



January 1, 2016

Dear Sweetwater Community:

Our district has faced many challenges over the years. Our successes or failures set a tone that reaches far beyond the school sites into our neighborhoods and communities.

In recent years, the relationship between our employees, employee associations and the District has been adversarial at best, focused on a belief that to get anything accomplished we must fight. Over the past year, a commitment has been formed with the Superintendent, Board and our Associations to craft a new relationship focused on moving the District's culture forward together. It is for that reason that our team attended State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson's California Labor Management Initiative at the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce on November 16, 2015. The Initiative focused on collaboration as a means of improving student achievement. The symposium was co-sponsored by the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), California Department of Education (CDE), California School Board Association (CSBA), California School Employees Association (CSEA), and the California Teachers Association (CTA). The symposium was designed to: 1) Facilitate and support collaborative learning and planning among district teams, and; 2) Highlight best practices, tools, and strategies which have successfully been used by district partners to build collaboration.

Our district team included the District Superintendent, School Board President and Vice-President and Presidents or representatives of our labor associations. The team was challenged to take a close look at current relationships between labor and management, discuss honestly our obstacles and jointly build a plan for what authentic and purposeful labor-management collaboration could look like. Purposeful collaboration is not about unions and districts being more cordial to one another for the sake of cordiality, but working together with a goal to change the substance of the conversation and ultimately, the quality of decisions made to benefit our students. The team understood that greater trust, increased civility, increased innovation and problem solving, a better understanding of contract language and better retention of employees bring improved student achievement. In fact, data was presented at the symposium that validated our beliefs!

As part of that process, we committed to forging a relationship based on purposeful collaboration. We all agreed that purposeful collaboration must have strong communications. As such, we committed to meet regularly to address district issues in an open, transparent manner. This means setting stable advisory meetings (Faculty Advisory Committees, Classified Advisory Committees), and joint District leadership meetings amongst Cabinet and Labor Associations operated in an open, transparent manner. We agreed that building this type of network communication would ensure that each member of our team understands and respects the work that all of the other members do each day.

Over the next month, association leaders and district management will be discussing our collective initiative with their respective members. Association presidents have expressed a desire to bring all of their members into the process in order to bring forward issues to discuss at the table and continue the communication of what our purposeful collaboration will look like.

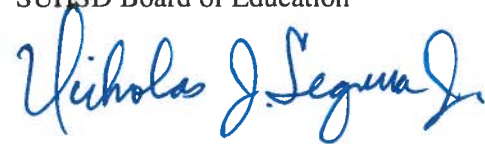
In summary, the representatives of each of our bargaining units, our school board and our superintendent recognize that effective communication and collaboration between the people in our district is essential to our growth and success in the future. We have committed to work together for the benefit of the employees and students of the

Sweetwater Union High School District. The evidence is clear that a positive district/labor relationship not only benefits all employees, but also promotes student achievement. We are confident that through Communication, Collaboration and Commitment that we will create the change in culture SWEETWATER needs to move our district forward for student success.

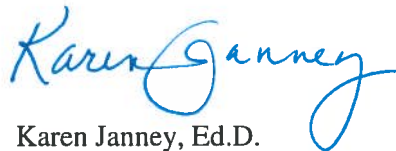
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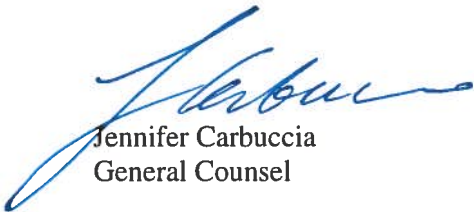
Frank Tarantino  
SUHSD Board of Education




Nicholas Segura  
SUHSD Board of Education



Karen Janney, Ed.D.  
Superintendent



Jennifer Carbuccia  
General Counsel



Sandra Huevo  
Assistant Superintendent Human Resources



Elaine Reiser  
Confidential Unit Representative



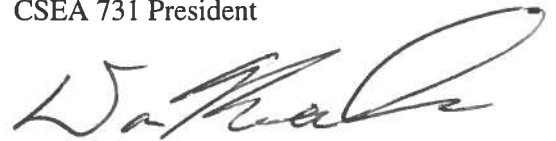
Jeffrey Wilderson  
CSEA 258 President



Troy Johnson  
CSEA 471 President



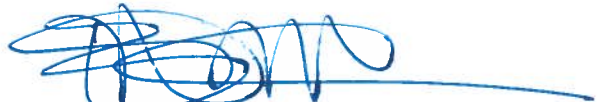
Diana Clayton  
CSEA 731 President



Daniel Kracha  
MASD President



Richard Morrell  
NAGE President



Elvia Estrella  
SCGA President



Roberto Rodriguez  
SEA President