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**SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

October 7, 2014

Dr. David Rostetter  
 Office of the Independent Monitor  
 Modified Consent Decree  
 333 South Beaudry Avenue, 18<sup>th</sup> Floor  
 Los Angeles, CA 90017

Dear Dr. Rostetter:

As we make progress towards delivering and enhancing functionalities in My Integrated Student Information System (MiSiS), we are finding the need to make changes in several areas in order to provide a smoother transition and to better meet the needs of our schools. The District will follow the agreed upon process for requesting changes to the MiSiS Project in the areas of the Gradebook mandate and the MiSiS organizational structure as we proceed with the remaining functionalities. To that end, a copy of this letter will also be provided to the Plaintiffs' Counsel for discussion at the upcoming MCD Meeting of the Parties on October 13, 2014. We will also provide an update on the progress of the MiSiS implementation in independent charter schools.

### **Gradebook Mandate**

Previously, the mandated use of the Gradebook was revised to November 17, 2014 for elementary school teachers and January 12, 2015 for secondary school teachers. Given the challenges we have faced with the rollout of MiSiS this school year, it is evident that we have not appropriately prepared our schools for the roll out of Gradebook. We request your approval to the plan for the postponement of the mandate until the 2015-2016 school year for the following reasons:

- We need to provide more face-to-face training with our teachers. The vast majority of our teachers have not used the MiSiS gradebook this academic year. Elementary teachers are generally the least experienced with digital gradebooks, with some teachers transitioning from paper gradebooks to the MiSiS gradebook.
- Secondary teachers, who have experience with digital gradebooks, have identified necessary features that are not currently available in the MiSiS Gradebook. A detailed gap analysis is needed to identify and review key functionality gaps that may not be available in the current version of the MiSiS Gradebook.
- Through the 'Train the Trainer' approach, 668 experts have been trained across 409 school sites, however experts for the remaining 486 school sites have yet to be trained. In addition, there is no confirmation from the school sites that all teachers are receiving the training that they will need to use the MiSiS Gradebook.

- Teachers may not have the necessary computer equipment to access and use the MiSiS Gradebook. The performance of MiSiS is superior on newer computers due to higher processing power and more memory. Teachers who use older computers will encounter performance issues.
- There are technical issues with the MiSiS Gradebook that have not been addressed. The MiSiS team has been working diligently to fix high priority production defects that are urgently needed at the schools. Due to resource constraints brought on by unanticipated issues with other MiSiS functionalities, the team has not had time to address Gradebook issues and will not be able to resolve these issues in time for the Gradebook mandate without impacting other critical functionalities.
- In addition, there are still data quality and integrity issues (which will be discussed in detail below) that may impact the use of the MiSiS Gradebook. Issues include students missing or disappearing from teacher gradebooks as well as assignments and/or grades disappearing.

By postponing the Gradebook mandate, the MiSiS team will be able to conduct a detailed gap analysis, involve more teachers in the planning and development process for the Gradebook upgrade, improve the Organizational Change Management (OCM) strategy and training plan to ensure the organization's readiness, and provide teachers with the necessary tools to access the Gradebook. The new version of the Gradebook will embody our focus on addressing the real functionality issues our users are encountering with the system on a daily basis; it will be designed by the teachers for the teachers. In alignment with the Gradebook postponement, we also respectfully request your approval to extend the rollout of the Parent Access Support System (PASSport) until the following school year, so that parents will have full access to the information PASSport is designed to provide.

### **MiSiS – A Look Ahead**

Going forward, our focus will be on precision and user functionality issues to facilitate the transition of our schools into new functionalities and to truly provide a system that meets their needs and is beneficial to students. As we work through the existing production defects to improve the system, the project organization structure will require an immediate reorganization due to the existing challenges of additional scope and complexity, as described below.

- **Functional Readiness**
  - After the deployment of the remaining functionalities with Milestone 8, the focus of the MiSiS team will shift towards ensuring that the module is fully functional and ready for the schools to use. The current version of these modules may not fully meet the requirements of our schools, teachers, and students. Each month, schools are faced with school-based events, such as the requirement to enter report card grades, the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE), and the Fall Survey in October. In order to be ready for these school-based events, the MiSiS team will focus their efforts on resolving any production defects and coordinate with business owners and school-based representatives to ensure the functional readiness of the module.
  - As of October 2, 2014, there are currently over 600 enhancements in the queue. The majority of these enhancements are outside the scope of the Modified Consent Decree (MCD) requirements, but some of these enhancements may be essential for teachers, counselors, and administrators to perform the daily functions of their jobs. These enhancements will need to be addressed in order to provide the most optimal system for our users.

