

MDUSD MONDAY MEMO

A Weekly Update of District Activities and Education-related Issues
from the Superintendent's Office, Mt. Diablo Unified School District

Week of March 30, 2009

Grand Jury Reports, District Responds

Last July a complaint was filed with the Contra Costa Grand Jury in regard to how the District leadership was managing the organization. Late yesterday, Monday, March 30, the Grand Jury released its report of findings to the public. Interim Superintendent Dick Nicoll and Board President Gary Eberhart prepared an initial response, pointing out that most of the areas listed in the findings have already been addressed and resolved. The report and the District's response are available on the "COMMUNITY" page of the District's website, www.mdusd.org.

School Calendars for 09-10 and 10-11 Now Available

Employees, parents, students, and any others who need to know when school starts, takes breaks, and ends, not just next year but the one after, can find out at the click of a button on the District website, www.mdusd.org. A click on the "Calendar" button, located on the lefthand column of the homepage, will open a window to a list of District calendars, including the ones for school year 2009-10 and 2010-11 that the Board approved at its meeting on Tuesday, March 24.

Registration for General Ed. Summer Session POSTPONED

Previously announced to begin this week, **registration for General Education summer programs has been postponed until further notice**. Alternative Education Director Katie Gaines, who coordinates the summer program, says the significant mid-year cuts in the state of California's budget have reduced the amount of funding available for the program. She is working with Interim Superintendent Dick Nicoll and Associate Superintendent Alan Young to find a way to provide the most necessary courses.

High school students may take some classes through the Mt. Diablo Adult Education program. Those who want to enroll in U.S. History, World History, Economics or U.S. Government should contact Carol Oswood at oswoodc@mdusd.k12.ca.us or at 685-7340, x #2751. These classes are for non-graduating seniors and incoming seniors. No class may be taken for original credit.

The postponement of registration does not pertain to students in the Extended School Year (ESY) program.

Information about the General Education summer program will be updated as it becomes available and posted on the District website, www.mdusd.org. Click on the "PARENTS" button on the home page and then on "Summer School" under "School Information."

Emergency Cards Entering Into Electronic Age

Parents will see some relief in the amount of paperwork they fill out when registering their students for next year's classes. Staff in the Student Services and in the Technical Information Services departments are working on a new way to produce Emergency Cards for the 2009-2010 school year using the Student Information System (Aeries). Student Services Director Margot Tobias says the system being planned will save trees, reduce the requirement for parents to complete the same information repeatedly, provide an accurate way to update Aeries, and have printed student emergency information available if needed. Staff at school sites will be receiving information about the new process in May.

Eagle Peak Uses State Grant to Educate Charter School Boards

Thanks to a dissemination grant from the California Department of Education, Eagle Peak Montessori School and the Charter Schools Development Center (CSDC) are creating the Charter School Governance Academy, which will provide a year-long training program on best practices for charter school board members.

Eagle Peak Montessori, the District's charter school, opened its doors ten years ago. Over time its board has gone through many stages of development, says Principal Michelle Hammons. "Like most charter schools, Eagle Peak started as a grassroots effort of parents and educators looking for an option in education for their children. Eventually, this group evolved into the first ten-member Board of Directors for the charter." She noted that "the practices the board has instituted have allowed school leaders to focus on the success of their students." Those practices will be shared in the Governance Academy program.

County Meeting Focuses on Underage Drinking

Parents, students, teachers, counselors and others are invited to participate in a Town Hall Meeting on the topic of "Underage Drinking" that's being held this Thursday, April 2, from 7-8:30 p.m. at Ygnacio Valley High School. Youth leaders from the Contra Costa Friday Night Live Partnership will be facilitating the event, which will address not only underage drinking but also current alcohol prevention strategies and ordinances that a "local social host" should know and follow. Panel speakers will include a parent, youth, and law enforcement officer.

The event is sponsored by the Center for Human Development (CHD); the Contra Costa Health Services Alcohol and Other Drugs Advisory Board; the Monument Corridor Anti-Drug Coalition, *New Connections*; and Contra Costa County Supervisor Susan Bonilla. Those planning to attend are asked to RSVP to Siobhan Wallace of CHD at (925) 687-8844, x248 or siobhan@chd-prevention.org.

In others' words . . . at the end of Read Across America Month

"There are many little ways to enlarge your child's world. Love of books is the best of all." ~ Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis

"Until I feared I would lose it, I never loved to read. One does not love breathing." ~ Harper Lee

"The instruction we find in books is like fire. We fetch it from our neighbors, kindle it at home, communicate it to others, and it becomes the property of all." ~ Voltaire

"A bookstore is one of the only pieces of evidence we have that people are still thinking." ~ Jerry Seinfeld

**Dick Nicoll
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Mt. Diablo Unified School District
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