



MVEA ADVOCATE



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Moreno Valley Educators Association is an organization of professionals which serves as a powerful **voice** communicating the needs of Educators and students to the district, parents, and community in order to establish a **positive** school environment and build **quality educational programs**. The Association will continue to **protect the rights** of Educators, and thereby students, **by promoting equity and human rights**.

Site Reps Working Hard for You!

By Janet MacMillan, MVEA President

The Representative Council is the policy making body for the Moreno Valley Educators Association. Each site has a minimum of two and as many as eight representatives, depending on the number of unit members on site, and they are elected by the staff in May of each year. The Executive Board of MVEA depends on the Site Reps to accomplish the goals of the Association.

For example, a major thrust at the opening of this academic year was slowing the process of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (NCLB). Your Site Reps began contacting legislators at the September meeting. They took the message back to you at the sites who also participated in the campaign. MVEA/CTA/NEA was successful. NCLB will not add such items as merit pay based on test scores and additional sanctions for schools that do not make the AYP for all subgroups.

On November 14, 2007, the Repre-

sentative Council met and reviewed Contract language as part of MVEA's preparation to return to the bargaining table in March, 2008. The Council's input gives direction to members of the Bargaining Support Committee who will develop a survey to be distributed to all members. Data from this survey will go back to the Rep Council, and this will finalize MVEA's priorities for bargaining any new Contract language. Rep Council members also shared what was happening at the site level to move the District from its designation as Program Improvement. Your input on issues such as these will continue to occur at 10 Minute Meetings that the Site Reps will conduct.

Your Site Reps represent you. They are important links in communicating members' interests and concerns. Talk to them about issues at your site. Thank them for the time they spend at the Rep Council meetings and on other committees. They do a great job!



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MVEA's Holiday Social—Friends, food & prizes!

Join us on Thursday, December 6, 2007 for MVEA's first Holiday Social! The fun will begin at 3:30 and last until 7:00 p.m. at Margarita's located at 12630 Ferris Blvd. A Taco Bar will be provided, compliments of MVEA, and Happy Hour prices will be honored for the occasion. Donations of toys, food, and books will be accepted for Toys for Tots, the Community Assistance Program (CAP), and the Community

Book Drive. Drawings for great prizes will be held throughout the duration of the event, so come and see fellow educators and get into the Holiday spirit! For more information, call the MVEA office at 485-0545.



Bargaining Begins Again – What Lessons Have We Learned?

By Ann Adler, MVEA Executive Director



In their history, MVEA and MVUSD bargained issues, agreed where they could, and closed with a multi-year contract. A multi-year contract promotes labor peace, and the focus is on the students and working together instead of spending valuable time and resources bargaining the same issues repeatedly. This past year, there was no multi-year agreement even though MVEA proposed one after all the issues had been discussed. The District waited until the 11th hour to say no to a multi-year agreement. At that time, a District representative at the table said they wanted to come back next year to get the things they did not get. So, as we approach this year's bargaining, let's reflect on last year and see what we can learn:

The District

2006-07

The Association

Surveyed administrators in a general matter

Surveyed members and prioritized the issues

Bargained from 14 non-prioritized proposals

Bargained from 8 priority objectives

Presented many onerous proposals (of the 14)

Presented educationally motivated objectives

-Delay January paychecks

-Lower ratio / class size for high need students

-Block salary advancement (if Unsatisfactory Eval.)

-Provide credit for Cont. Ed. Units (Nurses)

-Enforce teacher "policing" between periods

-Limit non-classroom duties

-Delete site damages deductible policy

-Review PAR procedures for improvement

-Delete grade level, dept. in definition of transfer

-Limit # preps for high school teachers

-Delete assn. release time for pres. to assist members

-Improve kindergarten class size

-Monitor /define dress for Educators (dress code)

-Provide time to write IEPs /attend IEP mtgs.

-Delete one of two summer school prep days

-Provide more collaboration and prep time

-Raise caseload at secondary sites to more than 165

The Association did present an objective for a comparable pay increase. When bargained with the District, it turned out to be COLA: 4.53% and the District agreed not to raise medical costs as well. (Remember that classified received the same as educators because of their "me too" clause, and administrators also received the same monetary improvement and benefits condition.)

MVEA believes that as an organization, we should be in the second year of a 3-year contract since your team just finished debating the major issues and reached agreement on your priorities. To do this, we must focus on comparability in wages and benefits, adopt a calendar and move on, unless the District is going to agree to lower at-risk class size, provide continuing units for nurses, provide more collaboration and prep time, etc., all of which they refused to do last year.

Your Site Reps have discussed the issues at the November 14 Rep Council meeting, and a survey will follow based on those discussions. MVEA will prioritize your objectives so that we can move forward and get on with the business at hand - educating the students.

