

September 24, 2009

Dear Parents,

Welcome to this 2009 – 2010 school year. I hope your children have adjusted quickly to the new challenges that they face and that they are anxious to have another successful school year. Many of you have already had an opportunity to meet with your student's teachers at Back to School Orientations held earlier this month. Please continue to take every opportunity to get involved and work together with teachers, staff, and administration.

On a different note, our School District, like every other school district in California, is going through very tough times financially. All school districts are required to submit four budget reports to the County Office of Education every year. The COE has told the District that it has until December 15, 2009 to submit a detailed plan to eliminate the budget deficit in school years 2010 – 2011 and 2011 – 2012. This current deficit is approximately 2.2 million dollars. Also of significant budgetary concern is the district's 5-year declining enrollment trend, totaling a loss of about 500 students or a 10% decrease in enrollment. This trend is crucial to our District as most of our revenue comes from State budget allocations based upon attendance. Part of my job will be to work collaboratively with staff, the School Board, and stakeholders (parents and community), to create a budget process and implement plans that will help improve our overall student attendance.

These fiscal realities will unfortunately result in further reductions to programs and personnel. Regrettably, these reductions are inevitable. I realize as your Superintendent that all aspects of the District must make reductions and operate efficiently. For now, the good news is that you can play an important part in helping the District through these tough times by making certain your "healthy" child attends school daily. It helps your child and helps the District. Last year's district-wide attendance rate was 94.68%. I believe we can do significantly better. For example, if we raise our rate to 96%, it would increase our revenue by approximately \$250,000. By working together we can all play a part in addressing these tough economic issues while not compromising our high educational standards and ongoing instructional improvement efforts. NMCUSD and our community have tremendously dedicated people, committed to doing the best for our children.

In the future, I will be sending you updated and ongoing budget information titled "Budget Updates." These, I hope, will serve as a communication tool to keep all information current and transparent. While every potential budget reduction matters deeply to us all, we must do our best to keep moving forward while keeping our district fiscally solvent and our students receiving a high quality education.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

Respectfully,

Sergio Montenegro Jr.  
Superintendent