MEA October 2024 Update

Hi members. October and May are the dog days of their respective semesters. Have no fear (except on Halloween), November and the holiday season are on their way!

# Membership

Thank you again to the dedicated and unflagging efforts of our site representatives to get our new educators signed up for MEA. We’ve signed 42 new folks. We’re not done yet!

Another reminder to our new teachers that CTA offers a $300 grant to set up their classrooms. Word is that the application process is pretty simple and the money arrives in short order.

In addition, the Delta Kappa Gamma (international women teachers association) Moorpark chapter has three teacher grants of $300 each available.  These can be used for classroom projects or equipment and are for female teachers regardless of experience.  Please contact Nancy Cooper, ngrbm@aol.com; 805-660-2188 for an application.  Any female teacher in the Moorpark Unified School District is eligible.  The deadline to turn in applications is December 1, 2024.

# MUSD’s 2023-24 Unaudited Actuals

In late September, as required by the State of California, MUSD issued its accounting for last year, also known as Unaudited Actuals (UA). The UAs show us MUSDs budget numbers from 2023-24 and the District’s projected expenses for 2024-25 school year as well. In December ’24, MUSD will its offer Revised First Interim Budget. This will reflect projected COLA increases and have more accurate assessment of 2024-25 costs. In January ’25, The Governor will issue his proposed 2024-25 State Budget. Once we see Governor Newsom’s proposed budget, MEA can really get rolling at the negotiating table.

Without getting too deep into the budget weeds, here are some of the more relevant highlights from the 2023-24 UAs:

* Average Daily Attendance (ADA) for 2023-24 was 5,616
* Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF)/ADA funding was $68,565, 683
	+ LCFF/ADA funding = 75% of total MUSD funding
* MUSD’s total revenue was $91,012,264; it’s expenditure = $91,055,192
* Health Care Benefits (HCB) = 8.94% of total expenditures (down from 9.58%; retiree expenses down as well)
* Salaries + Benefits (HCB + STRS + Other Benes) = $76,680,691 or 83% of total MUSD expenses
* ’24-25 Cost of a 1% raise for certificated staff = $296,656
* ’24-25 total cost of hiring 6 new teachers (1 extra teacher per elementary school) is about $712,000 or the equivalence a 2.4% raise for all certificated staff
* The average salary in MUSD is now about $81,000 (with benefits, average total compensation is over $118,000)
* Services and Other Operations up from $11.6 million to $14.5 million
	+ This category of expenses includes but is not limited to lawyers, consultants, and outside staffing
* SPED costs = $15.5 million or 17% of total expenditures
* MUSD ended the year with significant restricted and unrestricted $ in its ending balance and little over 3% in its required cash reserve

In summation, MUSD is as fiscally healthy as they’ve been in more than a decade. It’s the State’s finances that concerns us.

# State Funding and Budget

As I have mentioned in prior notices, the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) from the State is a meager 1.07%. This is a historically low amount. MUSD receives the vast majority of its funding from ADA and the LCFF. COLA, broadly speaking, adds money to the amount MUSD receives from these two primary sources. Here’s the potential problem: if our ADA goes down (we have less students and/or a lower percentage of students attending school), we can potentially lose money even when the COLA goes up. For example, if MUSD loses 2% of its ADA, it will cost the District $600,000 in funding (the CA offers about $12,000 per pupil funding). The good news is that while our ADA is down, it is above projections; the bad news is that the projected COLA for ’24-25 is so low that it will most likely be a net loss for MUSD.

Overall, the US experienced positive growth in the second quarter of the year, and the tax revenue from the three fundamental sources for CA’s school funding (The Big 3)—personal income, sales and use, and corporation taxes―are exceeding budget projections by $4.1 billion for the 2024-25 fiscal year. According to the *Finance Bulletin*, “revenues for the last three months of 2023-24 are also outpacing budget estimates by $3.2 billion.” This surge could bode well for us at the bargaining table.

# Bargaining Report

MEA Bargaining Chair, Lisa McCarter, will soon submit MEA’s official intent to bargain to MUSD’s school board trustees. In the parlance of negotiations, this document is called “sunshining,” or bringing to light the portions of the contract that we will bargain this year. As the contract is not completely open for discussion this year, in addition to Article XVI: Salary and Article XVII: Benefits, MEA intends to negotiate Article VIII: Safety and Article X: Evaluations. This year, the team’s focus is adding the new State laws pertaining to workplace safety to and updating educator existing evaluation language in our collective bargaining agreement (CBA). Lisa will issue our formal bargaining proposal for ’24-25 sometime before we head to Winter break.

# Workplace Safety and Your Rights

According CA’s Constitution, “All students and staff of public . . . schools have the inalienable right to attend campuses which are safe, secure, and peaceful” (CC. Art I, Sec.28 (c)). MEA and MUSD work together to protect our members against harassment, and other forms of abuse. Again, I want to thank Dr. Hays and the MUSD School Board Trustees for adding civility language to their SB policies. In effect, this clause empowers the superintendent to take effective action against harassing parents/guardians. If feel that you are the victim of an overly aggressive or harassing parent or guardian, please contact a union representative and an administrator.

Along these lines, our CTA Rep, Jake Anderson, created an instructive PowerPoint that details your rights and protections in the workplace as it pertains to safety, discipline, and disruptive parents. The document, *Educator Rights: Safety, Discipline, and Disruptive Parents,* is located at the MEA website, Moorparkeducators.com, in the Documents section.

# Rep Council to Meet in Person

One final note: next week our Rep Council will meet in person for the time in more than three years! It will be nice to see everyone’s faces and to hand out a door prize or two.

Have a Happy Halloween!

Brian