

MORENO VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
25634 Alessandro Boulevard  
Moreno Valley, California

SPECIAL STUDY SESSION OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
**MARCH 16, 2005** **5:30 P.M.**

**LOCATION:** **Board Room**  
**25634 Alessandro Boulevard**  
**Moreno Valley, CA 92553**

**THESE PROCEEDINGS ARE BEING AUDIO TAPED PURSUANT TO GOV. CODE § 54953.5**

CALL TO ORDER: The Board of Education opened the meeting at 5:32 p.m. to discuss Program Improvement Status.

ROLL CALL: Ashe - Aye Coz – Aye Holguin – Aye Sayre – Aye Vackar - Aye

SPECIAL MEETING: **(All Requests to Address the Board of Education on Agenda Items must be submitted in advance of the meeting.)**

Administration Present

Nicolas D. Ferguson, Superintendent  
Pat Chandler, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services  
Robert Crank, Assistant Superintendent, Business  
Ollie Hershey, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources  
Estuardo Santillan, Business Manager  
Kathy Nordin, Director, Elementary Education  
Joe Palomino, Director, Secondary Education  
Ann Vessey, Director, SELPA  
Dan Reed, Director, Accountability and Assessment, and Training  
Donna Farrell, Coordinator, Accountability and Assessment  
Vanez Butler, Coordinator, Staff Development  
Evangeline Mirandé, Coordinator, Categorical Programs  
Lisa Wilson, Coordinator, Multilingual Programs  
Mike Keefe, Principal, Armada  
Diana Emanuel, Principal, Butterfield  
John Lawson, Principal, Box Springs  
Sandra Somerhalder, Principal, Creekside  
Maribel Mattox, Principal, Edgemont  
Robert Gordon, Principal, Hendrick Ranch  
Bruce Hemlock, Principal, Hidden Springs  
Dolores Vasquez, Principal, Honey Hollow  
Todd Flowers, Principal, Midland  
Jeff Jones, Principal, Moreno  
Tony Knapp, Principal, North Ridge  
Ken Sims, Principal, Seneca  
Martha Palomino, Principal, Serrano

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Administration (Cont.)

Penny Macon, Principal, Sugar Hill  
Bob Romero, Principal, Sunnymead Elementary  
Paula Rydners, Principal, TownGate  
Willie Williams, Principal, Badger Springs  
Jim Dutton, Principal, Landmark  
Debbie Fay, Principal, Mountain View  
Nancy Ross, Principal, Palm  
Gitta Williams, Principal, Sunnymead Middle  
Mike Newcomb, Principal, Vista Heights  
Tammy Guzzetta, Principal, Canyon Springs  
Gayle Rellstab, Principal, March Mountain/March Valley  
Gloria Todd-Rousseau, Principal, Moreno Valley  
Kim Kruger, Principal, Valley View  
Mary Jones, Principal, Vista del Lago  
Sharon Cirigliano, Executive Secretary, Board of Education

Visitors

Patty Rucker	Jeff Frazier	Donna Saldin
Candy Moke	Lauren Hartman	Katherine Underwood
Sonia Quain	Lizabeth Magallañes	Beth Tichenor
R. MacPherson	Mario Torres	Melissa Bazanos
Lori Holland	Latesha Brown	Janet MacMillan
Karla Quintero	Gil Ocegüera	
Mark Hasson		

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

None

I. DISCUSSION

- Program Improvement Status

Dr. Pat Chandler, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services, stated that last week the District was identified as a Program Improvement District under the Federal Education Accountability System. This took place because on Wednesday, the State Board of Education adopted new criteria to identify districts that would need to go into program improvement. This new criteria was mandated by the U.S. Department of Education. The federal government disallowed the State's criteria of using the API which is the State Accountability model that measures districts making adequate yearly progress by API. Before the change in rules, Moreno Valley was not a program improvement district. After the change in rules, it is now.

