



John J. Pedicone, Ph.D.
Superintendent

May 3, 2011

For Immediate Release:

I have had a conversation with the Board President and have recommended that at tonight's Governing Board meeting the item on the modification of the Ethnic Studies program be presented and discussed but that no vote is taken until such time as we are able to encourage greater community dialogue. It is clear there is a great deal of misperception and miscommunication about the reason for consideration of this item. This has resulted in heightened levels of frustration.

I received input from community groups asking for an opportunity to have dialogue about the proposed changes. They have made a commitment to participate in a discussion that will focus on an examination of the current curriculum, the manner in which courses are being taught and, ultimately, the District's perspective about the importance of increased levels of multicultural awareness across all grade levels. Those conversations need to take place.

It is my concern that in the current atmosphere, created by events outside of our control, the opportunity to have this productive dialogue is compromised. My responsibility as the Superintendent of this district is to do what is right for all students and to do so in a way that allows the community to feel they are participants and their input is valued.

It will be up to the Governing Board to decide what action to take. In the interest of all concerned, the importance of discussing this matter tonight is clear but the decision to modify the program should come outside of an increasingly politicized environment that threatens the welfare of the community and our mission as a school district.

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