



Superintendent's Message Mensaje del Superintendente



Dear Sequoia USD Community:

As we approach the holiday season, I wanted to take this moment to wish you a festive and fun holiday season with your friends and family.

As superintendent, the last couple of months have been a whirlwind of activity that has brought me closer to our school community, and assisted me in understanding how to better serve you.

From the onset, you have been very clear in sharing with me that you wanted to strong lines of communication with the Office of the Superintendent. Beginning in January, I have hired an *Executive Assistant- Communications Specialist* who will work with me to develop a communications infrastructure, and to be your voice in the room when making decisions as her role will take the lead in always making communications a priority within our district community.

January will also be a month of continuing conversations with our teachers. On January 8th, we will hold a professional development day for our teachers. These professional development days are critical to us because they provide our teacher community with the necessary support to continue making our district's classrooms the model for learning in California.

As we wave good-bye to 2017, and get ready for an amazing 2018, I would be remiss if I did not thank each of you for everything you do on behalf of our students. The strength of a district is determined by the passion and commitment of the people that come together to give it life through the various contributions they make. On that front, I am very fortunate to be at the helm of a district where all of you have devoted yourselves to the idea that our classrooms are the laboratories where we make dreams into a reality for our students.

Sincerely,
Mary Streshly, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Dr. Streshly possesses 26 years of service in public education. She holds a B.A. from UC Berkeley, an M.A. from San Diego State University and a Doctorate from San Francisco State University.

Estimada comunidad de Sequoia USD:

Mientras que nos acercamos a la temporada navideña, quiero tomar un minuto para desearles una temporada festiva y divertida con sus familias y amigos.

Como superintendente, el último par de meses han sido un torbellino de actividad que me ha acercado más a nuestra comunidad escolar y me ha ayudado a entender cómo servirles mejor.

Desde el principio, han sido muy claros en compartir conmigo que querían líneas de comunicación fuertes con la Oficina del Superintendente. A partir de enero, he contratado a un Asistente Ejecutivo-Especialista en Comunicaciones que trabajará conmigo para desarrollar una infraestructura de comunicación y para ser su voz en la sala al tomar decisiones ya que su función será la prioridad de hacer de la comunicación una prioridad dentro de nuestra comunidad del distrito.

Enero también será un mes de conversaciones continuas con nuestros maestros. El 8 de enero, tendremos un día de desarrollo profesional para nuestros maestros. Estos días de desarrollo profesional son fundamentales para nosotros porque proporcionan a nuestra comunidad de maestros el apoyo necesario para continuar convirtiendo los salones e clase de nuestro distrito el modelo de aprendizaje en California.

Mientras nos despedimos del 2017 y nos preparamos para un 2018 increíble, sería negligente si no agradezco a cada uno de ustedes por todo lo que hacen en nombre de los estudiantes. La fuerza de un distrito está determinada por la pasión y el compromiso de las personas que se unen para darle vida a través de las diversas contribuciones que hacen. Motivo más para ser afortunada de estar al frente de un distrito donde todos ustedes se han dedicado a la idea de que nuestros salones de clase son los laboratorios donde hacemos realidad los sueños de nuestros estudiantes.

Atentamente,
Mary Streshly, Ed.D.
Superintendente

La Dra. Streshly llega a Sequoia con 26 años de servicio en educación pública sirviendo a estudiantes de preparatoria. Ella tiene un B.A. de UC Berkeley, una M.A. de San Diego State University y un Doctorado de San Francisco State University.



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NEW! Budget Series: The Perils of Rising Pensions

¡NUEVO! Series de presupuesto: Los Peligros del Aumento en las Pensiones



In an effort to make our budget more transparent to the Sequoia Union High School District community, the District is inaugurating a new series of articles explaining different aspects of the budget. This first article tackles the challenge of rising pensions.

En un esfuerzo de hacer nuestro presupuesto más transparente a la comunidad de Sequoia Union High School District, el Distrito inaugura una serie de artículos explicando los diferentes aspectos del presupuesto. Este primer artículo aborda el desafío del aumento de las pensiones.

Like most California school districts, the Sequoia Union High School District participates in two employee retirement systems. Pension benefits for teachers are handled through the California State Teachers' Retirement System, or CalSTRS. Most non-instructional employees receive their pensions through the California Public Employee Retirement System, known as CalPERS.

Como la mayoría de los distritos escolares en California, Sequoia Union High School District participan en dos sistemas de retiro para empleados. Los beneficios de pensión para los maestros se manejan a través del Sistema de Retiro del Estado de California o CalSTRS. La mayoría de los empleados no docentes reciben sus pensiones a través del Sistema de Retiro de Empleados Públicos de California, conocido como CalPERS.

Both school districts and employees are required to pay into these retirement systems to fund employee pensions. But unlike private retirement benefits, which allow employers and employees to decide how much to contribute, the state and CalPERS, a pension funds' board, dictate how much districts and employees must pay.