OUR LESSONS LEARNED:

- ◆ The Association can only control its side of the table.
- ◆ The District reps last year proposed "take backs," and said they will come back again for more.
- ◆ MVEA's objectives are based on members educational priorities.
- ◆ MVEA cannot count on a multi-year agreement even after it is apparent the bargaining is concluded.
- ◆ MVEA must continue to be organized and move forward as if this is the second year of a multi-year contract – Focus on salary, benefits, and calendar. (Your Site Reps have confirmed this.)

Let's see if the District has learned something too. Time will tell...

MVEA Educator of the Month: Heike Mauck

Heike Mauck was MVEA's Educator of the Month for November. She has thirty years of experience in public education, the last eighteen of them at Sunnymeadows Elementary School. The staff at her site characterizes Heike as a "master" teacher and her principal, Emilio Gallegos, refers to her as "exceptional." There are many reasons why.

Heike has the ability to take on new challenges to meet the needs of any student. Heike's focus has been fourth and fifth grade, but she has sharpened her skills and expanded her bag of tricks by working one year with the general education program, the next with High Point designed specifically for English Language Learners, and this year with Read 180 which addresses students functioning two years or more below grade level. She can cite something from each of these programs that has had a positive impact on her teaching. As a GATE teacher, Heike organized enrichment activities such as Math Field Day and Science Fair for all students. Her reward was the excitement that sparked throughout the school when students applied academic skills to a competition. In working with High Point, Heike could relate to her own experiences as a second language learner since her primary language is German and she began school in the U.S. as a non-English speaker. Read 180 encouraged her to learn how to incorporate technology effectively into reading instruction.

Successfully implementing three curricula in three years required many hours planning time and most of this happened outside of the school day. Heike is truly dedicated to ensuring that students succeed. While doing so, she has served as a leader at Sunnymeadows working as a categorical facilitator and MVEA Rep as well as representing the site on District committees.

Heike has a life away from school which is part of what helps her to motivate her students. She is a world traveler, returning frequently to Germany as well and touring Europe, the United States and Canada. Her students have the opportunity to hear her play the piano, but her real musical abilities are demonstrated when she plays "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" on her duck whistle.

The staff at Sunnymeadows values Heike's contributions and has come together to support Heike by bringing her lunch everyday since she spends afternoons and evenings caring for her son, Erick, who returned home from college when he was diagnosed with lymphoma. Our thoughts are with her as she rises to meet yet another challenge in her life.



*Congratulations, Heike, on being chosen as
MVEA's Educator of the Month!*



Paid Leaves of Absences—What does the Contract say?

By Harold Acord, Director of Contract Maintenance



All employees, for their own use and protection, should know the “ins and outs” of Paid and Non-Paid Leaves of Absence. In next month’s Advocate, Non-Paid Leaves of Absence will be discussed. Here is a quick refresher course concerning the use of Paid Leaves in the current contract:

Article XXII – Paid Leaves of Absence - Section 1.

Sick Leave

- ◆ Provides 10 accumulative “sick days” per school year (*prorated for those who teach less than one full year.*)
- ◆ States that unused “sick leave” is carried over to the following year.
- ◆ Mandates that the District must provide an accounting of your accrued sick leave no later than November 15 of each school year.
- ◆ States that sick leave may be used when quarantined.
- ◆ Provides for sick leave to be used for physician or dentist appointments.
- ◆ Allows for a physician’s certificate or proof of illness or disabling condition to be required by the District for any illness or disabling condition in which the absence is three days or more or when the employee has been informed that verification for future absences will be required.
- ◆ States that after sick leave is exhausted, the employee shall be paid no less than the difference between regular salary and the daily rate of pay of a substitute.

Maternity Leave

- ◆ States that the length of the leave, including start and end of leave due to pregnancy, miscarriage or childbirth, shall be determined by the employee and the employee’s physician.
- ◆ States that disabilities caused by these conditions are “for job related purposes. Temporary disabilities shall be treated as such under any health or disability insurance or sick leave plan available in connection with employment by the District.”

Personal Necessity Leave (*Comes From Accumulated Sick Leave*)

- ◆ Provides up to seven days per school year FROM accumulated sick leave.
- ◆ Provides up to three days beyond the five days provided for bereavement for serious illness or death of the unit members’ immediate family, or three days for an accident involving a member’s person or property or that of an immediate family member. (*No advance notice required.*)
- ◆ Provides up to three days per year for personal business with **advance permission**. Such leave may not be taken within the first five and last five days of any school year or the day before or after a holiday or vacation without the prior written approval of the Superintendent.
- ◆ Provides for two days of leave that can be used for parental non-medical absences for birth or adoption of

(Continued on page 5)

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a child plus three personal days can be added with advance notice to be used within 30 days of the birth or adoption of a child.

