



MTA News

Volume 6

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MTA Newsletter

Get More Involved
Join an MTA Committee!

Health Insurance

TBA

Health Benefits

TBA, MTA Office

PAC

Meets as needed, off site

Negotiations

See MTA's website for updates under Bargaining

Special Education

TBA

Grievance

Meets via online communication and quarterly meetings as needed.

Organizing Committee

Online and meetings on site when needed

CTA Alternative Committee

Email Greg Lumsden for meeting information

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President's Message

Tearing off the band aid

Teachers are notorious for bending over backwards to keep any negative consequences from affecting their students. In doing so, they sometimes end up making a bad situation worse. When the State Budget started creating problems for Education a couple of years ago, teachers did their best to keep programs and students whole. Often spending hundreds of dollars out of their own pocket to supplement curriculum and supplies that were increasingly being undersupplied by the district.

When budget cuts hit harder and we entered the era of "Zero-based budgeting," teachers again band aided the situation by spending even more of their own money on supplies and materials for their classrooms. From Kindergarten to High School, teachers increasingly felt the sting of no pay increases, constantly rising insurance rates, and less and less financial support from the district. At all levels, teachers began to reach deeper into their own pockets to supplement the lack of supplies at their sites.

This year, when money is at it's tightest, and supplies are at their lowest, teachers suffered a loss of income when stipends were cut in many positions throughout the district. Did our job load decrease? No, in fact there was even more placed on our plates and again, we band aid the situation by spending even more of our income, even though there is less of it. All in an effort to keep our students and community from suffering the effect of the cuts to education.

Time to tear off the band aid. It will hurt for a while, but we must do it. District officials have stated that "Teachers need to do the right thing." They must be ignorant of the efforts we have continually made to keep this district and it's programs whole. Teachers have spent far too long putting band aids on our district's cuts. We can't continue to be presented with a continuing loss of income and an unwritten rule that we will supplement our classroom supplies out of our own dwindling salaries. A band aid can only stop so much bleeding.

Chuck Smith MTA President

Register to vote in CTA/NEA Elections

Voting for the National Education Association and California Teacher Association Representatives is done on line.

In order to vote, MTA members log on to www.cta.org. Log in (your username and password) and click on MY PROFILE. Then click on VOTE ONLINE.

Follow these directions to register:

1. Log on to www.cta.org and click on REGISTER NOW. You need the number that is on your CTA membership card.
2. If you don't have that number, contact Mary at the MTA office:

Murrietata1@verizon.net

Obama's Race to the Top Funding Method May Hurt Students

The Obama administration has created "Race to the Top (RTTT)," a package of competitive grants authorized by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). The program has \$4.35 billion dollars to distribute to the 50 states. If California receives a "fair share," it will get almost \$500 million in one-time funding.

RTTT regulations were up for review by the public. CTA and NEA wrote responses to regulations for qualifications for this funding. By October, 2009, all input had been received and reviewed with the first phase of funding coming out in early 2010. States that apply and are not awarded grants during phase I can apply or reapply for phase II. Those receiving funding in Phase I can not apply for Phase II.

Proposed regulations require states to change their current educational system in order to even apply for the grants. These demands are not about "minor details." Obama's federal officials want a fundamental change to state standards and accountability systems; teacher credentialing, evaluation, compensa-

tion, and promotion; and charter schools. Phase I applications for funding require state governors to make assurances that their states will take action and make progress in the following areas of reform:

Overhauling California's content standards and creating a new testing system.

Creating alternative credentialing systems in order to "fast track" unprepared and unsupported teachers in classrooms.

Mandating student test scores are used as a "significant" factor in teacher evaluation. (School districts are already required to use criterion referenced tests as part of a teacher evaluation.)

Mandating that teacher compensation and promotion be linked to student performance data.

Encouraging charter schools to be the number one reform for turning around failing schools.

Educators believed the new administration would eliminate the onerous one-size fits all model of No Child Left Behind, but the RTTT competitive grant continues the same philosophy (continued on pg. 4).

Quick Reference Corner

Rights: You have the right to representation in any meeting that could result in disciplinary action. You have the right to stop the meeting and **DEMAND** representation and to postpone the meeting until your representative can join you. This is a private sector rule that has been made applicable to public school employees under the EERA. (See Redwood CCD v. PERB (1984) 159 Cal. App. 3d 617)

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Middle School: Matt Johnson

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High School: John Grissom



We're on the web!

murrieta-teachers.org

Charter Schools: What does the research Show?

Charter schools have been increasingly advocated as a means for supporting innovation in public schools, and they are a growing element of the school sector. According to the National Alliance for Public Charter schools, by 2007, 40 states and the District of Columbia had created 4,046 charter schools serving 1.1 million students across the nation. Four hundred charter schools opened in that year, representing a 12% increase from the previous year. Increases have continued in the years since.

