

President's Update 5-11 to 5-15-2020

Hello everyone. Again, I hope everyone is staying safe and well.

Budget

The Governor issued his May Revise yesterday. It is a somber and sobering reminder that we all suffer during this pandemic. I encourage you to view this allocation of funds through a wider lens at this point. The nation's gross national product (GNP) decreased somewhere between 26 and 40% since January. California's entire budget is running a \$54 billion deficit. The three major sources of revenue—sales tax, income tax, and corporate taxes—have all declined about 25%. CA lost \$19 billion dollars in revenue in 4 months! CA has spent \$13 billion combating COVID-19. Proposition 98, which is the primary funnel for the flow of money to schools, is down \$6 billion. The Governor trimmed the LCFF by 10% to the tune of \$6.5 billion. He also cut a wide swath of grants, including but not limited to child nutrition, partnership academies, CTE, Adult Ed, and SPED preschool. He also will defer payments to Local Educational agencies (LEA), such as MUSD. This means that our district will receive its money later than usual. But what this really means is that too many people are hurting financially.

The news was not entirely bad. Although it will not receive COLA, SPED ADA funding is still going up to \$645 per student. The Governor also suspended the increased STRS obligation that LEAs would have had to pay in 2020-21. This should save MUSD the equivalent of about 2% in its total expenditures for salary. Certificated educators were also exempt from the proposed 10% pay reduction that the Governor proposed for State employees.

The Governor made no mention of furloughs, reduction in instructional days/minutes, or additional layoffs. We can be encouraged by the fact that we're not hearing anything about these extreme cost-cutting measures now. Next week, MEA will get a much better idea of how the funding will affect our district. With more exacting information on the way, I am not going to spend any time today speculating. As former President Bush used to say, "It wouldn't be prudent at this juncture."

It is possible that CA will receive more Federal funding. The House of Reps is scheduled to vote on a bill that could potentially fill the funding gap in the LCFF. Please consider contacting your representative to encourage them to vote in favor of the HEROES Act.

Phone Number- 1-855-977-1770

Ask #1- Ask them to support providing at least \$175 billion for the Education Stabilization Fund to distribute to states.

Ask #2- Ask them to support \$2 billion for the E-Rate program to close the homework gap.

Possible script for you to use:

"Hi, my name is [First and Last Name] and I am a constituent of [CongressPerson]. I live in [City]. I am calling to urge his/her support for the \$175 Billion Education Stabilization Fund and The \$2 Billion E-Rate Program. I am a [Position] in [District] and we desperately need those funds as we look at impending budget cuts. Thank you very much for our support of Public Education."

Next School Year

There is no one plan for next year's schooling. This doesn't mean that MUSD and MEA, independently and jointly, are not planning. MUSD is involved with a 5-district "task force" that is collaboratively developing blueprints for August. MEA is collaborating with its UNISERV partners to create bargaining strategies and parameters for work conditions for when we return to work. We met this morning, and we will meet again on Tuesday afternoon. Unfortunately, our group doesn't have as cool a moniker like *task force* . . . yet. Regardless, our mission is to protect our members health and jobs. In short, there is no way that we will send our members or our children into a salad bowl drenched in COVID-19 dressing.

As for MEA and MUSD, we return to the bargaining table on Monday. I have informed our team that we will negotiate during the summer months. We have so many questions and very few concrete answers right now. This means that the District and MEA must contend with multiple equations with an abundance of variables. Last, it is important to note that staffing for next year is going to be difficult for the District to project. The process will be protracted because the District may not know about student enrollment and ADA until the first day of school. They will survey the community soon to get a better idea of what parents are thinking for next year.

Check Out Procedures

Jake and I met with MUSD's Facilities Director and CBO concerning the end of this year. The FD admitted that the District has been lax in its enforcement of its check-out procedures. MEA was informed that this year, MUSD *will* enforce its check-out protocols. In a normal year (do you remember what normal was like?), the District's rationale would be pretty legitimate: there are some classrooms that are in violation of Ed Code and/or fire code. These violations lead to higher insurance rates as well as safety issues. This year, clearing our classrooms is vital. The District wants to begin deep cleaning as soon as they can. The expectation is that teacher's will return to his/her classroom to get as much stuff out and/or out of the way, so that the maintenance staff can clean as well as possible. Your principal will help you schedule your appearance at the school. I have been assured that you will be safe (maintenance will disinfect before and after you arrive) and principal's will be accommodating of your work and child care schedule. Please let me know if you have any issues with what's being asked of you. The District's cleaning will be different this year. They need to "truly clean" our campuses. Let's work with MUSD to make our classrooms as safe as possible for you and your students.

I know this is an awful time no matter how much we try to make the best of it. MEA is working on your behalf to protect jobs and ensure your safety and wellness. Please try to create boundaries between your personal and professional life, and enjoy the fresh air when you can. As soon as I get more concrete information, I will get to you as soon as I can.

Enjoy your weekend!

Brian