



## December Message from Superintendent Lane Weiss

December 8, 2011

Dear SUSD Parents, Guardians, and Staff,

I hope this message finds you well and enjoying the holiday season! I would like to thank our families and staff for their thoughtful and caring giving to the many food drives and other charitable events taking place in our district. Many thanks go to our parents and community who are supporting the many performances, activities, and events involving our students. Your continued support of Saratoga Education Foundation, our schools' PTAs, Saratoga Music Boosters, and Saratoga Sports Boosters is appreciated. Your support makes a positive difference each day for our students.

### **State/District Budget Update**

- At this time, the state's budget "trigger" could affect our district with a possible take back of \$380,00 in addition to the \$1.2 million being returned to the state. Although SUSD is a "basic aid" or "community funded" district (we receive a majority of our funding from local property taxes), our district could still be affected.
- We are currently engaged in the polling process to determine if there is community support for a parcel tax for our K-8 school district. We expect to receive and discuss the results in January.
- Our current school year expenditures/revenue are fairly close to projections.
- A Budget Advisory Committee has been formed and will be meeting monthly to review budget information and make recommendations to the SUSD Board of Trustees. The 2012-2013 budget must be approved by the Board and submitted to the county by the end of June 2012. Committee members consist of district office staff, teachers, classified employees, parents, and representatives from SEF. Budget updates are posted online.

### **Common Core Standards**

We are developing an implementation plan for the recently adopted Common Core Standards. In August, 2010, the California State Board of Education adopted new Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The new CCSS are research-based, internationally benchmarked, and designed to prepare every student for success in college and the workplace.

The Common Core Mission Statement: *The Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real*



*world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. With American students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be best positioned to compete successfully in the global economy.*

Our school district is committed to implementing a successful transition from our current state standards and assessments to the new Common Core State Standards and assessments by:

- Building a strong understanding of the new standards, 21st Century Learning Skills, and the assessments
- Supporting teachers with ongoing professional development
- Providing ongoing communication with our district's community

There are several online resources to support building staff, parent, and community understanding of the standards:

- <http://www.sccoe.k12.ca.us/depts/esb/standards>
- <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cc>
- <http://www.commoncore.org>

We look forward to keeping you informed of our progress and work with the Common Core Standards and 21st century learning.

### **Khan Academy**

We are in dialogue with staff from the Khan Academy, as well as parents and staff members who have taken an interest in the Khan Academy. I have been in conversation with Jeff Baier, the Los Altos Union School District superintendent regarding their district's implementation of the Khan Academy approach to learning.

Our district technology advisory committee and our staff look forward to exploring the possibilities the Khan Academy can offer our students, staff, and parents in the area of online learning and using analytics to help us personalize learning. I had the pleasure of attending a presentation by Mr. Khan and speaking with him about our district.

To learn more about the Khan Academy and to access some exciting learning opportunities please visit [www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org).



### **Saratoga Education Foundation Survey**

If you have not yet completed the [SEF Program Survey](#), please take 10 minutes to provide your valuable feedback to SEF. Data collected by the survey helps SEF determine which programs are most needed and valued by district families and staff.

### **Board Meeting - Tuesday, December 13**

The public is invited to attend our next board meeting on Tuesday, December 13 at 7pm in the district office conference room. Agenda highlights include:

- Board election of officers
- First interim budget report
- Report on Professional Development in SUSD

Best wishes for a joyous, peaceful, and happy holiday season!

*Lane*

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