

Sent via BlackBoard Connect on 10/19/23

Re: McKinley Announcement

McKinley families,

I am writing to announce that this evening the Board appointed me as the new SMMUSD Director of Curriculum and Instruction. While I am sad to be leaving McKinley, I am happy that I will continue to work closely with the school in this new role.

These last 7 years have been quite an adventure, as McKinley has blossomed into a leader for innovation and a role model for exceptional instructional practices. We have added new traditions like schoolwide outdoor assemblies, a school mascot Mac the Lion, 4th/5th Clubs like Student Newspaper and Rainbow Club, additional supplemental enrichment like Theater, new parent groups like the Special Education Resource Group, a school site focus of Academic Discourse, and more. As a team we persevered through the many iterations of the pandemic, the only school in the District to be awarded the CDE CA Pivotal Practice Award for excellence during Distance Learning. We continued our trend of excellence, being recognized for our social inclusion of students with special needs in a worldwide Edutopia video, and now becoming the first AVID elementary school in the District. We've also seen campus improvements to enhance instruction such as the new STEM Lab, windows, doors, floors, and furniture, with a future new building to come.

Overall, McKinley is a joyful school family and a special place. With talented teachers, dedicated staff, supportive parents, and wonderful students, I know that the next Principal will be able to sustain the exceptional programs, policies, and practices we have here at McKinley.

I will be continuing to directly support McKinley through the transition in leadership. Over the next few weeks, the District will engage with parents and staff to gather input on characteristics for the next leader, and then a screening and interview process will occur.

It has been an honor to serve as your Principal, and I am deeply proud of our school.

Thank you.

Dr. Benjamin