



May 13, 2020

*Board of Trustees*

*Michelle Rivas  
President*

*Michael Baker  
Vice President*

*Basim Elkarra  
Clerk*

*Bob Bastian  
Member*

*Linda Fowler, J.D.  
Member*

*Ramona Landeros  
Member*

*Rebecca Sandoval  
Member*

*Superintendent  
Steve Martinez, Ed. D.*

*To inspire each student to  
extraordinary achievement  
every day*

Sacramento County Board of Supervisors  
700 H Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Letter of Support for the Dental Managed Care (DMC) Program in Sacramento County**

Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors,

As Superintendent of Twin Rivers Unified School District (TRUSD), representing nearly 27,000 students and their families, I am writing to you in opposition to 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 supporting thousands of our Title I school children.**

**Teachers, parents, students, administrators, and other staff members of Twin Rivers 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 years as superintendent, our district has worked tirelessly to bring resources to our students & their families. As our County Supervisors, it's no surprise to you that majority of those students' families are lower income; many struggling to overcome a wide array of barriers to ensure the best health outcomes for these families. Beginning in 2016, the DMC plans funded the Center for Oral Health's (COH) dental screening and navigation program called **Early Smiles Sacramento (ESS)**. **TRUSD was one of the first districts in our County to welcome the ESS program into our district to serve our students.** We saw that this program represents what the DMC plans can do that a Fee-For Service delivery system cannot do. DMC plans partner with school districts like ours throughout the County so that a key health screening is provided at school, allowing students to focus on their studies, building relationships, and develop important life skills. Last year alone, over 25,000 students with DMC plans have been screened in Sacramento County elementary schools by ESS hygienists. That number is set to increase soon as soon as re-open. Parents are juggling so many responsibilities and this program provides them greater piece-of-mind that their children have access to necessary dental screenings.

There are many benefits to the ESS program. ESS's dental hygienists provide dental screening to students if their parent has signed the consent form. The consent return rate has dramatically grown 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 & 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 their 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<sup>nd</sup>, 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.**

Respectfully,



Steve Martinez, Ed.D.

Superintendent - Twin Rivers Unified School District

/SM/ms