



Orange
County
School
Boards
Association

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March 2002 Edition

President's Message
Don Sedgwick

Advocating For Our Kids Goes Further Than Setting Policy

Last month, one of the larger upsets in Super Bowl history occurred. Could the Patriots have won if their coach had dwelt on the opinions of the media during their preparations? Had he chosen, he could have found plenty of reasons why his players had no chance to win. Instead, he stressed his team's strengths and built hope in the players, energizing them towards victory. As School Board Members, we too can go far in energizing our employees, parents, students, and community at-large to greater levels of excellence. Collectively, a board must set a positive tone in the community regarding the district's strengths, achievements, and future outlook. Sure, we can complain about how the politicians are making our life difficult. But such discourse should be kept at a minimum because negativity breeds negativity.

Instead, we must discuss what we can do, given today's circumstances, to make our districts stronger than ever, never losing an opportunity to sing praises of recent accomplishments. When visiting a PTA meeting, speaking to an employee group, or making other public presentations, I try to always have a positive result to share, conveying a sincere sense of pride in something that is occurring with that group or school. I love visiting Gates Elementary, our school with the most socio-economically challenged student population. Though they scored at the bottom of the district in raw API score, they scored 10 out of 10 in their Similar Schools Ranking. The latter should be the emphasis, while we constantly look for ways to improve. Every school is doing *something* great! Just like our own children, when people are recognized for being *good*, they will in turn strive to be *great*! Teachers and administrators find it awkward when pointing out their own successes. We have greater ability than anyone to sing our districts' praises.

Politicians likewise must be positively reinforced when acting on our behalf. It was unfortunate to hear from Governor Davis last year, after disbursing a record amount of money, that he did not receive one thank you note. With this recent restoration of funds (albeit insufficient), we ought to show true appreciation (as we beg for more!). In the long run, searching for opportunities to give thanks might be more effective than complaining when things don't seem right!

Why go through these efforts? By building support for, and confidence in our local districts, we will see greater volunteerism by parents, efforts by employees, and support by legislators. What is the end result? Better achievement, better schools, better teaching, and better resources...for our kids. Now *that is* advocating!

We must spread our sense of pride throughout the community. Someone said, "Attitudes are contagious. Is yours worth catching?" If it is, then our districts can be like the Patriots of the Super Bowl. When faced with a fairly bleak outlook, we choose to stress our strengths, stay upbeat, and find a way to win!

A Middle Grades After School Enrichment Program

The Time Has Arrived

by

Marc Ecker, Ph.D.

Superintendent, Fountain Valley School District

The growth in extended school programs operated by public school districts has far outdistanced the many programs now offered by other child service agencies. The extended school programs funded through grants, fees and district funds in most cases have been limited to elementary students through grades five or six. The Fountain Valley School District is committed to providing before and after-school programs for students during the hours that parents are at work and school is out. The district has for many years provided a program for K-5th grade students and currently services over 750 children. The popularity of the program has grown as a direct result of the supervised nature of these before and after school activities that are linked to the school's instructional program. Parents have found a safe, affordable and valuable program of supervision for their children outside the school day.

Attention is now being focused on the early adolescent. Last year the district began its exploration into the expansion of the K-5 extended school program into the middle schools with a pilot program at Talbert Middle School. Attendance was limited, due in great part because a tuition fee was charged.

Aware that 10- to 14-year olds require supervision albeit through different program options, the Fountain Valley School District has recently been successful in its application for a CalWORKS Grant that will fund a "A Middle Grades After School Enrichment Program" at each of its three middle schools. Through grant tuition assistance, from a contract with the Orange County Department of Education, it is anticipated that participation in this year's new program will increase.

The goal of the program is intended to provide adult supervision appropriate to the age and needs of the students. Supervised experiences will assist students to develop positive values, social competencies and a commitment to learning. Students who have been able to develop these skills are less likely to participate in high-risk behaviors. By providing academic support after school, young people will feel better about being at school and perform academically better.

Before and after school homework assistance will be provided by district teachers and YMCA staff. Classes and clubs will be offered by district staff to reinforce the instructional program and provide creative and fun ways for youth to use what they are learning. After school activities will assist our young people in valuing the many ways literacy is used in their daily lives. To reinforce the importance of culture and personal history, district teachers and staff will offer art media and the performing arts. Staff and the City of Fountain Valley Recreation Department will provide organized and cooperative sports.

A research based conceptual framework clarifies how all pieces fit together to help young people grow into healthy, caring and responsible adults. The popularity of our extended care programs combined with effective schools research is the basis of Fountain Valley School District's interest in focusing on the "whole child."

National School Board Association (NSBA) Will Study After-School Programs

NSBA has received a grant of nearly \$500,000 from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation to develop a comprehensive resource to encourage local school boards to provide extended-day learning opportunities in public schools.

One of the key steps in the project involves identifying successful school-based, after school programs.

School board members with information about such projects or school board policies on extended learning and after school programs are encouraged to contact Mike Wessely at NSBA, (703) 838-6760 or mwessely@nsba.org

“Adopting a Community State of Mind” The Fullerton Collaborative

*by Sharon Quirk, Healthy Start Coordinator
Fullerton Elementary School District*

The Fullerton Collaborative is a growing group of active Fullerton School District representatives, community members, service group members, and business members who meet monthly with the common goal of supporting children and families in Fullerton in order to recreate a healthier community for all Fullerton residents.

