

District Update

May 25, 2010

News from Superintendent General Davie Jr.

Welcome to our new Superintendent

Incoming Superintendent Bobbie Plough was introduced to the staff and community at the Board of Trustees meeting on May 12 when she was unanimously appointed by trustees from a field of 25 candidates from across the nation. Plough, who begins her new job here July 19, comes to us from the Romoland School District in Riverside County where as superintendent she led the effort to post triple-digit gains in district achievement scores and was known for her strong communication skills and ability to lead a district into good fiscal and instructional health.

“I wanted this position because Natomas is a diverse community involved in the education of their children,” Plough said. “I admire the community’s passion and commitment to their youth. I can hardly contain my excitement over my appointment.”

Plough will be in our district later this week to meet with district staff and begin getting to know her new district. She already has been a frequent visitor to the Natomas district because her son is an assistant football coach at UC Davis who lives in Natomas. I’ve met for several hours with her already and know what a good match she is for NUSD. More information on her selection and background is available in the “Headlines” section of the district website at www.natomas.k12.ca.us.

2011 Teachers of the Year announced

Congratulations to our 2011 Teachers of the Year (TOY) who represent the “best of the best” of our teaching staff. Natomas Park Elementary Teacher of the Year Linda Pugh has been chosen the Natomas Unified School District’s Teacher of the Year to represent the NUSD in the Sacramento County competition. Our TOYs for 2011 are: Kevin Duval, American Lakes Elementary; Teri Slingerland, Bannon Creek Elementary; Marcia Blanke, H. Allen High Elementary; Courtnay Kaump, Jefferson Elementary; Linda Pugh, Natomas Park Elementary; Sandra Asimos, Two Rivers Elementary; Roxanne Benadorm-Ramirez, Witter Ranch Elementary; Darcy Pacheco, Heron School; Charles King, Leroy F. Greene Middle; Arcy DeVera, Natomas Middle; Kristie Dornan, Inderkum High; and Nancy Kidd, Natomas High.

Graduation season under way this week

One of the most important milestones for a school district are the high school graduation ceremonies, and this week our three high schools have planned some special ceremonies for our graduates. The Discovery High ceremony was Monday evening, with Inderkum High hosting its graduation Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. in the stadium and Natomas High having its ceremonies Wednesday at 6 p.m. in the stadium.

With the ceremonies being moved up a week because of the shortening of the 2009-10 school year by five days because of budget cuts, I appreciate how much effort is being made to honor our Class of 2010. As you may know, I served as Superintendent here for seven years and these ceremonies are among the highlights of my time spent in the NUSD. As I end my term here as Interim Superintendent, it is once again a great honor to recognize the hard work and dedication of our graduates, their families and the many staff members who contributed to their success.

Promotion ceremonies also are being held at our middle schools as we mark the end of the 2009-10 school year. The last day of school for modified traditional schools is Thursday.

New principals coming to four of our schools

Four schools will have new principals for the 2010-11 school year. Please join me in welcoming the new principal of Jefferson Elementary, Tiffany Smith-Simmons, currently the Sacramento City Unified School District Equity, Access and Achievement Coordinator, who starts July 1; and the new principal of Two Rivers Elementary, Leslie Sargent, the current principal of Inderkum High who will begin her new post this fall.

We are in the process of selecting new principals for Inderkum High and for Heron School, where Principal Mary Patrick has announced that she is leaving after this school year. Plans for those communities to meet their new principals will be made at the time of their announcements later this summer.

Successful earthquake drill

The 10 modified traditional schools participated in a first-ever district-wide earthquake drill last week as part of the new Sacramento County North Area Schools Emergency and Safety Alliance funded by a federal grant for emergency preparedness. The year-round schools were in STAR testing and will have their earthquake drill in the coming weeks. The District Emergency Response Team (DERT) was activated for the drill, as was the Incident Command System Unit for each participating school. The DERT held an after-action debriefing as did the Administrative Leadership Team. Thank you to Director of Student Services Heyman Matlock for organizing this successful drill.

Solving the fiscal crisis still top priority

The Board is scheduled to adopt a 2010-11 budget on June 23 that reflects a projected drop in enrollment of 265 students for next year and a continued decline in the state revenue limit that is our major source of income. While the budget is balanced for next school year, the district remains in “negative certification” because it is not balanced for the following two school years as required by law.

Our analysis of the Governor’s May revised budget shows our projected deficit worsening to about \$17.3 million through 2012-13. We now are faced with making a projected \$5.8 million in cuts over three years by June 30, or an estimated \$8.6 million in cuts over two years by Dec. 30. The revenue limit per Average Daily Attendance (ADA) is now projected to decrease by an additional \$48.38 to \$5,039.17. When the state fiscal crisis began, we were receiving \$5,911.49 per ADA — which means we have a projected \$873.32 less per ADA to serve our students next school year compared to just three years ago.

The Sacramento County Office of Education recently commended the district for “the hard work and difficult choices made” to reduce its deficit and remain fiscally solvent. In addition to adopting a Budget Recovery Plan last January to balance the budget for the current and next school year, the Board this spring authorized the layoff of 97.55 full-time equivalent certificated employees and 90 classified employees for 2010-11. A key component of the recovery plan is the continued cooperation of the district’s labor groups which have agreed to \$4.04 million in contract concessions over two years including furlough days.

Save the date:

- **May 25**, Inderkum High School graduation, 6:30 p.m. in the stadium
- **May 26**, Natomas High School graduation, 6 p.m. in the stadium
- **May 27**, 2009-10 school year ends for modified traditional school
- **June 9**, regular Board of Trustees meeting, open session 6:30 p.m. at the Education Center
- **June 23**, special Board meeting on budget adoption/Board facilities workshop, 6 p.m. at the Education Center
- **July 14**, regular Board of Trustees meeting, open session 6:30 p.m. at the Education Center
- **July 27**, single-track year-round schools begin 2010-11 school year
- **Aug. 10**, modified traditional schools begin 2010-11 school year
- **Aug. 11**, regular Board of Trustees meeting, open session 6:30 p.m. at the Education Center

The District Update is produced by the Natomas Unified School District Public Information Office. Contact Public Information Officer Heidi Van Zant at hvanzant@natomas.k12.ca.us or at 561.5253.