

President's Message 12-16 to 12-20

I hope that you and your families have a wonderful holiday season. Happy Hanukah, Merry Christmas, awesome Kwanza, a robust Festivus, and happy new year to you all!

Community Engagement Grant Mixer

On January 16th, 2020 at 4pm at Enegren's Brewery in Moorpark, MEA will host a get together funded by our Community Engagement Grant. The purpose of the party, and the grant in general, is to facilitate improved association communication and interaction with our community. Your Executive Board organized this as an opportunity for members and other stakeholders to communicate with MEA leadership. MEA will invite PTSA, School Board, and City Council members to join us. You can also come just to hang out and have a free beverage and some food if you are not in the mood to talk shop.

First Interim Budget

I have to admit that I really dislike First Interim Reports. They are usually dire and, often unrepresentative of the assets that the District may have in June. They are like getting a lousy 5 card poker hand out of a deck of 52 cards. To be fair, there is no hidden agenda in the District's report. The main problem with First Interim Budget Reports is that they are a projection of a future estimated itemized allotment of funds. Additionally, the way California sets up its funding system, requires that local school districts issue these budgets a month or more prior to the Governor's own proposed budget. Compounding the messiness, school districts must project, using flat and/or unknown funding, two years into the future. The First Interim budget guess often look far worse than what occurs in actuality. Still, they can cause consternation and make bargaining more difficult.

MEA has several questions for MUSD concerning the First Interim numbers. Jake Anderson has already emailed our inquiry to Latasha Jamal. I will schedule a meeting with her as soon as possible. As you recall, MEA, while respecting the constraints of the District's budgetary process, prefers to use real numbers rather than projections. MEA compares MUSD's 2019-20 First Interim calculations to the District's 2018-19 year-end unaudited actual numbers.

Here is a brief summary of the report. If you would like to see the full report, it is available on the District's website.

- The SB approved a positive certification for MUSD. This means that the District believes that it can meet its financial obligations for this year and two years in the future
- The District shows about a \$2.1 million deficit (expenses are greater than revenues) for its 2019-20 First Interim Budget
- The District will transfer Redevelopment Agency (RDA) funds of \$3.5 million to offset the deficit. Every savvy school district saved extra money in 2018-19 to meet their increased obligation to STRS and PERS. As you recall, MEA was aware and approved saving more than the required 3%.
- The District is down 56 students from 2018-19 to 2019-20

I assure you that the District is not in arrears. In short, on Monday night, the District told the School Board is that if State funding stays static, expenditures will exceed revenue by \$2.1 million for 2019-20. MUSD has the cash stored to cover the potential shortfall for at least this year and two years beyond. Simi USD's First Interim was comparably lousy.

Let's get some answers from the District, enjoy our Winter Breaks, and wait until after Governor Newsome comes out with his January Budget proposal before we get too agitated.

In the meantime, enjoy your time off!

Brian