



# MVEA ADVOCATE



MVEAinfo.com

March 2008



**M**oreno **V**alley **E**ducators **A**ssociation 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**.

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## State Budget Update

By Janet MacMillan, MVEA President

**W**hile districts across the state are making massive cuts in preparation for loss of revenue both this year and next, the Legislature has passed an emergency \$507 million education package for the 07-08 school year which is presently on the Governor's desk. As this goes to press he is expected to sign the bill in the next few days.

The somewhat good news is that the State was able to "sweep" categorical balances at the state level to make up this year's deficit so there will not be a reduction of the money distributed to school districts this year. These dollars are not allocated dollars. The state, however, will defer the July 08 apportionment to districts until September 08. This will cause cash flow problems during the summer for most districts. Options are to move existing funds for a short period of time, to be reimbursed in September, or take a short loan to be paid back in September when the District receives its money. MVUSD is already looking at how to ensure its cash flow, and believes it can be done without hardship to employees. MVEA will be in discussions to assure this is so during its regular budget meetings.

While we can breathe a momentary breath of relief for this year,

**we still must be vigilant about reductions in order to make it through the massive cuts predicted for the 08-09 school year.**

Decisions will have to be made on budget priorities at both the District and the site levels. At this point, there will be an estimated 25% reduction in block grants to each site for the 2008-2009 school year. The Contract mandates a budget committee at each site. This committee is comprised of educators and the site principal. The committee should be the forum to determine reductions for the current year, as well as developing a tentative budget for next year. Data on how funds have been spent in the past, and staff input on priorities will be necessary. Meetings should be scheduled now. Please make sure your site turns in its plan for reducing site expenditures to the District by February 29, 2008.

Revenue enhancement will be necessary as well as reductions. Average Daily Attendance (ADA) has increased over the past year, but there is still room for improvement. Please work with your administrator to improve attendance for an educationally sound and fiscally supportive program.

Together we can seek solutions to the budget crisis while meeting the needs of our students.



# Register for MyCTA Today and VOTE!

By Cathy Fulgenzi, Director of Communications

**M**yCTA is a special area of the California Teachers Association website, cta.org, for CTA members.

Starting this month, the San Geronio Service Center Council chapters (MVEA is one of them) will be trying out Online Voting using MyCTA for the National Education Association Representative Assembly (NEA-RA) State Delegate Election. It is very important that every MVEA member take the time to register and then vote online for their State Delegates from March 3rd to April 4th. Yes, you will see names of people you know from MVEA on the ballot!

CTA members can also get information on professional development, trainings, CTA conferences and a number of exclusive benefits offered through the CTA Member Benefits Department, such as discounts on school supplies, home loans and insurance on the MyCTA part of the cta.org website.

To register, you will need your 10 digit CTA membership identification number which you can find on your CTA membership card, the mailing label of your California Educator Magazine, or as a last resort, you may call the MVEA office at 951-485-0545 and your number will be located.

To get started, go to cta.org and click on the "Register for MyCTA" button below the CTA Members Login on the right side of the page.

On the next page you will fill in your 10 digit CTA membership identification number, first and last name, home zip code, and then your home e-mail address. Then click "Ok."

Are you a UTLA Member? (United Teachers of Los Angeles)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
<b>All fields required</b>	
Individual ID (see membership card) (UTLA Members use your Employee ID):	<input type="text"/>
First name:	<input type="text"/>
Last name:	<input type="text"/>
Home Postal/ZIP Code:	<input type="text"/>
e-mail address (for notification):	<input type="text"/>
	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Home <input type="radio"/> School

You will then receive an e-mail that will have a link for you to click on in order to complete the registration process. For future visits, all you will need to enter MyCTA is your username and password which you established during registration. **Don't forget to log back on and VOTE before April 4th!**



## Mortgaging Our Present for the Future: Does It Make Sense?

By Ann Adler, MVEA Executive Director

**G**ASB 45 is a statement of accounting standards from the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) about how Government entities, including public school districts, should report retiree health care costs. This is VERY important to us as Educators because the District is looking at pre-funding these costs and has already put \$1.5 million into Fund 71, an irrevocable trust.

