

LVEA TODAY



Measure E Passage Is Essential!

LVEA strongly supports the renewal of Measure E! It has provided \$2.3 Million in local funding every year since 2004. It was extremely important during the economic downturn and is even more essential now as we make educational enhancements for our students. The current measure expires in June 2016, so we must ensure that this renewal passes and continues to provide stable and essential funding for another twelve years! We experienced furlough days, pink slips and very little staff development in the recent economic downturn. Without Measure E, the impact would have been far worse for everyone, especially our students. This is not a tax increase. It simply maintains the current level that homeowners have paid since 2004 which is only about 8 dollars a month or 27 cents a day. This funding keeps our class sizes down, counselor ratios low, important arts programs running and much more. This local funding source stays with the district and directly enhances the educational programs for our students.

The community is overwhelmingly supportive of Measure E based on the phone calls we have made so far, but saying YES on the phone and saying YES on a ballot are very different. We must get our supporters out to vote. The current phase of the phone banking is to remind our supporters to vote. PLEASE take some time to help us with the GOTV effort between now and Nov 3. You can find the schedule for phone banking from your rep or online at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f044aabad28a0f58-phone>

If you live in the district and/or have friends/relatives that do, please urge everyone to vote YES on Measure E on Tuesday, November 3. Spread the word: Vote YES on Measure E!

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LVEA supports Mathy Wasserman and Linda Menges for LVUSD School Board

Jill Gains and Cindy Iser are retiring from the LVUSD School Board next month and LVEA thanks them for their years of hard work and incredible dedication to our students. There are three candidates running to fill these two vacant seats on November 3. Your Executive Board and Representative Council have both unanimously voted to support Mathy Wasserman and Linda Menges in their races to become Las Virgenes Unified School District School Board members. Both of these candidates are fixtures in our school district already. They have shown themselves to be heavily invested in the success of our students, schools and educators. They have been volunteers at all levels of their children's schooling, PFC presidents, and they have earned the respect of our members across the district. With Cindy and Jill leaving, the next two Board members will have some big shoes to fill; however, LVEA is confident that Linda Menges and Mathy Wasserman will both lead our district to achieve educational excellence for our students.

Curriculum Issues

ELA Adoption and Writers Workshop: There has been a lot of discussion lately about the English Language Arts (ELA) adoption and Writers Workshop. A district Literacy Committee, made up of teachers from all grade levels and sites, will oversee the adoption – including the pace of curriculum investigation, pilot planning, actual piloting, and curriculum adoption. All decisions will then go to the district Curriculum Council and then the School Board for official adoption.

We're still getting lots of questions about Writers Workshop (WW). WW remains a resource and not required curriculum for this school year. The ELA adoption will contain a writing component, so it's possible that WW could play a role in the formal ELA adoption as either a continued resource or a required part of the adoption – it's up to the Literacy Committee, Curriculum Council and the School Board. When will the ELA adoption happen? That will be determined by the Literacy Committee; however, there seems to be interest and momentum for a 2016-17 adoption for K-5 and 2017-18 for secondary. This will be an interesting year for ELA!

Elementary Report Cards: We are hearing lots of concerns and frustration with K-5 report cards. The format is outdated, inconsistent with Common Core expectations and not very informative for parents. Last year, we were told that a new system would be available for 2016-17. Now it appears that this school year will focused on planning for the new system with pilots beginning in 2016-17 and full implementation in 2017-18. We share in the district's goal to get this new report card implementation done right; however, we sympathize with all elementary teachers that have been waiting patiently for this essential curricular improvement for students, parents and teachers!

Elementary Writing Assessments: We're getting a lot of questions about the recent writing assessments. You do NOT have to grade them now. They should be kept for comparison with next Spring's assessments, so you can analyze the writing progress for your students. The grading rubric was rewritten over the summer by the writing TOSAs at the request of teachers. The district feels the new rubric more accurately addresses statewide assessments and is less cumbersome than last year's rubric.

SpEd Testing Requirements: The district has changed its assessment system from Woodcock Johnson III Tests of Achievement (WJ-III) to Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement III (KTEA-3) because the WJ-III is now outdated. In addition, the KTEA-3 contains several assessment battery options and the Specific Learning Disability (SLD) battery was felt to provide a more comprehensive and more legally defensible approach to assessing SpEd students. While we see that this can be helpful to the IEP legal process, this new KTEA-3 SLD battery has dramatically increased the testing time for our SpEd teachers. As a result of concerns from our SpEd teachers and LVEA, the district is rethinking the way that KTEA has been implemented and plans to implement changes that will be less tasking on SpEd teachers while maintaining its concern for legally defensible IEPs. Stay tuned for more updates.