



INGLEWOOD UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Dr. Vincent Matthews
STATE ADMINISTRATOR

Date: January 13, 2016
To: The IUSD Advisory Board and IUSD Community
From: Vincent Matthews, Ed.D.
Re: State Administrator's 60 -Day Report Out

ADVISORY BOARD

Mrs. Margaret Richards-Bowers
President, Seat #1

Ms. Melody Ngaue-Tuuholoaki
Vice President, Seat #3

Dr. Carliss R. McGhee
Seat #2

Mrs. Margaret Evans
Seat #4

Dr. D'Artagnan Scorza
Seat #5

Inspiring and Preparing for Success: The First Sixty Days

Introduction

The mission of the Inglewood Unified School District (IUSD) is to ensure that all of our students are taught rigorous standards based curriculum supported by highly qualified staff in an exemplary educational system characterized by high student achievement, social development, safe schools and effective partnerships with all segments of the community.

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Tiffany Rudek
Chief Academic Officer

Ms. Nora Roque
Executive Director
Human Resources Services

Dr. Antonio A. Raymo
Interim, Chief Business Official

How close is the district to realizing this mission? What are the challenges that must be addressed to actualize the mission? Do all stakeholders share this desire? As your state administrator, I must address these and many other questions to ensure that IUSD continues to provide all students with the opportunity to excel.

This plan of entry was designed to ensure that I engaged in a thoughtful, proactive, strategic beginning to lead IUSD. The transition activities outlined in this plan reflected my strong desire to make a thoughtful and deliberate entry into this school district and community, and to take the necessary time to listen and learn about the Inglewood Unified School District. As high quality instruction and successful student learning are the keys to achieving our collective educational mission, this entry plan was organized to provide me with a great deal of information, input, and ultimately insight into how best to strengthen and build upon the current and historical success of the schools in the Inglewood Unified School District.

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Goals of the 60 day transition plan

This entry plan sought to accomplish the following goals:

- To ensure a smooth and orderly transition of leadership and to carefully structure this transition to best support and facilitate clear understanding of the districts' current state of instructional improvement and increases in student achievement
- To develop a clear, trusting, productive, collaborative relationship with the IUSD Advisory Board of Trustees
- To create opportunities for the new state administrator to listen broadly and deeply to a multitude of stakeholders and gain a comprehensive understanding of IUSD
- To proactively ensure that all voices, not just those who traditionally avail themselves to collaboration with the school system, are heard and engaged in the process of continuous improvement
- To build enthusiasm for IUSD's mission, while also establishing the commitment to engage in needed change to ensure a system of continuous improvement

Outcomes/ Deliverables

Expected results

- State administrator's visitation to every school in the district
- A 60 day report on observations, findings and a proposed vision for the future

Preamble

A few years ago, a local California newspaper's headline screamed: "H-1B demand exceeds limit." The article noted that, on the very first day that companies were eligible to apply for H-1B visas for high-tech workers, a record 150,000 applications had been filed for the only 65,000 visas available for all of 2008. Anxiety was rampant among technology companies, which would have to participate in a lottery to determine who would receive these visas designated for engineers, computer programmers, and other technically skilled workers.

Meanwhile, all around the state, poorly educated California children were dropping out of school in increasing numbers – recent statistics show the on-time graduation rates are at 70%- and the state's prisons are bursting at the seams, filled largely with dropouts and functionally illiterate young people who are the victims of the state's declining investments in education.

This is one example of why this district reaching a goal of EVERY student meeting or exceeding district and state academic standards is critical.

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Achievement data shows that all ethnic subgroups have risen over time however the gap between groups that have been achieving at lower levels and groups achieving at higher levels has not been significantly narrowed. In order for us to be a great district we need EVERY student achieving at high levels.

What follows are my initial impressions, observations and immediate recommendations after my initial 60 day listening and learning campaign.

