend perceptions of the real world
- √ Explore complex societal issues
- √ Develop, utilize and improve research techniques

For more information on the FPS as it is being implemented in San Diego, contact EBS staff developer Pat Kutyla at: (858) 693-8593 ext.2204, or visit the California FPS website at www.geocities.com/cafpssp or the International Office site at: www.fpsp.org

New Board Of Education

Welcome to returning board trustee John de Beck, now embarking on his fourth term on the board and his second as vice president. Mr. de Beck was first elected to the board to represent District C in 1990.

A warm welcome as well to Katherine Nakamura, elected to represent District C following the retirement of Sue Braun. Both Mr. de Beck and Mrs. Nakamura will serve through December 2006. Trustee Ron Ottinger was reelected as board president, and will serve through December 2003.

Greeting from the Superintendent and the Board of Education President

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to us all. We should also applaud the fact that our work taking place as part of Proposition MM under the leadership of Lou Smith and his facilities management team, is on track despite cost pressures and that we are working to renovate and build school facilities that support student achievement.

Just as the end of the year is a time to look back, the beginning of the year is a time to look at the challenges and opportunities before us and to set new goals. We welcome back and look forward to working with John de Beck who was reelected to the board, and with our new board member Katherine Nakamura who brings new ideas and who joins with the other trustees in our commitment to a respectful process. As Superintendent and President of the Board of Education, our pledge for 2003 is to lead and support the

community in an intensified effort to further the goal of providing all children with a high-quality educational opportunity. We also pledge to work together as we face one of the most challenging financial situations that our state and public education has ever faced. Finally, we, along with Mary Hopper and the Institute for Learning team, are committed to broadening as well as deepening our instructional focus and encouraging instructional leaders, site administrators and teacher leaders to engage in the professional dialogue that will improve the quality of instruction at their schools.

The coming year will surely present many challenges, but by renewing our focus on the well being of the students of San Diego, we can continue to build upon the accomplishments of 2002 and can look forward to a year in which we all contribute to significant achievements in the district's

creation of an environment characterized by enhanced communication, consultation and cooperation. We are committed to working with staff, parents and members of the

operations, facilities and most importantly, student learning.

We wish you and yours a joyous season and a new year filled with professional and personal satisfaction.



Alan D. Bersin
Superintendent of Public Instruction



Ron Ottinger
President, Board of Education

In Memoriam...

Floyd Burris, whose service start with the district is unavailable, passed away October 28, 2002. Mr. Burris was a teacher at Hardy Elementary at the time of his retirement June 1983.

Deborah Dunbar, whose service with the district began September 1999, passed away October 15, 2002. Ms. Dunbar was a food service worker at Marston Middle School at the time of her death.

Gretchen Haas, whose service with the district began December 1997, passed away October 19, 2002. Mrs. Haas was a teacher at Florence Elementary at the time of her death.

Lynn T. Jose, whose service with the district began October 1995, passed away October 19, 2002. Mr. Jose was an instructional behavior technician in the Special Education Department at the time of his death.

Helen Kammerude, whose service with the district began November 1981, passed away October 9, 2002. Ms. Kammerude was a food service worker at O'Farrell at the time of her retirement November 1996.

Mary "Kay" Richardson, whose service with the district began January 1993, passed away October 2, 2002. Ms. Richardson was a secretary at the School-To-Work Transition Department at the time of her retirement March 2001.

Milton C. Rosemeyer, whose service with the district began September 1963, passed away October 14, 2002. Mr. Rosemeyer was a teacher at Carver Elementary at the time of his retirement June 1988.

The next Staff Bulletin will appear Jan. 3. Deadline for submissions is Jan. 15. Please note that deadlines are final and cannot be extended. Staff Bulletin is on the web site.

Staff Bulletin

Published for employees of San Diego City Schools twice monthly except during school holidays, and monthly in July.

Send news items and classified ads to:
Staff Bulletin

Education Center, Room 2145
phone: (619)725-5578; fax: (619)725-5576
e-mail: communications@mail.sandi.net

Board of Education

Ron Ottinger, President
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People & Places

Wilson Academy and **Mira Mesa High School** have both been identified as **National Demonstration Schools** for the **Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Center**. They are two of only 86 sites so honored, from among more than 1,500 AVID schools in 21 states and 17 foreign countries.

