



January 20, 2023

Interim Superintendent's Message: The Good Work Continues

Dear Parents, Guardians, Staff, Students and Community Members,

I write to welcome everyone into the new calendar year and take a moment to introduce myself as your interim superintendent. Currently, I am in my 24th year in SMMUSD. I have been fortunate to serve as an administrator at the district office, Malibu High School and at Santa Monica High School. I bring to the interim position historical knowledge and a commitment to support our schools, district office and communities during this time of transition. I have been fortunate to work with several excellent superintendents, including most recently Dr. Ben Drati. I am humbled that the Board of Education has placed trust in me for this interim assignment, and will do my best to ensure that the amazing work of the District will continue.

The second half of the school year is underway. Our students and staff have returned to school and our students are learning. Each of our schools and departments are led by excellent educators and leaders who are engaged with students and staff each and every day. I have always believed in the philosophy that there are two roles in a school district: to teach and to support teaching – all in the broadest sense of what support means. I am confident that our teachers, support staff and administrations will continue to engage in the professional practices and professional learning that are described in each school's plan for strengthening student achievement and addressing achievement and opportunity gaps.

We will continue our focus on diversity, equity and inclusion at the classroom, school site and district levels. We will also continue to provide social-emotional learning experiences for students, and support them as we continue to cope with the on-going health crisis and other issues that affect the well-being of our young people. With the continued support of parents and our communities, our schools will continue to thrive during this time of transition. The good work will continue.

In the coming months our District team and site administrators will be working with the Board of Education to plan for the 2023-24 school year. You will be hearing an update from our school board soon regarding the process for selecting a new superintendent.

I wish families and staff a great and productive semester ahead with our ongoing focus on student success and wellbeing.

Sincerely,

Mark O. Kelly, Ed.D.

Interim Superintendent