- ◆ Provides for Religious Holidays as long as the total number of personal necessity days has not been exceeded.

Bereavement

- ◆ Provides up to five days on account of the death of any member of the employee's immediate family (*Mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, grandchild of the employee or of the spouse of the employee, and the spouse, son-in-law, daughter, daughter-in-law, brother, or sister, brother-in-law, and sister-in-law of the employee or any relative living in the immediate household of the employee.*) **These days do NOT count against accumulated sick leave.**

Industrial Accident and Illness Leave

- ◆ Follows very specific rules and guidelines within Ed. Code and Contract, including rules for the reporting of accidents and injuries.
- ◆ Provides up to 60 workdays.
- ◆ Provides that after 60 workdays, personnel may use that portion of the accumulated sick leave as to maintain their income not to exceed their regular salary.

Military Leave

- ◆ Provides up to 30 days of days without loss of salary upon call to temporary military service.

Jury Duty

- ◆ Entitles members to paid leave for jury duty when legally summoned to such duty.

Subpoenas to Court in Relation to Work

- ◆ Allows District not to charge to personal necessity leave.
- ◆ Provides up to two extra days if entitlement to personal necessity leave is exhausted.

Please remember that all procedures delineated by the District for the reporting of absences, including the use of the substitute calling system, must be followed. It is important for members to know what the paid leaves of absences are and how to use them. Our members who are not informed about these issues run the risk of using up accumulated sick leave when it is unnecessary to do so.

In Solidarity,

Harold Acord, Director of Contract Maintenance



Middle School Visits

By Mike Sorter, Director of Middle School

I enjoyed visiting all the Middle Schools with MVEA President Janet MacMillan - Landmark, Badger Springs, and Sunnymead on Thursday, October 25th and Vista Heights, Mountain View, and Palm on Thursday, November 1st. All schools seemed to share many of the same issues. There was a lot of talk about start times, restructuring, discipline, and scheduling. Most of our middle schools now have some sort of double math or double language arts classes. Many of the schools have gone away from the "team" concept to departmentalization leaving little time for SST's. Many decisions seem to be taking place without teacher input. There was much discussion about major master scheduling decisions being made without teacher input that were not at all in line with past practice and "teaming" of teachers.

All middle schools have the same start time (8:55) except Mountain View. The end times are also very similar - sometime between 3:24 to 3:35. Periods are from 50 to 52 minutes. Passing periods range from four to six minutes. Two middle schools have breaks - Landmark and Vista Heights. Mountain View's start time is 8:15 and end time is 3:13. They have 90 minute block classes with eight periods—four each day, with an A/B schedule (by teacher consensus).

Most schools are talking about a Professional Learning Community (PLC), however, many teachers still do not seem to know exactly what PLCs are, or what they should be doing with them (see the article on Professional Learning Communities in the November issue of CTA's California Educator or at cta.org).

Capturing Kids Hearts is a program most Middle Schools are participating in; however, teachers had no input regarding involvement with it. In most cases, training dates were given out to the staff by the administration with an expectation that each staff member would be attending on the date he or she chose.

Mountain View and Vista Heights have rotating schedules, which most teachers reported liking. Palm, Badger Springs, Sunnymead, and Landmark have Flex Wednesday. Some schools reported that they had given input with regard to how the flex time was to be spent, but that it had been changed by administration.

There was some talk about returning middle school to the quarter system - some for, and some against. There was great disparity among schools in regard to when grades are turned in. Some had the grades due the Friday morning of our minimum day for grading while others had grades due by the following Tuesday, after school. There also seemed to be a general consensus that it was wrong that the entire middle school schedule is driven by transportation and food service issues, and not the needs of our students. Many teachers would also like to see the return of intervention programs for our at risk kids, including things such as Success Academies and Opportunity School.

Thank you for voicing your concerns. I am forming a Middle School Committee to address our issues. If you are interested in serving, please contact me at Landmark Middle School. Happy Holidays!

MVEA Supports New Moreno Valley Library Fundraiser



MVEA sponsored the four person team of Ron Shaffer, José Alcalá, Jason Kreitz, and Jim MacMillan at the Mayor's Cup Golf Tournament held at the Moreno Valley Ranch Golf Club on November 15th. The tournament raised money to benefit the new Moreno Valley City Library which will be built near Frederick and Alessandro Blvd.



In Memory of Ron Visser

By Katherine Underwood, MVEA Secretary

On Monday, November 12, 2007, the students and educators in Moreno Valley lost a great friend, Ron Visser. Ron was an excellent Advocate for our students and us. He truly believed in public education and the positive impact that a school community partnership can have on schools success.

