



Message from SMUHSD Superintendent Skelly
“To Everything There is a Season and Purpose”
August 15, 2016



Dear Parent/Guardian:

Perhaps you are familiar with the former number one hit song from the 1960s by the Byrds entitled, “Turn, Turn, Turn.” The first line of the song includes the words “To everything there is a season and a time for every purpose...” I have been thinking about this song a lot these past few weeks.

I am a few years ahead of most of you. I have four children. My “last” child graduated from high school two years ago and is now in and out of the house. The other three children are either married, in graduate school, or finding their own way. Our family is turning. It seems like only yesterday that we were shopping for our first lunchbox.

Even if California’s weather doesn’t provide the right signals, the start of school suggests the start of a new season for all of us. As parents, we can measure life’s journey through our children’s trek through elementary, middle and now high school. The season of parenthood, for all its triumphs and heartache, constantly evolves.

To everything there is a season. At the district level, our annual goals this year include improving the social-emotional support we provide students, improving the academic achievement and college readiness of our students, planning for a later start time in 2017-2018, planning for continued enrollment growth, and searching for operational efficiencies to use your tax money most effectively.

Every year when we set our goals, we have to think about what is right at that point in time, and every year is different. What remains the same is our deep commitment to having an outstanding teacher in each and every classroom to provide a transforming effect on the lives of our students, and having the supports in place to ensure students are managing their time in high school in a way that leaves them able to cope with teenage stressors.

Long-time parents know that there is a seasonal nature to our schools that shifts depending on its leadership, staff members, families and particular challenges. The collective work we do at each site – creating community and fostering the healthiest culture for our young people – is so important and needs to change over time so that we know we are evolving with the needs of our ever evolving teens.

When my children were young, I threatened to put a brick on their heads so they wouldn’t grow up. Needless to say, they didn’t like this idea at all. But such are the desperate lengths a parent will consider to prevent his children from growing up.

It is a time to teach and a time to learn. Here’s hoping for a great school season for all of us!

With Warmest Regards,

Kevin Skelly, Ph.D.
Superintendent
San Mateo Union High School District