



# Board Briefs

Highlights from this week's Board of Education meeting

## **Board gets an update on district's energy efforts**

Mark Sontag, IUSD's coordinator of math and science, presented a detailed update on the district's ongoing efforts to conserve energy, recycle and promote environmental awareness.

Despite two electrical rate increases, Sontag said IUSD generated nearly \$300,000 in savings on its utility bills in 2008-09, reflecting the staff's efforts to conserve electricity, water and gas. He added that since May 2008, the district has diverted 1,125 tons of construction debris – or nearly 75 percent – to recyclers for reuse.

Sontag said he anticipates the district's site-based "Green Teams" will play a greater role in future conservation efforts. In addition, IUSD is developing "green" curriculum on energy and sustainability that will be implemented beginning this year with sixth-grade classrooms.

Meanwhile, IUSD's Energy Team continues to expand and enhance its partnerships with key groups. Sontag added that the district remains on track to install solar panels on the roof of Rancho San Joaquin Middle School, despite some financing changes.

## **Board updates its field trip and excursion policy**

Noting increases in the cost of travel, the Board revised its policy related to field trips and school excursions.

Though school groups do not receive district funding for travel, IUSD's policy, which was initially adopted in 1977, has long required Board approval for trips that exceed \$1,000. The modified policy calls for Board approval when trips require students, families or boosters to raise more than \$1,500.

## **Board approves changes to Career Technology Education Program**

Board members adopted a resolution that adjusts the district's Career Technology Education program in an effort to qualify for grant funding under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006.

The resolution adds a third pathway to the district's program, which previously included visual arts and automotive courses. Students interested in the performing arts can now pursue a sequence of academic and career technology courses.

As a result of this change, IUSD will be able to pursue as much as \$4.8 million in grant funding that could be used to help pay for a performing arts facility and equipment.

## **IUSD enters into agreement to explore possible retirement incentive**

The Board adopted a resolution authorizing the district to enter into an agreement with Public Agency Retirement Services (PARS) to explore the feasibility of a retirement incentive for eligible

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