



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.

MVEA's new website is up!

By Cathy Fulgenzi, MVEA Director of Communications

It's 2008 and the Moreno Valley Educators Association can now say they have officially put themselves on the map—the internet map that is. **MVEAinfo.com** is finally a reality! Go online and check it out.

At **MVEAinfo.com** you will find past copies of our Advocate newsletter, the dates for upcoming events, and links to our Contract and Salary Schedule.

The Hot Topics page will be frequently updated with important information such as Budget and Contract issues. Current legislative updates will be there as well.

Under Executive Board, you can view pictures of MVEA's leaders, and on the Directory page, the e-mail addresses for everyone in the MVEA office is listed so that you can eas-

ily contact us. (A word of caution here: **DO NOT USE YOUR DISTRICT COMPUTER!** Wait until you get home and do it on your own computer).

There are also Resource Links which will make it easy for you to go to the websites for CTA, NEA, the California Dept. of Education, renew your Teaching Credential, and even buy discount tickets to amusements parks, movies, etc.

Spread the word to your fellow Educators to check out their new website, **MVEAinfo.com**



Inside this issue:

MVEA's New Website	1
Welcome to 2008!	1
Governor Declares Fiscal Emergency	2
Budget Proposals- What do we do?	3
Non-Paid Leaves of Absences	4,5
Bargaining News	6
Member Committees	6
Educator of the Month	7
Catastrophic Leave	7
Dr. Seuss's Birthday!	8
Important Dates	8

Welcome to 2008!

By Janet MacMillan, MVEA President

Welcome back to a new calendar year. 2008 has already presented us with some challenges. Although reports on the budget are grim, the Governor's proposals are the first step in a process that will see the proposal modified as it proceeds through the legislature. There seems to be understanding of this fact within the business and civic community in Moreno Valley. This is not the time to panic. The District and MVEA have a solid history of working together in times of financial crisis and your leadership will continue this practice.

In the meantime, both the Association and the District are preparing to return to the bargaining table in March. The Executive Board and the Representative

Council have begun work on determining bargaining objectives. Surveys developed by the Bargaining Support Committee were sent out the week of your return from winter break. Your Site Reps are expected to hold a 10 Minute Meeting to update you on the process. It is important that you fill out your survey and return it to the MVEA office. There is an opportunity on the form for you to bring up topics not covered specifically on the survey. Any comments on the survey will be considered by the Bargaining Support Committee which will analyze the survey results and make a report to the Executive Board.

Be involved in setting bargaining objectives for MVEA. Return your Bargaining Survey to your Site Rep or to the MVEA office.

Governor Declares State Fiscal Emergency—PROPOSES to slash school funding!

By Ann Adler, MVEA Executive Director

2008-09 was designated the “Year of Education” by the Governor. Now it appears to be turning into the “Year of Devastation” if his proposals prevail.



2007-08 School Year (Now)

Facing a \$14 billion shortage by the 2008 state budget, the Governor has declared a “fiscal emergency.” This means that the Legislature has 45 days to enact legislation that improves the budget situation. His proposals will impact all services in California. Concerning K-12 public education, the Governor is proposing a \$360 million dollar reduction for the 2007-08 budget (yes, this school year). The Governor is proposing to use unspent categorical funds to make up the budget deficit. At this time, we do not know if that will be enough money to make up the \$360 million. Experts are saying “No.” If not, the Governor is suggesting adjustments to the 2007-08 base revenue limit. This would decrease the amount of money districts would receive, and be less than they budgeted for and expected to receive this year. There will be no specifics until the Legislature acts, and it takes a 2/3 vote to approve any legislation, which could prove difficult.

