



SAUSALITO MARIN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Superintendent:
Board of Trustees:

Will McCoy
Joshua Barrow (President), Ida Green, Thomas Newmeyer
Debra Turner, and Caroline Van Alst

1895 - 2017

January 8, 2017

Dear District Staff, Parents, Community and Students:

Welcome back and welcome to a New Year and a fresh start at Bayside/Martin Luther King Academy! We hope that you had the chance to get some well-deserved rest and time to enjoy family and friends over the holiday break.

Over the break our administration team and the teams from the Marin County Office of Education (MCOE) and the California Collaborative for Education Excellence (CCEE) began to work on how we can begin anew. We recognize the challenges of the first few months of this school year and using information gathered through meetings and conversations with staff and parents before the break, a planning committee met to develop strategies for improving the communication and functionality of the district. This update will become part of regular communications you can expect in the coming months. We believe in a better future for our students and this will be strengthened by our collective commitment to the Bayside/Martin Luther King Academy School and the Sausalito Marin City School District.

The following items include several updates related to district and school operations.

Superintendent's Temporary Leave

Superintendent Will McCoy will be out attending to a minor medical issue and looks forward to returning on the January 18th. In the meantime, please know that you are in good hands under the leadership of Terena Mares, Deputy Superintendent for the Marin County Office of Education, who will be helping support the day to day operations and has been very involved in the district over the past several months. Terena will be in close communication with Superintendent McCoy to ensure seamless leadership upon his return.

New Middle School Schedule

A new middle school schedule has been drafted and will be implemented effective January 9th. Through our commitment to ensure to get the most out of each instructional day, we are implementing these changes with very little advance notice. This will not be the standard for changes in the future and we are sensitive to the potential opportunities and challenges these changes may bring. Please bear with us as we work through the details to ensure the best possible outcome for students. We continue to search for a permanent middle school math teacher and in the meantime we have built a middle school math program with additional personnel and support systems. As we make additional improvements, we'll continue with monthly meetings for middle school parents to provide updates.

200 Phillips Drive, Marin City, CA 94965 ~ Phone (415) 332-3190 ~ Fax (415) 332-9643
www.smcsd.org

Extended Math Instruction for 8th Grade Students

Due to the slow start with math instruction during the first few months of the school year, we are extending the instructional day on Wednesdays (no early release) for all eighth graders in order to take advantage of math instruction from Tamalpais High School Math Teacher, David Wetzel. Mr. Wetzel will be traveling to Bayside/MLK to provide math instruction for our 8th graders and his high school schedule only allows him to be available on Wednesday and Friday afternoons. During our planning time over the break it became apparent that in order to take full advantage of this arrangement, and to best prepare our 8th graders for high school, our 8th graders would benefit from this additional instructional time.

Part-time Substitute Math Teacher on Mondays and Fridays

Substitute Teacher, Deborah Jones has been hired to teach 6th, 7th, and 8th grade math on Mondays and Fridays. Vice Principal and teacher, Beth Minor will continue to provide instruction and this arrangement will provide two math instructors for our middle school students on Mondays and Fridays.

Additional Math Support for 7th and 8th Graders

In a concerted effort to best prepare our middle school students for high school, we have incorporated a Math Intervention Hour into the instructional day. We are bringing in additional support through the Marin School Volunteers, Bridge-the-Gap and possibly tutoring support from high school students. This segment of the schedule is still under development and is supported through the Math Challenge Project, which is a collaboration of multiple agencies working to ensure the successful transition to high school math for middle school students at both Bayside/MLK and Willow Creek Academy. This collaboration is facilitated by Marin Promise and includes Bridge the Gap, Marin School Volunteers, Tamalpais Union High School District, Willow Creek Academy, and other local math instruction expert volunteers. Over time, through the Math Intervention Hour, we plan on utilizing individualized learning plans for each student.

Scheduling Changes for Art, Music, Drama, PE

As many of you are aware, our students have been served by consultants for Art, Music, Drama and Physical Education. We are currently in the process of examining each of these arrangements to ensure they are meeting the needs of our students. We ask for your patience as we work through the details of scheduling changes for these subjects. We expect to have more information to share over the next few weeks.

Discipline Plan and School Climate

Through our discussions with staff and parents it became clear that the discipline plan for the school was in need of clarity and consistency. Specifically, we have heard and observed the need for a better strategy for times when a student needs to take a break from his or her classroom. As we all know, good classroom management commits to keeping students in the classroom and recognizes that students respond well to positive reinforcement and modeling. However, it is important to also have a structured plan for students who need additional assistance with self-regulation. For those times when it's necessary to remove a student, we are re-instituting a room where students can temporarily continue their work in a different setting. As reported at the last board meeting, a new draft policy is under development. On Wednesday, January 11th, staff will meet to work further on this plan. Once we have collectively finalized the details of the new discipline policy we can move forward. In the meantime, we

have made the necessary room changes over the break to implement this as soon as Tuesday, January 17th.

As we're all aware, a positive school climate is necessary for a successful school. Over the next few weeks we will be sharing plans on how we can together create an energized and positive educational environment that supports students and the staff who support them.

School Board Meeting and Trustee Changes

The next board meeting is on Tuesday, January 10, and the venue has been changed to the multipurpose room to provide a more welcome environment for those who attend; based on feedback following the meeting, we will determine if this will be a permanent change in location. We will be working on implementing an audio system that will improve the sound for the audience and Trustees. For the January 10th meeting we will have microphones. Additionally, board meetings will be video-taped, effective January 10th. Due to Superintendent McCoy's temporary leave, the Board training which had been scheduled on Wednesday, January 11th will be rescheduled for later in the month.

At the December 13th meeting, the Board elected Josh Barrow as the Board President for 2017 and Ida Green will serve as Vice President. The Board also welcomed and swore-in new trustee Debra Turner who will serve as Board Clerk, and Caroline Van Alst was re-elected.

In closing, we want to express our deepest commitment to the Sausalito Marin City School District – the students are our number one priority. We believe that 2017 will bring a renewed strength to the district. Expect to see our planning turn to action in the coming months...this is just the beginning of building for the future success of our school and district. Thank you for your commitment, flexibility and support. Working together, we can make great things happen in 2017 and beyond!

Sincerely,

Josh Barrow, President, Sausalito Marin City School District
Will McCoy, Superintendent
Terena Mares, Deputy Superintendent, Marin County Office of Education