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Welcome to the 2017-18 School Year!

Superintendent's Newsletter

August 2017

Dr. Michael D. Matthews, Superintendent

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Here We Go!

Welcome to the 2017-18 school year! Our teachers and instructional assistants returned to work on Monday and we had an outstanding day of professional development and eclipse viewing. I am grateful for all of our employees who worked through the summer preparing our schools, hiring new employees, making our budgets work, and generally getting ready for the year. Our students return tomorrow, we are ready, and we can't wait! I am fully confident they are returning to an outstanding educational experience with more personalization and support than ever before.



Our Board adopted [new goals](#) this year, which are for the most part a continuation of our goals from the last few years, with added emphasis on inclusion and social emotional wellness for our students. Here are some updates.

Inclusion

Our Board adopted Inclusion as a goal last year. All of us in MBUSD are committed to making this a place where every student feels welcome, supported, encouraged, and safe. The recent events in Charlottesville should make that clearer than ever. There is hatred in this country and in our world. We each have a responsibility to make inclusion a reality for our students. If you are looking for resources to refer to, I loved the [LA Times article](#) on how to talk to your children about difficult news.



Our first activity with our staff this year featured Jonathan Mooney, a former MBUSD Special Education student, who spoke to all of our employees. I read his most recent book, *The Short Bus: A Journey Beyond Normal*, where he met many people across the nation and learned about their challenges. Mr. Mooney received a resounding standing ovation from our employees. His message of focusing on the strengths of each student was powerful and impactful.

I recommend his book highly. You're welcome to visit my [Superintendent's Bookshelf](#), where I have a bibliography of books recently read. (Photo, L-R: Me, Chad Mabery, Kim Johnson, Jonathan Mooney, Katherine Whittaker Stopp)

Personalized Learning

Our instructional focus will continue to be on Personalized Learning. Everything we have been doing over the last six years has been to better personalize learning for our students. We have done remarkable work in this area, and yet, we are just beginning. I want to thank all of our teachers for their efforts. Personalizing student learning experiences is making a difference. We have identified five key themes to our Personalized Learning efforts:

- Knowing Your Learners
- Voice and Choice
- Flexible Groups and Space
- Data Informed
- Technology Support



As we prepare to greet our students, I know that our teachers are putting incredible thought into how to weave these themes into all that they do, from the moment they meet their students and through all of the instructional content they will deliver over the course of the year. It helps our students to be better learners who are more prepared to be successful in their future endeavors.

Measure C & EE



You all know we passed two bonds last year. Our progress with the Mira Costa gymnasium (Measure EE) is significant. We now have conceptual designs for a four-court gymnasium that is stunningly beautiful and practical. We hope to finalize those plans in late 2017 and send them off to the state for approval – a process which will take approximately one year. We have hired an architect for the classroom projects as well (Measure C). That design process is just beginning. I expect that our elementary schools will be asked for input in this process throughout this year.

MCHS Fields Project

MBX and MBUSD have been working together to transform the field on the Meadows side of the Mira Costa campus for over ten years. We are very near the completion of that project, and it will be beautiful. When you are on the Costa campus on Monday, take a look if you can (either from a distance at the west end of the quad, or up close from just behind the pool) and see the massive 150 x 100 yard turf field that will provide so much quality field space for our students and for our community. Thanks to MBX for their continuous support and leadership.



Follow Us!



Are you following us on Facebook? We are ramping up our social media presence on Instagram and Twitter, too. Be in the loop as we'll be posting about events, people, employees and anything photogenic that we can capture! On that note, if you have great pictures from your campus, office or classroom, please forward them to Heather Hoffman so we can share them out to all. We currently have ~1,600 followers on Facebook and we're aiming for 2,000!

Once again, I hope you all have had a wonderful summer. I look forward to seeing you soon and to welcoming your children back on Wednesday. Let's have a spectacular 2017-18 year! All of the MBUSD employees will do our best to help each and every one of our students succeed!

Handwritten signature of Mike Matthews.

Mike Matthews
MBUSD Superintendent



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