2008-09 School Year

According to the Governor, his proposed reductions preserve funding for all *core instructional programs*, but at a slightly lower level, which reflects a 1.4% reduction from the current year. This is major. As you may know, the January Preliminary State Budget (PROPOSAL) is out. Nothing will be final until after the May Revise Budget and the actual adoption of a statewide budget, hopefully by July 1, 2008, as required statutorily. Below are the major reduction PROPOSALS:

- Revenue Limits-COLA and Growth: Not fund COLA and cut revenue by an additional 2.4% for an overall deficit of 6.99%.
- Equalization: None proposed.
- Categorical Programs: No COLA plus approximately 11% less than 2007-08 for most programs including class size reduction. Funding rate reductions will also be applied to the following budget items: the Charter School Categorical Block Grant, Instructional Materials, Supplemental Instruction, Home-To-School Transportation, Supplemental School Counseling and various Career Technical Education Programs, all of which impact our District.
- Child Nutrition Programs: Approximately a \$.02 reduction per meal allocation
- Special Education Funding: No COLA plus reductions so that districts will have to backfill (pay it themselves) most of the reduction because of the federal mandates.
- Charter Schools: (Moreno Valley has one) Proportionally cut the Block Grant money usually received which was \$500/ADA in 2007-08.
- Deferred maintenance: Partially fund.
- Deferrals: Delay the July apportionment due to districts until September 2008 (Could cause a cash flow problem).

PROPOSED Program enhancements are 2 new programs:

- California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CalPADS): \$8.1 million to fund this system.
- California Longitudinal Teacher Integrated Data Education System (CalTIDES): \$1.8 million one-time federal Title II funds and \$400,000 for the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

In addition, the Governor proposes contributing less to the General Fund STRS contribution teacher payroll. He also proposes to spend down the money from the Cal Grant Competitive program. Finally, and very importantly, the Governor is proposing to give himself sole power to make cuts in a “poor” budget year if the Legislature does not enact legislation in a timely manner.

What Will This Mean To Schools?

While it is clear there are extraordinary budget challenges, it's also clear that California voters believe our students and public schools should be a top priority and strongly support our minimum school funding guarantee, Proposition 98. Voters passed Proposition 98 almost 20 years ago (some of us were there and fought for this guarantee for future generations of educators). We wanted to create stable minimum funding for our public schools.

In terms of public education, the Governor's proposed budget is a giant step backwards for our students and will create chaos in our schools. Midyear and across-the-board education cuts could be devastating. An across-the-board cut of 11% means billions less for our public schools. It's disappointing and ironic that in the proclaimed "Year of Education," the Governor is talking about cutting billions from our public schools and decimating our minimum school funding law. Our students didn't create this budget crisis, and their education shouldn't be ransomed to solve it.

The District has frozen funds and asked you to curtail spending. While that may inconvenience you, know that for now it is critical to conserve until we know more. MVEA urges each site to meet as a faculty and plan serious measures to save money. Even simple things like using less paper and supplies will make a difference. Come up with a site budget reduction plan and then live with it. Involve your students by educating them about the state, and work together as classes and as a school community to make a fiscal difference. Write to your legislators, and urge them to keep cuts away from the kids. This crisis is real. By working together, we can get through it. The time to act is now. Collectively, let's make a difference.

Budget Proposals: What Do We Do?

Don't panic!

The state legislature is in a 45 day fiscal emergency session until late February. After that we will know specifically if any reduction impact will occur midyear. The proposal is to take this year's needed money from unused state categorical monies.

Know that next year's (08-09) reductions will not be known until after the May 2008 Revisé. The 6.99% deficit in revenue for the 08-09 year you are hearing about (2.4% less monies for schools than this year) is still a proposal. Nothing is final yet for 07-08, and until an 08-09 budget is adopted, we will not know for sure what reductions will be made next year.

Know that MVEA is in your court!



MVEA will work toward any future cuts being as far away from the students and educators as possible. Your President and Executive Board have asked to reconvene CAMM (Classified, Administrators, MVEA and MVUSD), a group of presidents and top management that was used during the 2003 state budget crisis. Through

CAMM, the JFMC (Joint Fiscal management Committee) and during other meetings, MVEA will do all it can to keep any possible reductions away from the classroom. MVEA will continue to share information we get from CTA so that you are educated on the issue. Check MVEAinfo.com and CTA.org often for the most recent updates.

