

MVEA Advocate

The Official Publication of the Moreno Valley Educators Association

MVEA Members Share

By Janet MacMillan, MVEA President

November 2009

Volume 20 Number 2

Each fall, MVEA holds a Leadership conference for Site Reps and Executive Board members. Trainings at this conference cover topics that Site Reps advise members on each year. This year, the conference included small focus groups in which Reps talked about their roles as educators and their expectations of MVEA. The discussions were rewarding and revealed areas that need to be explored in representing all of our membership well.

The Executive Board and Rep Council of MVEA have agreed that it is time to expand these focus groups to the sites so that your leadership is hearing directly from you. Your Reps will post a time for a 10 Minute Meeting when this will happen. They will ask you, in small groups, to share your thoughts on what drew you to education as a career, what values are common to all educators and what member engagement should involve? Your Reps will ask the questions and take notes, but you will do the talking. Your responses will be shared at the November Rep Council meeting and used in updating MVEA's programs.

This process parallels questions that California Teachers Association (CTA) President David Sanchez and the CTA

Board of Directors are asking about how to reconnect with members. They have requested that the local leaders talk with members and report the information gathered back to the Board of Directors. The goal for CTA is to consider the input from membership more directly in developing its policies and positions.

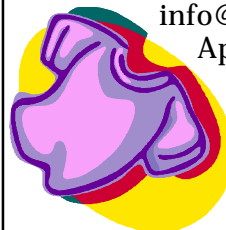


Look for a posting on your MVEA bulletin board that will let you know times when your site focus group meeting will occur. **Join in the conversation, and begin the process of establishing priorities for MVEA/CTA.**

MVEA/District Committee Openings

The District is planning to begin committees to revise the policies on student dress code and inter/intra district transfers. If you are interested in working on these committees, please call the MVEA Office or email info@MVEAinfo.com.

Appointments of members to these and other District committees are made by the MVEA President.



Inside this issue:

MVEA Members Share	1
MVEA/District Committee Openings	1
Two Roads Diverged	2
Who Decides?	3
Who's Transferring Whom?	4
Race to the Top Slows...	4
Exciting Events in Elementary	5
Middle School Spotlight	5
Discrimination	6
MVEA Social for Counselors	7
Educator of the Month	7
Important Dates	8

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MVEAinfo.com

Two Roads Diverged...

By Ann Adler, CTA Executive Director

I continue to harp on the state budget and its local impact because the woods remain thick with obstacles and thorns as the economy, while showing signs of recovery, is not likely to impact the state budget in a kindly way for one to two more years. Yes, one to two more years according to the experts.

Six months ago, MVEA settled the Contract negotiations in a tumultuous budget environment. The 2009-10 contract conditions remained intact with the exception of raising elementary class size to 22:1 at grades 1-3. This was significant because there are no contract guarantees for primary class size and absent the agreement, the District could raise classes to 30:1, which they had discussed doing.

Three months ago, the state re-adopted a budget with less revenue than had been expected, and all employees (MVEA, CSEA, and administration) rallied by accepting two "budget cut" days (furlough days) to make up the difference. There was a disagreement on the stabilization money and the School Board would not agree to spend it all to save the counselor program. Part of the stabilization money is being spent on the class size reduction at primary which is appreciated by parents whose students have smaller class size, and by the teachers who did not lose their jobs. In the end, due to enrollment, the teachers returned, but not all of the counselors.

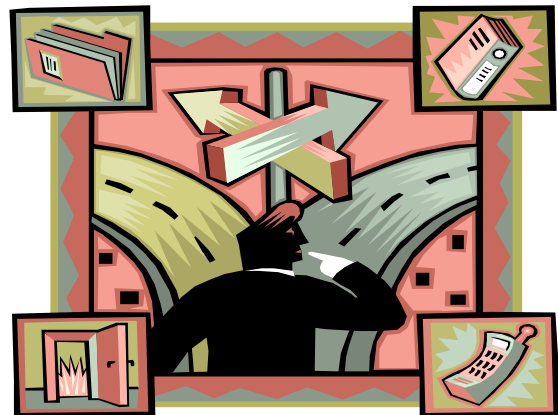
Now, **three months after the re-adopted state budget**, the state is figuring at least a \$1 billion shortfall. The state is now projecting a \$7.4 billion deficit for 2010-11, however, that was based on a balanced budget for 2009-10. Some experts are predicting as much as a \$15-20 billion shortfall for the 2010-11 and 2011-12 budget

years. Where that will leave schools is still to be determined. In addition, the Governor has not signed a bill that would have ensured the QEIA money. While there is another bill to rectify that, this is still worrisome. Benefit costs are likely to continue to grow each year. Employees do not expect to continue "budget cut days" and salary cuts if that can be avoided.

