

MVEA Advocate

The Official Publication of the Moreno Valley Educators Association

Budget Talk: It May Payoff!

By Ann Adler, CTA Executive Director

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The state budget news continues to worsen, and short of an unscheduled and extremely unlikely miracle, the state again suspects it will have at least a \$6 billion shortfall by the end of this fiscal year. Further, the state projects an additional \$14.4 billion deficit for the 2010-11 school year. This means that the California expects to be out of whack by \$21 billion for the 2010-11 fiscal year.

Sadly, the massive shortfalls will likely again impact school districts, and Moreno Valley will be no exception. MVEA continues to strongly urge the District to refrain from expanding programs, exercise extreme caution with one time funds, and in general, save, save, save where it is possible, all while continuing to provide the best education possible for our students given the lesser amounts of money.

What can you do at the site level to lessen the impact of the potential cuts by the state? Talk budget to yourself!

- Do I truly need ___ in order to achieve the desired outcome in my classroom, office, or work area?
- Is there another way I can accomplish the same thing without spending as much money as I was planning?
- Might I find a way to work together with other colleagues to provide the resources needed to meet my students' needs?

•Is it possible to prioritize my expenditures to reflect a reduced amount of funding?

If the answer to any of these questions is "Yes," then seek alternatives before taking action. The money you save helps to keep the program running but minimizes cuts elsewhere. If the answer to the question is "No," then act to meet your needs.

What can you do when talking to those who influence District spending? Talk budget to them!

- Is ___ an expansion of a current program? Why are we expanding programs during a state fiscal crisis?
- How does the expenditure for ___ impact the current budget? Will this cause more cuts later on?
- From what funds will the expenditures come? Are these ongoing funds or will use of these funds continue to encumber money during a fiscal crisis?
- Has the District assessed the current program to see what is working and what is not working before spending new monies or expanding programs?
- Regarding textbooks - Are these books critical to purchase at this time or is there a way to provide education by aligning current texts with the standards?

The money we all save now may "pay off" later when it comes to program, class size, and people!

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We're on the web!
MVEAinfo.com

MVEA—Hard At Work!

By Janet MacMillan, MVEA President

One of MVEA's goals is to work collaboratively with the District whenever possible. Recently, your leadership has been involved with several issues.

Charter Schools: Administrators from the Moreno Valley campus of RCC reported to the School Board that MVUSD and RCC had agreed conceptually to the establishment of a dependent charter school with a focus on health careers. The school would enroll 500 students and would organize its curriculum around health-related themes. Certificated staff would be afforded full employment rights under the MVEA contract.

MVEA policy on charter schools states that the Association would support charters only if the charter originated with parents or staff at a school site and if the establishment of the charter school had no negative impact on the district budget. Janet MacMillan suggested that expanding the current Academies, Middle College, ROP and AVID programs needs to be considered before a charter school. The Superintendent has stated that stakeholders will be involved in all phases of the discussion on RCC's charter outline. MVEA, as the exclusive bargaining agent for the District, will be appointing members to serve on this committee.

District Goals: The Educational Services division has developed a list of goals and objectives which were presented to the School Board at a study session in July. The goals involve expenditures at a

time when the state revenues continue to be below projections. The Board did not adopt the document presented. In the course of the discussion, the Board did say that the Plan needed to go back to the stakeholder groups. This has not happened. MVEA leadership has taken the Plan to Rep Council and your Reps were involved in the discussion. See them for details.

Race to the Top: Guidelines for the President Obama's Race to the Top program have been made public. The requirement for teacher evaluation based on test scores and merit pay are not mandates in applying for the funds. The California Senate passed SBX 51 which would require these items. The Assembly will not consider the issue until January, so there is no change in the current Education Code allowing local districts to determine evaluation procedures. The Human Resources department, however, has sent a memo requesting that MVEA either meet and confer or negotiate on SBX 51. The Association's position is that this is unnecessary. The current Contract language does not violate Education Code.

Budget Cut Days: Budget cut days have already occurred for elementary and middle schools with high schools giving up December 18th. The agreement between MVEA and the District calls for the schools to be closed during these days with no certificated or administrative staff on campus. Please honor this agreement. The public needs to see how the state budget is impacting local school districts. No cars in the parking lot lets citizens know that staff is not working on budget cut days.

Race to the Top-What's It All About?

By Harold Acord, MVEA Director of Contract Maintenance

Many of our members may have heard about Secretary of Education Arne Duncan's Race to the Top Initiative, or they may have seen or heard the acronym RttT. So what is this all about?

Race to the Top is a package of competitive grants authorized by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (**ARRA**) of 2009. The \$4.35 billion program provides one-time grants to local states, although only 10 states are expected to be awarded any money, possibly fewer. The regulations will center around four areas: internationally benchmarked standards and assessments; effective teachers and principals; data systems that track teacher and student performance; and targeting the lowest performing 5% of schools for improvement.

The **concerns** of educators regarding RttT

center around: tying teacher's evaluations to students' performance on one standardized test and mandating that teacher compensation and promotion be linked to student test scores, watering down the teacher credentialing system to fast track under-qualified teacher candidates, and making charter schools as the major "fix it" reform for schools. Some legislators are trying to rush into reforming the California Education Code to align with these areas before the federal government has even set the regulations for RttT. This is especially problematic when California would only have a one in five chance of **actually** receiving any of the funding under RttT, but we would permanently have instituted some very bad initiatives for teachers and students. The District has asked to bargain this now.



