



Manhattan Beach Unified School District

Welcome to the 2016-17 School Year!

Superintendent's Newsletter

August 2016

Dr. Michael D. Matthews, Superintendent

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Welcome!

Welcome to the 2016-17 school year! We have been busy this summer, hiring 55 fantastic new employees, cleaning our classrooms, preparing our campuses, and engaging in professional development with our employees. We are ready for your children! Over 700 MBUSD employees gathered together yesterday preparing for the school year. Our thanks to Kinecta Credit Union for providing a BBQ lunch for all of our employees. We are going to have a theme for the year, something we have not done before, and that theme is **OHANA (#mbusdohana)**. *Ohana* is Hawaiian for family – really for extended family. Our *ohana*, which includes our students, our families, and our employees, will continue to grow and become stronger through the ways we all educate, care for, and support each other.

In yesterday's meeting, we had about 15 employees come up on stage and talk about their relationship with MBUSD. Many of our employees attended school right here in our District, and then came back to send their own children through our schools. It was a powerful testimony to the strong and caring organization that we are. We are all here because we are eager to do everything we can to help each child succeed. We look forward to doing exactly that as we welcome your children back to school on Monday.



As always, **I thank our Maintenance and Operations Department** for all they have done to get our schools ready. More classrooms (52 more) have air conditioning this year, which is a great step in the right direction. Our M&O staff has prepared our classrooms and our schools, and they are ready.

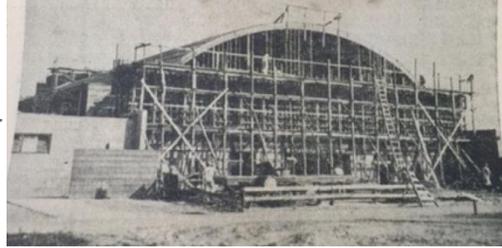
For the schools that have new principals this year, our new principals have reached out to their employees and families. Already, each of the four principals who made a move is engaged in the process of opening school, continuing the wonderful traditions already in place, and finding ways to enrich and enhance their new students' experiences. To aid in this transition, one of the practices we have in MBUSD is a "Change of Principal Workshop." In this exercise, district leaders meet with school employees and the new principal and review together what is working well and issues that need to be addressed. All four workshops were highly successful, providing essential information for our principals to assist in a smooth transition.

If you look at our [District Calendar](#), you can make plans now for the minimum days that are sprinkled throughout the school year. Most of these minimum days are for the purpose of giving teachers time to learn, collaborate, or measure student growth and success. All of our schools are based on semesters now. And the first semester ends before Winter Break. That means that our high school students will not be studying for finals over the break, and should get a true break from school. We think that is healthy. Our [2017-18](#) and [2018-19](#) calendars are on our website and you can check on them as you make your future summer plans.

2016 Bonds



The Board has authorized two bond measures to go on the November ballot. The first is a \$114 million measure (Measure C) that would be used primarily at our elementary schools to improve infrastructure (including completing air conditioning for all classrooms), replace the Ladera campus at Grand View, and make improvements to each elementary site, based on the Facilities Master Plan we developed last year. The second measure is a \$39 million measure (Measure EE) to replace the outdated and undersized gymnasium at Mira Costa High School. The photo to the right is from a 1951 La Vista (Mira Costa's student newspaper) edition, as our gym was being constructed! As with past District bonds, any bonds authorized by the voters will be repaid with property taxes collected over time until the bonds are repaid in full. The projected tax rate for the first measure is \$22.00 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation and the projected tax rate for the second measure to replace the high school gymnasium is \$8.00 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation. Both of these bonds will require 55% of the vote from Manhattan Beach voters. I hope you take the time to educate yourself about the bonds.



2016-2017 Goals



The Board of Trustees adopted the 2016-17 Board Goals that include:

- Improving student achievement through teachers further implementing research-based **personalized learning** strategies.
- Maintaining a Sound Budget and Plan for **long-term infrastructure needs**.
- Creating a **culture of inclusion** that supports and engages all students, staff, stakeholders and community members.
- Providing **professional development** and developing leadership and talent at all levels and cross-pollinate best practices districtwide.

Inclusion



One of our Board's major goals this year is new: Creating a culture of inclusion. In Manhattan Beach, it may seem to some that we are in a bit of a bubble. The truth is: we are not. Many of us gathered together to show support for the Clintons after the fire at their family's home last fall. When the new Smithsonian African American Museum of History and

Culture opens in September, one of the exhibits may be the Clinton's burned front door. That is incredibly powerful. In the spring, some of our students littered the Pennekamp campus with hateful graffiti written in chalk. Parents have come in my office describing ways they and their children have witnessed and felt a lack of inclusion. We also have an achievement gap in MBUSD. The test scores of African American and Hispanic students are significantly below the average for the District. This is true throughout our nation, and we have not overcome it here. All of this comes in conjunction with the national issues of our time, where race is a dominant topic. That is why our goal of inclusion is so critical. If we are truly going to be a stronger ohana, characterized by a culture of inclusion, we have to be leaders in our community, and we must make certain we are doing everything we can to support all students, all families, and all employees.



The Clinton family donated the proceeds of the reward campaign to MBEF, to be used for a new Social Inclusion Grant Program, wherein teachers, students, leaders and community members can apply for small grants to implement programs that will help students and families to understand, respect and celebrate all racial, ethnic, religious, economic, cultural and ability differences. Students, staff, and parents are eligible to apply for the grants. [For more information, please click here.](#)

MCHS Fields Project

We have recently received long-awaited approval from the state to begin construction on our **MCHS Fields Project**. I began discussing these fields with community members back in 2010. With this state approval, we can finally begin work on these fields. We are in the process of developing an agreement with a contractor to begin work this fall building a new JV baseball field and a new full length soccer/football/lacrosse field. These fields will be a great resource for our students and for our community. My thanks to to MBX, which is supporting the District in the construction of these new fields.



Once again, I hope you all have had a wonderful summer. I look forward to seeing our students return to our schools on Monday. Let's have a spectacular 2016-17 year as we all do our best to help each and every one of our students succeed.

Mike Matthews
MBUSD Superintendent



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