

March 28, 2018. Board Agenda Item A: Resolution and Partnership of Education Excellence Award, Marina High School

This is a beautiful resolution and award, and a marvelous surprise. We could not be more proud of all of you for this distinguished achievement.

I would like to provide some background information that many of you do not know because you were not here. MPC has always rallied to challenges with a positive approach, an admirable can do attitude. I tell this story of transformation and reciprocity because MPC is an exceptional role model and as such has much to rejoice over. This Partnership of Education Excellence award and the Early College and Career Pathways partnership between MPC, Marina High School and MPUSD represent a major momentous milestone for the City of Marina and Marina High School and Los Arboles Middle School.

MPC and Marina have a rich history. There was a confluence of events in 2010 that converged to

create this history. First, Marina High School was graduating seniors from its charter class; second MPC was breaking ground for the Marina MPC Education Center; third, the City of Marina was celebrating its 35th Birthday, which it co-celebrated with MPC at the ground breaking ceremony; and fourth, due to redistricting, MPC had just gained two trustees, one from Marina and one from Seaside.

Our amazing trustee from Seaside, Charles Brown, and I are here thanks to the incredible work of the NAACP, Mel Mason, Helen Rucker, and others from Seaside who believed our communities should be represented at MPC. This redistricting marked a new beginning in the MPC relationship with Marina and Seaside in 2009-2010.

We are so pleased that Mel Mason and his beautiful wife, Regina, are being honored next month at the President's Luncheon for all the good they have done and continue to do for all of us, not just Seaside.

To continue my story, a scholarship for a Marina High School graduate to attend MPC seemed in order to help commemorate the 2010 events coming together. At the time, I was chair of the City of Marina 35th anniversary committee and also chair of the education subcommittee, but we could not use committee funds. Thus, three of us subsequently agreed to subsidize the scholarship.

All was well, until I received a call from Marina High School lamenting that it was unable to process the scholarship through MPC. Of course, I was flabbergasted. A brief inquiry revealed that MPC did not have any procedures for financial aid or any scholarships for high school seniors. The MPC Foundation Executive Director, go-getter Robin Venuti, also confounded, worked with MPC to create a plan for Marina High School. MPC put in place procedures not only for the City of Marina 35th Anniversary scholarship, but also established an additional endowment scholarship for Marina High School. But wait, that is not all. Four additional one thousand dollar scholarships were established for

the other four Peninsula public high schools, in the spirit of fairness to all.

Why is this information so important now? Because in 2010 only 25% of Marina's residents had a college degree, same for Seaside, but 52% of the other Peninsula cities's residents had a college degree.

The newly established MPC scholarship program for graduating high school seniors provided opportunities unheard of before, opportunities for underserved, but very deserving, students to develop their potential and have hope for the future. Under the visionary leadership of Beccie Michaels, MPC Vice President for Advancement and MPC Foundation Executive Director, these opportunities are growing exponentially each year, "advancing greatly" to our delight. These scholarship recipients are very grateful for this gift of hope and financial prospects that education offers, new doors opening, exciting new beginnings. All because MPC was and is proactive when facing challenges. That is a major strength of the MPC

college community. The recent accreditation report splendid achievement is another example of this MPC excellence.

Now other donors have been stepping up to expand that scholarship program to ten one thousand dollar scholarships for each Monterey Peninsula public high school, and since 2017, scholarships now encompass funding for the other public high schools in Monterey County. What a magnificent way to grow enrollment!

The MPC – Marina relationship was indeed a catalyst to help our underserved students have access to a college education. None of us realized the enormous future snow ball effect this first seedling contribution would have. And it never would have happened without the initiative of MPC, its remarkable administrators, and the MPC Foundation. They deserve a first-class prize for innovativeness and creativity, among many other accolades.

Marina loves and salutes MPC and Dr. Diffenbaugh and the Monterey Peninsula Unified School District for nurturing this valuable partnership for young scholars, another pathway to student success. On behalf of Marina, thank you so much. Bravissimo to all at MPC and MPUSD who, working together, made it happen, with a special thank you to Dr. Tribley, our exceptional superintendent/president. Your positive, supportive approach is making a big difference. As Kiran Kamath, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, said when submitting the accreditation report, “We are MPC”!!! The MPC Family!!!