

October 20, 2008

TO: District Superintendents

FROM: John D. Anderson, Superintendent of Schools

RE: **"The Great Southern California ShakeOut" November 13, 2008**

There is no doubt we live in earthquake country. On February 8, 2008, a magnitude 5.4 earthquake hit just 24 miles southeast of Calexico. It was followed by nearly 500 more earthquakes and aftershocks over the next 13 days. Although most were minor, many of the quakes were strong enough to be felt on both sides of the border, and at least four reached a magnitude of 5.0 or greater. In July, another 5.4 earthquake hit close to home. This time the epicenter was north of us in Chino Hills. The quake and its aftershocks were felt as far south as San Diego and as far east as Las Vegas.

These earthquakes are just the latest in a long string of reminders that earthquake preparedness is critically important. In an effort to boost our state's ability to respond to future and even larger earthquakes, California is organizing *The Great Southern California ShakeOut*, the largest earthquake preparedness activity in the history of the United States.

On November 13, thousands of local, state and federal agencies will join together to simulate a 7.8 magnitude earthquake along the southern section of the San Andreas Fault. The epicenter of this quake will be in Bombay Beach. The event will test our overall response readiness and recovery capabilities statewide, helping to streamline and troubleshoot our emergency procedures.

We would like to invite your district to join in with the thousands of businesses, residents and schools statewide already registered to participate in this fundamentally important event. *ShakeOut* is a great way to reinforce previous earthquake preparedness efforts, as well as meet schools' requirements for regular earthquake drills.

You can register your district at www.shakeout.org/registration/, through November 12. The main school site, www.shakeout.org/schools/, is also an excellent resource for organizing additional *ShakeOut* events at district levels. We sincerely hope you will urge schools and teachers to take full advantage of this wonderful educational opportunity.

Thank you.