Ambos los distritos escolares y los empleados son requeridos a pagar a estos sistemas de retiro para fundar las pensiones de los empleados. Pero a diferencia de los beneficios de retiro privados, que permiten a los empleadores y empleados decidir cuánto contribuir, el estado y CalPERS, una mesa de fondos de pensión, dictar cuánto los distritos y empleados deben pagar.

The state, and not the District, determines the size of a teacher's pension.

El estado y no el distrito, determina el tamaño de la pensión de un maestro.

In his 2014-2015 budget, Governor Jerry Brown chose to address the fiscal problems caused by state-level pension fund decisions by dramatically increasing pension costs for school districts, teachers and staff. Under that budget plan, school districts' CalSTRS contributions on behalf of their teachers will more than double over the course of just seven years, from a rate of 8.3 percent of payroll in the 2013-2014 school year to 19.1 percent of payroll in 2020-2021. Over the same seven years, school districts' contribution rates to CalPERS for non-instructional employees will also double, rising from 11.4 percent to 23.8 percent.

En su presupuesto de 2014-2015, el gobernador Jerry Brown eligió abordar los problemas fiscales causados por las decisiones de los fondos de pensión a nivel del estado al dramáticamente aumentar el costo de las pensiones para los distritos, maestros y el personal. Bajo el plan de presupuesto, las contribuciones CalSTRS de los distritos escolares en nombre de sus maestros duplicarán en el transcurso de solo siete años, de una tasa de 8.3 de la nómina del año escolar 2013-2014 a 19.1 por ciento de la nómina de 2020-2021. Durante los mismos siete años, la tasa de contribución a CalPERS para empleados no docentes se duplicará, aumentando de 11.4 por ciento a 23.8 por ciento.

Unfortunately, the state is not providing school districts with any money to help pay for this huge new cost.

Desafortunadamente, el estado no está proporcionando a los distritos escolares ningún dinero para ayudar a pasar este nuevo enorme costo.

The impact these increased pension costs will have on the District's budget is enormous. The cumulative cost of these state-mandated increases from the 2014-2015 school year through the 2017-2018 school year is estimated to top \$7.26 million.

El impacto que estos aumentos de pensión tendrán en el presupuesto del Distrito es enorme. El costo cumulativo de estos aumentos obligatorios del estado del año escolar 2014-2015 hasta el año escolar 2017-2018 se estima que superará los \$7.26 millones.

To read the entire article and the impact of rising pension on District budgets, please follow this link: <http://www.seq.org/documents/BudgetSeries1.pdf>.

Para leer el artículo entero y el impacto del aumento de las pensiones en el presupuesto del distrito, por favor siga este enlace: <http://www.seq.org/documents/BudgetSeries1.pdf>.

CARLMONT HS

A visit from Santa himself and Holiday grams were two annual traditions that rounded out Holiday Village at Carlmont, a week full of holiday-themed events in the spirit of Christmas, Hanukkah, and other religious traditions. Read the full story on Scotscoop [HERE](#).

REDWOOD

Phase I Construction: progress has been made and the buildings are almost sealed. The windows have been installed. The new completion date for the construction project is April 2018!



Twenty proud RHS graduates expected through December 18th! We anticipate 125+ proud graduates to celebrate their accomplishment on June 8th! A further 8 students will be returning to their traditional high school to earn their high school diploma.

MENLO-ATHERTON

Based on performance the last few months, the M-A Debate Team has earned the position of being ranked 8th in the nation for parliamentary debate, their primary style of debate. Last month all 8 parli teams places in one of the most competitive state tournaments.



EAST PALO ALTO ACADEMY

EPAA Spanish 3 students finished their unit with their Stanford Classmates, culminating in an evening of "Telenovelas" created by the students and celebrated during a red carpet "telenovela release" gala.



9th grade Physics students participated in the annual egg drop contest where students tested their creative solutions to ensuring a safe landing for their egg.



EPAA competed with local high schools at the FilipinX/Pacific Islander/South East Asian Student Conference on Dec. 6th at De Anza College. It was down to EPAA and Gunn High School and EPAA was victorious!



SEQUOIA

Math teacher **Robert Moaveni** was awarded a Step-Up-To-The Plate Grant from Wells Fargo and the San Francisco Giants to fund equipment for a fencing class as part of Sequoia SAFE After-School Program.



The holidays are a time for Sequoia's musicians to shine. Band and choir performed at Redwood City's annual Hometown Holidays celebration and the Winter Concert Series in Carrington Hall featured a mix of popular music, seasonal selections, and traditional concert literature. At lunch on the Friday before finals week, members of the Sequoia band traveled around campus playing festive favorites to brighten the halls.

TIDE ACADEMY

The "I" in TIDE Academy stands for Innovation. Students will begin learning and engaging in the Design Thinking process during their 9th grade year. Design Thinking is a process that is increasingly used to solve technical, business, and social problems.

The process begins understanding the needs of a group of "end users" through a process of interviews with a focus on a problem and the experience of these end users. The process then flows the definition of the problem to be solved, a prototype of the solution, and finally testing of the solution to see if it works. TIDE students will apply the Design Thinking process to their work and develop valuable 21st Century Skills in the process.

