



# In Between...

Moreno Valley Education Association

Phone (951) 485-0545 / FAX (951) 485-0353

[www.MVEAInfo.com](http://www.MVEAInfo.com)



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Editors: Janet MacMillan, Cathy Fulgenzi, and Ann Adler  
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## Summer is Anything But QUIET!

At the June 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, the School Board pressured the District administration to start calling people back to fill positions needed for a class size of 22:1 at grades 1-3. District administration organized to offer contracts to 87 of the K-6 rified teachers only to threaten a second RIF to the very same people in August. With this threat of more RIFs, MVEA stepped up quickly to organize.

## Members Work Together to Impact School Board's Decision

Your MVEA Bargaining Support Team immediately convened. Notifying as many members as possible of the need for quick action, your committee planned the following: campaign to email school board members, a call to attend board meetings, informational picketing/rally.

Hundreds of educators including CTA leadership and community members turned out to picket with signs saying "**Stimulate. Educate. Don't Terminate! I am not a bargaining chip, Laid off again, Keep your word,**" and "**Enough is enough!**"

CTA President David Sanchez led the array of speakers. They told of the traumatic effects of the possibility of an August layoff on their personal lives. Each repeatedly urged the School Board to use the federal stimulus money to save jobs as was intended by President Obama.

Educators truly made a difference! The School Board postponed their decision on the layoff resolution until Monday evening, giving the bargaining teams time to continue to resolve the issue.

On Monday, July 13, 2009, the MVEA and MVUSD bargaining teams reached a tentative agreement, one that helped the District to balance its budget while maintaining the 22:1 ratio at grades 1-3. This persuaded the Board to take **no action on re-RIFFing the 87 teachers** who had been brought back. **This means they will not be RIFFed for the 2009-10 school year.** Sadly, the School Board approved a resolution to layoff 8 Counselors and 1.5 EL Specialists. The funding for these positions has been swept by the District in order to help address the state caused deficit to the District. The Association continues to look for ways to avoid these lay-offs as does the District.

## The Tentative Agreement

As the state deficit increased during the summer, the District proposals became more draconian including RIFFing almost 100 members, increasing class size or taking a substantial pay cut. To maintain the previously ratified Contract, the bargaining team explored many options. The following tentative agreement is the result of many hours of labor to solve a very difficult situation:

- Two furlough days during 2009-10 (working 2 less days and receiving 2 days less pay)
  - Example: An employee who works 184 days would work 182. The salary schedule remains intact. Employees would be given step and column, but essentially receive two days less salary for 2009-10 only.

- Dates for the days
  - Grades K-5: November 12-13, 2009
  - Grades 6-8: September 25, 2009 and January 22, 2010
  - Grades 9-12: December 18, 2009 and June 11, 2010
  
- Agreement contingent upon
  - A membership vote tentatively scheduled for August 31-September 1, 2009
  - ALL employee units agreeing to 2 designated furlough days
  - No physical change to the salary schedule except that educators will receive step and column and two days less pay for the 2009-10 year
  - All other Contract working conditions remaining the same

### Ratification Vote

MVEA will supply sites with official copies of the tentative agreement once school reopens. Tentatively, there will be an August 19<sup>th</sup> Rep Council meeting to explain the agreement to the Site Reps and a General Meeting to review this information with all interested members on August 26<sup>th</sup> at 4 PM with voting set for August 31-September 1, 2009.

### Q and A

**Are the furlough days the only thing it took to balance the budget?** Absolutely not. In the last 18 months, MVEA has worked with the District to cut expenditures by \$62 million to match the loss in state revenue and declining enrollment. The District is also using much of the stimulus money, sweeping many categoricals, and cutting out positions to make its budget balance.

**How much money will the loss be to people's pockets?** A furlough day is equivalent to about ½ of 1%, so two furlough days are equal to approximately a 1% pay decrease divided out over the year.

**Why a furlough day and not a salary decrease?** A furlough day is a loss in pay for one time. A 1% pay decrease is a permanent loss, and the salary schedule would reflect that loss so that in the future it would take a 1% to break even and a 2% to actually add more money to the salary schedule.

**Do I still get a full year STRS credit?** Yes. The District will redefine the year by 2 less days for 2009-10 only so that STRS will give full credit for the year.

**Why didn't MVEA agree to prep days as the furlough days?** There was not enough time to vote before those days would take effect. The MVEA Executive Board felt it is critical for members to vote first on a change of working conditions.

**Should all employee units take the same 2 days?** MVEA urged the District and has lobbied the Board for all employee units to take the same days so that schools and the District Office are actually closed during the furlough days. This sends a message to the community that the state's budget problems are filtering down to our students and demonstrates the solidarity of all the employee groups. MVEA, however, only bargains for MVEA.

**Do any other contract conditions change?** No.

### Thanks to All!

Thanks to everyone who emailed and/or showed up for the rally! Special thanks to your Bargaining Support Committee: Ruben Goussen, Lizeth Piskulich, Cathy Fulgenzi, Randy Dargitz, Tina Torres, Felice Ward, Denise Gonzalez, Janet MacMillan, Patricia Gomez and Laura Patiño; and your Negotiation Team: José Alcalá, Harold Acord, Jay Hannah, Judy Hyneman, Peggy Murphy, Vida Swilley, and Katherine Underwood. Kudos to the speakers at the School Board meeting: Lizeth Piskulich, Janet MacMillan, Elena Teminova, Lupe Rodriguez, Megan Hannah, Claudine Bond, Randy Dargitz, and Jose Gutierrez.