

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 December 1, 2008

Update on Budget Reduction Process

The State Legislature continues to debate ways to address this year's shortfall in state revenues and has taken no action on the Governor's or any other proposal. Therefore, we have no new information regarding the possibility of mid-year cuts to education funding.

There is no question, based on the state budget adopted last September, that we must reduce spending and/or find new revenue to balance the District's 2009-10 budget. We are moving forward on identifying budget reductions, cost savings, and revenue enhancements. We continue to update information through a link, "Budget Reduction Info," on the District web site: www.mdusd.k12.ca.us. Several meetings are scheduled to give the public opportunities to hear about, comment on, and make suggestions for budget reductions and/or revenue enhancements.

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| 12/3/08 | Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council monthly meeting; 7 p.m., MDUSD Dent Center |
| 12/9/08 | Regular Board meeting and public hearing on budget reductions; 7:30 p.m., Board Room, Dent Center
First Interim Report to be approved by the Board of Education |
| 12/11/08 | MDUSD Budget Advisory Committee meeting; MDUSD Dent Center |
| 12/16/08 | Special Board meeting and public hearing; 7:00 p.m., Northgate High School Little Theater. Begin process of reducing the budget. |
| 1/13/09 | Regular Board meeting; 7:30 p.m., site to be determined. Continue process of reducing the budget |
| 1/27/09 | Regular Board meeting; 7:30 p.m., site to be determined. Continue process of reducing the budget |
| 2/10/09 | Regular Board meeting; 7:30 p.m., site to be determined. Complete process of reducing the budget |

Principals named for Rio Vista, Walnut Acres

I am pleased to announce that the Board of Education has recently appointed two District employees to fill vacant principal positions: **Susan Valdez** at Rio Vista Elementary and **Colleen Dowd** at Walnut Acres Elementary. The Board approved Susan's assignment at its meeting on October 28; Colleen's on November 25.

At the Bay Point school **Susan** is now working with the younger siblings of some of the students she'd been assisting as Student Services Coordinator at Mt. Diablo High School since 2007. She came to the District in January 2003 as Student Services Coordinator at Pleasant Hill Middle School; six months later she was named the school's vice principal. Previously, she was head counselor and Puente Program counselor at Pittsburg High School for six years, spending two summers as principal of the school's English Learner Institute. Susan earned a B.A. in Spanish at California State University, Hayward, and an M.A. in education at U.C. Berkeley. She succeeds Liz Kim, who transferred to Strandwood Elementary as principal in August 2008. Our thanks to retired principal Barbara Blankenship for her conscientious leadership as interim principal for Rio Vista since school opened in August.

Colleen brings a range of experience and knowledge to Walnut Acres. Since joining MDUSD in 2006 she has been a Program Specialist in the District's Curriculum and Instruction Department, overseeing the GATE and the ELD programs and coordinating teacher and administrator training. Previously, she was principal of a K-8 charter school, administrator of a school for "Gifted and Learning Different Students," an instructor of early childhood and special education at two universities in the South and two community colleges in California, a consultant for the state department of education, and a classroom teacher in Special Day Classes and in Gifted programs. Colleen earned a B.S. in psychology at U.C. Berkeley, an M.S. in human development at U.C. Davis, and an EdD. in school leadership at NOVA Southwestern University. She succeeds Rose Lock, who was appointed the District's assistant superintendent for elementary education in August. Our thanks to retired principals Sandy Brickell and Gail Brekke for their effective leadership as interim principals at Walnut Acres since the school year began.

Student in the Spotlight

Kelly McBee, a senior at College Park High who also attended Strandwood Elementary and Pleasant Hill Middle, was named "Teen of the Year" at the Pleasant Hill Chamber of Commerce's 37th Annual Community Awards Night on November 12. Active in the community, Kelly has served on the Pleasant Hill Teen Council for three years and was the College Park Ex-Officio Representative to the Pleasant Hill Recreation & Park District Board of Directors in 2007-08. She volunteers at many Teen Council activities and, as a Girl Scout in Pleasant Hill Troop #1662 for 11 years, spends more than 60 hours a year participating in Girl Scout community events. Active at College Park, where she has a 4.17 GPA, Kelly is currently President of the Student Body, President of the HYPHY (Help Your Planet Help Yourself) Club, Co-President of the Interact Club, and a member of the Student SITE Council. She also participates in CPHS Leadership and in both varsity water polo and varsity swimming. Her parents, Catherine Burnham of Pleasant Hill and Ken McBee of Crockett, are "thrilled" that Kelly has been honored for her many accomplishments.

Adult Education staff, students host annual Crafts Fair this weekend

Looking for beautiful artwork, wooden items and toys, quilted and knit pieces, jewelry, ceramics, china painting, woodcarvings, AND the opportunity to enroll in adult education classes? All are available to visitors at **the annual Open House and**

Craft Sale that Mt. Diablo Adult Education staff and students are hosting on Saturday, December 6. The event is being held from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Pleasant Hill Education Center, One Santa Barbara Road in Pleasant Hill. Coordinator Judith Sosnowski says, "Bring a friend, spend some time, and prepare to be dazzled by the many handcrafted items created in the numerous courses offered at Mt. Diablo Adult Education." For more information, phone Judith at (925) 682-8000, ext 3911.

In others' words . . . on the power of the press, from newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst, born December 2, 1915

"Try to be conspicuously accurate in everything, pictures as well as text. Truth is not only stranger than fiction, it is more interesting."

"The force of the newspaper is the greatest force in civilization [Newspapers] declare wars . . . make and unmake statesmen."

"You furnish the pictures and I'll furnish the war."

**Gary McHenry
Superintendent**

**Mt. Diablo Unified School District
Web Site: www.mdusd.k12.ca.us**

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