The 60 Day Listening and Learning Report –

Structure of Entry Plan

The State Administrator engaged in a purposeful effort to listen, learn, discern and begin to develop plans for the future, in collaboration with the Advisory Board and the Inglewood community. The following activities were the core components of the entry plan:

- I. Developed working relationship with the Advisory Board of Education
- II. Assessed the organizational capacity and alignment: District Executive and Senior Staff
- III. Analyzed Data and Reviewed Documents
- IV. Engaging Parents and Community Leaders
- V. Sought understanding of the current, strengths, strategies, and opportunities for improvement in light of current budget challenges
- 60 Day Plan Report Out

The following person's from the IUSD community were interviewed to gather information:

All IUSD Advisory Board members
State Administrator's Cabinet Members
District Directors
District Managers
Principals in 1 on 1 meetings
CalPro President and Leadership
ITA Leadership
IMA President
Principals
Surrounding District Superintendent's
City Council members
Civic Leaders
Charter School Leaders
Parent Leaders
Key elected officials
Area legislators – state and national
Chamber of Commerce officials

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Parent organizations and local PTAs
Key business and Civic leaders and advocates
Non-profit groups
Faith-based leaders
Faculty and staff
Teachers, Parents and Community members at Community meetings

These are impressions, observations and recommendations that I have made throughout my listening and learning campaign through the first 60 days:

I. Governance Team: IUSD Board of Trustees

In order to ensure that the district has an intense focus on meeting the needs of all children, the board and superintendent must develop a trusting, positive, collaborative, team-oriented relationship.

Activities:

- Entry Plan Shared
- One-on-one meetings with Board members held
- Board members interviewed
- Determined the schedule and proposed monthly 1-on-1 meetings with Advisory Board meetings
- 1 on 1 Monthly Meetings with State Administrator
- Continued board members training

Initial Impressions and Observations

- The IUSD Board is focused and places the well being of students as a first priority.
- The IUSD Board works well as a unit.
- The community perspective is that board is committed to student achievement and eliminating achievement gaps.
- The board is committed to improving and gaining increasing skills to ensure that they function well in their roles
- Policies exist for the establishment of school site councils (SSC) and the SSC develops the single plan for student achievement at each school
- Board members are receiving training to better fulfill their roles
- The advisory board is meeting consistently and is more actively involved

Recommendations:

- Continue training for Board members to fulfill their roles
- Post FCMAT and district capacity progress on district website
- Continue authentic community engagement into LCAP plans
- Over the next few years develop district wide strategic plan with community input

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II Organizational Capacity and Alignment

To implement and execute the district's strategic plan at maximum efficiency, it will be critical to support and hold accountable a high-performing, results-oriented district executive team. To make sure we operate as a highly effective cross-functional team, dedicated to a positive, professional culture, we must, as *Good to Great* author Jim Collins states, "Ensure we have the right people on the bus and in the right seats."

Activities

- Reviewed the current central office structure to determine focus on student achievement and maximizing operational efficiency
- Conducted one-one-one interviews and reviewed resumes and briefing papers with all direct reports
- Conducted a retreat with senior staff to review FCMAT reviews, improvement plans, most recent achievement data, review current or anticipated vacancies in central office or principalships, and discusses leadership team structures and practice
- Determined how communication and decision-making will occur with executive team, establishing meeting protocols and systems designed to focus on increased student achievement and continuous improvement
- Conducted one-on-one interviews with all unit heads in central services, focusing on alignment and execution of key strategies
- Interviewed the structure of the communications department
- Met with Chief Academic Officer to assess current data and performance of all schools under his supervision and determine quality of actions designed for continuous improvement
- Explored the current state of strategic data monitoring in IUSD to ensure all students are performing at or above grade level and/or are receiving appropriate, targeted interventions
- Ensured all necessary plans and preparations are in place for an outstanding opening of school; establish protocols for assessing effectiveness of the opening of schools

Initial Impressions and Observations:

- Since research and best practices stress that achievement gaps are closed through effective instruction it is important to acknowledge that division of Curriculum and Instruction has a focus on accelerating achievement for every child through the lens of powerful instruction.
- There is a continuing need for comprehensive evaluation of programs, including needs assessment for professional development planning, root cause analysis of student performance deficiencies, reviews of summer school and after-

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school activities. Likewise, there is a lack of a coherent analysis of the effectiveness of existing STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) High School, vocational education programs and alternative education program.

- The efforts of the entire extended cabinet are reflective of the improvements in FCMAT scores
- There appears to be a lack of high system-wide expectations with unclear meaningful accountability for staff performance.
- Previously there did not appear to be a deliberate, focused approach to ongoing professional development of staff.
- Lack of known, visible district and building level vision, mission and goals as well the plans to achieve them
- Limited and inefficient utilization of technology for both administrative and instructional purposes.
- Episodic rather than system-wide adherence to a standards-based K-12 curriculum.