Both MVEA and the California School Employees Association (CSEA) spoke against the trust concept, and would have preferred a designated fund in case universal health care was passed or the money was needed for something else. MVEA has repeatedly expressed major concern that in an irrevocable trust, the District loses control of the money because it turns it over to a third party. We worried that in the case of an unanticipated event, there would be no ability to retrieve these funds.

Now with the state fiscal crisis, this unexpected event is here. Major reductions loom in our futures due to the economy. We are faced with reducing programs and possibly employees depending on what the Legislature does. We cannot use this money to help, and if the District continues to fund this trust, more money will be taken from the General Fund.

In early 2007, the state of California appointed 12 bi-partisan commissioners to review the GASB accounting procedures as they relate to public agencies. In December, the commission presented 34 unanimous recommendations to the Governor, recommendations that preserve local autonomy for school districts.

The report basically states that a District must adopt a policy and make that policy public. The commission report says that the policy must be adopted; however, the paying out of money to a fund has no timelines and pre-funding is but an option. The report does not say that the money must go into a specific fund. The commissioner I talked to also reiterated that if a district is not in strong fiscal shape, or if all programs are not funded to satisfaction, or **if there is a fiscal uncertainty (WHICH THERE NOW IS)**, that a district may want to consider waiting to move forward, or at least place the money where it can be retrieved in difficult times. It is interesting that the State falls into this same dilemma with CalPERS, and Governor Schwarzenegger has already said that given the state of the State fiscally, now will not be the time to sock money away while programs face major cuts and people's jobs may be on the line. I would hope that the District would have the same thoughts given the tough times.

MVEA urges the Board to read and thoughtfully review the commission's report. MVEA urges the Board to ensure that we do not hold employees or programs hostage while we rush to put money in an account that essentially prohibits spending that money for anything but post-employment benefits. The District does need a long-range post-employment benefit plan and pre-funding may be the way to go, but for now, while things are so shaky from the state, let's slow down the pace. Let's not reduce programs and people while putting another \$1.5 million away for the future. The future is upon us. It is about students and employees.



# MVEA's 2008 Bargaining Objectives

By Harold Acord, Director of Contract Maintenance

**M**VEA's Bargaining Support Team met to evaluate all of the surveys returned by our members and developed the following Bargaining Objectives which were presented to the MVEA Executive Board and Rep Council, who approved them on February 13, 2008:



## Article I - Duration and Termination

- ◆ Remain in effect for two years with reopeners in Salary and Benefits and two other mutually agreed upon Articles.

## Article VII - Salary

- ◆ Continue to increase compensation for all bargaining unit members to be comparable with surrounding Metro Districts including comparable wages, acknowledgement of degrees, rating in, and evaluation of continuing education unit costs.

## Article VIII - Employee Benefits

- ◆ Provide affordable quality health and welfare benefits for members while minimizing out-of-pocket health benefits costs to members.

## Article IX - School Calendar

- ◆ Establish future calendars as per each year of the final Agreement and add Preschool/Headstart Calendars.

## Article XIII - Class Size

- ◆ Limit class size/caseload for "high needs students."

## Article XXIV - California Peer Assistance and Review Program

- ◆ Review California Peer Assistance and Review language as per yearly reopener.

**All other terms and conditions of the current contract will remain in place.  
Calendars will be developed through the Calendar committee and bargained.**

## Intent to Return - The Forms Are Out What You Need to Know

**E**very year, pursuant to Education Code 44842, the District must ask all employees in the bargaining unit, in writing, if they plan to return the following school year. Attached to the form, according to law, should be the actual Education Code for employees to read. Even though this is a legal mandate, it also assists the District in determining how many employees will return and how many new hires they will need to fill positions.

