



PRESS RELEASE

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July 6, 2015

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District Plan Supports Academic and Socio-emotional Needs of Students

Board of Education Adopts Annual Budget and Local Control and Accountability Plan

The Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District Board of Education on June 30 adopted a 2015-16 budget and 2015-18 Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) that emphasizes college and career readiness along with a secure and collaborative learning environment.

The District has earmarked funding to bolster college-readiness programs and services such as peer support groups and college/career centers at each of the high schools. Additional funding will go toward a College Night; Advanced Placement instructional training for teachers and materials for middle and high school students; College Board PSAT and SAT preparation courses and exams; new textbooks; and increased support for the visual and performing arts, including expansion of vocal music to all schools.

The \$194.3 million budget funds professional training for teachers to support programs designed to help deliver high-quality instruction for all students. The training will be provided for the New Generation Science Standards, California Standards in mathematics and strategies to support learning for English-language learners and use of technology to enhance instruction.

“The Board approved a solid budget that supports the academic rigor required to ensure our graduates are college and career ready while supporting the socio-emotional well-being of our students,” newly appointed Superintendent Dr. Hasmik Danielian said. “The strategies outlined in our LCAP represent a comprehensive approach to supporting students with a focus on academic and emotional needs.”

The LCAP is a three-year plan, required by the state’s school funding system, which guides District efforts to improve student learning with programs focused on the state’s three high-needs groups: economically disadvantaged students, foster children and English learners. It identifies goals for each year, strategies to achieve those goals and funding sources.

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Seventy-two percent of district students fall into at least one of the high-needs groups; therefore, many of the programs outlined in the LCAP are districtwide. That approach includes an expansion of the District's Project Lead The Way (PLTW) program promoting science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills. The program will be added to middle schools with a pilot program set up for elementary schools.

Focused strategies designed to benefit English learners, foster youth and low-income students at particular grade levels, school sites or student groups include: support for early learners with instructional aides in TK-K classrooms; expanded socio-emotional counseling via Elementary Student Support Specialist for elementary students and their families; and access for all students to high level coursework, including additional AP classes, with support from additional counselors. Additional coaches for Playworks, a structured-play program designed to improve the physical and intellectual well-being of children, are also in the plan.

The District will also pilot an elementary version of its Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) college preparatory program now provided to students in middle schools and high schools. The District will also implement a language skills-building version of AVID ("AVID EXCEL") in middle schools for its long-term English learners.

The new plan also aims to increase counseling and mental health support services to support at-risk students' needs, including additional high school college/intervention counselors and mental health support programs for elementary level students.

Stakeholder input on funding priorities was gathered by the district in the spring through an on-line survey and meetings with site administrators, students, parents and district staff.

"The District held a series of informational meetings where we heard the priorities of our stakeholders, including community members, parents, educators and students," said School Board President Jesse Urquidi who has a first-grade student in the District. "The input we received was important for the district community to move forward knowing everyone is on the same page."

Because parents play an integral part in their children's education, the District will increase the number of training opportunities for parents so that they can help their students master the new California Standards. Workshops will be offered in both English and Spanish.

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