



At tonight's school board meeting our trustees discussed the cost to restore not just elementary libraries but middle school and high school too, but . . .

**NO DECISIONS WERE MADE  
REGARDING RESTORING SCHOOL LIBRARIES  
OR ANY OTHER PROGRAM**

**THE NEXT BOARD MEETING IS TUESDAY, JUNE 16TH AT 6:30PM**  
(A DIFFERENT DAY DUE TO MIDDLE SCHOOL PROMOTION ON WEDNESDAY)

The school board asked for more information about what a "smorgasbord" of reduced program bring-backs would look like. The four programs they talked about bringing back at minimum levels were library services, elementary science specialists, elementary reading specialists, and computer lab specialists.

The board expressed a stronger desire to reinstate library services at the high school and the middle school rather than at the elementary schools due the use of the secondary libraries for independent research.

High school enrollment is expected to increase by at least 75 students in 2009-10, and that extra Average Daily Attendance money might be used to reinstate the high school librarian.

MBMS Principal John Jackson spoke of the necessity of having the library media specialist reinstated at his site because of the extra support she provides to staff as an equipment technician and as a textbook clerk. The teacher union representative, speaking as a teacher, brought along testimonials from the staff about how vital it is to have library services at their school.

The elementary principals agreed if library services were restored they would rather keep their own library specialist at reduced hours rather than have one full time specialist travel to the five schools.

The so-called May Revise is due June 8th at which time school boards across the state may also learn that all penalties have been removed from the Class Size Reduction program. If so, MBUSD could gain \$500,000. It is likely, though, the May Revise will bring further cuts to the education budget.

The PTAs have donated \$335,000 to MBUSD and a spokesperson tonight said there is a feeling of frustration by the PTA boards that the school board has not committed to restoring anything with that money. The PTA boards are confident they can duplicate that donation annually.

MBEF President Ellen Rosenberg said the Ed Foundation is projecting to raise \$4.1 million in the 2009-10 Annual Appeal, but there could be a damper on the ability to raise this larger amount with the board not restoring vital programs with the \$1.3 million that was raised in the few short weeks of the Supplemental Appeal.

The board explored that topic for a while. They expressed the desire to conservatively spend the \$1.3 million over two years, to try to have program stability, rather than commit all of it for 2009-10 and then have to go through cut-cut-cut again.

Even so, the board made it clear that if a program was restored for two years, there was no guarantee it would not be cut mid-year with the economy being so bad.

June 1, 2009

## ELEMENTARY LIBRARIES ON THE JUNE 3RD SCHOOL BOARD AGENDA

District Office 325 Peck Avenue - 6:30pm

<http://www.manhattan.k12.ca.us/board/2008-2009/06-03-summary.pdf>

### PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS (90 Minutes)

Schneider

1. Independent Study (**Information Only**)
2. 2009-2010 Program Considerations (**Direction Requested**)
  - a. Budget Assumptions
  - b. Elementary Libraries
  - b. SLIP Funding 2009-2010
  - c. Elementary Administrative Support

I do not know why our elementary libraries are up for discussion and the middle school and high school libraries are not. The statement "Direction Requested" implies a decision will be made. I hope any and all can join me at the meeting to hear the discussion and speak in support of our school library program, if warranted.

Whatever happens, we can hold our heads up high in this town. We rallied support for our teachers and our vital programs with our trustees and administrators right there with us. Please stand and support them as they make hard decisions to keep our precious school district solvent in these difficult times.

In Gratitude,  
Heidi

May 21, 2009

## GREAT NEWS AT LAST NIGHT'S SCHOOL BOARD MEETING!

Even in the face of dire budget news out of Sacramento after the defeat of the budgetary propositions, our trustees voted to reinstate for the next two years (2009-10 and 2010-11) the following programs and services:

1. Reasonable class size (approx. 23) in grades K-3 and current numbers in grades 4-5
2. Reasonable class size for 9th grade English/Language Arts
3. Counseling services for grades 6-12

The next board meeting is June 3rd, 6:30pm, 325 Peck Avenue, where it is likely our trustees will discuss (and possibly vote on) reinstating other vital programs.

We are able to even think about taking such positive baby steps because of the prudence and foresight exercised by our trustees and administrators in preparing for the worst; and because our community has thrown itself wholeheartedly into supporting excellence in education through advocacy, fundraising, and volunteerism.

