

Choosing our Representatives to the NEA-RA

The Rep Assembly (RA) of the National Education Association (NEA) will be held in Boston this summer. Several MDEA members have filed applications to represent our Service Center, Alcosta, at this assembly. Between March 1 and March 14th, all CTA members in Alameda and Contra Costa County will have the opportunity to vote to select their representatives. The electronic ballot will be sent to the personal email addresses on file. Anyone who would like a paper ballot can email us at OurMDEA.org. We will pony a ballot to you and you can mail it directly in to Alcosta. You can also stop by our office to pick up a ballot.

Volunteers Needed for MDEA Academy Awards

The MDEA Academy Awards is a big event. It takes the effort of many people to make it a success. We need volunteers to help with decorations, set-up, checking people in, selling wine tickets, pouring wine, cleaning up and many other functions. If you want to help and contribute your talents in recognizing outstanding members of our education community, please contact Sylvia Chatagnier at schatagnier@earthlink.net.

Catalyst is a publication of the Mt. Diablo Education Association.

Editor: Anita Johnson

Stay Connected

If you are not receiving updates and information from MDEA on email, you don't know what you are missing.

Add yourself to our list by going to our website at OurMDEA.org and providing your email address.

We need your personal email because MDEA information cannot be disseminated using district resources.

Our email list is never shared with other organizations.

Remember, information is power!

Academy Awards: Call for Nominations

On Thursday, May 11, the MDUSD Community will gather to honor some of the many stars among us at the Fifth Annual Education Academy Awards Event. Event planners are seeking nominations in the following categories:

Awards for Teachers

Leadership & Courage
Creative Curriculum
Most Inspirational
Community Involvement
Lifetime Achievement

Awards for Non-Teachers

Outstanding Classified Employee
Outstanding Administrator
Outstanding Parent Volunteer
Outstanding Volunteer Organization



Think about the people you work with, those who go out of their way to provide excellence service to our students and to support our school communities. If you know of someone deserving of recognition, nominate them for an Academy Award. Nomination forms are available on the MDEA website and are due Tuesday, February 28.

Holbrook (continued from page 1) Bancroft Elementary. The two languages being discussed have been Mandarin and Spanish, although it is possible other languages could be offered.

Sun Terrace and Wren are also included in the Regional Magnet Program, because some of their current students reside in the Holbrook attendance area. When Holbrook closed, the students in that attendance area enrolled at these schools.

Sun Terrace has been named the Magnet School for Science, Technology, Math and Engineering (STEM), as the staff at Sun Terrace has been working for the last year and a half to develop the school's capabilities in this area, installing a STEM lab and employing a dedicated half-time Teacher on Special Assignment to coordinate STEM efforts. In addition, the after-school program offers Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Launch, a pre-Engineering curriculum designed for elementary level students.

Wren Avenue Elementary has been named the Magnet School for the Arts and is beginning planning efforts to increase student's opportunities for artistic expression by integrating fine and performing arts in to regular curriculum.

The loss of enrollment for Sun Terrace and Wren that will result when some Holbrook families choose to go back to their home school may result in a few involuntarily transfers; however, there are typically over 100 positions available in the District at the end of a school year. Any staff members displaced from these sites will have many options available to them.

The Regional Magnet Program is a creative way for the District to reopen the neighborhood school, give families the option to choose a program that reflects their child's interests and strengths, and expand opportunities and collaboration at Sun Terrace and Wren. All three schools will likely be much stronger as a result

THE CATALYST

February 2017

Mt. Diablo Education Association

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OurMdea.org

Dates to Remember

February 6
~ Rep Assembly - Willow Creek MU

February 6-10
~ National School Counselors Week

February 13
~ Professional Development Day

February 13
~ School Board Meeting

February 15
~ Preference forms for next year's assignments distributed

February 15
~ Application deadline for CTA Martin Luther King Jr Memorial Scholarship

February 19
~ President's Day - No School

February 27
~ School Board Meeting

February 28
~ Applications for "Willie Brown" contracts due

February 28
~ Academy Award Nominations Due

February 28
~ Tentative Assignments for Next Year Announced

March 1 - 10
~ Electronic Election of Representatives to NEA RA

March 1
~ Anniversary of Historic Agreement restoring Medical Benefits

March 1
~ Climate Survey Opens

March 4-6
~ CTA Equity and Human Rights Conference

March 6
~ Professional Development Day

March 6
~ Rep Assembly, Willow Creek MU 4:00

Save the Date

MDEA Academy Awards

May 11, 2017

Holbrook to Reopen as part of Regional Magnet

In response to strong community interest in having their neighborhood school back, the MDUSD Board has voted to reopen Holbrook Elementary.

