

Superintendent Rick Schmitt's Monthly Update

April 1, 2014

Superintendent Schmitt plans to update the greater San Dieguito Union High School District community through our local media with a monthly update. Topics covered will include curriculum, facilities, budget, safety, and other specific and special interest topics. Today's update focuses on the new Next Generation Science Standards and celebrating our 2014 Employees of the Year.

Next Generation Science Standards

The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) have been developed based on the National Research Council's *Framework for K-12 Science Education* and in close alignment with the Common Core State Standards. NGSS includes three dimensions: (1) Science and Engineering Practices, (2) Crosscutting Concepts, and (3) Disciplinary Core Ideas. As compared to current California Content Standards for Science, NGSS includes much more integration with mathematics and engineering, much more connection between science disciplines, and a greater emphasis on depth over breadth within science disciplines.

NGSS is similar to Common Core State Standards in that (a) it is a set of standards, not a prescribed curriculum; (b) it emphasizes depth and application over breadth and coverage; (c) standards build coherently from kindergarten to 12th grade; (d) literacy and communication integrate directly into course content; (e) they are designed to prepare students for college, career, and citizenship.

California officially adopted NGSS as the state science standards in September of 2013. The California Department of Education has planned a three-stage phase-in. The San Dieguito Union High School District (SDUHSD) will take a gradual and multi-year approach toward implementation:

- 2014-15: Awareness & Staff Training
- 2015-16: Transition & Staff Training
- 2016-17: Implementation

While NGSS recommends integrated science classes (instead of disciplinary classes) for grades K through 8, California has established two pathways for middle school science classes. One pathway would approach middle school science in an integrated manner with standards relating to Life Science and Physical Science being taught together in an integrated fashion over a two year sequence (7th & 8th grade). The second pathway would continue to teach middle school science standards in two separate stand-alone courses (7th grade Life Science and 8th grade Physical Science). During the 2014-15 school year, SDUHSD Science teachers and curricular leaders will study both pathways and will choose which to pursue moving forward. The new standards do not call for or recommend that high school science course pathways change.

As with our transition to the Common Core State Standards, SDUHSD will take a slow and measured approach to implementing NGSS. We will emphasize ongoing professional development for teachers and we will develop and adopt high-quality textbooks (digital and/or traditional) and other instructional materials aligned with NGSS. In the coming year we will conduct a number of public meetings at our schools and in conjunction with our feeder elementary districts to inform our students and families about the changes inherent to NGSS.

For more information,

- www.nextgenscience.org
- CDE page: www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/sc/ngssintrod.asp

Teacher of the Year

Scott Huntley, History and Culinary Arts teacher at San Dieguito High School Academy (SDHSA) is our 2013-14 District Teacher of the Year. Scott teaches both AP World History and Culinary Arts. He began his career in our district in fall of 2007. First and foremost, Scott is an exceptional classroom teacher in both the AP World History and Culinary Arts classrooms. His students have one of the highest AP World History test pass rates (over 85%) which are among the most difficult of AP tests due to the breadth of the content assessed.

In 2008, Scott created the Culinary Arts program at SDHSA with one course. By 2011 over 800 of the 1500 students at SDHSA requested Culinary Arts as one of their electives and Scott was teaching both introductory and advanced courses. In just a few short years, Scott created what is likely the single most popular elective program in the entire district. The Culinary Arts program draws both university-bound AP students as well as students looking to gain ROP certification to work in the culinary industry.

The success Scott has achieved in both the academic and elective realms doesn't happen by accident - it is the result of his dedication to excellence in all he does and is the result of a Herculean work ethic. Scott is the embodiment of what we hope for in all of our teachers and we are very fortunate to have him as part of our SDUHSD family.

Classified Employee of the Year

Norma Villa, Secretary at Diegueno Middle School is our 2013-14 Classified Employee of the Year. Norma began her career in the District as a student aide after school while attending San Dieguito High School. Norma worked in the Personnel Office and the Superintendent's Office for several hours after school.

Norma was hired by the District in January, 1994, as a part-time Office Assistant in the Adult Education ROP Office which eventually became a full-time position. In July, 2009, she was hired as a secretary in the counseling office where she still works today.

Co-worker Vetha Pierce describes Norma as a "work horse" and the one who is always willing to help with any task! Norma has a great sense of humor and never misses a co-worker's birthday. Norma is the ultimate professional in dealing with parents, students, and staff.

Norma is committed to doing her best and always goes above and beyond the call of duty. We are fortunate indeed to have Norma on our San Dieguito Team!

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