September 26, 2014

Dear Parents,

We wanted to update you on our plans to deal with extremely hot weather, should we again experience the type of heat that occurred early last week.

While the school district cannot afford to provide air conditioning in all of our facilities in the near term, given the severity of the most recent heat wave, we are actively exploring short-term and long-term solutions to lessen the impact of such weather.

Since the recent heat wave, we have worked with the California Department of Education and the Los Angeles County Office of Education so that we can call minimum days under an emergency resolution that the state superintendent of public instruction has made available to schools. Minimum days may be called when the National Weather Service issues an extreme heat advisory. Parents and staff would be notified of such minimum days at least one day in advance via School Loop (websites and email) and via School Messenger (telephone). Please be sure your child’s school has your current phone number and email address so that we can provide you with the proper notice.

If the National Weather Service issues an extreme heat advisory, we also will call in night custodians to schools that do not have air conditioning. These custodians will open classroom windows very early in the day to allow for air circulation prior to the start of school, which can help to dissipate heat that builds inside rooms overnight.

In addition, we are working with 12 schools to pilot other measures, including the use of swamp coolers (devices that cool the air through the evaporation of water), ceiling fans, pedestal mounted oscillating fans and reflective window film. We will analyze these pilot measures and consider extending them to more schools.

During hot weather we also will continue to curtail physical activities, encourage hydration, leave lights off in classrooms when possible, and use any and all available air conditioned space on campuses.

Extreme heat has affected classrooms throughout Southern California and nationwide. The safety and health of our students is always our primary concern. We will do everything in our power to provide a classroom environment that is conducive to learning.

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Steinhauser
Superintendent of Schools