Stop any rumors. They are not productive.

Nothing is for sure until the Legislature enacts legislation which takes a 2/3 vote. If you hear rumors about reductions or any other budget-related issues, PLEASE check the source and contact MVEA so that we can follow up. Let's try to react in a logical manner based on fact, not fiction or assumptions.

Non-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 December’s Advocate, Paid Leaves of Absence were discussed. Here is a quick refresher course concerning the use of Non-Paid Leaves in the current contract:

Article XXII – Leaves of Absence - Section 2.

Non-Paid Leaves of Absence

- Provides that Non-Paid Leaves of Absence must be approved by the Board of Education.
- States that regular pay and benefits shall be discontinued.
- Provides that when practically feasible, returning employees will be placed at the job site to which the employee was assigned to before approved leave. If not feasible, the District will attempt to return the employee to a position as nearly like the one that was left.
- Provides that personal leaves of absence of five days or less may be approved by the Superintendent. All requests greater than five days shall be submitted to the Board of Education. Granting of requests is based on impact on program.
- Provides that the Board may approve a leave of absence not to exceed one year nor less than one semester for enrollment in a course of study at an accredited academic institution relating to his/her professional assignment.
- Stipulates that Federal law shall apply to military leaves.
- Provides that leaves for study travel may be granted if a planned itinerary is provided with an outline of subjects to be studied. Such leaves may not be less than one semester nor longer than one academic year.
- Provides for child care leave which terminates only at the end of a semester and may only be for two consecutive semesters. Child care leave is designed for the postnatal care of an infant only.
- Provides for extended illness leave. The employee must provide description of illness by physician indicating employee is unable to perform his/her professional functions. Such leave must terminate at the end of a semester. Return from such leave may only be at the beginning of a semester with 10 days written notice to Superintendent.
- Provides that the Board may approve a leave not to exceed one year nor less than one semester for personal reasons.
- Provides for partial leave for a unit member who serves as an elected public official in increments of half or full days to attend governmental business not to exceed 10 instructional days.

Teacher Exchange Programs

- States that employees shall be allowed to participate in teacher exchange programs which provide for exchanging positions of like status from school districts in other parts of the country, or world, upon approval of the proposed exchange by the Board.

Family Care Leave

- Provides definitions of child, parent, serious health condition, and health care provider that must be adhered to.
- Provides that Family Care Leave shall be granted, subject to the restrictions set forth, to unit members who have been employed by the District for at least one year and have provided 1,250 hours of service in the 12-month period prior to the FCL request.
- States that FCL may be granted for the birth of a child of the member, the adoption of a child by the member, foster care placement of child with the member, the care of a child, parent or spouse who has a serious health condition, or because of the member’s own serious health condition.
- Requires that FCL granted for the birth adoption or foster care placement of a child must occur within one year of said birth adoption or placement.

