

MVEA Advocate

The Official Publication of the Moreno Valley Educators Association

Protect the Core Program!!

By Janet MacMillan, MVEA President

March 2009

Volume 19 Number 7

Thanks

to the hundreds of MVEA members who packed the February 24, 2009, School Board meeting! Harold Acord, Bill Kalogonis, Katherine Underwood, Susan Holtan, Tim Hampton, Desiree Bray, Mike Sorter, Darcel Cannady-Jamerson, Faye Arco, Philip Peeples, Vanessa Gomez, and other valued members spoke well to the needs of the core program.

MVEA leadership protested against the Superintendent's budget proposal that included the lay off of 358 of our teachers, counselors and specialists, despite the fact that the adopted state budget is not as onerous to education as had been feared. The \$13 million deficit projected for 2008-09 has been reduced to \$8 million, and the \$28 million for 2009-10 to \$23 million, perhaps lower. For 2009-10, the committees have already closed the budget deficit by identifying \$16 in cuts. The District needs between \$9 and \$11 million more. How can the District administration justify laying off educators who work directly with students everyday to save another \$25 million, more than double what is necessary?

MVEA agreed with our partners in CAMM that cuts should be as far away from the classroom as possible. There has been no consensus however, on the definition of the core program. MVEA members believe the core instructional program begins with students, an appropriately certified teacher, and the basic supplies so that the students can master the curricula. The 358 educators who would receive RIF notices are a significant component of the core instructional program. They work everyday with students in settings that allow for academic, social, and personal growth. Test scores and report card grades indicate that student achievement is improving. Suspensions are down district wide. Students who have made poor choices remain in school working on assignments. These gains have been the result of the Class Size reduction, categorical support, counseling, and On Campus Suspension programs.

The District administration has said that not all of the 358 certificated employees listed in the particular kinds of services will be RIFed. MVEA's question is, then why list them? What is the comprehensive plan for providing a quality educational program to our students with less resources? If one exists, it has not been developed with transparency and input from the budget committees.

It is time for the District to decide what is important to the lives of our students. The Board needs to direct the Superintendent to work with the budget committees to articulate what the core program is, and then, to protect it from the reduction in force. Our students deserve no less.

Inside this issue:

Protect the Core Program	1
Getting Through Tough Times	2
Stand Up for Schools - Wear Pink!	3
Support Your Colleagues	3
2009-10 State Budget Quick Summary	4,5
Supplemental Employee Retirement Plan	6
Katherine Underwood NEA Director	6
CTA/NEA Retired	6
NEA-RA Voting Information	7
Educator of the Month	7
Important Dates	8

We're on the web!
MVEAinfo.com

Getting Through Tough Times...

By Ann Adler, Executive Director



It has been a real roller coaster ride the last several months dealing with the budget crisis. As an organization, MVEA has been a leader, not only within the MVUSD, but outside as well. In surrounding areas, districts are making changes to their budgets "sans" employee input, but in a few, like Lake Elsinore, San Bernardino, and here, the employee associations are actually integral factors in the outcome. In a way, that is much more difficult because as a player, each entity has to make decisions. The final outcome is far from over, even with the new budget and without a realistic final plan by the District.

As hard as it is, MVEA has been very involved. Your leadership has worked hard to keep the membership aware of the fiscal crisis and its impact to MVUSD by educating the Reps at the monthly Rep Council meetings. The expectation is that Reps will return to the site and disseminate the same information. MVEA has also provided information in its publications. Your Association surveyed both the Site Reps and the members to find out their thoughts on the crisis. In addition, two Rep Council motions have guided your Bargaining Team and elected leadership. In one motion, the following items were brought forward and have been agreed to at CAMM (the group made up of MVEA representatives as well as CSEA and management):

1. Eliminate all non-mandated conferences.
2. Hire no out of district consultants unless mandated by law.
3. As per the new Budget Bill, do not make a general fund contribution to deferred maintenance, do not buy new math textbooks at this time, do not buy new English Language Arts textbooks for next year.

