

## President's Message 10-21 to 10-25

### Site Visits

A special thanks to those members who attended the President's (and sometimes Jake's) visits. Thank you Site Reps for all you do. I appreciate the welcome! MEA is stronger when we hear more voices. The real power of a public employee association is its people. Leadership has to hear what's going on to be effective. Please feel free to email, call, or schedule a meeting with your Site Rep, MEA leader, or with me. Participation, even in the form of anger and frustration, is more productive than apathy. The most common theme, no surprise, is that our members desire more money. The refrain that rang consistently from the elementary schools was the amount of additional work demands that 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers have. The target class size for 4/5 is 32. The TK-3 target ratio is 24:1. The result is our 4/5 teachers have 25% more report cards and, therefore, more conferences than their primary colleagues and the same time allowed in which to complete them.

### March 3, 2020 Bond

At Tuesday's School Board meeting, MUSD released the full text of its ballot proposition. As president I will be recommending to rep council and executive board that we fully support it. Even if our association was philosophically opposed to bonds, local parcel taxes, or the debt that bonds create (bonds must be paid back with interest), given the present state of California's funding system for its public schools, bonds are the sole recourse for District's to pay for major repairs, renovations, and updates for its facilities. Recall that 90% of all MUSD's expenses go to employees' salaries and benefits. The other 10% goes all other operations, including supplies and maintenance. The State rarely allocates cash to fund facilities upkeep. The cold truth is that the amount Sacramento provides is not nearly enough to make basic repairs, maintain current technology, and keep campuses safe and secure. If there is another way to fund the maintenance of our public schools, please let me know. Here are some of the more pertinent details (all citations come directly from the proposition):

- ✓ The measure authorizes \$96 million to "repair deteriorating roofs, plumbing, electrical; remove hazardous materials, improve safety/security, labs, classroom, technology for math, science, engineering, arts, skilled trade, college readiness instruction."
- ✓ The objectives of the bond are to improve "the quality of education in" Moorpark's "local schools." The bond ties all funding to this end.
- ✓ The bond explicitly prohibits the use of money for ". . . teacher and school administrator salaries and other operating expenses."
- ✓ The proposition does state that some of the bond money can be used to fund "class size reduction." If this bond passes, MEA will no doubt fight for this.
- ✓ Accompanying the bond is a built-in nexus of local control and fiscal responsibility, "including a clear system of accountability, a project list detailing how the money will be used, a citizen's oversight committee, and independent audits to ensure money is spent properly."

Let's get out in front of this measure. When talking to Moorpark residents, please dissuade them of any talk of salary padding or augmentations to teacher pensions. This bond concerns facilities—our

classrooms included—not wallets. **In fact, the bond, by law, cannot be used for our salaries or benefits.**

### **Refresher Course Concerning Media**

Thank you, my office mate and landlady, SEA President Amanda Hogan, for hoarding everything from 3-ring binders to CTA presentations, and for generously sharing this valuable social media advice. Most of what I will share is common sense, and the majority of educators are judicious and prudent with his/her social media use. These are just gentle, friendly reminders from MEA/CTA:

- Don't friend kids
- Avoid sharing your cell phone number with students
- Don't friend parents of students
- Lock down your privacy settings
- Consistently check your pages to ensure that they are "clean"
- Do not post pictures of your vacation while on sick leave and do not post pictures that may offend a parent (use the "Grandma rule"—don't post anything that might upset your Nana)
- Do not post about students, parents, or colleagues unless it is decidedly positive. Never post a kid's name (we've had instances when a parent was upset that her child was not mentioned in a positive post about another child)
- Take a time out or a deep breath prior to posting—ask yourself why am I doing this? and who is going to see it? before pressing send

Remember,

- You do not, in your capacity as a classroom instructor and/or public school district employee, have unbridged 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment rights. Because the students are a "captive audience," and because you represent the State, your free speech is limited.
- There is no expectation of privacy for District-owned property. In 2000, I was awarded a James Madison Fellowship. I tried to send a thank you note to a professor via District mail. A business office secretary opened it up, read it, sent it back to me, and wrote in the letter, "unacceptable use of District mail." The CBO at the time, Larry Brown, told me in no uncertain terms, "You have no right to privacy on District campuses." He was wrong with his intent of blocking the email, but not wrong about privacy, but I trust you get my point.
- Ed Code states that you need parent consent to record students, and students may not record you or your class proceedings without your knowledge or consent; however, if a student records your class, administration can use it against you in disciplinary proceedings even if he/she did so in violation of Ed Code.
- The District owns your District-provided laptop, email, account, and any other District-provided technology
- You most likely signed an acceptable use policy, and are subject to the District's policies concerning technology use (MEA are currently negotiating an acceptable use policy that is acceptable to MEA)

- Although the District does not monitor your technology usage on a daily basis, it is safer to assume that they are nosy and that they do monitor your use.
- When communicating with Association leadership it is safer to use your personal email and MEA's, for example, email address (ours is [mrpkea@gmail.com](mailto:mrpkea@gmail.com), by the way)

### **Bargaining Update**

On Monday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, Lisa McCarter's team met with MUSD. The teams tackled Article I, II, XIII, and XV of the collective bargaining agreement, as well as, attempted to hammer out details of the Counselor's contract language. The school counselor's project is going to be a process . . .

Have a great weekend!

Brian