Some successful charters have been founded and have received significant attention. However, many others have been unsuccessful. Overall, research on the effectiveness of charter schools has been decidedly mixed. As Scott Imberman of the University of Maryland found in his review of evidence on outcomes in charter schools:

Some researchers find insignificant or negative impacts of attending a charter school (Hanushek, Kain, Rivkin and Branch, 2007; Bifulco and Ladd, 2006; Sass, 2006; Zimmerand, Buddin, 2003), while others find positive impacts (Booker, Gilpatric, Gronberg and Jansen, 2007; Hoxby and Rockoff, 2004; Solmon and Goldschmidt, 2004; Solmon, Paark and Garcia, 2001). Thus, we might conclude from these studies that the effect of charter schools on academic performance is, at best, unclear.

A recent large-scale study from the Center of Research on Education Outcomes at Stanford University, examining longitudinal student data in 16 states, found that only 17% of charter schools produced academic gains that were significantly better than traditional public schools, while students in 37% of charter schools performed worse than their traditional public school counterparts. In 46% of charter schools, there was no significant difference between their students' achievement gains and those of their demographically similar peers in district-run public schools.

Other reviews of research report similarly mixed findings, noting that charters have had widely varying outcomes across different contexts. Where charters have been poorly regulated, results for students have typically been negative. For example, in Ohio, where an unregulated market strategy created a huge range of for-profit and nonprofit providers with few public safeguards, charter school students have

been found to achieve at consistently lower levels than their demographically similar public school counterparts. Students in charters in largely unregulated Arizona and Washington, DC have also been found to achieve at levels significantly below those of their similar peers in public schools. In Minneapolis, Minnesota, where charters have proliferated, a recent student found that, on average, they produce significantly lower achievement relative to district public schools serving similar students.

A recent study in California found charter outcomes varied by type, with students in middle school charters scoring above and elementary charters scoring below their demographically similar counterparts. High school charters did better in English language arts and worse in mathematics. In addition, students did particularly poorly in charters providing most of their instruction through home schooling, independent study, or distance learning.

A recent evaluation of Chicago's Renaissance 2010 initiative, which replaced a group of low-performing schools with charters and other schools of choice run by entrepreneurs and the district, found that the achievement of students in the new schools was no different from that of a matched comparison group of students in the old schools they had left, and both groups continued to be very low-performing.

Some studies have found that charters have increased segregation in public schools, both racially and in terms of academic programs. For example, a Texas study found that the majority of white, Anglo students in the state's charters were in academically oriented schools, while most minority students were in vocational charters.

In summary, while charters may be one strategy among many, to spark innovation and improvement in public schools, they were not a silver bullet. Investments that improve instruction, curriculum quality and access, school management, and student supports are needed to produce educational quality, regardless of school governance or sector.

Obama's Race to the Top funding hurting students, continued pg 2

A Headlong Rush to Disaster?

California is being pushed by USDOE Sec. Arne Duncan and Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to change state law to make California eligible for these one-time federal funds. Gov. Schwarzenegger pressed legislators to move quickly before the session ended on September 11, 2009. Legislators were pushed to meet this unrealistic deadline and expected to "gut and amend" a bill without a formal policy hearing. Senator Gloria Romero scheduled an informational hearing on August 26, 2009. This process causes lawmakers to be hit with amendments at the last minute with no time to debate or research their long-term effects on students and teachers. Policy consideration meetings on the gutted bill were either not held or took place in Appropriations committees, panels charged with looking at cost issues alone. This results in lawmakers having their only chance for policy review of the plan on the Assembly or Senate floor.

Actions Requested at the State Level

1. California lawmakers must delay action on RTTT until the federal government releases final regulations.
2. California can apply for its full allocation of funds during the 2nd phase.
3. Waiting until Phase II will give California policymakers the opportunity to vet these issues fully and come up with a package of reforms that will help educators prepare California's students to meet challenges presented by the economy.

Key Messages on Race to the Top

Lawmakers should not rush reform by changing effective state laws just to meet an arbitrary deadline set by the USDOE.

Proposed regulations are more one-size-fits-all approach of the NCLB that continues to fail students.

Proposed regulations undermine California's high academic standards, some of the most rigorous in the nation.

Grants are one-time federal money that allows the Governor to hold onto 50% of funds to use as he chooses and therefore, money may never reach the classroom.

Encouraging charter schools to be the number one reform for turning around failing schools.

RTTT is the same result as NCLB and therefore, we need to consider its impact before proceeding and/or supporting this funding.

Please Take Notice

Participate in the U.S. Census

Participate in the U.S. Census and encourage everyone else to participate! School funding will be impacted by the results of the Census. For every household that shows school aged children, districts will receive federal funds.

Please encourage everyone you know that resides in California to participate in the census! Let's do our part to help our schools receive the deserved and fair funding for our students.

Rep. Council Meeting Dates

Representative Council Meetings

April 15, 2010

May 13, 2010

No June meeting

MTA Office, 4:00 p.m.