MVEA is still pushing the other mem-

ber-inputted suggestions from the motion.

In the second motion, the Site Reps directed MVEA to explore a Supplemental Employee Retirement Plan (SERP) that generates savings for the District. MVEA is working with the District to see if this is a viable program that will generate savings. As we go to press, it is awaiting approval by the School Board. Once there is approval, MVEA will put out all the details.

Any final decisions by the District must be realistic and upfront. That is why MVEA continues to pursue real data and answers by the District. The District has not assessed programs that go beyond the 184 core instructional days as requested by MVEA weeks ago. The reduction in force (RIF) plan that is emerging from the District lacks credibility in the sense that MVEA members would shoulder more than what is actually needed to bridge the local deficit. To agree to concessions makes no sense unless the District is far more transparent about how the 2009-10 school year will look, and how they will close the deficit gap without gutting the student instructional program.

So, based on your input and representation, let us assess where your Association has taken you. All year, MVEA leadership has met with CAMM. More than \$12 million in cuts for 2008-09, and \$11 million for 2009-10, have been identified by this group. MVEA has and continues to push the ideas given to us by the collective membership, only some of which have been agreed to by the District. These are ideas that so far, have left the classroom intact. Data by the District is still not complete. Other suggestions that raise class size or reduce Educators have not been agreed to by MVEA.

In regard to the SERP, MVEA is pushing ahead as long as the package does not add to the deficit. CSEA has made a creative proposal as well

to allow 53 and 54 aged classified members to retire early and receive medical benefits for those two extra years. This also would generate, not cost, money. For classified or administration to do a SERP like MVEA's would cost more and is not viable if the goal is savings. The administrators are looking at options. Whatever the options are for the other groups, MVEA will hold strong (as per the Rep Council discussion) that no plan is worth doing if it adds to the deficit. The benefits, if there is a savings, of a retirement incentive plan is that it allows more veteran employees a cash incentive to leave and helps save jobs for those who are newer to the District.

So I, for one, am proud of your leadership, and you, the members, for taking the more difficult road; the road where hard choices are made upfront rather than just waiting and later complaining about what happens, the road that forces the District to form a plan and then share that plan so that real decisions can be made. As members of MVEA, your voices are heard collectively. That is why surveys and motions are done by your elective bodies.

In these tough economic times, there are no easy choices. But to be involved and to speak with one voice through surveys, motions, and democratic votes, truly does make a difference. Finally, there is a State budget, and MVEA is in the process of assessing its true impact on MVUSD.

What can YOU do? **Plan to attend the School Board meeting on March 12th. Wear pink to support your colleagues who will be receiving "pink slips" on that day. Be compassionate to those who are threatened, and most of all, do not give up.** Thank you for your membership and for being a collective participant in your destiny. Thank you for supporting the collective you. **We shall get through this!!!**

Stand Up for Schools—Wear Pink!

By Katherine Underwood, CTA State Council Rep to the Board

Now that the California Budget has been signed in to law, we need to continue to send the message to the legislature and the public that “CUTS HURT.” The newly approved 17-month state budget reduces public education funding by a devastating \$11.6 billion. Cuts of that magnitude, the largest in the state’s history, will boost class sizes, force the layoffs of thousands of educators, eliminate vital student programs, and turn thousands of qualified students away from higher education institutions.

These cuts are having a devastating impact for the educators and students in Moreno Valley. Become a part a sending out the message. Here is how:

MVEA Day of Action: March 12

The MVUSD School Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 12, so MVEA will be holding

their “Pink Friday” activity to coincide with the meeting. We are encouraging everyone to wear pink, join in the planned before school activity and attend the School Board meeting at 7 p.m. that evening.

Watch for further details from your Site Representatives.