Staff from the district's **dropout recovery program, CONNECTIONS**, presented at the recent **National Dropout Prevention Conference**. Participants talked about reasons why students drop out, strategies on how to locate students, as well as services students receive through CONNECTIONS to help them transition successfully back to school. Non-district participants have since asked for assistance in setting up programs.

Bruce Ward, program manager for Physical Education and Interscholastic Athletics, was named to the **California Athletic Directors Association** as a vice president for the San Diego section.

Jean Marmet, Physical Education teacher at Dana Middle School, recently presented at the **APE/Elementary Physical Education Workshop Staff Development** at Hage Elementary. Over 85 educators attended. Jean presented a program on physical activities for content standards in 5th and 6th grades.

Cindy Acerno and **Tammi Moffett** from the district's **logistics division** helped coordinate a Thanksgiving food drive that benefited

20 different families. The employee group – representing **procurement, transportation, food, warehousing, material control, printing and mail services** – targeted four or five families. The overwhelming employee response meant 20 families could be helped, with food boxes including turkey, potatoes, bread, stuffing, canned goods, desserts and other assorted foods.



Financial literacy seminars offered to seniors at **Hoover High School** have helped **Mission Federal Credit Union** earn an honorable mention at the **2002 Desjardins Youth Financial Education Award**. The award is named in honor of Alphonse Desjardins, the founder of the credit union movement in this country who ardently believed in the value of teaching children to save.

Autism specialist MaryLou Evans has just achieved **National Board Certification**. Ms. Evans is a 25 year veteran of the district.

Classified Ads

ADS RUN ON SPACE AVAILABLE BASIS - Send to Communications Office, Room 2145, Eugene Brucker Education Center. **Limit to 10 words (not including phone) or ad not accepted. Include work location and phone (for ID purposes only).**

For Sale: '88 Saab 9000 Turbo, stick shift, \$2,900, 619-540-7663; '96 Pontiac Gr Am GT, loaded, mint, auto, \$6,800, 619-449-2349; White refrigerator, \$99, 858-405-9498; 1916 player piano, w/30 rolls, great cond., \$450, 858-405-9498; 3 piece oak computer desk, \$150/obo, 619-264-0701; Skis, Volant, 183cm, Marker bindings, like new, \$200, 760-436-7556; Love Birds, beautiful colors, make great pets, \$25 ea., 619-479-3432; Snow Board, 2001 Sims Decender, 153cm, excl. cond., \$225, 619-263-1245; Queen size sleeper sofa, yellow print, excl. cond., \$400, 858-270-7069; 2 Lazy Boy swivel rockers, green, excl. cond. \$100 ea., 858-270-7069; '92 Grand Voyager LE, good cond., \$3090/obo, 619-463-0957; Bedroom furniture, twin hdbd., dresser, nightstand, good cond., \$125, 858-453-8580; Dresser, antique American oak, lrg. mirror, serpentine front, excl., \$500/obo, 619-542-0350; Ikea youth loft bed, single, \$100, 858-653-3927; '92 Daihatsu, 4wd, soft top, 619-223-1070; Wedding gown, Eve of Milady, stunning, size 8, \$250, 858-467-0585; Compaq computer, Windows 98 1st edition, 13" monitor, w/printer, \$400/obo, 760-635-3537; '76 Ford van E-150, rebuilt eng., ideal for camping, \$1,800, 619-284-5199; Amplifier, Gibson Lab series 3, never used, Casio keyboard, \$150, 619-461-1747; Oak desk, lrg. \$75, Futon, like new, \$25, 619-291-8840; Mtn. Bike, unriden, specialized Enduro FSR, \$500, 858-270-2443; '01 Camper shell for Ford F150, Reg. Cab, \$1,100, 858-270-2443; Voit exercycle, \$50, 2 wood/glass end tables, \$60, 619-460-3883; '99 Honda Civic, silver, auto, keyless, 82K, \$8500/obo, 619-303-3068; Washing machine, Amana, excl. cond., 5 yrs. old, \$200, 619-888-0044; '87 Volvo turbo wagon, good cond., blue, \$1,900, 619-670-0976 **Free:** 2 yr. old iguana, tank, accessories, heat lamps, 858-592-0484; **For Rent:** 3Br/2Ba, 2 car gr. w/appl. Paradise Valley area, \$1,400, 619-479-1579; 3Br/2.5Ba cabin, mountain area near Idyllwild, \$125/night, 858-391-1038; **Wanted:** Roommate, 1 mi. from PB, \$675/mo., 619-549-2545.