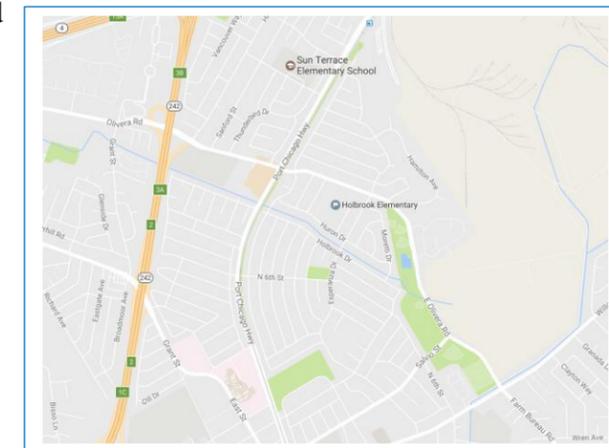
Holbrook, which was closed in 2011 due to declining enrollment and extreme budget pressure due to the Great Recession, will be refurbished and modernized before reopening in fall of 2017-18 serving students in grades K-5.

Families in the Holbrook attendance area will soon receive a letter from the District announcing the reopening of their neighborhood school, including a form for parents to use to notify the District of their plans for next school year. Families in the Sun Terrace or Wren attendance areas will also have the option of transferring to Holbrook if they choose. On Monday, February 27th, Holbrook will host an open house for interested families. Being part of a team that opens a school can be an exciting opportunity, offering teachers the ability to have a voice in establishing procedures and norms that will become part of the school's culture for years to come.

The District will not be able to determine the number or types of positions that will be needed until they receive back the enrollment forms parents interested in having their child attend Holbrook in the fall. During the discussions with the community around reopening the school, District staff learned that the community members expressed interest in a strong academic program as well as students having the option to learn a second language, to be exposed to a curriculum with a strong emphasis on Science, Technology, Math and Engineering (STEM), and a program incorporating robust support for the Arts. To address these various community interests, the District has developed a Regional Magnet Program with each site focusing on one of the three identified areas.

Teachers who are interested in being part of the new Holbrook team will be able to apply during the Voluntary Transfer Process after Spring Break and during the summer if enrollment numbers indicate the need for additional staffing. Specific positions and application dates will be announced in March or April.

As part of the Regional Magnet Program, Holbrook will offer students the opportunity to learn a second language through a dual immersion program. The specific language(s) will be made next year and will be based on district needs and interests of the families. The dual immersion program would be similar to the Spanish Dual Immersion program at **(continued on page 4)**



City of Concord Moves Forward on Development of Concord Naval Weapons Station

The City of Concord has established a Community Advisory Committee to hear public comments and provide input into the City Council's decisions regarding the development of the Concord Naval Weapons Stations. The development of this area will add 12,000 homes, 28,000 residents, and 22,000 jobs to the city of Concord. The City Council has selected a developer for the site and is in the processing of determining the terms and conditions the developer must follow. For example, the City Council will eventually need to determine the number of schools that will be in the area, the type of schools, and their locations. The City Council and the Community Advisory Committee need to hear frequently from the community that the area needs neighborhood public schools. If community members don't monitor the development carefully, City Council members could award sweetheart deals to charter schools.

Many local residents are concerned with the level of arsenic and other pollutants in the ground, especially around "Bunker City," the collection of concrete storage buildings near Bailey Road. This area will likely be the last to be developed, as the clean-up efforts there will take several more years. The Community Advisory Committee will receive regular updates on clean-up efforts and the remaining level of pollutants as development moves forward.

It will be the developer's responsibility to sell or lease the commercial portion of the land to various companies—manufacturing companies, research and development facilities, retail outlets, office facilities, restaurants, and hotels. There are many ways the Council could ensure that the development brings in employers that pay a living wage and treat employees fairly. For example, with some types of facilities, such as hotels, it is common for cities to require "card-check neutrality," a process that guarantees that management will not interfere with union organizing drives. If the Council does not act, the area could end up with employers who profit by exploiting the vulnerable members of our community.