For over eight years, the Collaborative has been working together to create a comprehensive referral system so that families in need can have access to health care, special agencies, enrichment activities, parenting classes, and community events.

The Fullerton Collaborative is currently supported by Fullerton Elementary special grants. These special grants require a collaborative to be in place in order to be funded: the Even Start Grant, Fullerton Healthy Start Grant, After School and Safe Neighborhood Grant, and most recently, the 21st Century Grant (After School Program). However, the Fullerton Collaborative is unique in the sense that it has moved from being a school based membership to a strong community collaborative. The collaborative continues to thrive in membership and enthusiasm.

Several highlights have occurred in the last few months. In October, 2001, the Fullerton Collaborative meeting was led by an outside facilitator, who helped implement a Strategic Planning Phase. Over 30 community agencies participated. This resulted in the Collaborative accomplishing a new mission statement and a vision statement. The months of November, December, and January have been focused on forming goals and action plans, as well as establishing working actions groups.

Most importantly are what we as Collaborative Members call “Collaborative Success Stories,” actions that have provided a need for service in Fullerton. One gap that was filled through the Collaborative was that the Healthy Start Grant was awarded an additional three year grant to be implemented at Nicholas Jr. High School. Under the grant’s budget guidelines a new facility could not be purchased. The City of Fullerton generously offered to donate their existing community portable for the new Nicolas Healthy Start site. The portable should arrive in May, 2002!

Another result was the “Magical January Boys Conference.” The Healthy Start Program, Nicholas staff members, and Disney Goals’ staff joined together for a morning break-out session focusing on pride, respect, and responsibility for 65 targeted boys. As a culminating activity, the boys went on a field trip to the Disney’s Mighty Duck’s Hockey rink. This combination of discussions and hands-on activities has resulted in many of our at-risk boys at Nicholas to begin making positive choices in their lives. Currently, over thirty boys are now attending a weekly lunch group hosted by Healthy Start. They are also attending Friday afternoon leadership groups led by Disney Goals at the Orangethorpe United Methodist Church and participate in up to two hockey games a week. At our last boys lunch club meeting, we took a survey and discovered that some of these boys have now logged in 40 hours of supervised activities since our January kick-off conference.

In addition a well orchestrated team effort took place on January 26, 2002, at the 2nd Annual Richman Elementary Community Breakfast. Over 500 community members, families and local agencies teamed up for a morning of entertainment, food, fun, and family support services. An amazing show of support came from Dr. Harris Done, an Anaheim dentist who arranged for over 30 dental interns to come and perform services on site. Close to 100 elementary students received free dental care with donations from the Rotary Club and 20/30 Club. Many of these children had none or very little previous dental care.

As the Collaborative continues to unite and work together, our students are receiving services and support that have traditionally been left up to individuals, families, or schools. We have learned that working as a community has benefited our individual agencies and is moving us closer to our common goal of improving the lives of all Fullerton residents.

“It Takes a Community to Raise a Child.”

OCSBA CALENDAR

General Dinner Meetings

Location: Irvine Marriott, 18000 Von Karman Ave., Irvine 92612
Evening Schedule, 5:30 p.m. PAGE Meeting, 6:00 p.m. Social, 6:30 p.m.
Dinner

*Joint ACSA Dinner Meeting

March 20, 2002*
April 24, 2002

Officers and Directors Meetings

Location: Orange County Department of Education, Board Room
200 Kalmus Drive, Costa Mesa, 92628
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

March 13, 2002
April 10, 2002



OCSBA/ACSA JOINT DINNER MEETING

Irvine Marriott Hotel

Promoting Tolerance and Acceptance in our Schools

Speaker: Erin Gruwell, Distinguished Professor in Residence
California State University Long Beach

2001-2002

OCSBA OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

President.....Don Sedgwick, SVUSD
President-Elect.....Shirley Carey, HBCSD
V.P./Programs.....Marcia Milchiker, SOCCCD
Secretary.....Sheila Benecke, CUSD
Treasurer.....Judy Edwards, FVSD

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Elementary.....Susan Preus, ACSD
Elementary.....Donna McDougall, CSD
Unified.....Judy Franco, NMUSD
Unified.....Karin Freeman, PYLUSD
High School.....Bill Dunton, FJUHS
Community College.....Walter Howald, CCCD
PAGE Chairperson.....Mary Fuhrman, BPSD
CSBA Region 15.....Virginia Wilson, LAUSD
Newsletter Editor.....Bob Fisler, FSD

PAGE MEETING

Wednesday
March 20, 2002
5:30 p.m.
Irvine Marriott Hotel

**James B. Cox, President
JK Educational Associates, Inc.**

Topic:

**Understanding the Academic
Performance Index
(API)**

This brief session will focus on understanding California's API. Where the three-digit number comes from, the process for determining a school's "state rank" and "similar schools rank" will be highlighted.

**POINTS FROM PAGE MEETING
January 23, 2002**

EMAIL AND THE BROWN ACT

**By Ron Wenkart
General Counsel
Orange County Department of Education**

- A majority of the board may not communicate with email on an issue.
- Email posted on the district website with printed versions available to the public is not permitted under the Brown Act
- The key word is "majority."
- Exchanging information to reach a concurrence of opinion using email keeps the public from monitoring the deliberations as they occur and keeps them from participating in the process.
- Never send email on any item discussed in closed session.
- Think of email as a memo document. It can be sent to others that you aren't aware of.
- It is probable that if the district is being sued, the board members' home computers could be subpoenaed to trace all email.