In reviewing testing data in August, the District recognized that it missed the AYP for a second year in the sub-population of special education. As the accountability targets are moved higher for this coming year, there is a possibility that another sub-population, English Learners, might miss the AYP unless immediate action is taken. Staff and principals are here to share information on things the District has been doing and what it still needs to do.

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Dr. Chandler gave some background information about the two accountability systems. She stated that the Academic Yearly Progress (AYP) is what came about from the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) legislation. The Academic Performance Index (API) is the State

accountability model. In 1999, the state legislature passed the schools accountability act which contained the API to show whether or not schools were making improvement with a target goal of 800. The API focuses on the academic growth from one year to the next.

The measurement of success for each school is improvement. It emphasizes standards based assessment as the primary measures for student academic achievement. These assessments are closely aligned to the State's academic content standards for each subject that is tested. This year, two different organizations evaluated the content standards across the United States and found that in both evaluations, California's content standards are the most rigorous. The performance standards are also high. The state legislature and the State Board of Education want to have high expectations that all graduates will be able to enter a four-year college or university. Therefore, the proficiency level that students are expected to meet on the California contents standards tests are sufficient to gain entrance in any four-year college or university in California or the United States.

The federal system became effective in 2001 and was enacted with the NCLB. In this system, the focus is on academic success and on how well states meet a particular performance standard. California is required to use a proficiency standard to meet the state standard. In 2013-14, all students are to be expected to be at the proficiency level. California's growth model has now been by the federal accountability system, which is a performance model. The growth model focuses on supporting schools and districts to increase student achievement and the federal model punishes schools and districts with sanctions if they do not meet academic requirements pre-empted.

Dan Reed, Director, Accountability and Assessment, and Training, reviewed the difference between the AYP (NCLB) and API (State). Both require 95 percent participation of all students in all significant sub-groups. The AYP focuses on language arts and math, where as the API looks at all four core subject areas. The AYP uses the high school exit exam instead of the STAR. The high school exit exam puts a tremendous pressure on high schools to meet the 95 percent participation and the percent of student growth achievement because it is a test that is only administered several days during the year and only for tenth grade students. The District has major sub-groups – social economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners, and special education students to work with.

To make the AYP, students have to meet participation and proficiency targets in all 40 of the sub-groups in language arts and mathematics. If there is one "no" in any sub-group, the District does not meet the AYP. In addition to that, schools have two other indicators – the API and graduation rate from the high schools. There is a concern because the District has two sub-groups that have already become noticeable that they did not meet the criteria last year – special education and English Language Learners. These students make up forty-percent of the District's student population. The targets have changed. This year the target rate is twenty-three percent for all students. Last year, the target rate was twelve percent, which the special education sub-group did not meet. The math target was 12.8 percent. The target rate of 100 percent for all students is projected for 2013-14.

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The District qualified for Program Improvement because it did not meet the requirements in 2003 and 2004 in the following areas:

Elementary – proficiency in English/Language Arts for special education students.

Middle School – proficiency in English/Language Arts for special education and proficiency in math for African American, Hispanic, socio-economically disadvantaged, English Learners, and special education students.

High School – participation in English/Language Arts for all students and proficiency in English/Language Arts and Math for special education students.

Dr. Evangelina Mirandé, Coordinator, Categorical Programs, addressed the Local Educational Agency Plan (LEAP) which was Board approved in May 2003. Some of the key features is that it increases District accountability, it is the first time that the federal government is making districts accountable for English Learners and special education, it includes performance goals, and twelve performance indicators. The District is required to meet goals in reading and math for English Learners in professional development as well as graduation requirements.

Kathy Nordin, Director, Elementary Education, and Joe Palomino, Director, Secondary Education, gave an overview of what has been done with textbooks in English/Language Arts and mathematics. Mr. Palomino reviewed the textbook selection process. This is completed by working with teachers who participate on the subject councils for English and math. A list of state approved textbooks are reviewed. The books recommended to the Board are standards based textbooks. Adopted reading language arts content standards aligned intervention instructional programs for 6-12 students are *High Point* and *Read 180*.