- States that FCL will be counted towards the member's annual leave entitlements under the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 and the California Family Rights Act of 1991, as amended.
- States that FCL runs concurrently with any other leave in the Contract for which the member qualifies.
- Provides for the taking, to the extent required by applicable federal and state laws only, that the FCL may be taken intermittently or on a reduced work schedule. The District reserves the right to restrict leave based on law.
- States that FCL may not exceed a total of 12 work weeks within a 12 month period.
- Provides for a husband and wife to each take 12 weeks of leave for birth of child, adoption, foster care placement or care of parents with a serious health condition.
- States that if the need for FLC is foreseeable that the unit member provide at least 30 days notice. If the need is not known in advance the member must provide notice within one or two business days upon learning of the need for leave. A reasonable effort for planning for medical treatment must be made to minimize disruption to the District, subject to approval of the health care provider.
- Requires that in conjunction with the notice and request for FCL due to serious health conditions, the member must submit to his immediate supervisor a certification from the health care provider that includes: the date the condition commenced, the probable duration of the condition, an estimate of the amount of time the member needs to care for the individual, and a statement that the serious health condition warrants the participation of the family member to provide care or renders the member unable to perform job functions.
- States that if the FLC ends up exceeding the original estimation of time, a new written notice by the health care provider shall be submitted.
- States that if the District has any reason to doubt the validity of any health care provider's statement, the District may require at its own expense that the member obtain the opinion of a second health care provider. If the opinion differs from the original provider's, the District may pay for a third health care provider to be approved jointly by the District and the unit member. The opinion of the third health care provider shall be final and binding on the District and the member.
- States that if a member has taken FLC due to his or her own serious health condition, certification from his/her health care provider that the unit member is able to resume work must be provided to the District.
- Provides for the member to be reinstated to his/her previous position or equivalent as long as the position has not ceased to exist due to legitimate business reasons, and had the member not taken FCL, he or she would not otherwise have been employed at the time reinstatement is requested.
- States that all FCL is unpaid with two exceptions: members may elect or the District may require that all accrued vacation hours be taken or if the member is taking FCL due to his/her own illness members may elect or the District may require that accrued sick leave is utilized in lieu of unpaid status.
- Provides that the period of FCL shall not be considered a break in service. Upon return, the member shall have no less seniority than the unit member had when FLC commenced. However, the period of FCL shall not be used to calculate increased seniority rights.
- Provides that during FLC the District shall maintain coverage under any "group health plan" at the level and under the conditions coverage would have been provided if member had been working. The District may recover the premiums it paid for maintaining coverage for the member and/or dependents if the member fails to return from FLC after it is expired or the member fails to return to work for a reason other than continuation, recurrence or the onset of a serious health condition beyond the control of the member.
- Provides that the District may require certification of the new or recurring circumstances requiring FLC be supported by medical certification.

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. To conclude, it is important to note that *Article VIII Employee Benefits - Section 6 - Leaves* states that, "Employees on leave without pay shall have the option of continuing health and dental insurance premiums at their own expense during the period of the unpaid leave."

Also, when on non-paid leave, MVEA members should note that unless they arrange for their MVEA dues to be paid, their membership in MVEA will not continue. This can affect years of continuous membership for insurance provided by CTA, ability to obtain legal referrals, and continued use of CTA recommended vendors including disability insurance. MVEA/CTA/NEA membership while on Non-Paid leave is available at a reduced dues rate.

In Solidarity, Harold Acord, Director of Contract Maintenance

Bargaining News

By Harold Acord

To assist MVEA and your Bargaining Team in the bargaining process, MVEA has appointed a Bargaining Support Committee. The Bargaining Support Committee is comprised of Peggy Murphy-VLHS, Roseann Reynolds-MVHS, Frank Garcia-MVMS, Judy Hyneman-La Jolla, Jennifer Womack-Adaptive PE, and Harold Acord-CSHS.

After consultation with various stakeholder groups, the committee has finalized the bargaining survey for this year. By now, you should have received and returned this year's MVEA bargaining survey which was due on January 25th. Before we embark on a new round of bargaining for a successor contract, during the next few months it is

MVEA's and your bargaining team's desire to have input and ideas from our membership. Therefore, the bargaining survey is of the utmost importance.

When the bargaining surveys are returned, the Bargaining Support Committee will compile your responses and then make a recommendation for this year's bargaining objectives to the MVEA Executive Board and the Site Rep Council for approval. Then all MVEA members will initiate their work in supporting our Bargaining Team. The Bargaining Support Committee will be publishing information soon regarding activities that you will be able to engage in to support our team in negotiating a fair Contract for all that furthers our rights, while not allowing "take backs."

