



PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

October 24, 2017

Dear PUSD Employees and Parents,

The strategic investments we have made to offer excellent academic programs in dual language immersion, STEM, art, music, and college pathways are netting results. Today, our schools are stronger than ever, our students are achieving, and our graduates are winning admission to some of the top colleges in the country.

But our district is facing a very difficult fiscal reality. The projected \$5.7 million deficit in the current year has grown, substantially increasing the \$13 million in reductions previously projected for the next two years. The deficit is due to structural increases in costs and a continued slow decline in enrollment.

As an organization rapidly moving towards excellence, our district urgently needs to bring expenditures in line with revenues. We need to examine and perhaps shed the layers of incoherent initiatives dating back decades that are hindering our progress today. The way in which we plan, budget, and staff must reflect the same movement towards excellence as our schools. We must forge long-term solutions that fundamentally transform our planning so that our district no longer continually faces budget gaps that slow our growth.

And so we are refocusing on the “instructional core” - the essential interactions of teacher, student, and content that create the basis for learning. The instructional core is connected to district wide strategies for improvement and are funded appropriately. We’re moving to ensure that students get the best services possible, that every student group is progressing, and that our district makes progress in closing the achievement gap.

In August, the Board of Education took a critical first step in this shift to examine data and address the root issues that have hindered student learning and progress. The Board revised the district’s Mission and Vision, and identified three priority areas for 2017-2018:

1. Continuous improvement in academics and operations
2. Increasing socioeconomic integration
3. Reducing the budget deficit for long term sustainability

The Board also revised the district’s Theory of Action for Change to guide the strategies that will refocus us on the instructional core. At its [August 24 meeting](#), the Board of Education adopted [Resolution 2414](#) that issued guidelines on budget reductions to right-size the district and authorized staff to present a tiered list of at least \$15 million in reductions in December.

Similarly, in the last few weeks each PUSD school has, with the expertise of teachers and administrators, developed a coherent plan to implement strategies that will have the most impact on issues identified through analyses of data and root causes. Stakeholders have been engaged at every step and plans have been adjusted accordingly. Central district departments are doing similar work.

In November and December, the Superintendent’s Budget Advisory Committee (SBAC) will review these budget and program plans for the 2018-19 school year, identify priorities, and make recommendations to me and the Governing Board. The SBAC provides for community involvement by a wide range of stakeholders

and includes teachers, principals, staff, parent representatives from district advisory committees, community members, and high school student council members.

In December, the Board of Education will receive an update on the planning and budget development process, and a presentation on Resolution 2414. In January 2018, the Board will receive recommendations for the 2018-2019 budget and take action.

PUSD has risen because of the talent, creativity, and enduring partnerships of teachers, families, staff, and the community. With the magnitude of the deficits we are confronting, the next few months will involve tough decisions as we change policies, contracts, and right-size our staffing and expenditures. I am confident that we can figure this out together.

Sincerely,



Brian McDonald, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Budget Development Timeline

June 2017	2017-2018 Budget adopted with \$5.7 million deficit. \$10-12 million in budget reductions projected for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020
August 2017	Board of Education revises district’s Mission and Vision, Theory of Action for Change to refocus on instructional core. Board identifies three priority areas for 2017-2018. At its August 24 meeting, the Board of Education adopts <u>Resolution 2414</u> that issued guidelines on budget reductions to right-size the district and authorized staff to present a tiered list of at least \$15 million in reductions by December.
September - October 2017	School teams conduct data and root cause analyses, identify priorities, and develop plans to implement strategies. Central district divisions do similar work
October 2017	Applications sought for Superintendent’s Budget Advisory Committee (SBAC)
Nov. - Dec. 2017	SBAC convenes to review plans and budgets
Dec. 14, 2017	Board of Education Update on <u>Board of Education Resolution 2414</u>
Jan. 10, 2018	Governor’s Budget 2018-2019 released
Jan. 25, 2018	SBAC recommendations presented for Board of Education action

For more information visit <https://www.pusd.us/Page/5704>