So where does that leave districts? In my opinion, hunker down and hold tight. Do not spend the swept categorical monies. If there is any unanticipated revenue, save it for now. Do not expand programs unless funding is restricted and cannot be swept. Watch the one-time funds for ongoing costs. **Spending today could force more "budget cut days," salary decreases, and program cuts tomorrow.**

HOW WILL THE POSSIBLE STATE BUDGET CUTS HURT THE MOST?

By BUSINESS AS USUAL in MVUSD!



**Two roads diverged in a yellow wood...
Take the one less traveled.**

**-What we save now may pay off
later for everybody.**

Who Decides?

By Anne Prows, MVEA Director of Political Action

- Core curriculum
- Topics for the District's Staff Development
- Monies that are swept to balance the budget
- Budget expenditures
- Layoffs
- The Local Education Agency Plan for the District
- Student expulsions
- Site Restructuring Plans
- Approval for consultants to MVUSD
- Ratification of the MVEA Contract besides MVEA members

ANSWER: The MVUSD School Board



There is POWER in Politics!

Get involved now.
Join the MVEA PAC.

Contact MVEA PAC at MVEAinfo.pac or call 951-485-0545

Who's Transferring Whom???

By Harold Acord, MVEA Director of Contract Maintenance

During the past few months, MVEA has become aware of various instances where the District has not followed the provisions in our Contract under the transfer article. Most of the situations center around members who are not classroom teachers.

Various departments at the District Office have taken it upon themselves to transfer our members without adhering to the contractual provisions regarding transfers. The Human Resources Department is the department which should be dealing with involuntary transfers. Our members have neither been notified in writing by Human Resources regarding their transfers as per Article XXI, Section 5 (d), nor have they been afforded the opportunity to meet with a Human Resources Division designee to discuss the impending transfer where the members can suggest alternatives to the transfer as guaranteed by Article XXI, Section 5(c) of the Contract.

Also, the District has not taken volunteers first as required. MVEA has also heard about our members being pressured by the District to seek voluntary transfers, which is forbidden in the Contract, Article XXI, Section 4(f).

Upon learning about the above instances of Contract violations by the District, MVEA immedi-

ately filed an Association grievance regarding transfers. MVEA wants to work with the District to ensure that when and if involuntary transfers occur, that the provisions in the Contract are followed. Therefore, this issue has been brought up in our Problem Solving meetings and other meetings with District leaders.

The guarantees in the Contract exist so that our members' rights are adhered to by following the some process for everyone. The process delineated in the Contract also affords our members the right to meet with Human Resources and suggest alternatives to the transfer. Human Resources is the department identified in the Contract for dealing with transfers. Other District departments getting involved in this process only affords opportunities for errors in the process, thus taking away our members' contractual rights.

MVEA looks forward to this issue being settled in our members' favor in the near future. Please stay tuned as this issue goes through the Problem Solving and Grievance processes. Remember, our rights only go as far as we enforce them and insist upon them.

In Solidarity, Harold Acord

MVEA Director of Contract Maintenance



Race to the Top Slows for Careful Review

From CTA.org

The California Teachers Association (CTA) leads the effort to inform lawmakers and policymakers about the problems with the federal "Race to the Top" grant regulations and the implications for California students and schools.

The deluge of responses, including those by CTA and the National Education Association (NEA), to the proposed regulations for federal Race to the Top grants so overwhelmed the U.S. Department of Education, that it has delayed adopting final regulations to allow more time for review. The rush to qualify for federal Race to the Top grants would require overhauling California's content standards and creating a new state testing system, mandate that teacher evaluations be based "significantly" on student test scores, limit options to help lower-

performing schools and allow unlimited expansion of unregulated charter schools.