WOODSIDE

Wildcats and Scots ILS programs joined for a December social on the Woodside campus with karaoke, dancing, foosball, and food. Thanks to the ILS staff for organizing the event.

College Day Part 2: PE teachers escorted all frosh to one of three college campuses (San Francisco State, San Jose, State, or Stanford) for a morning-long selfie scavenger hunt that introduced them to dorms, academic halls, wellness centers, bookstores, and student unions.



The DVPA department ended the semester with two events: a two-day film festival featuring student work from Video Production and a lunch-time Art BOOM! in our I-wing to showcase all things art: music, digital photography, ceramics, and 2-D work in different media.

Pilot NOA Curriculum Receives Positive Feedback

El Plan de Estudio Piloto NOA Recibe Comentario Positivo



NOA development team: Dr. Karen Li, Dr. Stalcup, Katie Finlay, and Dan Dadoun

District Wellness Coordinator **Dr. Karen Li** began Neuroscience of Addiction (NOA) project in the fall of 2014. This year, the pilot project has expanded into most life skill classes across the District.

Her team is currently gathering the data from this 2nd phase pilot. So far, the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Below is a parent testimonial from Woodside HS parents **Carrie** and **Doug Kehring**:

Throughout the year, the class we have heard the most about from our daughter has been life skills. She has been incredibly affected by developing a much deeper understanding of what drugs and alcohol do to one's system as well as the greater discussions about social media and mental health. Last night she wanted to show me her "neuroscience of addiction curriculum". . . This program is incredible. It speaks to teens very realistically on their level and seems tremendously in touch with the issues they are facing. Honestly, this class probably will be the most remembered and helpful in "life decision making" of anything she is going to learn in the next four years.

Some Life Skills students were treated to a nice surprise when **Dr. Stalcup**, who initially developed the curriculum and is featured on the NOA teaching video, visited select classrooms late November. He is a celebrity of sorts to our students and Life Skills staff! Dr. Stalcup left an impression on his students, along with his words of wisdom to have 'normal fun' as an antidote to addiction.

La **Dra. Karen Li**, Coordinadora de Bienestar del Distrito, comenzó el proyecto de Neurociencia de la Adicción (NOA, por sus siglas en inglés) en el otoño de 2014. Este año, el proyecto piloto se ha expandido a la mayoría de las clases de habilidades para la vida en todo el Distrito. Su equipo actualmente está recopilando los datos de esta 2da fase piloto. Hasta ahora, los comentarios han sido abrumadoramente positivos. A continuación hay un testimonio de los padres de Woodside HS **Carrie** y **Doug Kehring**:

A lo largo del año, la clase de la que más escuchamos de nuestra hija fue la de habilidades para la vida. Ella se ha sentido increíblemente afectada por el desarrollo de una comprensión mucho más profunda de lo que las drogas y el alcohol le hacen al sistema de uno, así como la discusión mayor sobre las redes sociales y la salud mental. Anoche ella quería mostrarme su "plan de estudios de neurociencia de la adicción". . . Este programa es increíble. Habla a los adolescentes de manera muy realista a su nivel y parece estar tremendamente en contacto con los problemas que enfrentan. Honestamente, esta clase probablemente será la más recordada y útil en "hacer decisiones de vida" en cualquier cosa que ella vaya a aprender en los próximos cuatro años.

Algunos estudiantes de Habilidades para la Vida tuvieron una agradable sorpresa cuando el **Dr. Stalcup**, quien inicialmente desarrolló el plan de estudios y aparece en el video de enseñanza de NOA, visitó salones selectos de clases a fines de noviembre. ¡Él es una especie de celebridad para nuestros estudiantes y personal de Habilidades para la Vida! El Dr. Stalcup dejó una impresión en sus estudiantes, junto con sus palabras de sabiduría para tener 'diversión normal' como un antídoto contra la adicción.

Parent Education Series



MENLO-ATHERTON HIGH SCHOOL (PAC) 1/23 at 7 pm

Devorah Heitner, Ph.D., Raising Digital Natives

Empathy is the App: Raising Thoughtful Kids in the Digital Age

(Empatía es el App: Criando Niños Considerados en la Edad Digital)

The Parent Education Series events are sponsored by the Sequoia Healthcare District. Questions? Contact: Charlene Margot, M.A., Founder & Director, The Parent Education Series, cmargot@csmconsulting.net.

Serie de Educación para Padres

WOODSIDE HIGH SCHOOL (MUR) 1/31 at 7 pm

Eran Magen, Ph.D. Managing Emotionally-Intense

Conversations with Your Teen (Llevando a cabo Conversaciones

Emocionalmente Intensas con su Adolescente)

Los eventos de Serie de Educación para Padres son patrocinados por Sequoia Healthcare District. ¿Preguntas? Comuníquese con Charlene Margot, M.A., Directora, Serie de Educación para Padres, cmargot@csmconsulting.net.