**This year, in particular, if you know you are leaving or retiring, it is critical you let the District know ASAP as jobs may be on the line depending on the state budget impact!**

Having said that, you also need to know some facts about what your signature means:

1. The "intent to return" is a legal contract and once you sign, **the District is not obligated** to let you "out of your contract."
2. You have until June 30 to complete this form if you are a permanent employee and May 31 if you are a probationary teacher.
3. Returning the form in a timely manner is advisable if you know you are returning to work for the following year.
4. Those people contemplating moving to another District are advised that if they sign, they may not be released at a later time. (If one is not released and moves to another district, upon notice to the California Credential of Teaching, the employee may have his/her credential suspended for up to one year for forfeiting upon a contract.)

**So, in short, under normal circumstances, know that signing is probably a good thing as it assures the employee a job and assists the District. Sharing the information that you are not going to return sooner, rather than later, will help others in this fiscal crisis and assist the District in planning for next year. However, if an employee is unsure of the following year, he/she has only a short period of time to look elsewhere and make the move before he/she must either sign a binding agreement or move on. Once you sign, you are obligated under the law.**



## Non-Renewal of Beginning Educators

### A Sad Time for Our Colleagues

March 15 of each year marks an important date for our Temporary and Probationary educators. That is the date by which the District must legally give notice to any beginning educator who will not be re-employed for the following year.

The District began to communicate with principals regarding this issue by the end of January, and by February 1 principals were to have notified Human Resources of who will not be re-elected to their positions. The District alleges that anyone who received a non-renewal would have been aware that there were prior concerns. Further, MVEA asks that administrators provide support to our newer colleagues, as well as all employees.

#### Probationary Employees - LAW

Probationary teachers may be given notice of non re-election effective at the end of the school

year or at any time prior to March 15 of the second year without any required statement of cause or hearing.

#### Temporary Employees - LAW

Temporary employees may be "released" at the "pleasure of the Board" without notice and without cause prior to serving 75% of the school year by giving notice before the end of the school year of the District's decision not to re-elect the employee for the following year.

Unfortunately, the District has the right to do this under the law with no protection for the employee.

At the same time, however, there is Contract language for Evaluation (Article XV-EVALUATION) of all employees. MVEA believes that if the District is going to let an employee go, there should be documentation within the evaluation process so that an em-

ployee has an opportunity to improve as per the administrator's recommendations required under the Contract. Site Reps received training at the January Rep Council meeting and attended meetings with our newer colleagues as they received such notice.

It is reprehensible that, despite the law, any employee would be let go without a fair process that notifies the employee early and often of possible issues and concerns that grant him/her the opportunity to improve. MVEA does sit down with Human Resources to review the names and questions any process violations or unusual circumstances. This, however, does not prevent the District from exercising its right to non re-elect employees under the Education code.

MVEA leadership is saddened over the loss of some of our newer colleagues and wishes them well as they continue on with their lives.

## Tom Chelbana Honored by Moreno Valley Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce recognized Tom Chelbana with the Chamber Director's Award for his contributions to the community. Tom has served on the Chamber's Education Committee since its beginning fourteen years ago. He has been instrumental in expanding the committee's work from recognizing a Student of the Month from each of the high school programs in Moreno Valley and Val Verde, to awarding nine \$1000 scholarships to one of the monthly student honorees from each school.



Tom and his wife, Terry, have spent their teaching careers in Moreno Valley. Tom taught auto mechanics at Moreno Valley High School and is currently the work experience coordinator at Canyon Springs High School. Terry is an elementary teacher at Bear Valley.

In addition to teaching in Moreno Valley, the Chelbanas are natives of the city and products of the Moreno Valley Unified, as are their children. They can share the story of how Moreno Valley grew from a small agricultural town dependent on March Air Force Base to an urban center.

Congratulations, Tom, for giving back to the community!

## CTA Well-Baby Program

**P**rovided by the CTA Economic Benefits Trust, the CTA Well-Baby Program is free to CTA members participating in the CTA-endorsed voluntary life or disability program. The program provides scheduled calls with a Mayo Clinic Pregnancy Advisor, a registered nurse who provides education and support throughout the pregnancy and three months postpartum. Access to the Ask Mayo Clinic 24-hour nurse line is also available.

