



MASPAC

MASON'S PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Larry Mason

FEBRUARY 2008

District D

IMPORTANT DATES

February 18, 2008
President's Day
(No School)

NEVADA READING WEEK

Theme: Ride the Reading Train
February 25-29, 2008

REGULAR BOARD MEETINGS

February 14, 2008 4:00 p.m.
February 28, 2008 4:00 p.m.

Meeting will be held at
Edward A. Greer Education
Center Board Room
2832 E. Flamingo Road
Las Vegas, NV 89121

Access the District's website at
www.ccsd.net
for Board agendas and reference
materials.

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

February 11, 2008 9:00 a.m.
Work Session

Meeting will be held at
Edward A. Greer Education
Center Board Room
2832 E. Flamingo Road
Las Vegas, NV 89121

MASPAC & DISTRICT G MEETING

Wednesday, February 20, 2008
9:15 a.m.

East Region Center
2298 Vegas Valley Drive
Las Vegas, Nevada 89146

Corner of Eastern/Vegas Valley

Please know that our February MASPAC Meeting will be on **Wednesday, February 20, 2008, at 9:15 a.m. in the East Region Center meeting room.** This will be a joint meeting with Trustee Sheila Moulton's District G PAC members. The program will entail a special presentation by the Nevada System of Higher Education concerning the future needs and education of Nevada. You are welcome to invite a friend to join us for this discussion. We will also review the recent budget cuts that have been proposed to CCSD by the Governor.

A huge thank you to all who attended the MASPAC meeting in January and to Ruby Thomas Elementary School Principal, Dennis Kubala and his staff for their pleasant and generous hosting of the group.

Nevada Reading Week is February 25-29, 2008. I will be visiting and scheduled to read to students. This year's theme is Ride the Reading Train.

New Teachers' Cultural Connections

In an effort to provide new teachers to the Clark County School District (CCSD) an opportunity to connect to other educators and community members from their culture, the CCSD, Student Support Services Division, through the Equity & Diversity Education Department, sponsored four New Teachers' Cultural Connections Programs and Receptions: Hispanic American Teachers, Alaska Native/American Indian Teachers, Pacific Asian Teachers, and African American Teachers all held at the Texas Station Hotel. The purpose of the New Teachers' Cultural Connections Programs and Receptions was to welcome new teachers to the Las Vegas/Clark County community and to demonstrate our appreciation to our new teachers for selecting the CCSD and other university and college programs to educate our students.

The New Asian/Pacific Islander Teachers' Cultural Connections Program and Reception was held at Texas Station on January 25, 2008. Over one hundred people from the Clark County School District, College of Southern Nevada, and various community businesses and organizations attended. Mr. Wayne Tanaka, a retired CCSD principal, served as the Master of Ceremonies.

The Clark High School Chamber Orchestra, under the direction of Mr. Chuck Cushinery, provided beautiful music to open the evening. The attendees were also privileged to see performances from the Nani Ola Hawaiian Dance Company, the Japanese American Citizens League Kaminari Taiko Drummers, and the Filipiniana Dance Troup of Las Vegas. These groups provided a spectacular cultural experience for all.

Ms. Joanne E. Ho, Clark High School teacher, gave a heart-warming and inspiring keynote address to the new teachers. The event closed with music by the Clark High School Guitar Ensemble, under the direction of Mr. John Boland.

Additionally, over 250 people attend the Friday, February 1, 2008, New African American Teachers (NAAT) Program. The NAAT were provided an opportunity for them to network with other teachers and administrators, as well as community and business leaders from the African American community. Reverend Dennis Morgan Brown provided the voice of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in his "I Have a Dream" speech and uplifting song of "We Shall Overcome." M. Christopher Brown II, Ph.D., Dean and Professor of UNLV's School of Education, provided an encouraging educational message entitled: "And Still We 'R.I.S.E.': Retaining, Inducting, Supporting, and Encouraging Our Own." The Chicago Steppers, "Step Alive," added their cultural twist with soulful dancing using the style of the steppers from out of Chicago, Illinois. Additionally, a soulful musical concert by: "Rhythm Nation," a smooth jazz band with R&B and Motown sounds featuring African American musicians, provided their favorite dance music.

