



Manhattan Beach Unified School District

Superintendent's Newsletter

December 2016

Dr. Michael D. Matthews, Superintendent

Looking Forward to 2017!



While the rest of the world operates on the Gregorian Calendar, we live our lives by the school year calendar. This is the first year ever in which all of our schools finished the first semester prior to winter break. Change always has some challenges, but our hope is that our secondary students in particular can get a true break over the next two weeks. Instead of studying for January finals, I hope they can have some downtime, rest up, maybe read books for fun (really - I mean that!), and be with their family and friends. Thanks to all of you for a strong and eventful 2016, and I wish you all a happy and healthy 2017!



Social Media

Our District has so many "photo opps" and braggable moments, so we're increasing our efforts to share them via [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and our recently initiated Instagram ([@manhattanbeachusd](#)) ... **please follow us!** And on that note, we encourage you to share great photos and blurbs with us -- field trips, performances, assemblies, teachable moments, you name it! We'd love to share it. Just forward to [Heather Hoffman](#).

School Accountability



All school districts in California are required to develop goals for how to improve, and to be accountable to the state and the public in how we meet those goals. Schools develop a Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) which is submitted to the County. You can find the whole 60-page plan [here](#), or you can see our 4-page synopsis of our goals and our progress towards those goals as of December [here](#). (I suggest the shorter bulleted version!)



First Interim Budget

MBUSD has a \$73 million budget. With over 700 employees, we are one of the largest employers in Manhattan Beach. Unlike most government entities, school districts have to present budgets that show a balanced budget not just for this year, but for the next two years. For those of you interested in learning about our budget in more detail, I highly advise that you take time to read the [narrative of the budget update](#) that Dr.

Dawnalyn Murakawa-Leopard, our Deputy Superintendent, submitted to the Board as we are midway through the 2016-17 year. It explains our budget thoroughly and will give great insight to how our budget operates.

Whenever I mention the budget, I have to say a big thank you all of you who have donated to MBEF. In examining our budget, you can clearly see that [MBEF donations](#) are essential to all that we do, and we are grateful for every donation.

Initial Steps After Bonds Passing

Thank you again for passing both C and EE! We have already taken the first steps towards construction, including:

- The Board has certified the election based on the County's certification.
- We have sent out a [Request for Qualifications](#) (RFQ) for architects: we will hire an architectural firm or firms to help us with the high school gym (Measure EE) and with our classrooms (Measure C).
- We are still accepting [applications for our Citizens Bond Oversight Committee](#). Please consider applying for this important committee.



Changes in Salaries / Benefits

As a part of our two-year settlement agreement with both of our employee unions, all employees will be receiving a 3% pay increase effective January 1, 2017. I am pleased to state that as of January 1, our top teacher salary will, for the first time, be over \$100,000.



Another part of that settlement changed our health insurance carriers. This resulted in a savings of over \$1 million annually to the District, while maintaining high quality health insurance for our employees. I am grateful to all of the union leaders who worked closely with us to develop this insurance change, and I believe the move to new insurers has gone quite smoothly.

Focus on: NGSS and MakerSpace



In the last five years, we have focused on improving reading, writing, and math teaching and learning. I have written you many times about some of the amazing work I have seen in our classrooms. The next big change is coming in science, specifically implementing the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Our secondary teachers are already beginning this work. One of the big changes is the introduction of engineering standards into the curriculum, and another is the emphasis on students actually "doing" science in labs and in the real world. One of the moves we have already made in elementary schools toward engineering and doing science is our MakerSpace work. Funded by Chevron, MB Rotary, and MBEF, MakerSpace now exists in all of our elementary schools, giving students a chance to invent, create, build, collaborate, and see the fruits of their labors. So many parents have volunteered helping us out, and we are working to find ways to integrate it into our classrooms.

Thank you all for your support of our schools in 2016. I hope you have a wonderful holiday with your families, and I look forward to a happy and healthy 2017 full of learning and promise. We'll see you on January 9th!



Mike Matthews
MBUSD Superintendent



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