Statewide Day of Action: Pink Friday, March 13



Get ready to wear pink and Stand Up for Schools on March 13. As part of the organizing plan developed by the State Budget Crisis Workgroup, CTA

is calling for a statewide day of action for public education on March 13. Stand Up for Schools: Pink Friday is designed to bring public awareness to the budget cuts facing our schools and the thousands of layoff notices that are expected to be issued by local school districts. We are asking all members to wear pink on that day, and we are asking local chapters to coordinate a Pink Friday event at your local school or college. The type of event is up to you.

CTA has launched a new website especially for the action day. Visit www.pinkfriday09.org to get additional information and resources, connect with other educators and public education supporters, share ideas for hosting an event, and upload information about an event at your school. It’s up to us to speak out and let our communities know what the state budget cuts are doing to their schools.

Support Your Colleagues

By Connie Pruett, MVEA Vice-President

A reminder that in these difficult times, we need to support each other. Yes, it is frustrating and scary in these horrible budget times, but we must stand together. Support your colleagues who are being non re-elected or who have a pink slip. Be there for each other. If you hear rumors, try to find the source and report it to MVEA so we can follow up. Let’s work together, not apart. And remember, if you have issues with a colleague, go to that person and clear the air. Together, we are stronger.



See you wearing **pink** at the School Board meeting on March 12th, and at work on March 13th!

UNION CODE OF CONDUCT

- I will not criticize any union colleague except to the individual directly.
- If any union colleague is being criticized in my presence, I will confront the criticism and ask that it stop.
- I will not participate in any conversations with administration that criticize, or negatively speculate about any union colleague.
- I will settle my differences with colleagues within my union.
- I will engage in debate, offer others every opportunity for debate and respect minority viewpoints, but I will observe and support the majority mandate of my union.

2009-10 State Budget Quick Summary

A 17-month state budget was approved by the Legislature and signed by Governor Schwarzenegger. Here is some preliminary information which is still subject to modifications. CTA and MVEA are analyzing the details.

The Budget Package includes:

- \$15 billion in spending cuts
- \$12.5 billion in new revenues
- \$11.4 billion in borrowing



K-12 Education

K-12 Education was cut more than \$11.6 billion in this budget package.

The Chart below details the total reductions. It does NOT include the 2008-09 statutory COLA reduction of \$3 billion approved in September 2008.

K-12 Reductions (in millions of dollars)			
<u>Reduction</u>	<u>2008-9</u>	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>Total</u>
.68 COLA	\$244		\$244
Revenue Limit COLA*		\$2,800	\$2,800
Additional Revenue Limit	\$944	\$944	\$1,888
Categorical (15%)	\$944	\$944	\$1,888
2009-10 Revenue Limit		\$265	\$265
2009-10 Categorical (4.9%)		\$265	\$265
Deferral	\$3,200		\$3,200
Settle up	\$1,100		\$1,100
TOTAL			\$11,650
*2008-9 Revenue Limit COLA was eliminated in the September Budget			

Prop. 98 Maintenance Factor Restoration

CTA led efforts to protect Proposition. 98. Budget Plan recognizes \$9.3 billion owed to schools as required by Proposition 98 and places a Constitutional Amendment on the special election ballot. It repays \$9.3 billion to school districts and community colleges over five years beginning in 2011-12. These payments are contingent upon the passage of the Budget Stabilization Fund, which is also on the special election ballot.

Class Size Reduction

K-3 Class Size Reduction was protected. For three years, the following new penalties will be in effect for districts that go over the student caps.

