



# Board Briefs

Highlights from this week's Board of Education meeting

## **Representatives present report on county visual arts pilot**

Elaine Keeley of the Orange County Department of Education and Dalynn Malek, a curriculum writer for the California Arts Project and teacher at Laguna Hills High School, presented a report on the visual arts pilot associated with the county's Arts Advantage program.

The Arts Advantage program is being developed by a committee of educational leaders and representatives from the community, business and professional arts sectors who wish to see the arts fully restored in K-12 education. The overarching goal of the committee is to seek technical assistance and sustainable resources to help classroom teachers deliver quality arts instruction.

## **IPSF chief updates board on Five Week Campaign**

Neda Zaengle, CEO of the Irvine Public Schools Foundation, announced that IPSF had extended its deadline for the Five Week Campaign aimed at mitigating the impacts of larger class sizes next year. The campaign, which concludes March 15, has so far netted more than \$172,000 for 2010-11.

Zaengle thanked parents, students, community members and the Irvine Unified Council PTA for their support of recent IPSF initiatives, including the "Dine Out, Help Out" event in which local restaurants donated a percentage of each tab. As a follow-up, IPSF and Barnes & Noble book stores have teamed up for the "iRead" campaign the week of March 8. At three select locations in Irvine, up to 20 percent of all sales will benefit IUSD schools.

For more information about IPSF, or to make a donation, visit [www.ipsf.net](http://www.ipsf.net).

## **Irvine PTAs helping to raise money through IPSF**

Steffanie Early, president of the Irvine Unified Council PTA, told the Board that site-based PTAs are stepping up big to support Irvine schools by holding special events, taking up collections and contributing to the Irvine Public Schools Foundation. The Turtle Rock PTA, for example, recently voted to donate \$5,000 of its reserves to the foundation, she said.

Early also noted that the state PTA is continuing its advocacy efforts and has engaged in a petition drive for an initiative that would lower the threshold for the passage of local school funding measures from two-thirds of the vote to 55 percent. She encouraged those in attendance to join concerned parents and community members throughout the state in wearing blue on Thursday, March 4, to show that California is "blue about the budget."

## **Board engages in latest discussion on impacts of state crisis**

Board members, staff and the community took part in the latest discussion related to the state fiscal crisis and its impact on IUSD.

IUSD's budget forecast for 2010-11 remains dire, with a projected deficit of more than \$20 million based on the governor's proposed spending plan. While the next fiscal year doesn't begin until July

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# More highlights from the March 2 Board of Education meeting

1, the district's Second Interim Report – indicating IUSD's ability to meet all financial obligations for three years – is due later this month. As such, the Board is expected to make budget reductions at its next regular meeting on March 16.

Assistant Superintendent Lisa Howell said the music and science specialist program for grades four through six would be removed from the list of staff-recommended reductions after legal counsel advised that onetime dollars from the Irvine Ranch Water District could be used to fund these programs. Board members also expressed their desire to continue funding IUSD's art specialist program.

The Irvine Teachers Association and IUSD have reached a tentative contract agreement that includes four furlough days for 2009-10 and eight furlough days for 2010-11, but the agreement still requires ratification by ITA's membership. If approved by both the district's certificated and classified unions, the furlough days would apply to all IUSD employees, generating a savings of nearly \$8.6 million.

## **Board approves yearly release of temporary employees**

The Board voted on a resolution to release IUSD's temporary certificated employees at the end of the current school year. Assistant Superintendent Terry Walker noted that the action does not represent a decision regarding specific program cuts or staffing for 2010-11. Rather, the release of teachers on temporary assignments is a yearly practice in IUSD, as it is in many districts, to ensure maximum flexibility in an environment of fiscal uncertainty and volatility.

## **Board approves first-reading of defibrillator policy**

Board members approved the first reading of a proposed policy to authorize the placement of automated external defibrillators, or AEDs, at all schools and a number of sites in the Irvine Unified School District.

Under the terms of the policy, the superintendent will develop guidelines that include employee training on the use of AEDs, as well as their placement, security and maintenance. Though the cost is projected at \$77,450, the district hopes to work with local businesses and community partners to obtain the devices.

## **Coming Up...**

Regular Meetings: *Tuesday, March 16, 2010 in the Board Room (7 p.m.)*  
*Tuesday, April 13, 2010 in the Board Room (7 p.m.)*

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*IUSD ... providing the highest quality educational experience we can envision.*