



San Diego Unified School District

EUGENE BRUCKER EDUCATION CENTER
4100 Normal Street, San Diego, CA 92103-2682

Terry B. Grier, Ed.D.
Superintendent

September 2008

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Welcome back for the 2008-09 school year! As the families of our students, you are the key to a successful start of another great year of learning. On behalf of our teachers, principals, support staff and administrators, I thank you for preparing your child for the first, and every, day of school.

I hope you enjoyed the summer. During this time, district staff has been working hard preparing for the start of school. We have continued to manage our response to education funding cuts as we await the approval of a final state budget. Even with this uncertainty, I am proud of all our staff for their ability to continue to focus on what matters most, the education of children.

As we begin the new school year, I want to share some exciting news about student achievement during the 2007-08 school year. I am proud to report that our students showed impressive gains at nearly all grade levels on the 2008 Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. In English Language Arts, performance improved at all but two grade levels, and gains were especially notable for grades 6, 8, and 9. In mathematics, performance improved at all but one grade level, with notable gains at grades 4 and 8. District-wide, English Language Arts scores were up by 2 percentage points; math scores were up by 3.

Student performance in science also deserves praise. For the past three years, students in grades 5, 8, and 10 achieved an overall 11-point gain. Since 2006, 8th and 10th grade scores rose by 20 and 21 percentage points, respectively. All these scores illustrate a continuing upward trend.

These academic improvements are only possible through the hard work and dedication of our teachers, principals and district staff in partnership with parents and guardians who make education a priority at home.

Looking ahead, the Board of Education has placed Proposition S on the November 4th ballot. **Proposition S**, a 10-year bond measure, is a component of the district's Long-Range Facilities Master Plan. If approved by 55 percent of the voters, the measure would:

- Provide approximately \$2.1 billion to repair and renovate our schools;
- Provide up-to-date classroom and instructional technology required for 21st century student learning and teaching;
- Extend the current Proposition MM tax rate of \$66.70 per \$100,000 of assessed property value for an additional 15 years, from 2029 to 2044;
- Allow our district to build on the accomplishments of Proposition MM by making capital improvements not funded by Proposition MM.

I encourage you to learn more about Proposition S by reading the informational sheet included with this letter. Additional information can also be found at www.sandi.net/PropS.

Thank you for the privilege of serving your children. Best wishes for a successful school year.

Sincerely,

Terry B. Grier, Ed.D.
Superintendent



San Diego Unified School District

Fact Sheet

Proposition S and Long-Range Facilities Master Plan

The San Diego Unified School District has more than 200 school sites, the majority built 20-50 years ago. Half of our buildings are more than 45 years old. We need significant facility improvements to meet current educational needs, support 21st century teaching and learning, and ensure a safe, secure and healthy environment for our students and staff. On July 23, 2008, the Board of Education approved placing a general obligation (GO) bond measure on the ballot for the November 4, 2008, general election to help fund these improvements.

Named **Proposition S**, the 10-year bond measure is a major component of the district's Long-Range Facilities Master Plan. If passed, the measure would:

- benefit all SDUSD students and schools;
- provide approximately \$2.1 billion toward the district's unfilled capital improvements;
- allow our district to build on the accomplishments of Proposition MM by making much-needed capital improvements not funded by Proposition MM;
- extend the current Prop. MM tax rate (\$66.70 per \$100,000 assessed value of taxable property), which expires in 2029, to 2044. [The district intends to structure the proposed bonds so that the estimated combined tax rate needed to repay all of the district's bonds, including Prop. MM bonds, will not increase as a result of the issuance of the proposed bond. –SDUSD Board-approved bond resolution]

Our district is currently updating our Long-Range Facility Master Plan. Facilities Management is conducting a comprehensive assessment of needs. They have evaluated funding options and conducted extensive outreach among district stakeholders to share findings from the assessment; discuss costs, funding sources and priorities; and seek input. Outreach has included:

- high school cluster meetings (over 710 participants, more than 1400 volunteer hours by non-district staff);
- principal surveys (approximately 170 returned);
- Ad Hoc Task Force on the Bond (approximately 25 board-appointed volunteers; six meetings held);
- District Facilities Task Force (approximately 50 members; four meetings held).

Preliminary estimates indicate approximately \$5.5 billion in unmet facility needs. Needs continue to grow due to changes in educational programs (e.g., new K-8 and magnet schools); technology upgrades for today's standards; safety/security systems improvements; Americans with Disabilities Act upgrades; ventilation/heating/cooling repairs and upgrades; repair/replacement of deteriorated building systems, etc.

Potential funding sources include: excess property income, developer fees, redevelopment funds, leased property income, the Physical Plant Operations budget, the State School Facilities Fund, and GO bonds such as the one now on the November ballot.

We are rapidly coming to the close of the very successful, 10-year Proposition MM bond program that funded over \$1.5 billion in facilities improvements. When Proposition MM passed, it funded \$1.5 billion out of \$4 billion in capital improvement needs.

For more information on the proposed Proposition S projects, visit <http://www.sandi.net/PropS/>. For information on the proposed Proposition S bond program, Proposition MM accomplishments, and the Long-Range Facilities Master Plan; visit http://www.sandi.net/fac_mgmt.htm. You may also contact Bill Kowba, chief logistics officer, at (619) 725-8191 or Facilities Management at (858) 637-3603.