

## **Off the Sidelines to Secure a Future for ALL**

September 8, 2017

*A message from Mary Jane Burke, Marin County Superintendent of Schools,  
and ALL Marin School District Superintendents*

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In the aftermath of the President's decision to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, our community is fraught with uncertainty and anxiety. This is a call to action...no longer can we sit on the sidelines and watch our community be torn apart by divisive actions. Our friends, neighbors and colleagues face an unknown future in a country that they consider to be their home. California leads the nation with the most DACA approved community members at over 220,000. In Marin County, it is estimated that number is around 2,000.

For many impacted by this decision, their earliest memories are that of living in the United States. They attend our schools, serve in our military, contribute to our workforce and help our communities thrive. How could we turn them away? Where do they belong if not in our country of immigrants?

Our society is better served by the diverse cultures, backgrounds, beliefs and creeds of all who live here. When we deprive certain liberties and benefits to those who contribute in positive, beneficial ways we are only securing a lesser fate for ourselves. Jane Addams, a revolutionary activist for her time, spoke the truth in saying, "the good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain until it is secured for all of us and incorporated into our common life."

The rhetoric surrounding this issue of "who belongs" has been around for centuries. America became a beacon of hope for thousands who sought better opportunities and wanted their children to have a successful future. DACA enabled dreams to be fulfilled...and our schools, economy and society has benefitted.

One thing is certain for our community. No matter the situation, our schools will not sit on the sidelines. Our doors are open to ALL students and their families. We believe that the future of ALL depends on our future leaders. May we offer our youngest generations the power to learn, to think independently and to accept one another knowing that we ALL have something great to offer the world.