

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 15, 2008

Action on budget reductions, revenue enhancements may begin

For more than a month the Board of Education has been discussing and hearing comments about and suggestions for budget reductions. At a special meeting on Tuesday, December 16, the Board may consider not only some initial recommendations for budget cuts but also a proposal for a major revenue enhancement: a parcel tax initiative to be placed on the June 2009 ballot. The meeting will be held in the Little Theater at Northgate High beginning at 7 p.m.

The most up-to-date list of proposed budget reductions can be viewed on the District web site, 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 5.4) 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, continued

In last week's *Monday Memo* we highlighted many of our schools whose students, staff, and parents are reaching out to people in need this holiday season. We have since learned of some more activities worth sharing:

- Clayton Valley High senior women sponsor an annual Holiday Drive in which school clubs sell holiday goods at brunch and lunch on two designated days with proceeds going to the Volunteer Center of Contra Costa County. The schools senior men are holding a canned food drive.
- Concord High's Communications and Human Services Academy students are collecting canned food and toys.
- Mt. Diablo High staff has been helping co-workers in need for the last three years and this year are also adopting one of families served through the District's Homeless Outreach Program for Education (HOPE).
- The JROTC and Leadership class students at Olympic High are collecting food, toys, and clothing to be donated to the Salvation Army. JROTC students have coordinated this project for more than 10 years.
- The Sequoia Middle School Leadership class is sponsoring a clothing drive that benefits "Wednesday's Gift" and others in need. The school's California Junior Scholarship Federation (CJSF) had a canned food drive for the Contra Costa Food Bank and adopted a family in need. The entire office staff donated gift cards to the MDUSD Foster Youth Services Program.
- Valhalla Elementary's Student Council has been collecting for the Contra Costa Food Bank through "Buy a Bag of Food." For every \$1 raised, the food bank is able to purchase \$6 worth of food.

Student and Staff Successes

Eight schools make Honor Roll

The California Business for Education Excellence (CBEE) Foundation and Just for the Kids-California (JFTK-CA) have named six MDUSD elementary schools and two high schools to their 2008 Honor Roll as Scholar Schools, defined as "consistent high academic achievers" in both English/Language Arts and Mathematics. Recognized "not only for their accomplishments, but so that other schools can learn and replicate [their] best practices" are Bancroft, Mt. Diablo, Sequoia, Valhalla, Valle Verde, and Walnut Acres elementary and College Park and Northgate high.

The CBEE Foundation works to focus businesses around a common agenda for better public schools and serves as the business community's leading voice in education. It is committed to seeing that all students reach grade-level proficiency and to giving a voice to California public schools that are raising academic achievement and closing achievement gaps. Just for the Kids-California is a non-profit organization that provides on-line student academic achievement database and promotes academic achievement in public schools through focused use of data, research, and effective school improvement strategies from across the state and nation.

Employee's service earns honor

Rosemarie Scrosati, administrative assistant for the MDUSD Administrative Services Division, was named Administrative Assistant of the Year by the Northern Section of the California Association of School Business Officials (CASBO) at its annual meeting on December 4. Rosemarie was commended for her support of the division's staff and programs, including Emergency Preparedness and the newly automated Facility Use Permit system.

Teacher honored as Education of Year

Kathleen Byle, Sequoia Middle School teacher, was named California League of Middle Schools (CLMS), Region 4, Educator of the Year at a dinner on December 2. The award is given annually to 11 educators in regions throughout California "who exemplify educational efforts to implement elements of educational reform in the middle school." Kathleen will represent the region at the CLMS Annual Conference in San Diego in March, when the State Educator of the Year will be announced.

In others' words . . . *In the holiday spirit*

"I do not want the peace which passeth all understanding, I want the understanding that bringeth peace." ~ Helen Keller

"If everyone demanded peace instead of another television set, then there'd be peace." ~ John Lennon

"When I started counting my blessings, my whole life turned around." ~ Willie Nelson

Gary McHenry

Superintendent

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Web Site: www.mdusd.k12.ca.us