

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

May 3, 2002

## Edison's Weekly Update

Vol. 2

*Are the schools really going to have new curriculum next year given that it is already May?*

IT IS CRITICALLY IMPORTANT TO US TO GET NEW materials—the right materials—into schools and in the hands of teachers in time for a great start to the school year. We also recognize that the pressure to get orders placed in time for delivery this summer and fall is becoming more intense with each passing day. Our Materials Management team (Edison staff who handle curriculum purchasing and distribution) is hoping that the school visits we are making this week will provide us with the information we need to make accurate orders. At this time, we hold true to our commitment to get you and your school your new curriculum materials on time. We will keep the principals and schools posted on any new updates that we receive.

*Will Edison remove programs in the schools such as special education, bilingual education, etc.? Our school is making progress, will Edison take all of that away?*

RUMORS THAT VARIOUS EXISTING PROGRAMS AND services will be “shut down” are totally false. Once the SRC has announced their decision on the governance model under which we will be working together, we will be able to sit down with the leadership at each school to discuss the current programs in use, Edison's school design, and our experiences in serving special needs and bilingual students across the country. In the meantime, if you would like to know more about our typical approach to meeting these needs, please visit us at [www.edisonschools.com](http://www.edisonschools.com). Please keep in mind that these schools, like all other public schools, will be legally accountable to state and federal regulations. There is nothing about becoming a member of the Edison partnership schools family that changes a school's requirements to meet legal obligations.

*Is there an update on staffing, including teachers and other school staff?*

SINCE MAJOR DECISIONS SURROUNDING STAFFING are up to the SRC, we are unable provide specific answers. It is important to remember that the majority of Edison's 136 schools across the country are managed through school district partnerships. Typically in our partnerships with school districts, school employees remain district employees and continue to be part of their local bargaining agreements. We have established strong partnerships with a number of local school districts and unions, and we are very com-

fortable working under such a model. So, while we wait to be informed by the SRC of the arrangement that will exist in Philadelphia-Edison partnership schools, we want to make it clear that serving and supporting schools where the staff is employed by the district is a normal routine for us. Our plan is to provide existing school staff with the opportunity to interact with teachers from other Edison partnership schools who have gone through a similar experience with Edison. This will be possible as soon as we receive permission to do so.

*How does Edison plan to reach parents and community members throughout this process?*

EDISON HAS BEEN INFORMED THAT THROUGH A resolution passed at an April 17th meeting, the SRC has committed to holding meetings along with selected providers at partnership schools “to present the proposed reform plan to parents and the community and to solicit comments.” We have further been informed that these meetings are to be held by May 30th. Though Edison is waiting to hear from an SRC designate to schedule these sessions, we are very enthusiastic about finally having the opportunity to get to know the families and local communities of our partnership schools, and also helping you get to know us. We also look forward to knowing which Community Partners will be chosen to work with us at each individual school.

In the meantime, we have established a telephone hotline and a web-site (*see below*) to receive your inquiries and provide information about us. Please contact us anytime.

*How will Edison be accountable for the success of the students in the schools?*

ONE FACT IS VERY CLEAR—WE WILL BE EXPECTED TO improve student performance in each of our partnership schools. Edison partnership schools students, like all Philadelphia public school students, will take the PSSA tests at appropriate grade levels, and we will be responsible for producing concrete, measurable gains in student achievement. We may also be accountable for improving attendance rates, among other items to be determined by the SRC. While the final accountability measures will be set by the SRC, Edison is confident in telling you that your school will be more accountable to its children and families than ever before. We will work tremendously hard to ensure that each student and teacher is supported, so that every school can meet local, state and Edison performance standards.