

President's Message 8-21 to 8-25-2020

Welcome back! I sincerely wish that I did not have to greet you from a distance and that our return to work was not under such extraordinary circumstances. These are truly the times that try our souls, our patience, and our sanity. We're all attempting to meet the demands of our situation, and rise above them. In the attempt, we expend so much more time and energy that we normally do. Please take care of yourself. We all know that we have a job to do. Teaching is as close as there is a noble endeavor that we have in our culture. Do what you need to do to stay well as our jobs, COVID, fires and whatever else the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" send our way.

School Reopening

As you may know, Ventura County announced that its school districts can apply for a waiver to return to its respective campuses. There are multiple strands and political cross-purposes involved in this process. I will not expand upon them in this forum. As of today, MUSD has not applied for a waiver. Recall that MUSD will reexamine its distance learning format on September 8th. My understanding is that the District is in no hurry to return. The decision is a school board decision. If you are concerned about the efficacy of a return, reach out to the trustees. Our working conditions are negotiable, but, the MUSD School Board, can order us back to work if the county deems it safe. Regardless of when this occurs, the process for a return will take weeks. If mandated to return, MEA will negotiate the safest possible work conditions. We will not sign off on the return unless we are satisfied that the sites are safe.

Canvas

This is my advice as your representative: teach your class from a distance in a manner that best benefits your students' academic, social, and personal wellness. Manage your class by way of Canvas. It is an LMS, a learning management system. How you convey your curriculum, how you deliver your instruction is your call, because you are the expert. Let's stay committed to learning how to use Canvas. Let's also allow the District to try to fix whatever the bugs are and, together, let's try to locate Canvas' limitations with the expressed goal of working together to foster learning. The alternatives benefit no one. Relay information to me, your site reps, and to your principals. Fill out Help Desks to let Dave Roberts and staff know what's going on.

Upcoming

I sent out an updated list of MEA officers and his/her contact information as well as meeting dates to reps. If you haven't received this document, please email your site rep. I am so pleased to welcome Erin Hanley (representing MS) and Scott Easley (representing 4-5) to the bargaining table. Dyan McIntosh moves from bargaining to our Executive Board.

Next week MEA hosts prospective District 5 School Board candidates. We co-host (as of today) 37 new educators at the New Teacher Orientation. I look forward to meeting all of our new employees. And, yes, I hope they all join MEA! Our first Rep Council meeting is Thursday, the 3rd, at 3:45pm.

Best,

Brian

