

President's Update 1-21 to 1-25

Hi everyone. Here's some of what's going on.

Upcoming MEA/CTA Advisory

Next, week MEA will issue an advisory on how to deal with student video and/or audio recording in your classroom. We will offer specific language to include in your management plans, and CTA's advice on how to manage devices that have the capability to record. We will also update you on progressive disciplinary steps for defiant students. Remember, despite the change in the laws governing student suspension, a classroom teacher retains the right to suspend a student from his/her class for two days. MEA will also press the District to establish a chain of communication for dealing with parental complaints. We need to find an effective process that affords parents and students a voice *and* provides teachers, as professional educators, the support that they earned.

Bargaining Report

At last negotiations MEA and MUSD powered through an overhaul of the majority of our collective bargaining agreement. Mostly, we updated antiquated language and adjusted the contract to match current labor law and education code. We still have a few articles left, but we got over the hump this week. We are also working diligently to codify the working conditions for our school counselors.

As for money, in short, MUSD's First Interim Budget was like a bed full of lice- lousy. And, although the Governor's December budget proposal provides greater funding than last year, many of the increases are one-time and/or categorical money that MUSD may not qualify for. In other words, a district may receive more money, but the funding may last for a year or the State directs it towards a certain program. For example, the Governor proposed a 15% increase in SPED spending; however, the pot comes from left over money from last year, and is not on-going. MUSD must project its budgets "out" two years into the future to demonstrate its fiscal responsibility and viability to the Ventura County Office of Education. MUSD doesn't know if the SPED increase is going to be there for 2021-22, so it cannot project it into its future budgets.

The Governor proposed more money for Average Daily Attendance (ADA). This money comes from Proposition 98 funds. Prop 98 is the "pie" that feeds the majority of public school funding in CA. While ADA money went up, MUSD's student attendance declined by 55 kids this year. The Governor also proposed a 2.29% Cost of Living Increase (COLA) for public education. While any COLA is good news, recall that all public school districts' obligation to STRS continue to rise and will do so for another two years. This increase will cost the District about \$150,000 more in 2020-21 than it did in 2019-20. Equally as salient, MUSD used a projected COLA of 3.0% to calculate its First Interim Budget. Why? Because that's what the state projected (recall last year COLA ended up being 3.26%--and that was less than what the Governor proposed in December of 2018). A COLA of 2.29% means that, if the First Interim numbers are correct, MUSD will have about \$368,000 less than it anticipated next year. The Department of Finance projects COLA slightly lower than 3% for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 as well.

So I don't lose you in the weeds of financing, the price of a 1% raise solely for certificated staff in 2019-20 will cost the District \$465,000.

Here's one way to look at negotiations: MEA cannot bargain how much money MUSD gets; we can bargain how the MUSD allocates the money that it receives.

With the bargaining challenges understood, at the February 19th negotiations, MEA will submit its 2019-20 salary proposal. MEA will propose a reasonable augmentation to salary, among other things. Our Bargaining Team will introduce and explain the proposal at our next Rep Council meeting on February 6th. After that meeting, MEA will post the offer on its website and offer a detail rationale for each of its elements.

Elections

Our Election Chair, Rosana Meisterling, should be ready to distribute timelines for nominations and the voting window for all MEA leadership positions in early February. It is my pleasure to announce that the current MEA Leadership Team has committed to run again after the nomination window is open.

Have a great weekend!

Brian