With so many issues of concern to the residents, the Community Advisory Committee will be an important avenue for influencing decisions makers and keeping decisions public.

The first regular meeting of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) will be Tuesday, February 21 at 6:00 p.m. in the Concord City Council Chambers at 1950 Parkside Dr, Concord, CA 94519.

The CAC will continue to meet every third Tuesday at the City Council Chambers at 6pm. If you live in Concord and are concerned about the development of the Naval Weapons Station, please attend these meetings and speak up.

CTA Creates Toolkit to Promote Safe Learning Environments

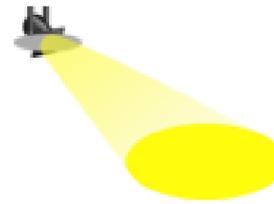
A recent survey of CTA members revealed a significant increase in bullying since the November election. At CTA, we believe all children, regardless of family circumstances, where they live, where they were born, how they look, who they love, or the language they speak have the right to a safe learning environment. If you are worried about how bullying and hate speech is impacting your students, use CTA's [Advocating for All Students: A Social Justice Toolkit](#) (including posters, sample policy and resolutions, and social media shareables) to create Safe Zones for students.



CTA State Council Passes Resolution Supporting All Children

CTA's State Council of Education reaffirmed educators' unwavering support for all students by passing a [resolution](#) and issuing a call to action to all Californians to join us in advocating for the quality public education all our students deserve. The resolution asks all Californians, including elected leaders regardless of party affiliation, to join us in supporting a strong, inclusive, safe and innovative public education system that ensures all students can succeed. [Take the pledge in support of all students](#)

Spotlight on Success



Meg Honey explains Northgate Uncapped on ABC News

In a televised interview on Friday, January 27, Meg Honey explained to ABC reporter Leslie Brinkley that that many teachers and community members in the Northgate Feeder pattern do not want to split off from MDUSD. She eloquently detailed the reasons that such a split would be bad for the students within the feeder pattern. She remarked, "This move is not only short-sighted but incredibly exclusionary."

Meg, who teaches History at Northgate High School, is the founder of "Northgate Uncapped," a group made up of community members and teachers who oppose the Northgate CAPS secession movement. She explained that teachers have been offended and hurt by anti-teacher comments that have been made by the advocates of

secession, especially on the social-media site Next Door. "This group claims that a split would be good for teachers, but their comments indicate that they do not respect teachers and the work we do."

Meg went on to relay that the Northgate CAPS secession group uses outdated and often incorrect data in its messaging citing test score and reference data from three years ago. Most of their comments about District bureaucracy seems to be based on incidents that happened before Dr. Nellie Meyer became Superintendent in August, 2013.



Meg spoke about the goal of teachers to prepare students for the real world. She feels that it would be a disservice to shelter students in a protective bubble. She clarified that the proposed Northgate Unified School District would be "predominately white." While MDUSD is currently 45% Caucasian, the Northgate feeder pattern is 65% Caucasian. Hispanic students comprise 36% of the District student body while making up only 8% of the students in the Northgate feeder pattern.

During the interview Meg also explained that a smaller District would not be able to provide the same kinds of programs for the most vulnerable students, adding that there are many program in these schools for students with special needs. In the event a split, these programs would need to be relocated to District schools and would no longer be available to students in the Northgate area.

The news segment on ABC was unfortunately labeled "Five East Bay schools want to secede from Mt. Diablo school district," which implied that the schools themselves want to split off while in reality this move has been generated by a group of residents, most of whom no longer have children in District schools.

The Northgate CAPS secessionist group claims to have collected 6,000 signatures. When these petitions are submitted to the County Office of Education and verified, it is possible that that County will authorize a ballot measure for November, 2018 regarding the issue.

In response to the secession movement, the MDUSD School Board adopted a resolution at its January 25, 2017 Board Meeting opposing Northgate CAPS' efforts. MDEA's Executive Board adopted a similar resolution opposing secession at its February, 2016 meeting.

The Northgate Uncapped website contains additional information about the potential impact on Special Education programs and the projected demographics of the proposed District, as well as opinions and