<u>Class Size</u>	<u>Financial Penalty</u>
20.5 to 21.5 (less than)	5%
21.5 to 22.5 (less than)	10%
22.5 to 23.0 (less than)	15%
23.0 to 25.0 (less than)	20%
25 or over	30%

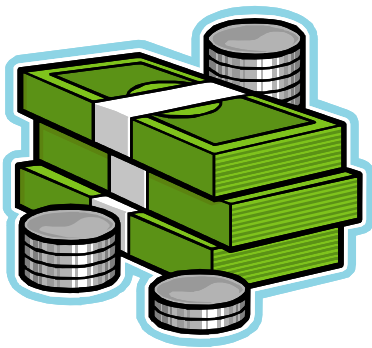


Categoricals

There are now three new tiers of categorical programs. With the exception of tier 1, there is an approximately 15% across-the-board reduction to all categorical programs. In 2008-09, the tier 2 and 3 categorical programs are cut by 15% or \$944 million, and in 2009-10, they are cut by an additional 4.9% or \$268 million.

- **Tier 1** – Includes Special Ed, Child Development, K-3 CSR, Economic Impact Aid, After School Programs, Home-to-School Transportation, Child Nutrition, Quality Education Investment Act and AVID.
- **Tier 2** – 15% reduction in 2008-09 and an additional 4.9% reduction in 2009-10. There are no flexibility options with these programs. Some of the programs included in Tier 2 are Student Assessment and Testing, Year Round Schools, English Learner Student Assistance, Apprentice Programs, Agricultural Vocational Education.
- **Tier 3** – 15% reduction in 2008-09 and an additional 4.9% reduction in 2009-10. There is complete flexibility for the district to use these funds as the district wishes. Adult Education, Regional Occupational Centers, High Priority School Grant Program and 9th Grade CSR are included in this tier.

The Department of Finance is compiling a complete list of all programs in each tier.



Revenues

- 1 percent increase in the sales tax
- Vehicle License Fee increase to 1.15 percent of the car's value
- Personal state income tax increase of 0.25 percent
- Reduces tax credit for dependents

Revenues are tied directly to the passage or failure of the Budget Stabilization Fund that will appear on the ballot in a statewide special election to be held May 19. If the BSF is approved by voters, then the revenues will stay in effect through the 2012-13 fiscal year. If the BSF is not approved by voters, then the revenue will stay in effect for only two years after enactment.

On the Ballot

All initiatives will be on May 19, 2009 Special Election, except for Open Primary.

- **Proposition 98 Maintenance Factor:** Asks voters to approve repayment of funding (\$9.3 billion) owed to local school districts and community colleges to restore recent budget cuts.
- **Budget Stabilization Fund:** Imposes a limit on the amount the state can spend each year based on state revenue over the previous 10-year period. Money above that amount would be saved in a rainy day fund. It is intended to smooth out revenues. Money from the rainy day fund is used to repay the \$9.3 billion owed to schools. The BSF does not change Prop 98, downsize government, or give the Governor the authority to make midyear budget cuts.
- **Modernize Lottery:** Asks voters to approve a \$10 billion plan to borrow against the lottery's future revenues over the next two fiscal years.
- **Proposition 10:** Allows state to divert use of First 5 money to other children's programs
- **Proposition 63:** Allows state divert use of some mental health moneys to pay for low-income child development programs.
- **Restricting Legislative Pay Increases:** that would keep legislators from getting pay raises in years when the state ran a budget deficit.
- **Open Primary:** Asks voters to create open primary system in CA. Top 2 vote-getters, regardless of party, would advance to the general election. (June 2010 ballot)



Board Approves Supplemental Employee Retirement Plan (SERP)



The MVUSD School Board approved a Supplemental Employee Retirement Plan known as SERP on February 24, 2009. In short, to be eligible

his/her final (year end) salary under one of the following options:

Option 1—Unmodified—Monthly cash payment for the participant's lifetime.

Option 2—Joint and Survivor—Reduced Joint and Survivor monthly payment paid for the participant's lifetime and beneficiary's lifetime.

Option 3—Life or 10 years—Modified monthly cash payment paid for the greater of 10 years or the participant's lifetime.

Option 5-15—Fixed Payments — Higher, fixed period payments based on the present value of the unmodified benefit, paid monthly for a fixed number of years. These options are guaranteed to pay out for a specific period.