CTA leaders meeting with U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan, members testifying at legislative hearings, lobbying visits and the formal responses to Secretary Duncan all had an impact on the Department of Education's decision to slow the process. Throughout the state, educators are mobilizing to urge legislators to delay any action until a comprehensive analysis and healthy debate is completed about Race to the Top's adverse impact on students, educators and schools. The proposed regulations

for "Race to the Top" are all too similar to the failed policies of the "No Child Left Behind Act." Any changes to education policy should be carefully considered.



Exciting Events in Elementary!

By Kathy Parrish, MVEA Co-Director of Elementary

Our cooling October temperatures and changing leaves were wonderful backdrops for Fall Carnivals and Festivals. Schools enjoying this fun family outreach included Rainbow Springs, Ridge Crest, Seneca and TownGate, while Armada trained their parents at Math Night. Students at TownGate beat the staff at their FNL (Friday Night Live Kids) Volleyball Game and are already practicing for their annual FNL Football Game.

Congratulations to all elementary sites that improved their AYP scores!

We would love to hear what your site is doing. Please contact Kathy Parrish or Patricia Gómez at KParrish@mveainfo.com or PGomez@mveainfo.com with updates about your school's events. Elementary Rocks!



Middle School Spotlight

By Mike Sorter, MVEA Director of Middle School

Welcome to the 2009-2010 school year! We seem to have gotten this school year off to a great start even given the unfortunate budget crisis.

It has been some time since I have written an article for The Advocate. For those who do not know me, I have been teaching at Landmark Middle School since it opened in 1991. Currently, I teach 7th grade World History. Last year I was the On Campus Suspension teacher. This is my third year as Director of Middle School. Before that, I was MVEA's Director of Member Services for eight years. I have also served on the District Discipline Committee for ten years.

Just a little housekeeping—Site Representatives: Please make sure that your site has a Budget Committee up and running. It is very important for Educators to have in-

put on budget decisions at your site, which you are guaranteed by contract. Also, you should have a site Discipline Review Committee. If you need assistance with any middle school issue, please e-mail me at MSorter@mveainfo.com, whether the issue is a union one or otherwise. I will see if I can lend any assistance or I will refer you to someone else who will be able to help.

I would like to hear about some of the great things happening at your middle school. Please e-mail me at MSorter@mveainfo.com with your information. At Landmark Middle School, we are very pleased to have a former teacher back as our new principal this year—Chris Schiermeyer.

Have a great school year and keep in touch. I hope to make visits to all of our middle schools soon to talk with some of our awesome middle school MVEA members!

Discrimination...Something to think about

By Ann Adler, CTA Executive Director

"The soul that is within me, no man can degrade."
– Frederick Douglass

Discrimination comes in many forms: obvious racism, insensitive remarks about gender equity, unconscious prejudice toward a race, comments about another's sexual orientation, and so on. Sometimes these actions are deliberate and other times not. Either way, this topic, while uncomfortable for some, is worth pausing to think about.

In the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the Association and District have agreed: *Neither the District nor the Association, to the extent required by applicable law, will discriminate against any employee on the basis of race, color, creed, age, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, political affiliation, place of residence, disability, marital status, membership or lack thereof in an employee organization (except as affected by Article VI), or participation or lack thereof in an employee organization.*

The Moreno Valley Unified School District also has Board policy. It says: *The Board is committed to equal opportunity for all individuals in education. District programs and activities shall be free from discrimination based on gender, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, ethnic group, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation or the perception of one or more*

characteristics. The Board shall promote programs which ensure that discriminatory practices are eliminated in all District activities.

Under District Administrative regulations, unlawful discrimination or harassment of an individual includes: slurs, threats, epithets, verbal abuse, derogatory or degrading comments, descriptions, drawings, pictures, or gestures as well as unwelcome jokes, teasing, taunting as well as any verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct against an individual which ...has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with his or her work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

In addition to the above, there are laws that require educators to treat all people (other adults and students) equally, and with dignity, while at work. Federal regulations enforce that in the area of gender, particularly. Girls and boys are to be treated with the same expectations and not separated out except for certain contact sports. There are laws about sexual harassment, and as an educator, one may be disciplined for inappropriate comments or behavior toward other employees or any students. California law prohibits educators from permitting discrimination based on one's sexual orientation and places the responsibility on educators to enforce this law at the worksite. For example, an employee may be punished

for allowing students to call names in regard to one's sexual orientation. The same holds true for allowing fellow educators to be called names in regard to one's sexual orientation.

