

Chief's goal: Improve Hayward schools

350
■ Struggling district's acting superintendent focuses on academics, leadership and safety

By Eric Kurhi

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HAYWARD — With three weeks on the job as interim superintendent of schools, Janis Duran is poised to present to the school board her

IF YOU GO:

WHAT: Hayward Unified School District meeting

WHEN: 6:30 p.m. Wednesday

WHERE: Hayward City Hall, 777 B St.

plan to help the struggling district achieve its goals.

It's a 53-page document that will be central to the main event

at Wednesday's Hayward Unified School District meeting, and it covers all the bases: academic achievement, district leadership, school safety, budgetary efficiency and community outreach.

Between now and when a new superintendent comes on board — which could be as soon as six months — Duran wants to see the district do more than bide its time between leaders.

"There's not a lot of time, and I

want to get the district moving toward its set goals, not just staying afloat," said Duran, who served in the same position for Hayward for 18 months starting in 2004, when the district also was in a fiscal bind.

"It's hard to compare the details of how it was then, five years ago, to how it is now," she said.

The school district is looking at making \$18 million in ongoing cuts, a painful process that's being mirrored in schools throughout the

state. There's an update on that on Wednesday.

Also, the Alameda County Office of Education will respond to the district's qualified status. It's possible that a fiscal adviser will be assigned.

But that's not the end of the world, Duran said. That was the case last time she came to town.

"I found it to be extremely help-

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ful," she said. "They act as a guide, saying, 'This is what you have to do.' And we did get positively certified."

To round things out, Wednesday's agenda includes the contract with the Hayward Police Department that pro-

vides officers on high school campuses. It proved to be contentious when board members requested some changes be made to the agreement that had been left untouched since it was implemented more than 30 years ago.

But Duran was confident that a compromise could be reached, and stressed that since she was here last, the district has made some very

significant strides.

"When I left, there had just been a groundbreaking for Stonebrae (Elementary) school, and Burbank was in planning stages," she said. "I came back, and they are both beautiful buildings."

She added that the passage of Measure I "was very well orchestrated" and resulting school improvements are "extremely well planned."

And she's very pleased with the job that's been done regarding parental involvement, one of the five goals being addressed Wednesday.

"There are now parent centers at every school. That's not something you see very often," she said. "That's fantastic."

The board will meet at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday at Hayward City Hall, 777 B St. 350