



A Report from our *President*

February 25, 2008



Dianne GarciaStevens

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Once again, I attended the regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting Thursday, February 21 and represented the Montebello Teachers Association. I will address the Board of Education again Thursday, March 6. Negotiations continue. I believe progress is being made.

Good evening Madam President Mrs. Calderon, Vice President Ms. Guzman, Board Members Mr. Vela, Mr. Chau and Mr. Chacon. Good evening Superintendent Mr. Velasquez, Cabinet Members, and Community. My name is Dianne GarciaStevens President of the Montebello Teachers Association. On February 7th I addressed the Board of Education and expressed my thoughts concerning our negotiations. Over the past fourteen days I have been able to reflect on that evening. As we all know, reflection is useful and sometimes painful. It was exhausting to sit, listen and watch power point presentations on the demands that our members must go through on a daily basis. These so called "plans," each administrator presented to freeze their PI statuses are only viable if the teachers who are to carryout the "plans" feel valued. As I said last meeting no one entity can solve the challenges education faces daily. We need to work with each other in a trusting co-operative partnership.

The question I put forth to this Board is do you value your employees? I believe you do. We, the members of the Montebello Teacher's Association, value the role we play in the lives of our students. We continue to attend in-services, workshops and meetings to provide the support our students need. We stay current on educational advancements and topic knowledge. We listen to those who are no longer in the classroom called "consultants". Our day does not end at a given time. We have become master of time management. Teachers grade papers in the car, during family meal preparation, in faculty lounges and have been seen grading even at board meetings. We value our work in public education; we value our families, but most importantly we continue to serve our students with love, devotion and care.

Teaching is a "Profession". Teaching is a special "Partnership". We have looked at, and molded the hearts and minds of countless students. We teach from the heart. We teach hope and possibility. We

teach our students to compete with ferocity in academics, arts, sports, and many other activities and to walk away as friends. We empower! Those of us, who entered this profession, know teaching is the most complex job imaginable filled with many frustrations. We entered a profession dedicated to assisting our students to achieve their potential. It takes a special completely devoted individual to make this profession a life long career.

As we continue with our negotiations process we will stay united; one voice. Just like the Verizon cell phone ads, our members will be there supporting our bargaining team throughout this process. They are our network. Just like we remind our students we have to be patient at times, the members of the Montebello Teachers Association have been patient.

I would hope we are all playing on the same team, believing in mutual goals and interest and not playing against each other with a win/lose attitude. An attitude in which the students are the only ones who can really lose. History has a habit of repeating itself. This is your opportunity to leave a legacy of repeating history by keeping our family of MUSD and MTA a trusting, caring, co-operative partnership that will be remembered as "The Partnership" that put the nurturing of our students before all else!

As you can see, I truly believe a hopeful future is based on learning from "past history". Eighteen years ago the Board of Education in partnership with MTA dug deep into their souls during a time of deep despair and darkness, to pull our district up into a realm of positive hopefulness. Once again, due to the handy work of politicians, we are faced with despair and darkness but all is not lost! I ask you, in good faith and trust to remember our history. Together as one we can once again conquer any obstacles to give our students of MUSD a future of hope and light. I invite you to join MTA on this journey into the future. United, One Voice.