The adopted content standards aligned instructional programs for math for grade six is Houghton-Mifflin, and Prentice-Hall for grades 7 in Pre-Algebra, and grades 8-12 in Algebra. Each language arts teacher who participates in the pilot teaches from both books. In the future, the selected textbooks will be coming forward to the Board for approval. Once the textbooks are approved, they come with pacing guides which do not necessarily work for the teachers. Teachers on the subject councils have developed pacing guides that will work for Moreno Valley teachers.

Ms. Nordin indicated that the Houghton-Mifflin Reading/Language Arts Series being used at the elementary level is the most comprehensive language arts program she has seen in her career. An intervention program that is being provided, which is on the state adopted list, is *High Point*. Because these programs are so comprehensive, staff development is a very important piece. The District is finding that staff development needs to be provided on an on-going basis. In order for assessment to be effective, there needs to be a turn-around-time of 24 hours to get back to the teachers so they can change instruction for those students that need it. The District has purchased a software program call EADMS which permits analysis of student achievement to help plan in instruction. This program contains a content standards aligned test item bank for teacher use to assess student achievement.

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The State recommends that elementary students who are struggling with the content standards receive 2.5 hours daily of English/Language Arts and 1 hour daily of math. At the middle and high school levels, the District has started working to provide 1-2 periods daily of English/Language Arts and math. The District provides additional assistance to eligible students with tutoring by

agencies such as Sylvan Learning and Kaplan, school site tutoring by teachers, peer tutors, or tutors from University of California Riverside, Riverside Community College, and California State University, San Bernardino. In addition, the District provides extended year and day programs such as Intercession, summer school, and after-school programs. The high schools also offer after-school credit deficient program.

Lisa Wilson, Coordinator, Multilingual Programs, reviewed strategies that the District is utilizing in providing a quality education to the limited English students. Thirty percent of the District's students are limited English students. The District has recruited, hired, trained, and supported teachers who are authorized to work with this student population. *High Point*, a state approved instructional program for English Learners, has been adopted by the District. Teachers have been trained in the effective use of *High Point*. Classes are provided to parents on how to help their students learn and to improve their English acquisition. Program options are provided for students who are learning English such as English Language Mainstream (ELM), Structured English Immersion (SEI), Alternative Course of Study (ACS), and Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) training for teachers.

Ann Vessey, Director, SELPA, addressed what the District is doing in providing an education to the special education student population. Approximately 10 percent of the District's student population is special education students. In teaching and testing toward the standards, the same applies for these students. Some of the things the District is doing to assist these students include: recruiting, hiring, training, and supporting teachers; implemented core instructional programs with adaptations; aligned the functional skills program to the California Alternative Education Program Assessment (CAPA) standards; based IEP goals and objectives on the "essential standards" in math and English; and revised the Special Education Credit Option (SECO) program (available to high school students who are credit deficient).

Ollie Hershey, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources, shared information on how Human Resources is recruiting and hiring highly qualified teachers. Currently, 95 percent of the District's teachers are fully credentialed (99 percent at the elementary level; 91.3 percent at the secondary level; and 78 percent for special education). Sixty-five percent of teachers are authorized to teach English Learners (81 percent at elementary and 49 percent at secondary levels). Human Resources is working with the teacher association to be more competitive in compensation and health and welfare benefits when hiring more teachers authorized to teach English Learners.

Vanez Butler, Coordinator, Staff Development, stated that research shows that the most important factor in student success and achievement is the skill and knowledge of the teacher. It is very important that ongoing professional development is provided for teachers. The District provides the following:

- Training and support for implementation of the standards-based core instructional programs – Two day training and comprehensive AB 466 training (40 hours/5 days and 80 hours).
- Support through literacy (2) and math (1) specialists.
- Training to improve students writing.
- Training in classroom management, small group instruction, strategic teaching, and differentiated instruction.