Given the District's attempt to roll back contract provisions (last year), including their refusal to settle on a multi-year agreement, and given the current fiscal crisis, our theme for this year's bargaining is "Hold the Line!" Please be on the watch for information regarding what days to wear blue and other activities that you and your site will be able to take part in to win prizes.

Show that you support our team and a fair contract settlement!

In Solidarity –
Harold Acord, MVEA
Director of Contract
Maintenance



Current MVEA Activities: Member Committees

English Language Specialists Consult

Charge: Meeting with the District to determine the ways in which the EL Specialists can best support student learning.

MVEA Representatives: Juanita Quiroz, Maria Teresa Adame, Susan Holtan, Francisco Lopez, Donna Saldin, Dolores Esquivias, Rachel Skelley, Carlos Flores, Liam Cadegan, Pete Loza, Anne Prows, and Janet MacMillan.

Preschool/Head Start Consult

Charge: Meeting with the District to make recommendations to the Bargaining Team on additional articles that should apply to the preschool/Head Start teachers.

MVEA Representatives: Verne Scatliffe, Bernice Johnson, Lorette Johnson, Nickolette Sands, and Janet MacMillan.

Visual and Performing Arts Consult

Charge: Meeting (as a new committee) to recommend uses for the ongoing visual and performing arts funding allocated by the State last year.

MVEA Representatives: Don Miller, Judy Hyneman, Sophia Arkosy, Paul Sexauer, Lisa Lopez, Debbie Meyer, Diane Tudge, Greg Solomon, and Graig Withrow.

Mathematics

Charge: Met to develop criteria that will be utilized in determining recommendations for the District's next math adoption.

MVEA Representatives: Jessica Trout, Joan Warburg, Amar Samet, Greg Stowe, Kristina Dewald-Baton, Richard MacPherson, Marcia Puckett, and Maury Yzaqure.

Members of the Standing Committees/Consults are expected to give regular reports on the work of their committees to you as members. At most sites this is an agenda item for staff meetings. Standing Committees meet three times per year. Be sure to ask for your reports.

The District has procedures in place to select new mathematics texts for Elementary and Middle School levels and algebra. Members of the Math Subject Advisory Committees will be involved with this project.

MVEA Educator of the Month: Debra Alexander

Debra Alexander is MVEA's Educator of the Month for January. She is currently assigned to Hendrick Ranch Elementary School after spending several years at the former Arnold Heights Success Academy, a year at Vista Del Lago in the special education programs, and a year at Cloverdale as a long term sub. When educators at her site were asked what made Debra special, they characterized her as an expert at teaching fifth grade. That is Debra's passion.

She considers transitions to be fundamental steps in ensuring student success and fifth grade to be portal to secondary education. Her passion is helping young people reach their full potential. Robert Gordon, her principal, says Debra is big on developing character in kids and leading them to believe they can accomplish anything they want while mak-

ing contributions to the community. She connects student interests with academics. For example, she has organized Fashion Shows as a fundraiser to give girls an opportunity to apprentice at business development.

There are other reasons for Debra's nomination. She is dedicated. She works beyond her regular hours to develop curricular expertise, especially in the area of reading and language arts. As her knowledge of pedagogy has expanded, her peers have counted on her to provide them with answers to some typical school type puzzles such as why a student might not be responding to instruction or why a student elected to do no work.

She is a grade level leader and a force behind developing collaborative approaches to problem solving through the Professional Learning Communities model. Educators at the site state that Debra's "collaborative

approach, professionalism and regular contributions make her an invaluable member not only of the staff, but the entire school community," and indeed parents have demonstrated their confidence in Debra's ability to positively affect student learning by electing her School Site Council Chairperson, a role generally reserved for a parent.

Debra is married with three adult children and eight grandchildren. Her spare time is spent with her large family and reading non-fiction books. She is a graduate of USC after which she began her career as a financial analyst. Perhaps the State of California could use her to solve the budget challenges!

