Sacramento Public Library Authority

July 28, 2011 **Agenda Item 5.0: Homework Coach Program Update**

TO: **Sacramento Public Library Authority Board Members**

FROM: **Rivkah K. Sass, Library Director**

RE: **Homework Coach Program Update**

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S): None – Information Only.

BACKGROUND AND INFORMATION

Work is well underway for the transition of Sacramento Public Library Homework Centers at the Martin Luther King, Jr. and Colonial Heights branches to a new sustainable model, using trained volunteer homework coaches for drop-in tutoring, a model which is replicable system-wide.

Key features of this new sustainable model include:

- Use of trained and vetted volunteer homework coaches
- Homework Help Now! training provided to all Public Services staff, as well as volunteer homework coaches
- Emphasis on incorporating use of Homework Help Now! service into coaching sessions and increasing Homework Help Now! usage
- Drop-in homework assistance, which will allow the Library to serve a greater number of students
- Specific area in the branch near the children's section where young students may do their homework and have access to computer resources

Volunteer Homework Coaches are being recruited from local retired teachers associations, AmeriCorps, the CSUS teacher credentialing program, outstanding teens from area high schools, etc. By operating the Homework Coach program with volunteers, Sacramento Public Library ensures that the volunteers represent the patrons we serve, provides additional support to supplement the work of trained staff, affords the young students a positive interaction with a community member serving in their neighborhood, and allows the community to further connect with their library branch and its resources.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. and Colonial Heights branches will have the Homework Coach program starting this fall. The program at the Martin Luther King, Jr. branch will start the Tuesday following Labor Day. The launch of the Homework Coach model includes Tuesday and Thursday homework assistance from qualified volunteers. The model will expand as student needs are determined and the program's development is evaluated. The program at the Colonial Heights branch will begin when the renovation work at that facility is

completed, which is anticipated for late September. The Homework Coaches for Colonial Heights are being asked to volunteer at Martin Luther King, Jr. in preparation for the opening of their branch. The staggered launch of these two programs will provide opportunity to successfully open the Homework Centers with focus and undivided attention.

Library staff is excited to offer this new sustainable model, which makes good use of current library resources (i.e. Homework Help Now! and a cadre of highly skilled and motivated volunteers), and allows the Library to serve a much larger number of students, with the ultimate goal of having drop-in homework coaching available at all or most of the Sacramento Public Library's 28 locations.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: Sacramento Public Library Homework Centers - Timeline, Goals and Completed Tasks

SACRAMENTO PUBLIC LIBRARY
HOMEWORK COACH PROGRAM
TIMELINE, GOALS AND COMPLETED TASKS

HOMEWORK COACH TIMELINE AND GOALS:	• **INTERNAL**	• **EXTERNAL**
Early Summer (June)	• Public Service Staff Training on Help Now Homework Database • Communicating with staff at sites	• Letter to Schools regarding upcoming academic year homework assistance offering • Advertise the volunteer opportunity on Volunteermatch.org
Mid-Summer (July)	• Homework Center Supervisor and Volunteer Coordinator attending staff meetings of CHS and KIN to update branch staff • Homework Center Supervisor and Volunteer Coordinator meet with Branch Services managers regarding Homework Center plans • Working with IT regarding use of Laptop and Computers • Public Service Staff Training on Help Now Homework Database	• Ongoing volunteer recruitment • Work with COM to prepare posters for branches, reservation table signs, flyer for parents, badges for volunteers, order appropriate aprons or vests for volunteers, etc. • Homework Center Supervisor planning training for tutors to complete in August • Report to Board of Supervisors • Work with Procurement for ordering badges, aprons, vests, etc • Information available to Library Authority Board for Director's Report
By start of Academic Year (August & September)	• Public Service Staff Training on Help Now Homework Database • Provide written information to Telis for queries regarding Homework Help	• Information available to public on CHS and KIN web pages with schedule for homework assistance • Flyer for students to take home to parent/guardian regarding participation in homework assistance program with contact information for any questions • Letter to school administrators regarding homework center assistance • Two-hour Tutor Training sessions • Evaluation of HW Center begins with limited Student Assessment • 9/ 6, MLK Site Opens, 9/27 CHS Site Opens • Ongoing volunteer recruitment
Fall (October, November)	• Check in with staff to monitor program from internal perspective to modify program as needed	• Meeting with Volunteers to determine program's success and areas of improvement • Provide additional training to volunteers as needed • Preliminary evaluation (by available records) • Evaluate program concept for replication • Ongoing Evaluation through limited Student Assessment • Ongoing volunteer recruitment

SACRAMENTO PUBLIC LIBRARY
HOMEWORK COACH PROGRAM
TIMELINE, GOALS AND COMPLETED TASKS

Completed Items to Date:

- ✓ Letters have been sent to school contacts (administrators, principals, vice principals, etc) by US mail and email. Letter advised that current model will be modified to a sustainable volunteer-based program beginning the week of Labor Day (the traditional start for SCUSD).

- ✓ Visits with current homework center coordinators
  - Stephanie met with Dalee at Colonial Heights
  - Randi Kay met with Gwen at Martin Luther King, Jr.

- ✓ Human Resources will be working with Stephanie and Randi Kay regarding Fingerprinting

- ✓ Successfully launched volunteer recruitment through VolunteerMatch.org using the Colonial Heights and Martin Luther King, Jr. accounts.

- ✓ This summer, all public service staff are receiving training on our online Homework Help resources, including our live tutor service and our test preparation databases. So far, 137 staff have been trained and a total of 10 training classes scheduled. Additionally, in the spring, approximately 150 staff received training on how to help patrons by using the library's online resources. By the start of the school year in August, Sacramento Public Library staff will be more prepared than ever to provide students with the resources they need to complete their homework.

- ✓ Plan for evaluation and tracking initiated
  - Communication with Hayward Public Library for modified star-testing
  - Working with credentialed teachers onshort, progressive evaluations

- ✓ Both centers (KIN & CHS) have been emptied and packed – items worth keeping are currently housed in OCS

- ✓ Have met with Branch Supervisors Jami Trawick and Neva Cosby regarding use of space, area for 'coaching', and other items at Colonial Heights and Martin Luther King, Jr. Libraries. Have also attended staff meetings for each branch to update employees regarding Homework Coach Program starting this academic year.

- ✓ Made pitch to Retired Teachers (Sacramento Chapter of State) (5 volunteers)