Additionally, participants receive the Mayo Clinic Guide to a Healthy Pregnancy book, multiple pamphlets and brochures, a

growth chart, and a pregnancy calculator.

There are three requirements to participate in the Well-Baby Program:

- 1) Must be an eligible CTA member or the spouse/domestic partner of an eligible CTA member.
- 2) The CTA member must be a participant in either the CTA-endorsed voluntary life or disability plan.
- 3) In order to maximize the benefits of the program, you are encouraged to enroll within the

first trimester. Enrollment is only acceptable through the 20th week of pregnancy. However, if the CTA member is within the first 120 days of employment, there is a one-time late enrollment opportunity.

To enroll in the CTA Well-Baby Program, contact the Mayo Clinic Pregnancy Advisor nurse line at 800-906-1064. For more program information, visit MyCTA at [www.cta.org](http://www.cta.org).



## No-Cost Automatic Insurance Protection

**A**s a CTA/NEA member, you are automatically eligible for two valuable insurance programs at no additional cost - the CTA Death & Dismemberment Plan and the NEA DUES-TAB. These plans are a no-cost insurance protection exclusively for CTA/NEA members. The CTA Death & Dismemberment Plan and the NEA DUES-TAB automatically cover you on September 1, following the date you become an eligible member, but even if you have just one year of credited membership, you will be eligible to receive a benefit.

The CTA Death & Dismemberment Plan is designed to provide a life insurance benefit that increases with each year of continuous CTA membership, until the maximum benefit is reached after ten years. The NEA DUES-TAB maximum benefit is reached after five years.

	<u>CTA</u>	<u>NEA</u>
<u>Death Benefit</u>	up to \$2000	up to \$1000
<u>Accidental Death and Dismemberment Benefit</u>	up to \$10,000	up to \$5,000
<u>Occupation/Association Leader Accidental Death and Dismemberment Benefit</u>	\$50,000	\$50,000
<u>Unlawful Homicide while on the Job</u>	N/A	\$150,000

For more information about the CTA Death & Dismemberment Plan, please call (650) 552-5200. For more information about the NEA DUES-TAB, call (800) 637-4636.

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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### MVEA Executive Board

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<b>CTA Board Rep. District 0</b>	Mikki Cichocki
<b>NEA Board Rep. District 11</b>	Patty Taylor

## Important Dates:



- March 3:** Read Across America (Dr. Seuss's Birthday)
- March 5:** MVEA Exec. Board Mtg. @ 4 p.m.
- March 12:** MVEA Rep. Council Mtg. @ 4 p.m.  
(Moreno Valley Conference & Recreation Center)
- March 17:** St. Patrick's Day 
- March 18:** MVUSD Board Meeting @ 7 p.m. (Board Room)
- March 19 - 20:** NEA-RA Local Delegate Election
- March 23:** Easter 
- March 24 - April 6:** Spring Break!
- April 7:** School resumes

### Communicate with Your Subject Advisory Councils/Committee Members

The Subject Advisory Councils/Committees are part of the communication link between the District office and the sites. The responsibility of those serving on the Councils/Committees is to present information from the grade level or department they represent and take information from the District back to the site for additional input.

Recently, there has been discussion of adding pacing guides and required assessments to additional subject areas. Please be sure that this is a conversation that takes place in your departments or grade levels so that your representatives to the committees have their site's perspective to share with the District.

### Our New Website - MVEAinfo.com

**M**V**E**A**i**n**f**o**.c**o**m** is finally a reality! Go online and check it out. You will find past copies of the Advocate newsletter, dates for upcoming events, and links to our Contract and Salary Schedule. The Hot Topics page is frequently updated with important information such as Budget and Contract issues.

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 easily 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 CA Dept. of Education, renew your Teaching Credential, and buy discount tickets. Spread the word to your co-workers to check out their new website, **MVEAinfo.com**.