



<http://www.fmea.org>

The FMEA OBSERVER

A Day Without Laughter is a Day Wasted

-Charlie Chaplin

Notes from the President

By Scott Shulimson

Hi FMEA members,

The new year has started off with a bang. After nine years in Franklin-McKinley, Dr. Porter has announced he will be retiring this June. Other big news includes a huge amount of new funding for schools in the Governor's January budget proposal. This budget proposal paved the way for a long awaited serious proposal from the district at the bargaining table. The other big development is that Rocketship has turned in a petition to open a third independent charter school in our district boundaries. There's a lot to discuss, so I hope you will read on.

There are many opinions about Dr. Porter's leadership, and the changes he has brought to the district, but no one can accuse him of using FMSD as a brief step to a higher platform.

There have been lots of ups and downs over the past nine years, and the district has changed quite noticeably. Our six independent charter schools were approved under Dr. Porter's watch, and Franklin-McKinley has become synonymous with moving in too many directions at once without a sustained focus; however, we have also earned a reputation as an innovative and creative district that partners with an unusually large number of outside organizations.

One thing that I will personally miss is how quickly Dr. Porter has addressed truly egregious matters that I brought to his attention, at times bringing in the necessary people to fix a situation before I had even finished explaining the problem. The School Board will soon be hiring a firm to find good candidates for replacement, and the goal is to hire a new Superintendent by June. Anything is possible, but it appears that the Board will be looking mostly at candidates outside the district.

The final state budget won't be passed until June, but in recent years the Governor's January proposal has been very close to the final document. For the coming 2015/16 school year, the Governor is proposing over \$4B in increased money for education. After waiting nine months for a solid salary offer from the district, FMEA finally received one last month. The district is offering a 3% raise for 2014/15, retroactive to the beginning of the school year.

While this is a big improvement over the trivial amounts they offered earlier

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Here's a sneak peek at what's inside this issue:

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this year, it's not equivalent to the 5% increase in funding the district received this year. It's also not on par with the large raises that our colleagues have been receiving in many neighboring districts. It's going to take a lot of action on our part for FMEA to get a better offer. Make sure to be in contact with your Site Rep, attend all FMEA site meetings, and wear your FMEA shirt every Thursday until we settle.

Regarding charter schools, the district is still in the middle of a year-old lawsuit against the County Board for approving twenty Rocketship schools around the County without going directly to local school boards first. Hopefully a ruling is coming soon, but this hasn't stopped Rocketship from attempting to open a third school in our district boundaries. The newest Rocketship plans to open in August 2016, but we need to ensure that this does not happen since our district already has six independent charter schools. Our School Board will be learning that they can no longer consider themselves to be friends of FMEA while approving more charter schools. I believe there is a good chance the Board will turn down Rocketship's petition, but we will have to come out to Board meetings so that it's not just the Rocketship people making their voices heard. The Board held a public hearing on February 10th on the newly proposed Rocketship, and the final vote is tentatively slated for March 24th. It's important that teachers and parents come out and speak to the Board on March 24th to show support for district schools already here. FMSD DOES NOT NEED ANOTHER ROCKETSHIP!

This is going to be a big and busy year. As members of FMEA, you will be called upon to be more involved than in recent years. That is what it will take to shape the course of things to come and have an impact on the future of this district. Stay tuned for upcoming FMEA actions, and do use the School Board contact info in the back of this newsletter to contact Board members about any of these important topics.

Thanks for all you do, and as always don't hesitate to get in touch with any question, ideas or comments.

Sincerely,
Scott Shulimson

Read This!!!

The 5 Questions You Need to Ask About Charter Schools

By Brian Washington

Education activists across the country are being put on alert to help raise awareness about the need for higher standards and more accountability for charter schools to protect the public's investment in these schools and ensure that students' needs are being met.

Next week charter school industry insiders will kick off what they call "School Choice Week," a campaign to promote unaccountable charter schools—which are at the center of several reports concerning waste, fraud, and abuse—as an alternative to traditional public schools.

CPD's "5 Questions to Ask During School Choice Week" will help public education advocates demand answers to the critical issues surrounding charter schools and their impact on students and public education. The questions include the following:

- How much money has your state lost to charter waste, fraud, and abuse?
- Are charter operators required to establish strong business practices that guard against fraud, waste, mismanagement, and abuse? Do regulators in your state have the authority and resources to regularly assess charter school business practices?
- Does your state require charter school operators and their boards of directors to provide adequate documentation to regulators ensuring funds are spent on student success?
- Can your state adequately monitor the way charters spend public dollars including who charter operators are subcontracting with for public services?
- Are online charter operators audited for quality of services provided to students and financial transparency?

