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Executive Director
Gary Bowman, M.S. Ed.

June, 13, 2011

Dear Carmichael Campus Families,

Last week, our Executive Director, Gary Bowman, sent out a letter announcing our intentions to relocate our upper elementary and middle school classrooms to the La Sierra Community Center. This decision was made after months of searching for an appropriate site for the entire campus.

After considering a number of other options, Gary and I came to the decision that La Sierra would best meet the needs of our learning community. The amenities for the students: a large play area, gymnasium, a community hall, and spacious classrooms were the most important in our decision. The benefits to the school as a whole are a long term lease at or below market rate, the opportunity to enroll more students into our program, and the ability to create a beautiful school environment in conjunction with a cooperative and supportive organization. The amount of parking available certainly didn't hurt either!

When it became apparent that lease negotiations would not be finalized in time to allow the renovations to be done to all of the classrooms, Gary and I moved forward with the plan to utilize only a portion of the La Sierra site for the 2011-12 school-year. By doing a split campus temporarily, we will be meeting the needs of the older students, reduce the numbers at the current campus, and give La Sierra and CMP time to work on the remaining space as it becomes available.

I am aware of concerns over sharing the La Sierra site with other programs. Plans have been made, and will be implemented, to assure the integrity of each of the programs (including the Laureate School), and provide a safe and secure learning environment for everybody.

Here are a few specific items we have addressed: A keyed gate is being installed to remove any access by students to the two sections. Our wing of classrooms and student bathrooms will be at the far end of the facility, and a hall monitor will be hired to oversee the facility and grounds. Our drop-off and pick-up areas will be separate, and the use of the fields and gymnasium will be coordinated to eliminate any interactions between our students and theirs.

The staff and I are discussing ways to maintain our culture of an integrated K-8 school. All of our family events will be together: the

Harvest Festival, Book Fairs, Movie Nights, the Spring Carnival, and Spring Program, etc. We are already thinking of other events for our campus that have not been possible in the confines of our current facility. We are planning ways to have the older students brought over on occasion to continue the “buddy” program with the younger children, and I will have my all-staff meetings together twice a month to keep our staff connected, as well.

The “bell schedule” has already been formulated to allow time between drop-off and pick-up for those parents with children at both sites. Office personnel and the Club Montessori program will be at both locations, and RaDene Girola, Educational Specialist, and I will rotate in order to meet the needs of both sites.

The details of the lease agreement are being worked out and should be finalized by late June. The timing did not allow us to hold a community meeting at the La Sierra facility. I will, however, continue to post updates on our web site and send out phone messages to keep families up-to-date.

Meanwhile, the staff and students of the upper elementary and middle school classes are so excited about the move to La Sierra. I have received numerous offers of assistance from parents over the summer which is so appreciated.

Gary, the Carmichael staff, and I thank you for your patience, support and trust as we have worked to obtain a facility that will better meet the needs of the students and our campus community.

Sincerely,
Ms. Kim

Kim Aldridge
Principal ~ Carmichael Campus
California Montessori Project