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Henry Castaniada, Superintendent

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June 1, 2005

Dear Loma Prieta Parents and Guardians:

As we move forward in our effort to create a great school district, many changes will necessarily occur throughout this continuous improvement process. Next year's adjustments are targeted squarely at improving the academic rigor and breadth of our instructional program for our children.

To be specific, we will be implementing educational best practices resulting in increased teacher collaboration, grade level consistency, enhanced articulation between grade levels, student proficiency "safety nets", and middle school curriculum standards which are consistent with Los Gatos High School's entry level expectations.

We have a very dedicated staff who work tirelessly to provide a quality educational program, and they are to be commended for their efforts and results. In spite of our history of success, in order to meet ever-increasing State standards and for future students to have the opportunity to compete at a higher level in high school, changes need to occur to infuse greater academic rigor throughout our entire K-8 curricula. Having analyzed test scores and student placements at the high school, it is clear to me that we have a compelling interest in taking substantive steps without further delay.

Anticipating that some members of the community would appreciate an opportunity to hear more detail first-hand, I have scheduled a special "Town Hall" style meeting on June 16th to outline program and academic changes for next year. In addition, I will reiterate the academic philosophy, which will serve as the framework for our future growth. This meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. and conclude by 8:30. I hope to see you on the 16th.

Other Points of Interest:

I am providing answers to a few questions that appear to be circulating throughout our community.

Question: What will happen with the "extra" KEEP dollars?

Answer: Approximately \$10,000 has been raised over our \$280,000 target. These additional dollars will be held until key stakeholder groups have had adequate time to provide input. I am gathering information and suggestions from the School Site Councils, Budget Advisory Committee,

Board of Trustees:

Julie Gouldsberry, President Lydia J. Dobyms, Vice-President

Doug Buttrey, Member Bill Chiocchi, Member Tricia Rasmussen, Member

and the Superintendent's Coordinating Council about strategic investments for the "extra" funds. Some ideas I have already heard include: sports program, student activities, student lockers, and staff development.

Question: Are the priorities for KEEP changing?

Answer: No. The program priorities identified in the campaign will be funded and implemented as outlined next year.

Question: Are the cost estimates for each KEEP priority changing?

Answer: The cost estimates are continually updated as better information becomes available. If there are any major adjustments in regards to cost, the following groups will be consulted: School Site Councils, Budget Advisory Committee, the Superintendent's Coordinating Council, and the KEEP Steering Committee.

Question: What does it mean to save 80% of CTE electives?

Answer: The successful KEEP campaign enables us to maintain 80% of the number of electives next year. Further, KEEP's success will allow us to offer a new technology elective course for CTE students. For a variety of reasons including interest of students, interest and credentials of staff, interest of parents, and enrollment, it is common to change specific program electives on an annual basis.

Question: I've heard that Reading Recovery will be cut back next year, but KEEP was intended to save this program, please explain.

Answer: We plan to serve the same percentage of first grade students that have been served for the past four years.

Question: If I have more questions, how do I get them answered?

Answer: In order to address questions as effectively as possible, I am requesting interested parties submit their questions via the following web link: <http://www.lpef.org>. We will obtain questions submitted via the website and address them during the June 16th meeting.

I would like to thank you in advance for supporting our efforts as we move from a good school district to a great one. Again, I do look forward to seeing you on June 16th at the "Town Hall" meeting.

Sincerely,

Henry J. Castañiada,
Superintendent