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- Encouraged grade level and department collaboration concerning student achievement.
- Support programs for new teachers.
- Test preparation and support for teachers needing to pass the California Subject Examinations for Teachers (CSET) test for certification.
- In collaboration with local universities, provide District support for additional certification.

- Strategies to meet the educational needs for the low socio-economic student through certified Ruby Payne's "Culture of Poverty" trainers.
- Training for administrators on the program adoptions and Walk Through training.
- Held Summer Institute, quarterly meetings.
- Site Leadership Teams attended training.
- Held monthly sessions for assistant principals, deans, and prospective administrators.

Pat Chandler stated that this information is what the District is doing. She indicated that Debbie Fay, principal, Mountain View and Maribel Mattox, principal, Edgemont, will share strategies their sites are doing at the middle and elementary levels.

Ms. Fay stated that Mountain View is in its third year as a program improvement school and its first year as a School Assistance and Intervention Team (SAIT) school. The goal was for the SAIT team to rate Mountain View the same as the site rated itself. This has occurred. The school plan is the SAIT plan. Lauren Hartman, Mountain View English/Language Arts lead teacher, and Candy Moke, Mountain View math teacher reviewed some of the requirements that their departments and teachers are required to do, the findings of the SAIT team, correctional actions being taken, and spoke about some of the barriers and challenges Mountain View has to deal with.

Maribel Mattox, principal, Edgemont, indicated that Edgemont is an example of a Program Improvement School. The API scores at Edgemont went up 55 points last year and 44 points this year, bringing the school up to 626. Last year's ranking was 11 and has increased to a ranking of 25 this year. Because Edgemont is also a Title I school, the site needs to meet its AYP scores. The AYP scores were met schoolwide, but had two sub-groups that did not. Therefore, Edgemont is classified as a Program Improvement School in its first year.

Edgemont is also a High Priority school. High Priority are state grant monies to assist in improvement of student achievement. This is grant funding. She reviewed components and action plans. Staff development is a very important part of the program. Edgemont's action plan is part of the school plan which includes research based staff development, parent involvement, and focuses on student achievement. This gives the school only one plan to coordinate its funding, and concentrate its energies and services into one plan. Ms. Mattox gave a few examples of what Edgemont is doing to meet the requirements under the Program Improvement program.

Evangelina Mirandé reviewed the Program Improvement School sanctions which include:

- Offer a choice to attend a non-Program Improvement School; provide transportation (Year 1).
- Revise school plan with technical assistance from District staff (Year 2).
- Use 10% of funds for staff development (Year 2).
- Notify parents of status (Year 2).

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- Provide supplemental services (Year 2).
- Corrective actions increase (Year 3).
- Alternative school governance (Year 4).
- Fundamental reform and structure of the school (Year 5).

The District is required to notify parents of the status of the Program Improvement (PI), and employ an external organization to assist with the PI process through the Academic Program Survey (APS) and District Program Survey (DPS), which will result in the revision of the Local Educational Agency Plan. The revisions to the Local Education Agency Plan are due within 90 days from the time the District receives the notification from the California Department of Education. The District has been working with the Riverside County Office of Education through the SAIT process and plans on working with them through the PI process.

The Academic Program Survey is a tool for improvement used by both the federal and state government. Elements of the Academic Program Survey include:

- Standards based adoption for reading/language arts and mathematics.
- Ensure instructional time in reading/language arts and mathematics to meet state minimum recommendations.
- Principals participate in leadership training on adopted instructional materials.
- Fully credentialed teachers are employed and participated in training on adopted instructional materials.
- Student achievement is monitored by using curriculum-embedded assessments and modified instruction.
- Teachers collaborate monthly by grade level and department.
- Lesson and course pacing scheduled (K-8).
- Master schedule flexibility for sufficient numbers of intervention courses.
- Fiscal support from the District.

