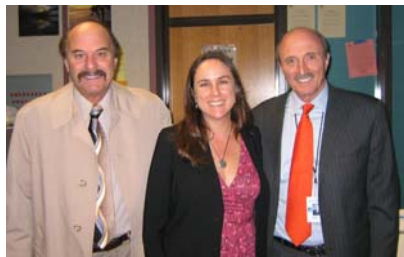




from the office of Superintendent Robert Collins

Caprice Young Visits Steele Canyon & Helix Charter High Schools

"Building a Portfolio of Great Schools"



Craig Rocha, Principal at Steele Canyon, Caprice Young, CEO, California Charter Schools Association and Superintendent Bob Collins

Caprice Young, CEO of the California Charter Schools Association, visited Helix Charter and Steele Canyon High Schools last week. The meetings were designed to foster a positive and supportive relationship between both schools and the Grossmont Union High School District (GUHSD).

Meetings with staff at both schools reinforced the intent to maintain **close, supportive relationships** with our charter schools. That includes "cutting red tape," maintaining transparency, and working together for the benefit of all students throughout East County.

Our charter high schools are an important part of a wide range of activities in GUHSD. To name a few: Proposition H, interscholastic athletics and a variety of student and teacher activities reflect a spirit of cooperation. We want to strengthen these relationships and build new partnerships.

In this context, we want to **develop a model of how school districts and charters work together effectively**, by examining how administrative and operational issues are resolved and to ensure that communication is open and supportive. We will also evaluate how teachers share information, strategies and ideas.

Helix Charter, in particular, has a rich history in serving East County students. We want to ensure that we continue to support both charters. They are part of a "Portfolio of Great Schools" that make up the Grossmont Union High School District.

"Don't settle for less than your best" LEADERSHIP AT MOUNT MIGUEL

Saturday, January 26th, was an inspirational day at Mount Miguel High School, as nearly 100 African American students assembled for the 3rd Annual **African American Young Men's Leadership Conference**. The all-day program connected leaders and professionals with young African American and other students in the Grossmont Union High School District (GUHSD). The purpose was to provide young people with **strong role models** in our community; to help them establish **a vision for their future** and to become **productive and responsible citizens**.



Kenneth Palmer, teacher at Monte Vista; Antonio Spellman, SDSU and Mt. Miguel Alum, and Thomas Gomes, teacher at Mt. Miguel



Dr. Bill Johnson, UCSD, discusses "Surviving and Thriving" with GUHSD students

The event was sponsored by the Student African American Brotherhood (SAAB), under the leadership of teacher and advisor Mike Love. The Mount Miguel Chapter supports other school events such as awards functions, Open House, and on Mondays, follows a dress code that requires students to wear business attire.

Last Saturday's program included workshops regarding "Everything You Need to Know About College," "Making It Your First Year in College," "Using Language Successfully," "Motivation, Discipline and Persistence," "Putting the Student Back Into the Student Athlete," and "Defining Manhood." These workshops were led by professors from UCSD, San Diego State University and former Grossmont District Alums, who donated their time to this effort.

The Power of Personalization of the Learning Environment

Similar efforts in schools around the nation have demonstrated significant success with students. The research is compelling and has resulted in significant "closing of the achievement gap" in schools where students are connected to role models. The SEARCH Institute's studies have found that one of the most important factors in the success of students in high school is having a strong mentoring relationship with an adult or peer.

Mount Miguel, like other schools in our District, has worked hard to establish a LINK program, recruiting peer tutors to be mentors and role models for at-risk students. Our challenge is to provide the resources to reach every student. Congratulations to the leadership at Mount Miguel for their continuing support of programs like the SAAB Leadership Conference.