



GROSSMONT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT'S NEWSLETTER

From the office of Superintendent Robert Collins

November 16, 2007

Grossmont Union High School District Community:

I want to express my sincere appreciation to the teachers, principals, parents and members of the Board of Education for placing their trust in me to be the new Superintendent of the Grossmont Union High School District. At the same time, I would like to introduce myself to you and provide each of you with my background and thoughts about the coming months.

I am a veteran of 39 years in the Los Angeles Unified School District with responsibilities for every aspect of instruction and school administration. That includes being the Chief Instruction Officer for 170 middle and high schools and the Superintendent of Local District 1, serving over 100,000 students in the West San Fernando Valley. I also served for 10 years as the Principal of Grant High School in Van Nuys. In addition to my experience, I bring a passion for students, teachers and principals and a commitment to their personal success.

To ensure ongoing communication, I will be publishing a regular Superintendent's Newsletter. I strongly believe in the power of effective communication to share ideas, provide accurate information and maintain a spirit of collaboration. For me, communication is the "hope, spirit and enthusiasm that ties us all together." I look forward to meeting you and sharing ideas as we together build a strategic plan for our District.

My first months in Grossmont will be a time of meeting with community stakeholders, asking questions and listening to their ideas, concerns and vision for our District. I have scheduled visits to each campus and meetings with stakeholder groups and a wide range of constituencies. In February 2008, I will present to the Board a strategic plan for the Grossmont District. That plan will be shaped by these visits and by your input. Our strategic plan will be a shared plan.

In visiting schools and talking with parents and community, I will be asking specific questions regarding:

1. A firm strategy for "Closing the Achievement Gap"
2. Our college preparedness and career readiness of all students
3. The continuation of a strong academic program accessible by all students
4. Student success in algebra
5. The needs of "at-risk" students, reducing the dropout rate and providing avenues for success for these students
6. A strong strategic plan for the arts
7. A comprehensive character education program
8. A parent engagement plan
9. A strong communications plan
10. Staff morale built through a collaborative administration that recognizes the importance, accomplishments and contributions of all staff

I want to be able to discuss the above points at length through the extensive meetings I have scheduled. At the same time, I want to encourage our community to put forward their interests and/or concerns. As I said before, this has to be "our" strategic plan.

At the same time, I know that staff is concerned about negotiations on new contracts. I want to be able to conclude a fair settlement with our bargaining units as soon as possible. I have served on both sides of the aisle in negotiations, but my goal remains the same: ensuring that our staff is properly compensated within a prudent budget.

A skilled and talented group of professionals is leading our Proposition H program. I believe that we can all have a great deal of confidence in the work that they are completing. However, I want to address as expeditiously as possible, unresolved Proposition H issues.

Sincerely,

Bob Collins