In Gratitude,  
Heidi

May 18, 2009

**THE MBEF SUPPLEMENTAL APPEAL RAISED \$1.3 MILLION!  
THIS MATCHES THE \$1.3 MILLION DONATED BY THE CITY!**

May 6, 2009

At the May 6th School Board meeting program priorities for 2009-10 were discussed but our board expressed it would be imprudent to formalize the reinstatement of programs until after the May 19th special election and the May Revise (which will come June 8th). So though nothing was voted upon, our Trustees discussed bringing back the following programs next year:

1. Reasonable Class Size at the elementary level and in 9th grade English and math
2. Elementary Science Specialists in some form
3. Librarian for grades 9-12 and Library Media Specialists for grades K-8 in some form
4. Counseling Services at middle and high school.

They also discussed restoring programs in the reverse order than which they were eliminated, but emphasized that program restorations are contingent upon continuing fundraising efforts and final budget numbers from Sacramento after the [special election](#).

The big news is that Janet Schwabe will step down as Deputy Superintendent of Human Resources and her position will become a classified one. Though a huge loss for our district, it will mean a savings of \$70,000 per year.

In the meantime, our small town has rallied with significant donations:  
\$1,300,000 from the City of Manhattan Beach  
\$960,000 supplemental donations to the Manhattan Beach Education Foundation  
\$35,000 from the Save Our Teachers Rummage Sale

Girl Scout troops are donating their cookie sale money... children are manning lemonade stands... kindergarteners are bringing principals their small change... we are truly blessed to live and work in such a supportive community where in solidarity our school board members have declined to accept the stipend for their services.

The next school board meeting is on Tuesday, May 12th at 7:00pm and concerns one agenda item. Program priorities will not be discussed.

Wednesday, May 20th at 6:30 is the next regularly scheduled board meeting when further discussion about program priorities will be on the agenda.

To stay informed log on to [www.gvpta.com](http://www.gvpta.com) and click on the Advocacy Page. Wear Blue every Wednesday to show Our Children Matter NOW! Every Wednesday a new Advocacy Action will be emailed to the parent list; just follow the simple instructions.

In Gratitude,  
Heidi

April 23, 2009

## GREAT NEWS!

[City of Manhattan Beach donates \\$1.3 million to MBUSD!](#)

[Submit your thank you online to The Beach Reporter!](#)

Councilmember Montgomery voices strong support for our school libraries!

Let's keep it rolling! We must rally. We must write. We must speak up, and donate what we can!

## RALLY FOR EDUCATION

Sunday, April 26th

Civic Center Plaza in downtown Manhattan Beach

11:00am-noon

Show the invited legislators how highly we value education!

BRING THE KIDS! WEAR BLUE!

In the meantime, the Manhattan Beach Education Foundation has initiated a Supplemental Appeal to raise money to go towards restoring teachers and programs currently eliminated for 2009-10. \$800 per student in the district is the suggested amount. Read the [MBEF Supplemental Appeal](#) letter from President Ellen Rosenberg for details and to print the donation form. There is also a survey where donors may indicate which programs they would like most to be restored.

A group of concerned parents are organizing a HUGE rummage sale for Saturday, May 2nd from 9am-3pm at American Martyrs O'Donnell Hall. All proceeds will be donated to the MBEF Crisis Campaign. To find out where and when to drop off items for sale or to volunteer visit [www.mbsaveourteachers.org](http://www.mbsaveourteachers.org).

Additionally, there is a We Love the Library wine and cheese party hosted at GROW the Produce Shop that will benefit our PTA, a strong supporter of the library program. Thank you **Barry and Kathy Fisher of GROW**. My husband Steve and I are proud and honored to be your guests. Thank you Mark Hurst and Christine Cronin for keeping our glasses filled! The sold-out event is Sunday, May 17th, 6pm-8pm.

Stay tuned for more good news as MBUSD meets with representatives of our city to address fiscal challenges, and meets with representatives of local districts to find ways to share costs and pool resources. Our administrators, school board members, and parent advocates are working tirelessly for our children's education and should be applauded for their dedication.

Our school board meets Wednesday, May 6, 6:30pm to discuss the people and programs that may be restored now that the City of Manhattan Beach has invested in the education of our children, and as donations from parents and community members continue to come in. Plan to attend to voice your priorities.