Recommendations:

- Continue implementing a systemic approach to program analysis and evaluation. Complete an analysis and evaluation of the use of district's technology, the alternative education program, the career and technical education program, and supplemental programming. Develop plans, including the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) responsive to the findings, to improve the programs and increase student achievement.
- Continue to rigorously and with fidelity implement the IUSD teacher and administrator evaluations to establish accountability for teacher and administrator practices associated with student achievement. Ensure all appropriate staff members are trained in the use of the system, including a) tools and processes associated with the evaluation; and b) interventions, assistance and professional development to improve teacher and administrator performance.
- Continue providing the teaching and administrative staff with research based training in the New State Standards and using data to improve instruction.

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- Internal and external communications need to be greatly improved
 - A communications plan needs to be developed and fully implemented
 - Increase steps to retain district leadership
- **III. Data Analysis and Document Review**

Activities:

- The State Administrator and staff conducted analysis and examined a wide variety of data sources, particularly student achievement data, to discern trends, patterns, areas of accomplishments and areas for additional focus. Student outcomes on standardized tests, value added data, graduation rates, AP course taking and passing rates and other relevant indicators were disaggregated by program, race and geography and carefully studied.
- In addition, resource and administrative indicators were closely reviewed. The current budget development process will be assessed, as will the performance of central offices in meeting their key metrics and customer service goals. Departmental organization charts, job descriptions, resumes of current key personnel, and the current compensation matrix will also be thoroughly examined.
- Written reports and presentations on IUSD resources use, personnel, organization, leadership and/or academic outcomes will be read and considered.
- Board Policies and Administrative Regulations were reviewed.

Initial Impressions and Observations:

- The district has established a subset of expected data that the community can expect to see.
- The district has access to a deep and rich source of data.
- Principals and site staffs have come to expect a certain data set at the beginning of each year
- Data currently indicates that our district student scores are low as compared to other districts in the County of Los Angeles as measured by student

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results on the CAASPP. More than 60 percent of our students have not met standards in every grade level in reading and mathematics in spring 2015.

- It is not consistent from site to site how data is used to inform instruction or change practice at sites

Recommendations:

- The District need to establish a very clear picture of what data the community can always expect to see from the district every year.
- By September 1, 2016, develop a comprehensive plan to establish a data accountability system for support staff, administrators and non-teaching professional staff. Ensure all appropriate staff members are trained in the use of the system, including a) tools and processes associated with the evaluation; and b) interventions, assistance and professional development to improve performance.

• **IV. Community Engagements and District Communications**

Activities:

- During this time of initial entry, there was a focus on engaging and mobilizing parents and community leaders in the pursuit of making IUSD a world-class school district. The new state administrator reached out to partners traditionally underrepresented in public education to make certain their voices are also heard and valued.
- Five Communitywide meetings were held and the Key questions asked included
 - What are the strengths of IUSD?
 - What are areas of needed improvement for IUSD?

School Visits

- The state administrator conducted visits to every school in IUSD to engage the principal, teachers, support staff, and parent volunteers about where we are as a district and where we need to be to meet the needs of all children.

Community Forums

- The state administrator, advisory trustees, and senior staff held

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multiple “town hall” meetings using a Strengths-Weaknesses analysis model to gather community input and initiate continuous dialogues about student achievement and improvement. These meetings occurred throughout 3 areas in the school district. There was a proactive effort to meet with as many stakeholders as possible.

Initial Impressions and Observations-

- The repeated strengths from the community meetings:
 - The district needs to continue it’s recent progress toward more accurate and transparent data.
 - The district should continue its implementation of the fiscal recovery plan.
 - Some site academic programs are strong (AVID, AP courses, etc.)
 - The community has a strong desire to see improvements in the school system
 - Their have been improvement in parent outreach

- The repeated areas for growth from the community meetings:
 - Classroom rigor should be a main focus of the district’s academic plan.
 - There should be a higher priority district focus on clean, safe and improved facilities
 - The district should continue its implementation of the fiscal recovery plan.
 - An internal and external communication plan needs to be developed and fully implemented.

