

Superintendent's Message – May 2011

What do children need to learn to be competitive in tomorrow's global marketplace? Should the U.S. have one set of common core standards for all states? Should all countries agree on a set of common core standards? How can we eliminate the disparities so that our students exit school as well prepared as those in other states and countries?

These questions are continually in the minds of educators. Some of the questions can be answered by focusing on content, cognitive skills, and civic engagement. At Moreland, we are looking at curriculum, standards, and benchmarks to ensure that our students are receiving an appropriate, comprehensive education. We are focused on developing cognitive skills like problem formulation, research, interpretation, communication, precision, and accuracy. Our students and staff pride themselves on their involvement in community service projects and the development of ethical values.

We believe that students deserve dedicated teachers who can help them to realize their full potential. Not only teachers but all staff members are tasked with providing a supportive learning environment. For this reason, one of our strategic goals is to attract, support and retain exemplary staff. We hire the best and brightest staff members. Our educational services department plans and provides meaningful, relevant, and highest quality professional development. Our teacher experts conduct trainings for other staff members. A variety of resources are provided to all staff members so that they can focus on the important job of student engagement.

The benefit to students of common core standards is that they provide a clear, consistent understanding of what students are expected to learn so that everyone involved in their education, teachers, parents, and other supportive people, know what they need to do to support their learning. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting knowledge and skills that are needed for success in college and careers. California adopted Common Core Standards for language arts, math and science in 2010. However, it will take several years to fully implement curriculum, instructional materials, and assessments based on the new standards.

Everyone involved in the education of children shares in the responsibility of enriching students' knowledge and understanding. Moreland is implementing challenging curricular programs in our schools. We are committed to the academic success of our students. Parents and other education partners can view the latest information on what information children should know at each step of their K-5 education from the California Department of Education at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/documents/alookatko5jan2011.doc> or view other information on common core standards or curriculum by subject for higher grades at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cc/>.

Working together we can help all students succeed academically, as well as socially and emotionally.

Glen Ishiwata
Superintendent