In today's world, one cannot be too careful and thoughtful regarding one's attitude toward others. A simple remark about boys doing better than girls on a math test needs to be based on fact or not said at all. Hearing students call other students or another teacher "gay" is unacceptable. **As an educator, you are required to put an end to such behavior.** Failure to do so may result in a verbal or written reprimand (or worse). Negative racial or cultural remarks have no place in education and tend to invite public complaints, at the very least. One can be punished severely either by the District or by the courts.

The bottom line is this: most people do not mean to offend or hurt others with their remarks or actions. Take some time to think about your comments and behaviors toward students and colleagues. Think about what you say and how others perceive your comments. Following and enforcing the laws are easy if you merely practice treating others with dignity and respect all the time and are conscious of how you say and do things.

**We are stronger when
we all respect each other
and work together.**

MVEA Social for Counselors

By Sharon Orme, MVEA Director of Instruction and Professional Development

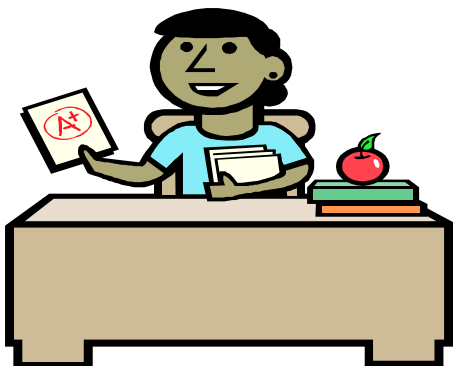
MVEA is having a Social for our Counselors on Thursday, November 5th, at 3:30 at Canyon Springs High School. There will be refreshments and a PowerPoint presentation by Harold Acord on credentialing options.



Educator of the Month: Bernice Johnson

Bernice Johnson was MVEA's Educator of the Month for September. She is a Head Start teacher at Edgemont Elementary School. Moreno Valley's program is exemplary because of the dedication of staff such as Bernice Jackson.

To work in a preschool program, one must wear many hats as Bernice does. The teacher must be sensitive to the developmental levels of three- and four-year-olds, as well as deliver a standards-based curriculum. Bernice uses Houghton Mifflin for math and language arts so there is a consistent program between preschool and kindergarten. The teachers instruct the program's concepts while keeping very young children motivated and on-task. Bernice builds time for hands-on activities and P.E. while teaching her students pre-reading skills, language development and math. She assesses them multiple times a year through standardized tests and observational logs.



If you visit Bernice's classroom, you will see four year-olds who know the routine. They rotate to centers where they work with parent volunteers, instructional assistants and teachers, and then onto independent practice. Bernice monitors these transitions quietly by holding up the number five. Within five minutes they are ready for the next activity. The Kindergarten teachers at Edgemont report that Bernice's students are well-prepared for Kindergarten.

In addition to excellent classroom management and instructional strategies, Bernice is a resource to her colleagues. She is finishing her Master's degree and shares new developments in early childhood education with them. Bertha Bravo, her supervisor, says that she is an active participant in Professional Learning Community and leadership activities.

The families that Bernice serves value her as a trusted friend. She is always available to listen. She knows the community and refers her families to food banks, transportation/housing assistance, and parenting classes, many of which she teaches.

Bernice spends her free time with her daughters and grandchildren. She is active in her church and plans to add golf to her list of hobbies. Congratulations, Bernice, on being selected as **MVEA's Educator of the Month!**

The Official Publication of the

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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:

- **Nov. 1** Daylight Savings time ends—Fall back!
- **Nov. 4** Executive Board meeting @ 4:00
- **Nov. 11** Veteran's Day
- **Nov. 12, 13** Elementary Budget Cut Days
- **Nov. 17** School Board meeting @ 7:00
- **Nov. 18** Rep. Council meeting @ 4:00
- **Nov. 23-27** Thanksgiving Break



November 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1  Daylight Savings Fall Back!	2	3	4  Exec. Board 4 pm	5	6	7
8	9	10	11  Veteran's Day	12  Elem. Budget Cut Day	13  Elem. Budget Cut Day	14
15	16	17  School Board 7pm	18  Rep Council 4 pm	19	20	21
22	23 Thanksgiving Break	24 Thanksgiving Break	25 Thanksgiving Break	26  Thanksgiving Break	27 Thanksgiving Break	28
29	30					

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		