



EASTON, REDDING, AND REGION 9 SCHOOL DISTRICTS

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SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

February 21, 2014

Dear Parents and Guardians of Students with Special Needs:

I wrote to you last November about the results – forthcoming at that point – of the E/R/9 Special Education Study conducted by two consultants from the National Executive Service Corps. Many of you participated in that study, either through your responses to the parent survey and/or through a face to face interview. You may recall from my letter,

... that parents expressed the full range of opinion on the core question of “satisfaction” with our work. Given the range of individual experiences, especial concerns, and particular perspectives, a full range of opinion is not a surprising result. Striking, however, is the need for clearer communication and more trust between school and home.

The NESC consultants emphasized as much on January 29th when they presented their findings and recommendations to the assembled members of the Easton, Redding and Region 9 Boards of Education. I presented my response to the Study at the same meeting. The consultants’ recommendations and my response may be accessed via the following link to our E/R/9 website:

[http://www.er9.org/pages/Easton Redding Region 9/Central Office/Coordination of Special Education/Cat/](http://www.er9.org/pages/Easton_Redding_Region_9/Central_Office/Coordination_of_Special_Education/Cat/)

I urge you to read both documents. They affirm what we do well and they identify the challenges we must address to do better.

Effective program leadership is essential for success in doing so. I am pleased that the Easton and Redding Boards of Education have authorized me to move forward with unifying the management of special services across the two districts. As a result, we will be searching for a Director of Special Services capable of inaugurating this role. Recognizing your keen interest in the quality of our work with your children, I want to share with you the following excerpts from the position description:

A recent study of existing E/R/9 special service programs highlighted a number of assets and challenges. The Director will be expected to lead an aggressive effort to build upon our assets and respond to our challenges, foremost among which is a need to foster greater trust and cooperation among all stakeholders as well as to improve program effectiveness and consistency.

Service Orientation:

The Director must be oriented to serve all special needs stakeholders as well as be committed to the welfare of the larger school community. He/she must be capable of the self-reflection required for individual growth and program leadership. He/she must be able to establish a program culture that emphasizes teamwork, professionalism and continuous improvement.

Other Qualities:

The Director must be well versed in special education law and evidence-based instructional practices. He/she must be an effective communicator and empathic listener, able to understand multiple perspectives and broker shared understandings through problem-solving that emphasizes common interests. He/she must be able to sustain healthy relationships among staff as well as between school and home.

A broad-based search committee, including parents, will be formed and will serve in an appropriate advisory capacity. I hope to be able to bring my recommendation(s) to the two Boards no later than the May board meeting cycle.

A preferred future for E/R/9 special education has been a focus of mine for quite some time. A benefit of working toward that future has been the opportunity to engage with so many parents for whom that topic means nothing less than the welfare of their children. Martin Luther King once said, "The time is always right to do the right thing." With your ongoing concern and involvement, we will continue to do so.

Please feel free to contact me directly with any concerns or comments.

Sincerely,

Bernard Josefsberg

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