

# 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 8, 2008

## Board members to be sworn in December 9

Sherry Whitmarsh will begin her first term as a member of the Mt. Diablo Board of Education and Gary Eberhart his fourth when the Board meets on Tuesday, December 9. The two will take the oath of office right after the meeting opens at 7:30 p.m. The agenda also includes the annual organizational meeting of the Board, at which time officers of the Board for the upcoming year will be elected.

## Update on budget reductions

At its December 9 meeting the Board of Education will continue to discuss and receive comments on proposed budget reductions and, it is hoped, to hear ideas for revenue enhancements. No action on the proposals is planned for at least one more public meeting. That next meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. Tuesday, December 16, in the Little Theater at Northgate High.

The most up-to-date list of proposed budget reductions can be viewed on the District web site, [www.mdusd.k12.ca.us](http://www.mdusd.k12.ca.us), at two locations accessible from the home page 1) by clicking on "Board of Education" and then "Current Agenda" (see Item 10.2) or 2) by clicking on "MDUSD Budget Reductions in the box titled "Budget Reduction Info" and then on the pdf file "MDUSD Budget Reduction List."

## In the spirit

This holiday season is finding many people in need and many reaching out to help. At schools throughout the District and in the District Office, too, a variety of efforts are being made to bring comfort and joy to families and individuals in our community. Here is a sampling:

### For the District's foster and homeless students

Food, clothing, and, of most use, gift cards are being collected at the District's

Administrative Office for MDUSD students and their families who are served through the District's Homeless Outreach Program for Education (HOPE). More than 100 homeless children and families have received services so far this year. Last year 322 were served, more than double the previous year. Gift cards for Target, Safeway or other stores are welcome as they are easy to distribute and allow students and families to choose their own gifts, clothes, or food. Donations to HOPE may be dropped off at the District Office, 1936 Carlotta Drive, Concord, or at any school, where they will be picked up and brought to the central location. Bancroft and Westwood elementary schools have collected and donated sacks of canned food, gift cards, and cash specifically for HOPE. Donations by check can be made payable to "Mt. Diablo Unified School District/HOPE program." Receipts are available upon request. Contact James Wogan, administrator of school-linked services, at woganj@mdusd.k12.ca.us.

#### For students living in the Monument Corridor

- Unwrapped toys and monetary donations to purchase toys for children ages 5 to 10 are requested for the City of Concord's 12th annual Monumental Holiday Toy Drive. This program provides holiday gifts for low-income families at six elementary schools in Concord. Last year more than 1,800 children received toys, which can be dropped off at several locations including the Concord Police Department, 1350 Galindo Drive, and the Concord Civic Center, 1950 Parkside Drive. Volunteers are invited to community gift-wrapping sessions at the Harvest House Warehouse, 2395 Monument Boulevard, Suite K, on Friday December 12, 4 to 7 p.m. and Saturday, December 13, 3 to 5 p.m. Several schools, including Holbrook Elementary, contribute to the Toy Drive each year.
- The Monument Crisis Center receives food, gifts, diapers, household and gift items collected in barrels at the Loma Vista Adult Center throughout the year. Woodside Elementary is holding a holiday food and toy drive for the crisis center.

#### For students and families within our school communities

- Classes at Bancroft, Gregory Gardens, Mountain View, and Woodside elementary and Robert Shearer Preschool all adopt families who are struggling financially and give them a selection of toys, food, and gift cards.
- Foothill Middle School's California Junior Scholarship Federation (CJSF) is buying holiday gifts for five families thanks to donations from more than 75 FMS families.
- Glenbrook Middle School students and staff compete to fill 4 large jars in the office with pennies and paper money, which is used to buy gifts for a Glenbrook family they have "adopted." Staff also bring gifts, gift cards and food for the family.
- Valle Verde Elementary had adopted one family new to the school from South America and another family through the Salvation Army.
- The College Park High School PTSA's annual "Holiday Outreach" program provides gift cards to CPHS families in need of some extra help during this time of year.
- The Pleasant Hill Middle School PTA sponsors "Helping Hands" for its families in need. Students bring in canned and boxed food as well as money to purchase gift certificates at local grocery stores. Typically, 20-25 families received assistance. This year the goal is to help close to 40 PHE families.
- Walnut Acres Elementary reaches out to Shore Acres Elementary families each

year, collecting gently used clothing for adults and children and gently used toys for children.

#### For those who are hungry

- Students of all ages are collecting donations for the Contra Costa County Food Bank, from those at Robert Shearer Preschool and Gregory Gardens and Valle Verde elementary schools to the Leadership class at Valley View Middle.
- Glenbrook Middle School is hosting its 2nd annual Glenbrook Community Dinner on Wednesday, December 10. Community members are invited to dine with the students and school staff. After school program participants, under the guidance of chef Eric Wood, and volunteers cook and serve the food.

#### For those needing extra warmth

- El Dorado Middle School's Leadership class is sponsoring "One Warm Coat" Drive, asking for donations of any new, old, small or big coat to a worthy cause.
- Silverwood Elementary School just participated in Operation School Bell with the Assistance League of Diablo Valley, helping several needy families get brand-new clothes.
- Westwood Elementary School's PFC sponsored a Coat Drive in November that brought not just coats but sweaters and other gently worn clothing to the Bay Area Crisis Nursery in Concord.
- Valle Verde Children's Center has a warm coat drive.

#### For soldiers overseas

Valle Verde is donating paperback books to soldiers. Woodside is asking for names of families who may have loved ones serving overseas so they may assemble and send care packages.

At many schools, teachers and other staff are asking that students give their holiday gifts to needy families rather than to them. Silverwood teachers told parents and students that the gifts they want are canned goods for the food drive. Westwood students and staff gave Principal Jenny Vargas canned food for her birthday to send on to the District's HOPE program.

Truly, in the Mt. Diablo school community, what goes around, comes around. In this holiday season, the spirit of good will and caring for one another is wafting throughout the District.

#### In others' words . . . *on giving*

*"To give without any reward, or any notices, has a special quality of its own."--Ann Morrow Lindbergh*

*"When I give, I give myself."--Walt Whitman*

*"It's amazing with the financial difficulties facing so many in our community how many others will come forward to quietly and generously support them."--Michele Martin, office manager, Woodside Elementary*

**Gary McHenry  
Superintendent**

**Mt. Diablo Unified School District  
Web Site: [www.mdusd.k12.ca.us](http://www.mdusd.k12.ca.us)**

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