Ron was involved in so many activities that helped our schools and community. His involvement included being an integral part of the MVEA *Building Better Schools Together* community outreach program. He helped us with donations and volunteers, and he started the *Moreno Valley Literacy Program* to provide assistance for students and adults at the library. He was a member of the Noon Rotary and always pushed for ways to improve involvement in educational events including the District

Spelling Bee. He was also a mainstay in the Moreno Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Student of the Month program to honor and provide scholarships to our high school students.

Ron was a founding member of the ACCESS to the Future program. Many of you should be aware of this program; it is a model program to bring businesses and schools together to show students the connections their education has to their futures.

I was privileged to meet and get to know Ron during the time I served as MVEA president. He was such a positive person and cared so much for others. He will be missed, but I know that the work he has put so much time, effort, and funds into will continue.

Legislative Update

Courtesy of nea.org

Congress has adjourned for a two-week Thanksgiving recess and will return the week of December 3. The last few weeks have seen significant action on a number of issues of critical importance to educators. **With YOUR HELP**, we have secured a number of significant victories for children and public education:

ESEA/NCLB reauthorization – Both Senator Kennedy and Representative Miller, respectively the Chairs of the Senate and House Education Committees, have stated that **they do not plan to move any ESEA/NCLB reauthorization legislation in 2007**. This major victory is due in large-part to the pressure exerted by MVEA/CTA/NEA members against a draft House bill that included a number of very troubling provisions including a continued over-reliance on standardized testing and a linking of teacher pay to student test scores.

Higher Education – The House Education Committee passed a higher education reauthorization bill that would, among other things, help ensure equal college opportunities and fair learning environments for students with disabilities, expand college access for low-income and minority students, streamline the federal student financial aid application, and provide supports to help students transition seamlessly from community colleges to four-year programs. The Committee rejected three amendments that would have added the Teacher Incentive Fund (merit pay); Adjunct Teacher Corps (allows people to enter the classroom as teachers based only on content knowledge); and the “academic bill of rights” (would chill free speech and academic freedom on college campuses).

Head Start – The House and Senate passed legislation to reauthorize the Head Start program, after Congress repeatedly failed to reauthorize the program since 2003. The reauthorization increases funding for Head Start, provides support for professional development, and retains civil rights protections for Head Start employees.

Social Security Offsets – The Senate Finance Committee’s Subcommittee on Social Security held a hearing on November 6 on legislation to repeal the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision. **This was the first hearing ever held in a Senate committee with jurisdiction over the issue.** A hearing has also been promised in the House for early 2008.

Employment Non-Discrimination – The House passed legislation that would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Thank you for doing a great job communicating with your members of Congress!

Important Dates:



The MVE Advocate is published ten times a year by the Moreno Valley Educators Association. MVEA is associated with the California Teachers Association (CTA) and the National Educators Association (NEA). MVEA is a member of the National Council of Urban Educators. Locally, MVEA is a member of the Moreno Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Moreno Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. All unsigned articles reflect the official position of MVEA.

Comments, suggestions, and inquiries should be sent to: Cathy Fulgenzi, Editor
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- December 5:** Hanukkah, MVEA Exec. Board Mtg. @ 4 p.m.
- December 6:** MVEA Holiday Social 3:30-7 p.m. @ Margarita's
- December 11:** School Board Meeting @ 7 p.m. (Board Room)
- December 12:** MVEA Rep. Council Mtg. @ 4 p.m.
Moreno Valley Conference & Recreation Ctr.
14075 Frederick St. (near Alessandro Blvd.)
- December 22-January 13:** Winter Break (No School)
- December 25:** Christmas
- December 26:** Kwanzaa
- January 14:** School resumes

Did you know that ...

By Connie Pruett, MVEA Vice-President

Did you know that ...

- ◆ if you have not signed any paperwork, you are not going to be paid for class size overages or a 1/6th? *Side Letter Agreement page 99*
- ◆ if you have been a Presenter, you should be paid according to the contract – not just the Buy Back Day amount? *Article XI Sec 1 (f)(1) and (2) pages 19-20*
- ◆ Department Chairs get one day per month for department business? If you have a co-Chair, you each get a half day per month. *Appendix B page 69*
- ◆ ELD and Reading are departments listed in the Contract? They should have Department Chairs. *Appendix B page 69*
- ◆ you have unlimited copies on your Xerox machine at your site? *Per Bob Crank via email from Debbie Soto 8-28-07*
- ◆ you have a duty free lunch? *Article X Section 2 (c) - page 16*
- ◆ meetings are clearly described in the Contract? *Article X Section 9 page 18*