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In Gratitude,  
Heidi

March 5, 2009

Friends, with a heavy heart I write that school library services have been eliminated districtwide for the 2009-10 school year due to the continuing bad news out of Sacramento. With the national and state economy worsening every day; and with the need for voters to pass all budget initiatives in May in order for the current state budget to work, our school board has had to take drastic measures to ensure a balanced budget for 2009-10. [On March 4th they eliminated all programs](#) not mandated by the state. The Manhattan Beach Education Foundation currently does not have the extra funds needed to keep the status quo.

The people who participated in Capital Convoy this week came back with the news that not only is the budget south of accurate but that high-performing districts such as Manhattan Beach can expect no help from Sacramento. We must take care of ourselves. Unless you want schools in 90266 to look like everywhere else here's what you can do:

1. [Urge the Manhattan Beach City Council to donate to MBUSD](#). The wealth of the city has long been tied to the excellence of our schools. In April 2008 the city gave the school district \$520,000 to finish that school year without losing programs; now we need about \$4 million for 2009-10 to restore class size reduction to grades K-3; the elementary P.E. program; library services districtwide; elementary science program, elementary music program and so much more. Councilmembers have indicated they are willing to help - urge them to be generous!
2. [Donate to the Manhattan Beach Education Foundation](#). If you already gave, consider giving again. If money is tight consider what you can do without for the sake of your children's education. MBUSD is one of the top-performing districts in the nation. We got that way by parents donating generously to MBEF, not with the bottom-of-the-barrel funding we receive from the state!
3. [Write to your representatives](#) stating you are sick and tired of state and federal education mandates that come with plenty of rules but insufficient funding. I learned Wednesday that it is common practice for legislators to mandate a service, fund it with a nominal \$1,000, and order school districts to cover the rest! Appalling! And while you're at it, write letters to Sacramento saying top-performing districts should not have to participate every year in time-wasting, money-draining, soul-sucking testing!
4. Get behind an education parcel tax. Families with children move here for the schools. Homes are sold for huge buckets of money. The whole city benefits; the whole city should support the health of the schools!

I thought what I posted below a mere five days ago was bad enough; I just can't believe we have sunk to this new low. Children everywhere deserve better. We can start by helping our own children by doing what we can in each of the four areas above.

In gratitude,

Heidi Snively - Grand View Library

March 1, 2009

As a result of the dire budgetary constraints brought on by the national economic downturn, the MBUSD Elementary Library Media Specialist positions will be reduced in 2009-10 to one full time person to serve our five elementary schools.

I will be that person, by virtue of seniority.

In the coming weeks and months I will continue to advocate for my four colleagues to be restored to their positions before the start of the new school year. In the meantime, a plan will be developed to provide the best possible library service under the constraints given, while at the same time safeguarding more than \$1.3 million worth of library assets.

As a mother of two sons who have benefited from the excellent educational opportunities afforded to them by MBUSD, I am keenly aware of how frustrating it feels not to have parents step in to ease the harsh reality of having one library specialist to serve more than 2,700 K-5 students and more than 100 teachers. Tempting as it may be to look to our dedicated and capable volunteers to fill in so that library services will not be interrupted, that is against rules set down in the California Education Code:

California Education Code

Section 35021

Utilization of Volunteers

(b) No district may abolish any of its classified positions and utilize volunteer aides, as authorized herein, in lieu of classified employees who are laid off as a result of the abolition of a position. A district shall not refuse to employ a person in a vacant classified position and use volunteer aides in lieu of filling the classified position.

(c) It is the intent of the Legislature to permit school districts to use volunteer aides to enhance its educational program but not to permit displacement of classified employees nor to allow districts to utilize volunteers in lieu of normal employee requirements.

Under these rules, we may continue to use volunteers in the capacity, and for the tasks, which they historically have been used. It has not been the usual practice for library volunteers to work alone without the direct supervision of a library media specialist.

At Grand View, we have benefited from the help of more than sixty library volunteers who assist with circulation duties, shelving, reader's advisory, and light cleaning.

I look forward to developing a comfortable working relationship with parent volunteers at the other schools, until such time as the four positions may be restored; and will meet with the principals to see how my strengths can meet the needs of the students and teachers.

With heartfelt thanks to my four colleagues: Stacia Costa, Julia Jassim, Yukari Matsuyama, and Chris Primm for their professionalism and grace under these unprecedented circumstances.

Heidi Snively

Library Media Specialist - Grand View Elementary

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