



San Juan Unified School District
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April 30, 2020

Board of Education
Paula Villescaz, President
Michael McKibbin, Ed.D., Vice President
Zima Creason, Clerk
Pam Costa, Member
Saul Hernandez, Member

Dear County Board of Supervisors,

As the Superintendent of the San Juan Unified School District (SJUSD), representing approximately 38,000 students and their families, I am writing to you in opposition of a provision in the proposed FY 2020-21 State Budget regarding elimination of the Dental Managed Care (DMC) Program in Sacramento County. I strongly urge you, as our dedicated County Supervisors, to join me in actively opposing this provision which would eliminate a program that is providing services that support thousands of our Title I school children.

Teachers, parents, students, administrators and other staff members of the San Juan Unified School District greatly appreciate the partnership we have built with the Board of Supervisors and county staff to ensure better health and well-being for our students. During my six years as superintendent, our district has worked tirelessly to bring resources to our students and their families. As our County Supervisors, it's no surprise to you that a majority of these students' families are lower income, and many are struggling to overcome a wide array of barriers to ensure better health outcomes for their families.

Beginning in 2016, DMC funded the Center for Oral Health's (COH) dental screening and navigation program called Early Smiles Sacramento (ESS). San Juan Unified School District was proudly the first district in our county to welcome ESS plans into the district and serve our students. We've seen that this program represents what a fee-for-service delivery system cannot. The DMC program, partners with school districts like ours throughout the county to provide key health screenings at schools, allowing students to focus on their studies, build relationships, and develop important life skills. Last year alone, over 25,000 students with DMC plans were screened in Sacramento county elementary schools by ESS hygienists. That number is set to increase as soon as districts reopen. We understand that parents are juggling many responsibilities, and this program helps provide them with a greater piece-of-mind knowing that their children have access to necessary dental screenings.

There are many benefits to the ESS program. ESS's dental hygienists provide dental screenings to students with signed consent forms. The consent return rate dramatically grew as the program established trust and proven reliability. Urgent dental needs are addressed through extensive coordination between the parents, hygienists, and the DMC plans. For students with less urgent dental concerns, parents are notified for follow-up. Families who have been unable to navigate a student's dental insurance are now assured a dental home for their child. When needed, ESS and the dental plans offer translation and transportation services to our families.

Eliminating the DMC program would take away the funding for the ESS program, disregarding significant progress that has been made for our students and families. This elimination would be detrimental to the oral overall health of our students, as oral health and physical health are intrinsically linked. Moreover,

during this unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic when our schools are closed, DMC plans provide access to teledentistry for emergency issues – regardless of whether a family has internet coverage are not.

We are not alone in opposing this elimination. On April 2, your Medi-Cal Dental Advisory Committee (MCDAC) made a recommendation to the Board to oppose program elimination.

Supervisors, we respectfully request that the Board consider and adopt MCDAC's recommendation to oppose the elimination of the DMC program as soon as possible. Further, we also request that you expeditiously notify Governor Newsom and the State Legislature given the timing of State Budget process.

Our district, our students, our parents and our staff thank you for your consideration of this urgent request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kent Kern". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Kent Kern
Superintendent, San Juan Unified School District