



## Del Mar Schools Education Foundation

March 6, 2008

BY EMAIL

Dr. Annette Easton, President  
Ms. Katherine White, Clerk  
Ms. Linda Crawford  
Dr. Janet Lamborghini  
Mr. Steven McDowell  
Board of Trustees  
Del Mar Union School District  
225 Ninth Street  
Del Mar, California 92014

Dear Trustees:

I am writing on behalf of the DMSEF Board to request that you place an action item on the agenda for your March 26, 2008 meeting, that will facilitate the district's immediate transition from the current system of using site-specific private donations to fund enrichment programs for the current year, to a system of using these donations to fund enrichment programs for the following year. The Board of Trustees would be required to take the following actions for this transition to take effect immediately:

- (1) The District would agree not to apply any of the site-specific funds raised by each school toward the goal set by the Foundation toward funding enrichment programs for the current school year;
- (2) The District would guarantee the same level of enrichment staffing for the 2008-09 school year that is currently in place at each site; and
- (3) The District would extend the current system of accepting site-specific donations for enrichment programs through the 2009-10 school year, pursuant to the same formula already adopted through the 2008-09 school year.

Given recent events within the District, it is important that the Board act on this request at this time. The Foundation is at a critical point in its fundraising efforts as we approach the May 1 deadline for contributions to enrichment programs. Since the announcement of Superintendent

Tom Bishop's departure, however, many parents have notified the Foundation of their intent to withhold their contributions as a form of protest against this action, while others have questioned why they should donate funds to a school district that has over \$300,000 at its disposal to buy-out the final 18 months of Mr. Bishop's contract. Anxiety over the preservation of current levels of enrichment programming at sites that fall short of their fundraising goals have exacerbated tensions and further undermined our fundraising efforts.

A decision now to guarantee current levels of programming for next year, while also shifting from a current year to a subsequent year fundraising system, will have a significant positive impact. First, it will reassure parents that Mr. Bishop's departure truly will not have a negative impact on funding for the enrichment programs they value so highly. Second, it will reduce the anxiety of teachers throughout the District who, under the current system, face uncertainty over funding for their positions every spring. Third, it will allow the Foundation to set fundraising goals that are much clearer and easier to communicate, which should translate to increased support.

The negative financial impact of taking this step, (i.e. foregoing a \$500,000 contribution from the Foundation included in the District's budget for the current year), should be heavily outweighed by the funds that will be available to support these programs for 2008-09 and beyond. As of today, the Foundation and the various school PTAs have raised nearly \$600,000 district-wide for enrichment programs, with nearly two months still to go before the May 1 deadline. If the Board takes this action, there is every reason to believe that strong giving will resume, and that each school's goal will remain achievable. Success will not only result in substantial funding for 2008-09, but also a good headstart on fundraising for the 2009-10 school year.

Given the current situation within the District and the proximity of the May 1 deadline, I urge you to act on this item at the March 26 meeting. Only by acting quickly can we maximize the opportunity for a successful conclusion to the current fundraising campaign. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, or if I can be of any assistance prior to the March meeting.

Very truly yours,

/s/

Bob Gans  
DMSEF President

cc: Ms. Janet Bernard  
Mr. Rodger Smith  
Ms. Dena Whittington  
Ms. Sherry Forte