



Dale Marsden, Ed.D.
Superintendent

September 10, 2014

Dear Colleagues, Partners, & Friends:

On behalf of San Bernardino City Unified School District, welcome to the Stakeholder Group Orientation for San Bernardino's Multilingual Initiative – Investing in Our Future Today. We are on the cusp of a major, groundbreaking effort to design an overarching plan for a district multilingual initiative that provides a pathway to engaging all students in high level multilingual learning opportunities that prepare them for success in a global, 21st century environment. As part of this plan, the educational success of English Learners will be addressed in a comprehensive manner that builds on their languages, cultures, and experiences, skills, and resources to graduate them college, career, and 21st century ready. As a fundamental approach to creating this plan, we are engaging YOU, with the anticipation that relationships among and across a most diverse group of stakeholders will be strengthened, and ownership of the issues will result. Thank you for agreeing to be part of this monumental and innovative effort to move our district and our community to the forefront of powerful and transformative education for all our students. We have an opportunity to make an incredible and sustainable impact for our students, our families, our schools, and our communities.

In the preface of international human and linguistic rights advocate Tove Skutnabb Kangas's book, *Multilingual Education Works*, Adama Ouane, Director of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, says:

The challenge that education systems now face is to provide quality education that takes learners' needs into consideration, whilst at the same time balancing these with contemporary social, cultural and political demands. A multilingual educational approach, in which language is recognized as an integral part of a student's cultural identity, is an important factor for inclusion, participation and democracy. It promotes respect, tolerance and

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equality for others. Educating “in and for diversity” teaches us how to live together. It also enables us to develop new ways of learning to do, learning to know and learning to be based on pluralism, mutual understanding and respect, democratic relationships and fundamentally human values. It is for these reasons that it should be recognized as a crucial part of all educational systems.

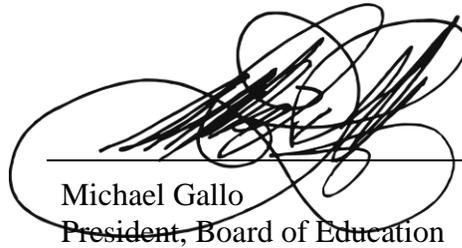
As we take up this challenge, we will build and deepen partnerships and collaborations, exploring possibilities together about how to best invest in our students’ futures through building their multilingual capacities. Through our collective effort, we will build on our experiences to move multilingual learning into a new arena. This collaboration will provide many opportunities for leaders, teachers, students, parents, and community partners to share their practice, learn from one another, and together, engage in innovative design of 21st century pathways for our students’ success.

You can be certain of this – your work will have an afterlife that will live beyond our formal meetings. We are optimistic that this initiative will yield positive results and outcomes, and reach far beyond what we can imagine today.

Warmest regards,



Dale Marsden, Ed.D.
Superintendent



Michael Gallo
President, Board of Education