When Do We Get Our December Paycheck?

By Connie Pruett, MVEA Vice-President

All employees received a memo from Business Services indicating that employees who are paid in December (remember that some employees still receive their December pay in January) would not receive their checks or direct deposits on the last working day of the month, but rather on December 30th. This is a violation of the Contract and past prac-

tice. MVEA has filed an Association grievance and we are Problem Solving the issue with Business Services and Human Resources to hopefully resolve this quandary quickly. You will be informed of the outcome as soon as the issue is settled, and then we will know when we will get our December paycheck!



Report of CTA State Council

By Katherine Underwood, California Teachers Association State Council Rep. to the Board

At its first 2009-10 CTA State Council meeting, the following Pre-Primary Friendly Incumbent recommendations were approved: Barbara Boxer-U.S. Senator, Debra Bowen-CA Secretary of State, John Chiang-State Controller, Bill Lockyer-State Treasurer, Betty Yee-State Board of Equalization. We also voted to oppose the recalls of Assembly Member Anthony Adams and State Senator Roy Ashburn.

There was a well-received presentation given by the State Council Public Education Funding and Board of Director's Organizing Strategy workgroups to create a plan to coordinate all activities of CTA, while working toward a stronger, member-centered

union. The plan is to continue the conversations, like MVEA has been holding through our Focus Groups, and to reach out to parents and surrounding communities in each school district. We must engage everyone in order to get the message out about the need for a fair, equitable, and stable funding source for our schools.

CTA has online resources regarding School Improvement and the Federal Government's Race to the Top (RttT) program. You can access the information at www.cta.org. There is also research available on charter schools, the effects of Teacher Certification, defining and measuring teacher effectiveness, and the use of student scores to evaluate teachers.

Educator of the Month: Tamra Handysides



Tamra Handysides was MVEA's Educator of the Month for October. She is a 19 year veteran of Moreno Valley Unified and has been assigned to six sites as a Special Education teacher, including serving at the District Office as a Program Specialist. Currently, she works as a Resource Specialist at Chaparral Hills Elementary.

Tamra is a dynamic teacher who truly cares about the success of all students. She views the progress of each of her students as a personal responsibility. She has high expectations, but modifies instruction, provides incentives, adjusts procedures and extends learning opportunities so that each student will be successful. She adjusts her schedule to meet with parents so they have a clear understanding of how they can help their children. She is also a resource to families, frequently extending herself to help parents meet their needs. Recently, she purchased a pair of glasses for a student when the parent's budget could not handle the expenditure. This type of outreach is common for Tamra.

Tamra's colleagues view her as an exceptional leader. She is a Grade Level Leader and Leadership Team member who always contributes valuable insight to considerations. She also serves as a staff representative to the School Site Council. In each of these roles she has modeled the importance of team work.

Tamra demonstrates the ability to work well with others. She has developed a fantastic relationship with all her staff members and the parent community. Tamra succeeds in conveying to each staff member, student and parent the feeling that he or she is important. She brings a strong knowledge base and a sense of humor to her interactions with stakeholders. These traits have made her an invaluable asset to Chaparral Hills Elementary School.

Tamra has a life away from school. She spends her free time with her family and she is in training for her first triathlon. Congratulations to Tamra Handysides, a teacher described by her Principal as "Cheetah-rific!"

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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**.*

Important Dates:

- **Dec. 2** Executive Board meeting @ 4:00
- **Dec. 4** MVEA Holiday Social 4-7 pm @ Chili's, 27050 Fir
- **Dec. 8** School Board meeting @ 7:00
- **Dec. 9** Rep. Council meeting @ 4:00
- **Dec. 11** Hanukkah begins
- **Dec. 18** High School Budget Cut Day
- **Dec. 21-Jan. 10** Winter Break
- **Dec. 25** Christmas
- **Dec. 26** Kwanza begins



December 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2  Exec. Board	3	4  MVEA Social	5
6	7	8  School Board	9  Rep Council	10	11  Hanukkah	12
13	14	15	16	17	18  High School Budget Cut Day	19
20	21  Winter Break	22  Winter Break	23  Winter Break	24  Winter Break	25  Christmas	26  Kwanza
27  Winter Break	28  Winter Break	29  Winter Break	30  Winter Break	31  Winter Break		

MVEA Executive Board:

President	Janet MacMillan	Co-Director of Elementary	Patricia Gómez
Vice-President	Connie Pruett	Co-Director of Elementary	Kathy Parrish
Secretary	Peggy Murphy	Director of Middle School	Mike Sorter
Treasurer	Tom Weir	Director of High School	Juanita Quiroz
Executive Director	Ann Adler	CTA State Council Rep. to the Board	Katherine Underwood
Director of Contract Maintenance	Harold Acord	CTA State Council Members	Harold Acord, Janet MacMillan, Connie Pruett, Katherine Underwood
Director of Communication	Cathy Fulgenzi	CTA Board Rep. District O	Mikki Cichocki
Director of Human Rights	Danny Alvarez	NEA Director District 11	Katherine Underwood
Director of Instruction & Prof. Dev.	Sharon Orme		
Director of Member Services	José Alcalá		
Director of Political Action	Anne Prows		