

## Superintendent Rick Schmitt's Monthly Update

January 2016

*Superintendent Schmitt regularly updates the greater San Dieguito Union High School District (SDUHSD) community through our local media with a monthly update. Topics may include academics, facilities, budget, enrollment, safety, and other specific and special interest topics. Today's update focuses on the healthy SDUHSD budget and reserves, class size, and High School Selection.*

### SDUHSD Budget & Reserves

Each January, we begin our budget planning for the next school year. As we entered the current school year, our projections indicated that, due to growth in state revenue and increased enrollment in our district, we would see our funding from the state increase over the next three years. At the mid-year point, all sources continue to indicate a healthy and stable outlook for our budget. SDUHSD has a long history of effective and fiscally conservative budgeting and maintenance of healthy reserves and, as we move into 2016 and beyond, we will continue these prudent fiscal practices. In fact, SDUHSD currently has the highest reserves in its long history. Due to our strategic fiscal planning and effective collaboration with district employees, even during the recent state economic downturn, SDUHSD was still able to increase student achievement year over year, retain all of our instructional and extra-curricular programs, and add elective choices for students, all while maintaining reasonable class size averages.

The improvement in per-student funding in our multi-year projection has allowed us to continue to expand programs, offer increased scheduling and course options at our schools, and attract and retain highly-qualified teachers and staff.

Our business is to prepare for the future. It happens every day in every classroom and it happens as we manage our resources. We thrived by every fiscal and academic measure during the recession thanks to careful planning both before and during the downturn. We will build upon our successes as we develop and support our outstanding educational program for next school year and beyond.

### Class Size

I want to take this opportunity to clear up any confusion regarding district class size averages that may exist as a result of a handful of community members recently misrepresenting to our community that class size averages in SDUHSD were going to increase. The District has, and will remain, focused on keeping class size averages as low as possible. In reality, our teachers and students have recently experienced some of the lowest class sizes in a decade as a result of our district's significant investment in reducing class size averages. The new district contract class size language was simply updated and clarified last month and did not make any change to class size averages as a few would lead you to believe. This new contract language helped provide clarity regarding how the staffing ratio actually equates to class size averages as our

teachers teach multiple classes each day. All nine of our comprehensive schools are staffed equitably regardless of their respective bell schedules. The formula used to determine the total number of teachers for each site does not include the additional funding the District has provided to sites specifically to lower class size. Over the last two years, the district, working closely with the San Dieguito Faculty Association, has spent in excess of \$3 million in additional funds to continue to reduce class size averages across the district as well as to provide additional support classes like AVID and College Readiness as well as math support and other academic programs.

### **High School Selection**

We will begin our annual High School Selection process for the 2016-17 school year on February 1, 2016. Each incoming 9th grade student is required to select the high school he or she would like to attend in the 2016-17 school year. The High School Selection window closes at 4:00 p.m. on Monday, February 29, 2016. Current SDUHSD 8th grade students who make no high school selection will be automatically enrolled in their school of residence (LCCHS or TPHS). Students already enrolled in SDUHSD high schools need not make a high school selection for 2016-17 unless they want to change schools. If more students apply for enrollment in a school than capacity can accommodate, the district will conduct a random lottery to determine which students are enrolled. While, unfortunately, we cannot guarantee that every student will get into his or her first choice school for 2016-17, SDUHSD remains committed to doing our absolute best to enroll as many students as possible in their first choice school. Fortunately, this selection process has worked very successfully for almost all our students and we have a history of success with this effort. For more information on 2016-17 high school enrollment, please [click here](#).

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