• **V. Operations and Finance**

In order to meet the needs of all students in IUSD, it is critical that Operations and Finance are effective. Understanding the current strengths, strategies, and opportunities for improvement in light of current budget challenges was a critical focus of the new superintendent. Each division was appraised to determine how they maximize support and services to schools using the continuous improvement model.

Activities

- Reviewed key district financial materials, budget, most recent audit, and grants
- Conducted one-on-one meetings with direct reports on budget, operations, and human resources

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- Conducted one-on-one meetings with all directors, ensuring each division has fidelity to its core function and has a student-focused agenda
- Reviewed district's financial projections, resource allocation and budgeting processes; assess how district's budget and budgeting process is aligned to support student achievement
- Conducted one-on-one meetings with lawyers and firms to review any current legal proceedings or outstanding judgments against the district and to provide a briefing on state education code with particular attention to statutes currently impacting or likely to impact the district
- Reviewed employee group contracts and negotiation plans; find out what the role of the State Administrator has been in negotiations
- Received update on plans to further apply for federal funds
- Reviewed district's safety and crisis communication plan
- Conducted a review of the district's public information office and programs; review the history, services, and outreach to entire community
- Assessed the degree to which all offices are cross-functional and begin to establish key metrics and customer service goals to ensure peak efficiency and support for student achievement
- Examined the effectiveness of IUSD's information-data management system, especially around student achievement, budget, and human resources

Initial Impressions and Observations

- The District projected that enrollment would decline about 6.2% in the 2014-15 school year and 5.8% in the 2015-16 school year. These projections are conservative and are intended to assist with planning of instructional and support services throughout the District.
- In response to the deficit spending projected in the 2014-15 and possibly in subsequent fiscal years, the District has planned for reductions in services, while minimizing the impact on the educational programs and direct instruction of students.
- The District is reviewing all areas for cost savings, particularly areas of staffing, employee benefits and workers' compensation.
- The District is self-insured for workers' compensation and has a very high funding rate of 7.25%, and benefits are uncapped at the cost of the highest HMO plan.
- The District has implemented a "return to work" program for

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injured employees currently receiving workers' compensation and is investigating all suspected cases of fraud and abuse.

- The District has conducting a benefits audit of all employees' dependents covered by the District's health & welfare benefit plans, and plans on holding negotiations. Until measureable progress is made to reduce costs in the District's workers' compensation and health and welfare benefits, the District will not incorporate any projected savings into this Fiscal Recovery Plan nor the District budget.
- The District has developed an initial five phase Fiscal Recovery Plan to address the deficit spending and make progress towards fiscal recovery.
- Phase I and portions of Phase II (Certificated) are incorporated into the District's multi-year projections of the 2013-14 2nd Interim report – portions of Phase II (Classified) are not incorporated because the planned reductions in services and staff are being finalized and official notification has not been made to all impacted employees as of the date of the 2nd interim report. However, the District plans on incorporating these and other phases of the Fiscal Recovery Plan once they are finalized and implemented. Phases III through V and other phases to be developed after the date of this Fiscal Recovery Plan will be incorporated and included into the District's budget once they become effective and measurable.
- An important consideration of this Fiscal Recovery Plan was the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) that was developed by the District. The 2014-15 budget year incorporated the LCAP goals and services targeted to the 'unduplicated count' pupils – free or reduced lunch program eligible, foster youth, and English Learners (EL). Gathering parent and teacher input will continue to be critical in developing the framework of a successful LCAP.
- We have increased costs on the horizon (salary, STRS, e.g.) which will have an impact on the budget

Recommendations

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- Update the fiscal recovery plan annually
- Continue implementation of the fiscal recovery plan
- Continuing recent progress toward more accurate and transparent financial data;
- Creation of multi-year operating and capital budgets, initial funding of operating and capital reserves;
- Increase reserves to prepare for declining enrollment and economic uncertainty;
- Develop a district reserves policy;
- Improvement in internal controls and elimination of existing multi-year audit exceptions;
- Increase the capacity of staff to implement industry standard practices;
- Eliminate redundant operations and increase operational efficiency;
- Explore opportunities to increase revenue through services, grants; donations, The Inglewood Foundation, etc.;
- Explore expediting the repayment of debt;
- Implement policies and procedures to reduce the possibility of litigation;
- Hiring a chief business officer to assure continued financial progress and transparency.

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