



# Santa Barbara SCHOOL DISTRICTS

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July 1, 2009

To: Dr. J. Brian Sarvis, Superintendent

From: Robin Sawaske, Associate Superintendent

Subject: Harding Early Childhood Initiative Expansion Proposal

Principal Dr. Sally Kingston has been in discussion with Jon Clark, executive director, and Harvey Bottelsen of the J. S. Bower Foundation, about the expansion of the Harding Early Childhood Initiative (HECI). Modeled after the Harlem Children’s Zone and the Carpinteria Family Services Collaborative at Main School, Harding School is in the process of developing a proposal for the Bower Foundation to expand HECI to reflect best practices in early childhood education. The proposed plan will reflect a comprehensive and coordinated service delivery system of care that includes (a) high-quality early learning for all, (b) family support and stability, (c) social/emotional development, and (d) physical health and nutrition for families and children zero to five years old in the Harding School neighborhood. The ultimate desired outcome of the program is the creation of a community where the collective norm is college entrance and completion. Since May 2009, Dr. Kingston has been collaborating with HECI and local early childhood experts in the community, other districts, and the University of California, Santa Barbara to identify the first phase of the proposal. She is expected to complete the proposal this month and begin the planning phase in fall 2009.

Early childhood education has been an area of focus since 2006. It is one of the four goal areas in the Harding School Strategic Plan along with core academic program, academic enrichment and arts, and healthy learning environment. The goal is to develop a strong academic and social emotional foundation beginning in preschool by providing the highest quality early learning experiences possible. Since 2006, the Harding Early Childhood Initiative has taken important and noteworthy steps toward that end, including:

- Installation of a separate preschool/kindergarten play space
- Development of a preschool – second-grade professional learning community
- Increased alignment between preschool and kindergarten
- Teacher (P-2) participation in research-based professional development and coaching
- Development of a fee-based Reggio-Inspired Preschool Program for two- to five-year olds
- Increased parent involvement and educational opportunities

Dr. Kingston is planning to present an overview of the Harding School proposal to the Bower Foundation at the upcoming Board meeting on July 14<sup>th</sup>. This will appear on the board agenda as an action item for approval to present the proposal to the Bower Foundation.

For more information about the J. S. Bower Foundation, see <http://www.jsbowerfoundation.org/>.

Adams Elementary School Cesar Chavez Charter School Cleveland Elementary School Franklin Elementary School Harding Elementary School	McKinley Elementary School Monroe Elementary School Open Alternative School Peabody Charter School	Roosevelt Elementary School Santa Barbara Charter School Santa Barbara Community Academy Washington Elementary School	Goleta Valley Junior High School La Colina Junior High School La Cumbre Junior High School Santa Barbara Junior High School	Dos Pueblos High School La Cuesta Continuation High School San Marcos High School Santa Barbara High School Home School Santa Barbara
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