

The Connection

San Bruno Park School District

January 2016, Volume 6

Superintendent's Corner

As we welcome the new year of 2016, we hope you were able to have a wonderful December and holiday season, celebrating what is near and dear to you. We in San Bruno Park School District most definitely look forward to our continued partnership with families and staffs to meet the needs of our students, who are your precious children.

Also as we usher in the new year, we have three retirements to share. Skip Johnson, who has been in the district as principal of El Crystal for over two decades, has retired. We will miss him dearly. We appreciate his many years of service and love for his school. An interim principal will serve as principal for El Crystal through the rest of this year. See additional information in the Human Resources article. Leeanna Graf, attendance clerk for Parkside for the past 29 years has also retired. She leaves behind a huge hole, but we wish her well in her retirement and thank her for her years of dedication and service. Lastly, Mary Tordsen, Office Manager at Parkside, also retired, after giving 7 years to her position. She also was a wealth of information and history, leaving behind a hole tough to fill. We wish her happiness in her retirement and new endeavors as well. Interviews for these two office positions are taking place over the break so that we can have the jobs filled for the new year.

Throughout January, CBO Sean McGinn and I will visit each site to share the current status of the budget, programs, LCAP, and answer questions. Staff members may attend any that work for their schedules. **The school staff informational sessions will go from 3:00-4:00 pm. Some dates have CHANGED, so be sure to note the dates. We needed to avoid SBEA meetings and staff meetings:**

Allen: **Wednesday, 1/13**

Belle Air: **Tuesday, 1/12**

El Crystal: **Monday, 1/25**

Parkside: **Tuesday, 1/26**

John Muir: **Wednesday, 1/27**

Portola: **Tuesday, 1/19**

Rollingwood: **Monday, 2/1**



Similar Informational nights and chat times for parents will be hosted at the district office from 6:30-7:30 on the following evenings:

Wednesday, January 20

Thursday, February 18

Thank you again for partnering with us in the education of your children. We appreciate you.

Lastly, if we do not have your email address, we will be sending you a letter requesting it. We are going to be utilizing our mass contact system more thoroughly and we need your email or cell phone number for texting or email. You will receive the monthly newsletter, CONNECTION, and other forms of communication this way! We continue striving to reach each family to communicate effectively with you all! Let me know what ideas you have for this. It means a great deal to me to be able to communicate easily and effectively with our families.

“San Bruno Park School District educates and empowers all students to thrive academically, socially and emotionally to be contributing members of society.”

SBPSD Goals:

- **Attract, develop and retain highly qualified staff**
- **Implement 21st century learning strategies and methodologies**
- **Become fiscally solvent**
- **Develop, expand and implement quality programs and courses to enable academic success for all students**

Thank you! Most Sincerely,

Cheryl Olson

From the Classroom



This past month, many of our students participated in a global event called **Hour of Code**. Hour of Code is a one-hour introduction to computer science, designed to demystify code and show that anybody can learn the basics. The Hour of Code event was held during the week of **December 7-13 in conjunction with Science Education Week**, but you can participate at any time. Computer Science helps develop problem solving, logic, and creativity. By starting early, students have a head start on possible career paths for the 21st century. **Over winter break, I encourage you and your children to log-on to <https://code.org> and try some of the coding activities.** There are beginning coding tutorials and activities for students from kindergarten through high school. You will even find tutorials using Minecraft, Star Wars, and Anna and Elsa from Frozen on the tutorials page. There are even some activities you can do off-line or unplugged. There are variety of activities that run on different devices such as tablets, smartphones and computers. There is no sign-up or login required at code.org, however some activities will require the creation of a free Code Studio account to save your work. The activity choices range from students who cannot yet read to high school. If you have high school students at home, they might enjoy the Star Wars and Minecraft tutorials or maybe beginner tutorial using Angry Birds. More advanced options include Khan Academy or Code HS. **So why not check it out- code.org and select the Learn tab and let the games begin!**



Kim Harper, Director Curriculum and Instruction

Student Services



This past month has been busy working on enrollment and attendance. The following is a summary of important timelines for Kindergarten enrollment, inter-district transfers, intra-district transfers, and attendance monitoring.

Kindergarten enrollment packets will be available for pick up and submission at the student's school of residence on January 11. Parents should contact the office managers of their school of residence for information.

Inter-district transfers must be renewed annually; procedures were revised in the Board Policy (BP 5117) and in the Administrative Regulations (AR 5117) last Spring, with some important changes.

- Applications will be accepted between March 1 and March 31, 2016 from parents requesting to renew a current transfer into San Bruno Park from another district. Parents will be advised in writing by May 1 as to whether their applications have been approved, denied or wait-listed.
- Renewal applications received after March 31 will be processed as a new request.
- New applications to transfer into San Bruno from other districts will be accepted between April 1 and April 30. Parents must first apply for release with their district of residence. Parents will be advised in writing by May 31 as to whether their applications have been approved, denied or wait-listed.
- Renewal and new requests to transfer out of San Bruno Park to attend another district will be accepted between January 15 and April 30, 2016, for the following 2016-2017 school year. These are submitted on an Interdistrict Attendance Permit Application and Agreement form, which may be downloaded from the District website or obtained from the district office. Applications will be approved or denied within thirty days of receipt. The application window for students to leave the district is wider than for those to enter in order to accommodate the variety of windows in the receiving districts.