In order for the SERP to be considered a "GO" 96 MVEA members

must agree to retire. In the event that participation does not meet the 96 eligible participants as of the enrollment deadline, the District will withdraw the incentive, provided that it notifies enrolled employees of the withdrawal on or before May 15, 2009. If the District withdraws the incentive, resignations will be automatically rescinded.

Katherine Underwood, MVEA Executive Board member, spoke to the Board asking them to approve the SERP. "On behalf of MVEA, I am urging you to approve the SERP for MVEA members and consider other retirement incentives only if they do not add to the deficit. Let's work together to save programs, money, and people."

More information will be coming out shortly, and there will be meetings to inform interested members.

for the SERP, a person must meet the following criteria:

1. 5 years of District service as of 6-30-09.
2. Age 55 with 5 years of STRS or PERS service as of 6-30-09, or age 50 with 30 years of STRS or PERS service as of 6-30-09.

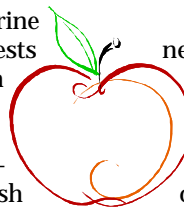
The way it works is as follows: A retired employee would receive 75% of

Katherine Underwood Elected NEA Director

One of MVEA's own, Katherine Underwood, has been elected NEA Director of District 11. She is currently MVEA's CTA State Council Representative to the Board. She will replace Patty Taylor on August 31, 2009.

It will be an asset to MVEA

Educators to have Katherine representing our local interests to the National Education Association. Katherine would like to thank MVEA and its members who supported her campaign. We wish her much success!



In other CTA State Council news, by a wave of the ballot, CTA State Council members unanimously re-elected CTA President David A. Sanchez and Vice President Dean E. Vogel to second, and final two-year terms beginning June 26, 2009.

CTA/NEA-Retired Membership



If you are thinking about retiring, or know of someone who has retired from education, you will find the following information useful:

As an active member of CTA and NEA, you have had access to many benefits of membership. Foremost has been protection and insurance, not only for your job, but also for your career. By joining CTA/NEA-Retired, you are af-

forded the same type of protection and insurance for your pension. This is because CTA/NEA-Retired is the only retiree organization affiliated with CTA and NEA.

Retired members are eligible for a one hour free legal consultation on matters concerning retirement benefits, health and welfare benefits, or substitute employment. This program has recently been expanded to include a one-half hour free legal consultation (once a year) on any other matter with a participating CTA Group Legal Services attorney. Membership in CTA/NEA-

Retired includes numerous other continuing benefits such as being able to continue to participate in Cal Casualty and First Financial programs and having one million dollars liability insurance while substituting.

Don't let your benefits lapse. Join CTA/NEA-Retired today! Annual dues are only \$42, or for a one-time payment of \$320 you can become a Lifetime member. To join, send a completed Enrollment Form (found in the CTA/NEA-Retired Membership brochure) with your payment to CTA in Burlingame.

NEA-Rep Assembly Voting Information

By Cathy Fulgenzi, MVEA Director of Communication

The National Education Association Representative Assembly (NEA-RA) is NEA's highest decision-making body. With over 9,000 voting delegates, the RA is the world's largest democratic deliberative body. It meets every July to debate issues that impact public education, elect NEA officers, approve the NEA budget, and set policy for the 3.2 million member Association, of which you, as a member of MVEA and CTA, are also a member of. This year the RA will be held July 1-6 in San Diego.

Delegates to the RA are elected by members in every state and local affiliate. Voting has now begun for the state sponsored delegates and will continue until April 3,

2009. Local delegate voting will be held next month at each site. By casting your vote, you have a say in who will best represent your interests on the issues. There are two methods to vote in this election, online or by mail. You can only vote once.