As the Clark County Board of School Trustees begins a new year, they remain hard at work to ensure the continued success of students in the community. With new Board officers and the Superintendent's reminder to "Keep Your Eye on the CAP," trustees have begun 2008 energized and proud of the school district's accomplishments from the past year.

In January 2007 trustees elected Ruth Johnson as Board President, Terri Janison as Vice President and Mary Beth Scow as Clerk. Throughout the year, trustees worked with the Superintendent and his staff as well as outside organizations and agencies to provide the community with a high-quality public education system. In determining how to best serve the community, they received reports from the Year-Round School Calendar Study Group, the committee to study school start times, the Policy Ad Hoc Committee and the 50th Anniversary Committee.

The Board received several awards and honors through the year for their work in music education programs, building programs, and office management systems while receiving commendations for their fiscal responsibility in the last legislative audit. Trustees were honored by the Nevada Association of School Boards. Carolyn Edwards was nominated for Director of the Year while Sheila Moulton was awarded Officer of the Year for her work representing Clark County District G.

To provide the public with better access to information that affects the school district, trustees installed new computer software that allowed them to create and post agendas electronically along with the minutes from past meetings. Not only did these efforts provide the community with a better opportunity to stay involved, it resulted in savings of close to \$55,000 in just one year. To help meet

the busy schedules of community members who wished to take an active role in education, trustees moved the start of their regular Board meetings to 4 p.m. and took the first steps towards web-casting the meeting to a broader audience. Finally, trustees redesigned their newsletters and created a new "Special Edition" to help the public stay informed on key district-wide issues.

Last year, in addition to visiting many of Clark County's schools for open houses and other important events, trustees held more than 56 public hearings and heard issues ranging from policy and school safety to zoning and budget cuts. They conducted a pair of community linkage meetings, including one meeting with parents on federal regulations and another for feedback from recent school district graduates. Trustees launched and subsequently aired five "School Matters" programs, a live, call-in television program that encourages feedback from the community on important education issues in Southern Nevada. As a result of the success of the "School Matters" television program, four additional shows have already been planned for 2008.

In February and July trustees conducted their evaluation of Superintendent Walt Rulffes and found him to both be in compliance and making reasonable progress with the district. Trustees accepted all 11 of the Superintendent's monitoring reports, which monitor the progress of the school district in educating students and also provided three commendations for jobs that were done exceptionally well. Thanks to the Superintendent's hard work and that of CCSD staff and students, trustees saw significant increases in the number of schools making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), the number of graduates attending UNLV, and they also were pleased to see the entire school district make AYP for the first time.

Additionally, the district saw a decrease in both the dropout rate and the achievement gap in 2007.

In keeping up with the CCSD's growth and evolving needs, trustees approved and monitored six charter schools and nine new schools. Trustees opened two replacement schools, one of which is the first green building in the district, while the other is the first of several new career and technical centers. Trustees also attended several new school dedications and the ground breaking for the new KLVX television station and Virtual High School campus.

Moving forward, trustees are committed to working with the community to provide quality education and opportunity for students. Communicating with the public will be central to all school Board goals for 2008. Trustees have outlined plans to have staff produce all Board minutes within 30 days of a meeting and will work hard to develop public speaking guidelines that are more user friendly. They also will work to improve the community linkage process and continue the development of the "School Matters" television program. Trustees also are developing a Board Audit Committee that will help the Board evaluate the areas of service it can improve upon. Additionally, trustees hope to once again participate with the school district in a community service project during the holiday season, a tradition that began this past December.

While this year will undoubtedly bring a new set of challenges and opportunities, the Board of School Trustees will continue to work closely with the talented staff, teachers, and students who proudly call Clark County home.