Dear Lincoln Middle School Community,

Many community members have expressed concern over the decision to convert AUSD middle schools from a 7-period day to a 6-period day. There has also been concern over the conversion from a two/three period Core to single subject classes in both English and Social Studies at the middle schools.

I would like to clarify information for our community, explain the rationale for the 6-period day, and prepare our families and students for our next steps.

At the December 14\textsuperscript{th} Board of Education meeting, as part of the First Interim budget report, the Board approved a worst case scenario – the possibility of the conversion from a 7-period day to a 6-period day for both middle schools. There are pros and cons in both cases. On the pro side, a 7-period day with Core classes allows for greater personalization and more opportunities to focus strongly on English Language Arts as teachers really get to know the students in their class through their extended time with them.

But after months of intensive research by a District advisory committee, it was determined that a 6-period day proved to create ongoing cost savings to the District as well as increase instructional minutes to both math and science classes. This increase in instructional minutes aligns the curriculum more closely to high school frameworks, preparing students for the academically rigorous pacing and curriculum of 9\textsuperscript{th} grade science, Algebra, and Geometry.

Establishing a 6-period day allows for students to maintain electives at all grade levels, but it does reduce one elective for all 8\textsuperscript{th} grade students. The 6-period day does not necessarily eliminate English/Social Studies Core.

In preparing for the worst case scenario, there are ramifications for our teachers with regards to appropriate credentials. As Human Resources prepares for March 15\textsuperscript{th} layoffs, it is imperative that layoffs include both parcel tax and no parcel tax scenarios. In the event the parcel tax does not pass, both middle schools will be converted to “secondary” schools with 6\textsuperscript{th} grade moving to elementary schools.

The California Department of Education (CDE) mandates that a “secondary” program ensures all teachers are credentialed to teach single subject classes and requires a demonstration of competency in those subjects. Eleven teachers at both middle schools were notified and informed of the necessary requirements needed to maintain a position at the middle schools in the worst case scenario. At the February 8\textsuperscript{th} Board of Education meeting, the Superintendent reported that AUSD would assume the cost of all preparation and exams necessary to meet these requirements by January 2012.

Lincoln Middle School Core teachers are meeting with District personnel to discuss both scenarios.

AUSD and Lincoln Middle School staff and administration are committed to maintaining academic excellence. We are also dedicated to our value to maintain relationships with students, minimize student transitions, and honor the valuable work of our devoted staff.