Katherine Underwood, president, Moreno Valley Educators Association, spoke on the teacher perspective and presented the association's goals.

- Teachers are advocates for high standards and strong accountability in public education at the state and local levels.
- To pursue flexibility that supports student learning and review how each student learns, not how "one size fits all" in instruction.
- Support teacher quality.
- To provide professional development in classroom management, pilot programs, and training for "trainer of trainers."

Ms. Underwood stated that the political impact of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) punishes school districts and schools rather than assist; it requires rigid, unfunded mandates rather than supporting proven practices; it is a bureaucracy and standardized testing rather than teacher-led, classroom focused solutions; it has the potential to leave many students behind because of rigid "one size fits all" approach to education; and there are MVEA/MVUSD teacher contract implications.

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The following recommendations were presented:

MVEA Recommendations

- Full funding of successful elementary and secondary education programs such as Title I to help children with math and reading.
- Increase funding to reduce class size and to provide quality professional development.

- Use a “growth factor” to calculate Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).
- Allow states to use alternative methods to calculate AYP.
- Target services to students in the particular sub-groups which fail to make AYP, rather than declare the entire school as failing.

Ms. Underwood stated that MVEA members are committed to working collaboratively with the District as we go down this path that labels our children and teachers as failing. Our goal is to make sure that our members have a voice in the process. We will work to ensure that members have input and buy-in to whatever decisions that will be made regarding the serious issues we are facing.

#### Special Education Recommendations

- Reduce class sizes in elementary SDC from 18 to 12 so that early intervention is more effective.
- Teach students test taking skills.
- Ensure students have the requisite number of instructional minutes.
- Shift responsibilities of program specialists to provide more curricular support to teachers.
- Focus on Educational Benefits Reviews that assess how students are meeting IEP goals and objectives.

#### English Learner Recommendations

- Recruit additional “highly qualified” teachers.
- Increase the percent of staff authorized to provide instruction to English Learners.
- Train teachers to effectively implement the Universal Access ELD component of the core program.
- Enhance the use of the CELDT to determine student needs in language instruction and improve proficiency on content standards.

#### District recommendations

- Additional staff for coaching and supporting teachers and principals, and monitoring student achievement.
- Additional staff development for all teachers and administrators to make a real difference for student achievement.
- Recruit and hire highly qualified teachers and instructional assistants.

In conclusion, in order to improve student achievement districtwide, the District needs more time to fully implement the revised LEAP and Single Plans for Student Achievement (site plans) to ensure learning for all students. The stakeholders and constituents of the District need to mobilize political pressure to provide more flexibility for Districts and schools to increase student achievement, particularly for special education and English Learner students.

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The Board members were very appreciative of staff for making this presentation. The Board acknowledged the complexity and sometimes unrealistic expectations of both the state and federal guidelines. They were appreciative of the efforts staff has done at the district and school site level so far. There was Board discussion that there is a need to have the same focus on student achievement and have one specific plan which needs to be followed by all sites throughout the District. It was suggested that these measures need to be included in a Strategic Plan and there was some discussion on this issue.

The District needs to continue to recruit credentialed, English Learning, and highly qualified teachers, and to provide professional development in order to improve student achievement. It was suggested that the District needs to cut out programs that do not focus on the classroom.

There was further discussion and clarification on recommendations presented, fiscal impact on the District, requirements, and focus on the sub-groups such as special education and English Learner students. The District needs to have a good solid plan to deliver services, implement the plan consistently districtwide, and make sure this plan will pass the test to ensure student improvement.

The Board will be supportive of the District as it looks at what it needs to do to implement a plan that addresses all these issues in order to improve student achievement. The District can also work together by keeping the community informed, involved, and together during this process.

## II. ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further items to come before the Board of Education, the meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m.

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