



A Message from the Superintendent

August 21, 2009

Mt. Diablo Unified School District

The new school year is rapidly approaching, and I would like to keep you informed of what is happening in your school district.

State Budget

In July, the State approved a revised education budget for this school year. The budget made several significant changes in funding for local schools. At this time, we expect that our projections will end up close to the final state budget. Unfortunately, not all state budget decisions have been finalized, so we do not know for certain whether additional expenditure reductions will be needed over the next three years. Experts believe that state revenues may continue to decline. If the state projections fall short, we will be looking at mid-year reductions this year.

H1N1 Virus

The H1N1 or swine flu virus has not gone away. There are now 6 reported deaths and 130 hospitalizations related to the H1N1 virus in Contra Costa County. Assistant Superintendent Mildred Browne and Student Services Director Margot Tobias have been working closely with the County Health Department regarding the necessary procedures that should be taken in cases of H1N1 at public schools. You may remember from the last school year that the Health Department did not recommend school closure in all schools with probable cases. We will be emphasizing personal hygiene, monitoring attendance, and following the advice of the County Health Department this year.

Superintendent Search

Leadership Associates is conducting an extensive search for a new Superintendent. On September 1 and 2, Leadership Associates will be talking with community members about the characteristics needed in a new Superintendent. They have scheduled meetings throughout the two days and will hold community forums at 5:30 pm for anyone interested in participating at Willow Creek Center (1026 Mohr Lane, Concord). Additional information about the search is available on the Mt. Diablo Unified School District web page at www.mdusd.org

Staff Readiness

As a result of budget reductions, preparation for the start of school has been especially difficult. When school starts, some classes will be larger than last year, some support positions will be missing, and some programs will be gone. At this point, we have been able to hire back all but 30 of our permanent teachers. Unfortunately, there are still approximately 120 probationary teachers the District has not yet been able to bring back. Many staff are at new schools, teaching different subjects or grade levels. We have held several workshops this month in preparation for the start of school, and I have talked with numerous staff members. I can tell you that in spite of the challenges, district personnel will be ready for the new year, able to create a quality learning environment and offer a welcoming hand for students and families on the first day of school. I find a “can do” attitude in Mt. Diablo and am confident each employee will do their very best in these difficult times.

Fingerprinting

In Mt. Diablo, we have many parent volunteers at our schools. State law requires that volunteers be fingerprinted prior to the start of their volunteer service. In the past, the school district paid the cost of fingerprinting. Beginning this school year, volunteers must reimburse the school district for the cost of fingerprinting, \$32. If you have been fingerprinted by Mt. Diablo before, you will not have to do so again.

School Starts

School begins on August 31st. Every day counts and every student needs to be at school the very first day. If you have questions about registration or your student’s class schedule, please contact your child’s school office.

On behalf of the staff of the Mt. Diablo Unified School District, we look forward to the start of a new school year and will continue to provide a safe place for students and families to learn and grow.

Dick Nicoll**Interim Superintendent**