

# La Cuesta Continuation High School

710 Santa Barbara Street, Santa Barbara CA 93101, Phone (805) 966-0883, Fax (805) 963-8006

June 17, 2009

To: Robin Sawaske

From: Kathleen Abney

Re: Proposed Name Change for La Cuesta

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## **Background:**

For the past eight years, we have been moving La Cuesta toward a more academically rigorous school, ready to prepare students for post-secondary education and the workplace in the twenty-first century. As a part of that change, we have an almost entirely new staff and have eliminated packets as a learning model in the classroom setting.

Students who come to a La Cuesta campus receive standards-based instruction using district adopted textbooks from teachers who are deemed highly qualified in at least two core subject areas.

Over time, our CAHSEE passage rate has increased; we have only three students from the period between 2003-2004 and 2007-2008 who completed their course work without passing one of their CAHSEE exams. We continue to work with those students toward passage of the exam they need to earn their full diploma.

As we have moved towards increased rigor and relevance in the curriculum and the consolidation of campuses to the 710 Santa Barbara Street location, there has also been an ongoing discussion with both students and staff about changing the name La Cuesta into something that might engender a more positive reaction in the community. Unfortunately, the name La Cuesta has a negative connotation in many places within the educational community; that reputation is currently undeserved and a new name would serve as a re-branding of La Cuesta to more accurately reflect the school we have become.

## **Plan:**

Following are the steps of the proposed plan for selecting a new name for La Cuesta High School:

- Engage in conversations, discussions with all staff (teachers, classified) regarding a new name for La Cuesta—this has been an ongoing conversation over the past three years
- Present the concept school wide to all students in classroom assemblies; this includes students on the satellite campuses
- Solicit student suggestions for new school names and mascots (currently *Coyotes*)
- Compile student suggested names, mascots
- Present list of names and mascots to students for a vote (ballot attached); ballot indicates that teachers will have the final say on names forwarded to Board
- Tally final student votes
- Teachers make final choice, based on student vote
- Present top two teacher selected names and mascots to Board for approval

## Let's Re-Name La Cuesta!!

If I had a chance to re-name La Cuesta and give the Downtown campus a fresh start and a new image in the community, the name I would choose would be:

\_\_\_\_\_. Therefore, I would also choose

\_\_\_\_\_ as the school mascot. (currently we are the Coyotes)

We will take all the suggestions, make a list and bring that list to you for a vote. Staff will consider your suggestions and make a final choice. IF staff cannot agree on ONE name, up to three names will be brought to students for a final vote. And then—we have to get it approved by the School Board—but with a thoughtful name and presentation they will know you have participated in the process.

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