Debra is a teacher who fulfills her passion by supporting fifth grade students in reaching academic and personal goals.

Congratulations, Debra!

Catastrophic Leave vs. Disability Insurance

By Connie Pruett, MVEA Vice-President

"Catastrophic illness" is defined in Ed Code 44043.5(1) as follows: "... an illness or injury that is expected to incapacitate the employee for an extended period of time, or that incapacitates a member of the employee's family which incapacity requires the employee to take time off from work for an extended period of time to care for that family member, and taking extended time off work creates a financial hardship for the employee..."

If you, or an immediate family member, becomes catastrophically ill, how can you take time off to care for those health issues? MVEA has had numerous calls this year requesting catastrophic leave. We feel there is a misconception out there concerning the Catastrophic Leave Bank. Here are the fiction vs. facts concerning this leave:

FICTION	FACT
I can have as many days as I need to take care of my or my family member's illness.	The Bank only holds days that have been donated by our members. The District does NOT fill it just because the days are needed. If you are out more than 100 days past your sick leave, you will be placed on a 39-month re-hire list.
These catastrophic days automatically kick in after my sick leave is exhausted.	The Rep at your site needs to notify MVEA's president, who must approve of the catastrophic leave. THEN people can begin to donate days to the bank for you.
I will be taken care of because I need to be.	You can't rely on other people do to this for you. It is NOT because people don't care, they just may not have enough sick days to take care of themselves, let alone give them to someone else.
The District pays into and covers me with disability insurance.	NO they do NOT! You may find yourself out of days and out of pay. Protect yourself by taking advantage of CTA endorsed <u>Standard Life of Oregon Disability Insurance</u> .

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
(cfulgenzi@MVEAinfo.com)

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CTA Board Rep. District 0	Mikki Cichocki
NEA Board Rep. District 11	Patty Taylor

Important Dates:

Calendar of events



- February 6:** MVEA Exec. Board Mtg. @ 4 p.m.
- February 12:** MVUSD Board Meeting @ 7 p.m. (Board Room)
- February 13:** MVEA Rep. Council Mtg. @ 4 p.m.
(Moreno Valley Conference & Recreation Ctr.)
- February 14:** Valentine's Day
- February 15:** Lincoln's Holiday (No School)
- February 18:** President's Holiday (No School)
- February 26:** MVUSD Board Meeting @ 7 p.m. (Board Room)
- February 29:** End of 2nd Trimester (Elementary & Middle)
- March 3:** Dr. Seuss's Birthday

Read Across America!

By Sharon Orme, Dir. Instruction and Professional Development

Save the Date! March 3rd



It's almost time for the tenth annual observance of the National Education Association's "Read Across America." NEA is calling all of America's children, both young and old, to reward their learning by celebrating the joys of reading with Dr. Seuss on his 104th birthday on March 3, 2008.

Last year, our District's reading party included having Middle and High School students read books to the students at nearby Elementary Schools. Because it was so successful and enjoyed by all, we will be encouraging this worthwhile activity again this year. Middle and High School MVEA reps will be receiving information soon from Sharon Orme about this event.

NEA-RA Declaration of Candidacy Info

Declaration of Candidacy forms for state delegates to the 2008 NEA-Representative Assembly convention in Washington, D.C. are available in the December 2007 issue of the California Educator magazine or online at cta.org (you must log on using "My CTA"). They are not being circulated through any other channels. It is the responsibility of each member wishing to run for state delegate to fill out the Declaration of Candidacy form and file it by the deadline, which is **Friday, February 1st**. All forms must be mailed or delivered to the CTA San Geronimo Service Center, 735 Carnegie Dr., Ste. 240, San Bernardino, CA, 92408. The election will be held some time in March.

Declaration of Candidacy forms for local (MVEA) delegates to the 2008 NEA-RA will be delivered to all sites soon and will be due back at the MVEA office by February 13th. The election will be held March 18-19th.