1. You may **vote online** by locating the San Gorgonio Service Center NEA Representative Assembly Election link in the MyCTA section of the cta.org website. First go to cta.org and log in to the CTA Members Login in the top, right hand corner. If you have not yet registered for MyCTA you will need your CTA membership number from your CTA membership card and a personal email address (do not use your District email ad-

dress). Your MyCTA password will be forwarded to your personal email address after registration. You will need to go back to the CTA website and use this password to log on to MyCTA. Once you have logged into MyCTA, you will need to locate the San Gorgonio Service Center Council NEA Representative Assembly Election link and follow the directions provided to vote.

2. You may **vote by mail** by calling (800) 218-4026 and requesting a mail-in ballot before March 23, 2009. You will need your CTA membership number to request a mail-in ballot. The mail-in ballot must be received on or before April 3, 2009.

Educator of the Month: Maureen Houlihan



Maureen Houlihan was MVEA's Educator of the Month for January. During her nineteen year career in Moreno Valley, she has taught all elementary grade levels. Her strength lies in finding ways to help all students flourish. She does this by varying her lessons so that all students can participate, by serving on the Student Study Team to develop improvement strategies for herself and other teachers, and by participating in North Ridge Elementary's pilot Response to Intervention program which provides extra instruction to students in the early years before they have a chance to fail. She is a resource in this area of intervention by constantly challenging her colleagues with in depth questions that keep them all on their toes examining best practices and research.

Maureen extends education beyond the classroom. She is involved in extra-curricular activities with students that connect education to business and community. She is a Girl Scout Leader who has been recognized as Outstanding Leader of the Year. Last year, she sponsored the Steam Team in which Fourth and Fifth graders worked after school to develop a microgravity experiment that won them the opportunity to fly on NASA's zero gravity aircraft, at the Johnson Space Center in Texas, to field test their experiment. That could be the highlight of anyone's teaching career, but Maureen will tell you that her job is her hobby, and she considers it a privilege whenever she can go the extra mile to ensure that students, both hers and others, are successful, happy, and reach their full potential. Her principal, Tony Knapp, describes Maureen as one of those teachers students remember for a lifetime.

Maureen has a life away from school. She enjoys reading, camping, and spending time with her husband and four daughters. Congratulations, Maureen!

**The Official Publication
of the Moreno Valley
Educators Association**

23025 Atlantic Circle, Suite A
Moreno Valley, CA 92553

Phone: 951-485-0545
Fax: 951-485-0353
Email: info@mveainfo.com

*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:

- **March 3** School Board mtg.
@ 6:30 **Wear BLACK!**
- **March 4** Rep. Council mtg.
@ 4:00
- **March 12** School Board mtg.
@ 7:00 **Wear PINK!**
- **March 13** Pink Friday



**Wear PINK to
Stand Up for Schools!**

- **March 17** St. Patrick's Day
- **March 19** School Board Study
Session @ 5:30
- **March 23—April 3**
Spring Break!



March 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 School Board 7pm Wear Black!	4 Rep Council 4 pm	5	6	7
8 Spring Forward!	9	10	11	12 School Board 7pm Wear Pink!	13 Stand Up for Schools Pink Friday, March 13, 2009 Wear Pink!	14
15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19 School Board Study Session 5:30/8	20	21
22	23 Spring Break	24 Spring Break	25 Spring Break	26 Spring Break	27 Spring Break	28 Spring Break
29 Spring Break	30 Spring Break	31 Spring Break				

MVEA Executive Board:

President	Janet MacMillan	Co-Director of Elementary	Andrea Chouinard
Vice-President	Connie Pruett	Co-Director of Elementary	Tim Hampton
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	
Director of Contract Maintenance	Harold Acord		Katherine Underwood
Director of Communication	Cathy Fulgenzi	CTA State Council Members	
Director of Human Rights	Danny Alvarez		Harold Acord, Janet MacMillan, Connie Pruett, Katherine Underwood
Director of Instruction & Prof. Dev.	Sharon Orme	CTA Board Rep. District O	Mikki Cichocki
Director of Member Services	José Alcalá	NEA Director District 11	Patty Taylor
Director of Political Action	Heather Gardner		