Intra-district transfer procedures remain the same as in past years. Transfer requests between school within the district are accepted between March 1 and May 1 of the

preceding school year for which the transfer is requested. Final determination is determined by lottery held in early May. Parent are notified of the results within ten days of the lottery.

All transfers are dependent on available space, attendance, the student putting forth best effort, behavior, and any other non-arbitrary considerations. Transfers may be revoked for any of these reasons.

Continuing with the concerns regarding attendance, the School Attendance Review Board (SARB) procedures and forms have been updated. All forms and procedures are compliant with the recommendations of the San Mateo County Office of Education, and will be used uniformly by all schools in the District. "Letter to parents" templates have been downloaded into Power School to allow easier generation of letters by Office Managers and/or Principals, after training is supplied to them. A first letter warning is sent to parents after three days of unexcused absence or three tardies of more than thirty minutes, or a combination of the two. A second letter may be sent home after one more instance, and a third letter may be sent home after one more instance. Letters may also be sent home when a student receives more than 10 days of excused absences. These letters are not meant to be punitive; rather, the purpose of these letters is to encourage regular attendance by providing appropriate support to the students and their families.

Ellen Merritt, Director of Student Services & Special Education



Human Resources

Long time, much loved and respected principal, Skip Johnson, from El Crystal, is retiring this month. He is leaving a legacy of creativity, a focus on what students need in order to learn effectively, and then the creation of the STEM Magnate program at El Crystal. We are in the process of seeking an interim principal to cover through the rest of this school year. We will conduct interviews for the permanent principal in early March for the 2016-2017 school year. Cheryl has met with teachers to solicit input regarding important qualities and characteristics for a principal and will meet with interested classified



staff and parents the evening of December 17, from 6:30-7:30, in the El Crystal Media Center to seek input as well.

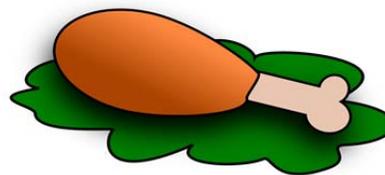
In addition, because there is such an extreme shortage of teachers and substitutes in the state of California, we are beginning to hold interviews in January, with the purpose of developing a pool of candidates what could be placed whenever an opening occurs. We are hoping this gives us an edge for hiring and retaining teaching staff in the future.

Thank you, Jennifer Peponis & Cecille Mendiola



Student Nutrition

Last month was busy with recruitment! Nancy Huerta, Cafeteria Helper for lunch at Allen, is now also POS for breakfast and brunch. Michelle Farano, who has been working as a sub Cafeteria Helper for several years, was hired as a Cafeteria Helper at John Muir to replace Colleen Ahuna. Janel Costanzo, currently Cafeteria Operator at Allen will be the accountant clerk and assistant for the department. This will free some of my time to allow focus on improvements and extensions of our program, such as the installation of bottle filler fountains, the replacement of Styrofoam trays with compostable trays, and the implementation of a breakfast program in all schools. Of course, we will also continue to introduce new items in our menus and will hold special events with students.



Tech as a Learning Tool

We are continuing our everyday support of staff and students in the district, along with maintaining the core network infrastructure. Work is beginning on updating and preparing mobile devices for SBAC testing in the spring, as well as implementation and support of a new math program (Dreambox) being piloted at Portola.

Thank you,

Don Hopkins, Network Manager



Dollars and Sense!



First Interim Report

One of the most important financial criteria of San Bruno Park School district's financial reports has to do with future expectations of financial position. It is important for any business to be able develop an expectation of resources and a spending plan. While no one can predict the future, we can make reasonable educated projections. The educated projections, also known as assumptions, are derived from local data, statistics, and fund balances as well as advice from CDE, FCMAT and SMCOE. The assumptions play a very important role in projecting fund balances and identifying risk factors associated with financial position.

There are several criterion and standards that FCMAT and the CDE developed as a way to identify risk factors associated with school districts that may not be able to meet financial obligations within the next few years. For the past few years, San Bruno Park School District's most basic concern was deficit spending and salaries not being competitive with the local region.

The first interim report recently approved by the board projects slight increases in fund balance for the next two fiscal years. The improvement has to do with a decrease in estimated expenses for the Special Education program and lower than anticipated personnel cost.

Comments were made last year at the second interim by FCMAT and SMCOE that San Bruno Park School District were both deficit spending and wages were not competitive. Now that we solved the deficit spending issue, we will now focus on the challenge of developing salary schedules combined with other forms of compensation, that are competitive with the salaries in the peninsula region.

Thank you,

Sean McGinn, CBO



**Happy 2016! Have a safe,
happy, and healthy
New Year**