

President's Update 3/30 to 4/3

An Appreciation

I am incredibly proud of the way our educators have responded to the stressful and ever-changing setting in which we teach. The reactions and adjustments have been overwhelmingly positive and adaptive. The change in "setting" demanded an alteration in "mindset." And that's exactly what we did. Stressful experiences do not always result in trauma; they have the capability of creating great responses as well.

Thank you to all the educators who dedicated themselves to reimagining and innovating how they deliver his/her curriculum.

Thank you to administrators who worked overtime to develop organized pathways and reasonable expectations for his/her staff to follow.

Thank you to the District for taking the deliberative and patient road towards distance learning, and affording your educators this week to train, collaborate, and plan.

Last but certainly not least, thank you so much to MEA site reps for their continuing communication with MEA leadership.

Distance Learning MOU

Attached is the collectively bargained Memorandum of Understanding between MEA and MUSD. Jake Anderson provided a first draft. Then Lisa McCarter and I made it more "Moorpark friendly." MEA submitted our version to MUSD prior to Spring Break. After both sides gathered input from teachers and administrators, on Wednesday, Lisa, Jake, Dr. Lasure, Dr. Hays, and hammered out an agreement that creates the general parameters of our new work conditions. This agreement reflects the latest information that both sides have received from Federal, State, and County channels. As I have mentioned to MEA reps, the overarching themes were teacher availability and administrative flexibility. The preamble to the MOU calls attention to the fluidity of this situation. In sum, if we need to change anything in the agreement due to added insight or alteration in government expectations, we will.

Remaining Concerns

As I write this, key questions remain concerning student accountability, equity, and accessibility. The County Superintendents met late yesterday afternoon to specifically discuss graduation and grading. I expect MUSD to announce its grading policy soon, maybe by the end of the day today. This is what the CDE has to say about grading:

The decision of whether or not to require graded work from students is a local one. There are a variety of considerations for local educational agencies (LEAs) to weigh as they review their grading policies during the transition to distance

learning. LEAs should weigh their policies with the lens of equity and with the primary goal of first, doing no harm to students. Further, the distance learning grading plan that LEAs adopt in the short term, may differ from a plan that is created for the long term (4/1/2020).

MEA has discussed the matter of grading at length with the District. We are aware that individual districts throughout CA have implemented varying policies. We are confident that the District will choose the most effective and equitable policy moving forward.

I am remiss if I don't discuss the unresolved matter of equity. There are times when a solution does not solve a problem. The sad truth of this matter is that no matter how hard we try as classroom instructors, no matter how many hours we put in making packets or altering our methodology to reach as many students as possible, we are not going to solve the greater socio-economic issues that confront many of our families in our community. The best we can do has to be good enough.

Bargaining and MEA Activities

MEA will attempt to resume bargaining with the District as well as conducting union business via Google Meet in the next two weeks. At a minimum, MEA would like to complete the update of the collective bargaining agreement and finalize counseling language. We will have to figure out how we are going to vote from a distance. As for salary and benefits, we may have to wait longer than usual to hear from the State due to the pushing back of the tax filing deadline to June. I will keep you posted on this for sure.

Stay safe and well.

Brian