- **Data Quality and Integrity**
  - MiSiS integrates student data from critical District systems, including Welligent, Cafeteria Management System (CMS), and MyData. The full scope of data quality and integrity requires an in-depth review of all the interfaces and data conversions from source systems. As evidenced by the releases during summer school and the start of the school year, data quality and integrity continues to be a major concern. Issues have arisen resulting from inaccurate or inconsistent data from source systems, outdated data conversion processes, and unclear data interface requirements. The impacts to our schools are significant and the team is spending large amounts of time investigating and reviewing data issues. This effort is beyond the scope of the project but is a necessity to provide precision of data to our users and build confidence in MiSiS.
  
- **Stabilization Team**
  - The MiSiS Stabilization Team resolves MiSiS Help Desk calls by coordinating with various Help Desk teams, business owners, school users, and developers to identify and resolve production defects for modules that schools are already using. As we transition from the legacy systems to MiSiS, this team will ensure that deployed modules continue to be fixed and improved during the stabilization period.
  
- **Organizational Change Management (OCM)**
  - Through direct and indirect feedback from the users, the current OCM and training approach has been insufficient to ensure the change readiness of this large organization. Going forward, the OCM strategy needs to be more robust and comprehensive. The focus on user functionality issues will only be fully realized through necessary changes to the OCM strategy that provides for greater involvement from school-based staff, including teachers, counselors, and administrators, is a requirement going forward. Changes to existing and well-established processes need to be well-defined and communicated to our end users. With regard to training, users are demanding more instructor-led training and hands-on exercises in order to be fully ready for new functionality.
  
- **Charter Schools**
  - In my September 1, 2014 letter to you, an update was provided on the progress of the MiSiS implementation with independent charter schools. Currently, the team is focused on reviewing and validating data files from the independent charter schools, however one of the biggest challenges is resource constraint. Given the issues that have arisen regarding MiSiS since the beginning of this school year, the capacity of the existing resources is not sufficient to handle this work effort in a timely manner. Resources will be allocated to this effort when the team finishes addressing priority issues and enhancements that impact a larger population of our schools and students.
  
- **Proposed Organizational Structure Changes**
  - In order to accomplish the work efforts described above and support the needs of our schools, we are proposing staff augmentation to the existing organizational structure. Additional resources are needed to review and ensure the readiness of each functionality for upcoming school-based events, validate data quality and integrity of student information, improve organization change readiness and training, perform production support of deployed functionalities, and support the charter school data upload progress.
  - A program manager will assist in managing the coordination with MiSiS and the teams outside of MiSiS. The Program Manager will coordinate the team efforts across the key areas described above in order to successfully support our schools with emphasis on

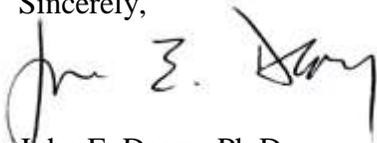
precision and user functionality issues. The Program Manager will be instrumental in the transition to the proposed new organizational structure in order to increase the team's effectiveness and efficiency as a whole.

### **Progress on Independent Charters**

The MiSiS team continues to work on validating the data files received from the independent charter schools. As of October 6, 2014, 182 of the 213 independent charter schools have submitted data files for review by the MiSiS team. The MiSiS team has completed the validation of 58 files, however the majority of these files require necessary corrections by the charter school. The challenges we face include data formatting issues and resource constraints both from the MiSiS team as well as the charter schools. Our team will continue to work with the charter schools through the validation process and the next step will be to upload validated files into MiSiS. Per the September 1, 2014 letter and your subsequent meeting with the team, we are exploring several technical options for ensuring integration of independent charter schools, including the suggestion offered by Robert Neary from your office. We expect to have impact and cost implications complete by our next meeting with you on October 13, 2014.

We look forward to meeting with you and Plaintiffs' Counsel to discuss these changes to the MiSiS project, including the long term usage of the system by independent charter schools. We strongly believe that our focus towards precision and user functionality issues will result in providing the best service to our students, parents, teachers and school-based staff.

| Sincerely,



John E. Deasy, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

c: Matt Hill  
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