



CONTACT

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Superintendent APOLOGIZES To The Montebello Teachers Association

Many members have interrupted vacation plans throughout the summer to attend Board of Education Meetings. Public Comments and Reports to the Board of Education consistently referenced the "Vote of No Confidence" and the outrage from the letter Superintendent Contreras Smith mailed to every parent in the District subsequent to coming to agreement in negotiations.

Once again, last night numerous members of the Association attended the meeting. Weary from a week of setting up classrooms, participating in professional development, and welcoming students to the new year, members found time to follow up on Association concerns.

Contreras Smith opened the meeting with the following remarks:

Good evening, and welcome back to a wonderful and exciting 2016-2017 school year.

I would absolutely like to begin our BOE meeting this evening by officially welcoming everyone back to this academic year.

And, as we begin a new year I feel confident knowing the MUSD has the hardest working and most dedicated teachers and employees in the state of California.

Their commitment to our students is the principle reason why we are a model district when it comes to the ultimate goal of graduating our students and sending them to college.

And as I look around the room, and I look around our district, I think we are all in agreement that last school year was a year that many of us do not want to rehash due to the tensions that were creating divisions within our Montebello School community.

Although I do not want to take steps backwards by reliving an error that caused many in this room, including myself, personal heartache, there is one particular issue that has created inner debate in me throughout this summer that I feel needs to be addressed in order to truly put us on a path that will assure that history does not repeat itself.

As many of you may recall, toward the end of the academic year I authored a letter to the community referencing the Montebello Teachers Association. In hindsight, given how personally hurt I was feeling at that time, it was a letter that should never have been written.

Ironically the hurt that I was feeling permeated throughout the letter causing a great deal of pain to the very people within our district who make our district successful.

Although I referenced how I was feeling at the time, I want to be clear in stating that my emotions at that point in history are not justification for my actions. On the contrary, I learned a valuable lesson about putting myself in the place of others as many of you were likely feeling equally hurt prior to the letter, let alone after I wrote the letter.

And for this reason, I want to publically apologize to the Montebello Teachers Association, its President Lorraine Richards, and to each and every one of you that so diligently serves our students. I recognize that my apology will not instantly make everything right with some of you.

And now that I am committed to being your partner and over time through action we will be able to build a stronger bond that will continue making our district one of the best in the state.

Let's work together to make this one of the best years in the history of our district.

Thank you for your commitment to our students and families. And, at the end of the day I want you to know that I will always be a teacher at heart.



The "Vote of No Confidence" will be discussed at the next Council meeting Tuesday, September 20.

Organizing Team Organizes Bella Vista For Opening of School on Thursday

Superintendent Susanna Contreras Smith and Cabinet joined Board of Education Vice President Lani Cupchoy for the first bell Thursday morning at Bell Vista Elementary. Proud members of the Association wore MTA shirts, MTA Blue, and MTA buttons.



ELEMENTARY DIRECTOR EDDIE GARCIA STANDS PROUD OF MTA.



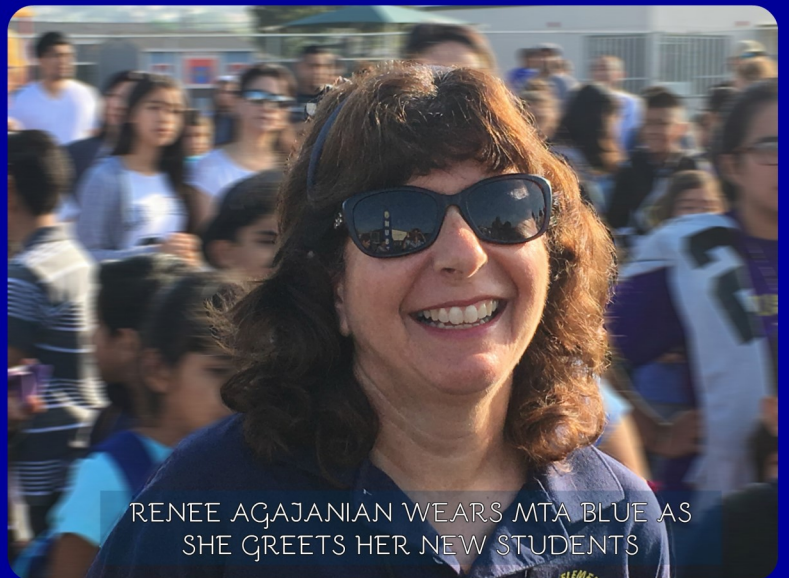
2015-16 ORGANIZING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON CRISTINA PAZ PROUDLY BEGINS THE SCHOOL YEAR WEARING HER MTA SHIRT AND BUTTON.



KATHY ABE GREETES STUDENTS AND THE NEW YEAR IN HER MTA SHIRT.



WENDY IBANEZ IS "UNION STRONG!"



RENEE AGAJANIAN WEARS MTA BLUE AS SHE GREETES HER NEW STUDENTS