

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

First of all, I want to thank all of you for your hard work and dedication to the students of Stockton Unified School District.

The purpose of this message is to give you more information about the Board's recent decision to redefine the CORE educational program and to dispel rumors that may be upsetting you.

I am tremendously proud to say that I have been a part of Stockton Unified for forty years.... My journey has been long and I have seen a lot. When I look back at the decades, I can remember being a part of many challenging chapters in the story that is SUSD.

Even now, people who have their own interests in mind are attempting to undermine the Board's courageous decision by using propaganda in the form of e-mails, leaflets, and petitions. Political pressure is increasing and some groups are attempting to advance their individual priorities over other stakeholders within the district.

Please consider the following facts:

- The County Office of Education has assigned SUSD a "Qualified" (or cautionary) financial certification due to ongoing fiscal concerns and deficit spending; therefore, a fiscal oversight expert has been appointed.
- The district has had to repay \$1 million for misusing materials purchased with categorical funds taking valuable dollars from the general funds.
- Many surrounding districts have negotiated concessions with the unions in order to reduce negative fiscal impacts for the students, staff and parents.
- With the redefinition of CORE, the district will avoid negative certification and the imposition of a fiscal expert with "stay and rescind" powers over Board decisions.
- Without the redefinition of the CORE, the district would have had to make millions of dollars in staff reductions to balance next year's budget.
- The district has conferred with the unions for ideas to assist in relieving fiscal issues. Some ideas suggested are to evaluate small schools and shift the spending to balance the district's financial problems. THE DISTRICT ADOPTED THE IDEA OF SHIFTING THE SPENDING THROUGH THE REDEFINITION OF THE CORE!
- The following are the benefits of CORE with all other things being equal:
 - ✓ There will not be a budget deficit for 11/12 and 12/13.
 - ✓ The district will not need to borrow as much money to make payroll and pay vendors.
 - ✓ Kindergarten classes are being reduced to 20:1.
 - ✓ 58 new kindergarten teachers are being hired.
 - ✓ There will be fewer layoffs for 2011 - 2012.
 - ✓ Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) are preserved.

The following are frequently asked questions with answers provided:

- 1) Beginning with the class of 2013, the district will require students to earn 210 credits for a high school diploma as opposed to the current 230 credits. Will this affect the number of teachers we hire for the high school sites?**
 - a) No, we will continue to staff high schools as we have in the past 240 credits (60 credits each year) as we currently staff the sites. The only change is some of the subjects will be funded out of categorical funds and not through general purpose funds. The district's expectations for graduation will remain the same with preparing all students with the capability of meeting UC A - G requirements.
- 2) Will the district cease to operate the Child Welfare and Attendance Department?**
 - a) With the implementation of the CORE program, the district hopes to shift the funding for the CWA Department to categorical funding. Our goal is to keep the program intact, however depending on funding and other variables there may be some staff reduction.
- 3) Will classified jobs be reduced and the work given to administrators?**
 - a) No positions at this time have been identified for elimination.
- 4) Will the district continue to support Kindergarten Class Size Reduction (CSR) at 20:1?**
 - a) Yes, the district plans to keep CSR at Kindergarten for 2012-13.
- 5) Because the Board of Education passed the CORE Resolution at the October 11 and again at the October 25 board meeting, will the district abolish entire classifications of SUSD workers?**
 - a) No. The goal of the CORE program is to identify alternative funding sources for current positions held. The CORE was developed in order to have greater flexibility in the expenditure of funds.
- 6) Will there be massive layoffs of teachers and classified staff for the 2012-13 school year?**
 - a) No. In fact, with the adoption of the CORE, it is our expectation that we will have 50 – 75% fewer layoffs than last year. If the CORE resolution DID NOT pass, then we would probably have the same number of layoffs for 2012-13 as we did for 2011-12.
- 7) Did the district spend all its categorical funds for the 2010-11 school year?**
 - a) No. We have carryover funds available this year that we are using to support our programs and meet our budget shortfall.
- 8) Without the CORE development, the district cannot spend all of its categorical funds. Would the district be forced to return valuable dollars to the federal government taking away opportunities for our children?**
 - a) Yes. If we used these funds in other ways it would be considered "supplanting" and we would be forced to return the funds back to the federal government. However, our Board approved the CORE program, thus providing the district with financial flexibility which allows us to be more efficient in our spending of categorical monies, thus preserving programs and jobs.