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PASADENA UNIFIED LAUNCHES FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SURVEY; RESULTS TO GUIDE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN

Pasadena, CA – With improved customer service as a top strategic priority, the Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD) is launching the next phase of its family online survey by opening it up to all families, PUSD teachers and staff, residents, and stakeholders residing in Altadena, Pasadena and Sierra Madre. Survey results will help set priorities and policies, inform the District’s Master Plan initiative, and provide insights into how to improve the quality of education for current and future generations of students. This online survey is open until Monday, March 14, 2016 and can be taken by visiting gopusd.com/masterplansurvey. The survey is available in both English and Spanish.

“Engaging with everyone in the communities served by PUSD, whether persons taking the survey have children in our school district or not, is critical to ensuring that we’re moving forward in the right direction,” said Superintendent Brian McDonald, Ed.D. “If you live or work in the Pasadena area, PUSD is your school district and you are investing in our schools every day, so it’s important that our decisions are informed by the diversity of perspectives that makes our area unique. The survey reflects our purposeful approach to planning for the future and making the most of our resources.”

The survey was developed by a task force comprised of community members and educational leaders working with Goodwin Simon Strategic Research, an independent research group. During the month of February, the survey was administered to the following groups:

1. Parents of children currently enrolled in PUSD schools;
2. Parents who live in the Pasadena area with children of pre-school age;
3. Parents who chose to remove their children from PUSD schools; and
4. Parents with children in charter or private schools

Since an independent third party is administering the survey, it is completely anonymous. No one in the district will know who participated or be able to connect people to their responses.

“Receiving honest and candid responses will help us improve,” stated Superintendent McDonald. “We’ll use the responses to explore our strengths and weaknesses, and to become the district of choice for families.”

The survey results will also inform the development of a Master Plan intended to help the District make sound investments, solve long-term challenges, transform an aging infrastructure, and provide more innovative and equitable opportunities for all.

The Master Plan process is organized into four key areas: community, instruction, leadership, and facilities, each led by a member of the Superintendent’s Executive Leadership Team.

The community component, led by Mercy Santoro, Assistant Superintendent of School Support Services, will ensure that local assets are leveraged to offer cogent student supports. In addition to the survey, her team is working to develop and strengthen partnerships with the cities of Pasadena, Altadena, and Sierra Madre and with social services, philanthropic organizations, Pasadena City College and other higher education institutions, arts, and industry leaders. Survey results will be made available to the public in March 2016.

The instruction component, led by Chief Academic Officer Dr. Shawn Bird, will ensure that differentiated high-quality dynamic instruction results in quality learning for every student. His team is implementing a managed instruction and performance empowerment initiative to improve student achievement, leading innovative design processes, and making plans to strategically invest in the professional development of teachers.

Leadership will be critical to the master planning process. As such, the Superintendent’s Executive Leadership Team is reviewing current school programs to ensure that high-quality educational options are available in every neighborhood. They will cross-reference updated demographic information with survey results and school enrollment figures, and use the data collected to inform district decisions regarding the placement of signature programs, e.g., dual language, arts, STEM. They will also review school feeder patterns to ensure that if a student begins a signature program at one level, such as language immersion, there will be a clear pathway for that student to continue in his or her selected area of focus when matriculating through PUSD.

Together with Dr. Bird, Chief Facilities Officer Nelson Cayabyab has established a Design Advisory Team (DAT) to develop a vigorous set of educational specifications that will help PUSD implement facilities solutions that will foster greater synergy between programs and buildings, communities and schools. Chief Cayabyab will also work closely with Ms. Santoro to maximize any potential community partnerships that are viable and well-conceived. Answering the question “where do we go from here,” Mr. Cayabyab’s Facilities Master Plan Team will conduct facility reviews, complete cost analyses, identify specific school projects, and identify prioritization schedules.

The PUSD Strategic Master Plan will serve as a blueprint to guide program development, facility investments, and, ultimately, student success. A five-year Educational Master Plan is scheduled to be presented to the Board of Education for approval in June 2016, which will lead to a Facilities Master Plan, ensuring that instruction drives construction.

For more information on the PUSD Master Plan, go to pusd.us

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