Excerpts of article taken from

http://educationvotes.nea.org/2015/01/23/the-5-questions-you-need-to-ask-about-charter-schools/?utm_source=EdVotes&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Charters&utm_campaign=013115EdVotesEmail

(Posted January 23, 2015)

Board Briefs

December 9th

- Rudy Rodriguez became Board President and John Lindner became Vice President.
- The First Interim budget report was presented and showed that the district is expected to end the school year with \$7.5M, which is less than the \$9.3 the district began the year with, but more than the \$4M the Board had expected to finish the year with.

January 13th

- SJPD presented the Board with an overview of current emergency procedures for a shooter on campus situation.
- The Board approved changes to the KIPP Academy charter.

January 14th (Mini-Retreat and Board Workshop)

- The Board held a workshop on the placement of KIPP Academy next year (currently at Stonegate).
- The Board was presented with a brief update from each department and major focuses were discussed.

January 27th

- The Board was presented with an overview of the six independent charters currently operating here and details were provided of their programs and progress.
- Information and updates regarding the Curriculum Support Specialist (CSS) position was provided to the Board.
- The Board was presented with an update on the Franklin-McKinley Children's Initiative (FMCI).

Press Release

By John R. Porter, Jr.

Superintendent

Franklin-McKinley School District

It is my pleasure to congratulate Virginia Gyorkos on behalf of the California Art Education Association (CAEA) President Nancy Andrzejczak and myself. She has been selected by the CAEA to be awarded the Outstanding Special Needs Visual Art Educator for 2014. The CAEA wishes to confer awards on our membership to recognize those individuals who have achieved the highest level of professionalism in the field of art education, and to show our appreciation to those individuals or organizations who have contributed their services in an exemplary way to our association and to the goals we espouse in our profession.

Ms. Gyorkos, who works at Bridges Academy in San Jose, has been a strong advocate for art education for many years. As an active member of CAEA, Ms. Gyorkos is currently the CAEA Youth Art Month Chair. In addition, in 2012 she earned Outstanding Middle School Visual Art Educator of the Year and Exemplary Middle School Visual Art Program of the Year.

While the above is just a small fraction of Virginia Gyorkos' accomplishments, her greatest contributions are yet to come as she continues to motivate and inspire her students and colleagues in the field of art education.

Ms. Gyorkos was presented with this distinguished award at the CAEA Area Conference's Awards Breakfast held on November 16 in Irvine, CA. Ms. Gyorkos' professionalism is greatly appreciated and admired and we feel that she has set an outstanding example in the profession in helping to further visual arts education.

Congratulations to Virginia!!

Grievance Grove



- There is a step 2 grievance at Kennedy regarding a “written verbal” letter.
- There is an arbitration filed at Los Arboles regarding a “written verbal” letter. FMEA and the district are working towards settling both of these.
- There is still an arbitration at Stonegate regarding a letter of reprimand.

Contract Corner

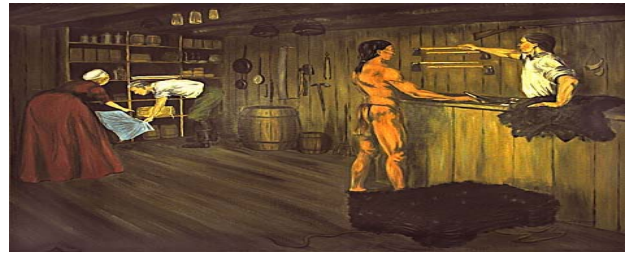
6.1.2

“Unit members shall indicate their desire for transfer or reassignment to the Deputy Superintendent for Human Resources prior to March 15th“

9.5.8

“Every probationary certificated staff member will be evaluated by his immediate supervisor in writing at least twice each school year, no later than the last instructional day in December and no later than March 1. Permanent employees shall be evaluated at least once every other year. Those to be evaluated will be notified by the evaluator prior to the first day of instruction. Permanent employees may be evaluated at any time during the school year if, in the opinion of the evaluator, the employee’s performance merits an ‘IMPROVEMENT NEEDED’ or ‘UNSATISFACTORY’ rating in any area.”

Trading Post



Guidelines for Ads: Ad service is provided as a convenience for FMEA members and our parent community. Ads may be run two times.

Please submit ads to lkpitino@hotmail.com

COMFY CANINES

In home dog-sitting and daycare. Our canine friends are treated like family and are never crated, left alone, or ignored. Great rates! Please call Rob Sandlin at 408-582-2557 for more



FMEA Spring Calendar

February 16th Holiday

February 23rd Rep Council

February 24th School Board

March 10th School Board

March 23rd Rep Council

March 24th School Board

March 25th FMEA Spelling Bee

April 3rd-11th Spring Break

April 14th School Board

April 20th Rep Council

April 24th FMEA Literacy Fair

April 28th School Board

May 2nd FMEA Track Meet



Important Contacts

FMEA Contact Information

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Please e-mail any articles and advertisements for the next issue of The Observer to lkpitino@hotmail.com. Please put "FMEA, The Observer" in the subject line.

Have any suggestions for The Observer? Please share your ideas with me at lkpitino@hotmail.com.

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