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Administrative Staffing Exodus at High School District

By Cathy Tyson



Front row from left: Cheryl Hazell-Small, Frank Acojido, Charlotte Taylor; back row from left: Kevin French, Chris Learned, Marshall Pfeiffer, Paul Fitzgerald

AUHSD for 18 years, and prior to that worked at the San Ramon Valley School District for 20 years. He could have retired at age 55, but describes himself as someone who likes to go to work in the morning. Considering the move for some time, Learned feels the district is in good financial shape and "it's time." In his opinion, many of the senior staffers are aging baby boomers who have earned their retirement and are simply moving on.

In addition to Learned, Steve Fishbaugh, director of maintenance and grounds, will retire after 20 years with the district. Kevin French, began his career in 1978 as a resource teacher in Southern California, moved up the educational ladder with stints as assistant principal, middle school principal, high school principal, and deputy superintendent in Davis all before joining AUHSD as associate superintendent for administrative services in 2010. Cheryl Hazell-Small has spent 43 years in education, ultimately serving as director of special education since 2003.

Frank Acojido, director of the Del Valle Education Center will be missed, along with several teachers: Scott Brady-Smith, Miclyn Carmichael, Paul Fitzgerald, Marshall Pfeiffer, Charlotte Taylor and librarian Patricia Hadley, who are all leaving the district. Also moving on are Teena Philpott-Rigal, attendance technician, and Maria Schultz, testing technician; they both worked at Miramonte High School.

Another agenda item highlighted at the meeting was a report on Gov. Jerry Brown's May revision - adjustments to his statewide January budget proposals, reflecting the state's current robust economy and increased sales tax revenue. Learned is working on what that will mean to the AUHSD for their next meeting on June 3. He anticipates one-time money of approximately \$3 million coming in to "help the district maintain its reserves" that had recently been drawn down due to the state's newly established local control funding formula, which provided an inadequate base level of funding. "The budget looks a lot better" than last year, he said.

"The state is just paying back the money they owe us," Learned explained, but it comes with strings attached. The partial reimbursement is for state-mandated funding. But now the governor is strongly suggesting that money should be used for something entirely different, supporting Common Core curriculum. "They owe us a dollar and are paying back 70 cents," then directing it be

More than half of the central administration staff is leaving the Acalanes Union High School District. At a recent school board meeting, Superintendent John Nickerson reflected on a substantial number of changes. "Specifically, five employees who lead departments will be retiring, and one department lead has resigned to pursue a promotion in another school district," he said. "The lead administrators in business services, human resources, adult and alternative education, student services, special education and auxiliary services, food services, custodial services, and maintenance and grounds will not be with the district in 2015-2016."

Some of the soon to be vacant positions will not be filled; instead Nickerson presented a leaner reorganized staffing chart to governing board members for consideration, which will result in significant savings going forward.

"It's a total coincidence," said Business Services Associate Superintendent Chris Learned, whose last day will be July 31. He has been with

spent elsewhere, said the out-going associate superintendent.

Also, at this point, there are no changes in adult education funding at the Del Valle campus. Final calculations will all be made clear at the upcoming June 3 Governing Board meeting - which, as always, is open to the public at the district offices at 1212 Pleasant Hill Road in Lafayette.

Lafayette Elementary Principal Shifts Roles within District

Lafayette Elementary School principal Mary Maddux announced May 26 that she will start a new position within the Lafayette School District as the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction. In a letter to the Lafayette Elementary School community, Maddux wrote, "One of my greatest joys is seeing those adorable children come in as kindergartners and each year grow both academically and socially. I have never been so proud as to ask a student what they were learning, and have them tell me with great enthusiasm, detail and evidence. The amazing support of our parents and community makes Lafayette School an incredible learning community, and one that I will always look at as a true highlight of my career." J. Wake

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