

SRVEA SIGNAL

Volume 26 Issue VI

April 2010

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Call For Action... Darren Day

The budget woes of the state of California continue to grind on, impacting, in one way or another, all of our members. If you did not receive a lay-off notice or release letter, then you are helping to support those who did.

On Thursday, April 15, the PTA groups of Contra Costa County held a rally at College Park High school in Pleasant Hill. The **Stand up for Students** rally was intended to bring attention to the disastrous impact the lack of school funding is having on our next generation. The stage was packed with wonderful speakers. Our own Joell Marchese, as well as, Tom Torlakson, Mark Desaulier, Joan Buchanan, and others shared with us different ways we should be working to change school funding. But there was a problem with this rally and with the support of education in general, APATHY. There were only 100 parents, teachers, and students in attendance at this rally.

I have a hard time understanding when so many livelihoods are on the line and I hear how anxious many SRVEA members are about keeping their jobs why so few members turn out to hear what should be done to try to save their jobs and programs. SRVUSD provided the greatest number of teachers to this rally. Most of those teachers, however, were established teachers who currently are not at risk of losing their jobs but came out to support those who did receive a release letter or lay-off notice.

If we all want to remain public school teachers we all need to get involved; otherwise our lay-off notice may be rescinded this year, but in subsequent years we may find ourselves receiving a lay-off notice every year, class sizes will be through the roof, and our working conditions will be unbearable.

So here is the next opportunity that all educators need to support with their voice, their dollars, and their time. The Governor, who underfunds education to the tune of approximately \$17 billion, is trying to attack the teaching profession once again. This will not only impact your compensation but also your working conditions.

Here are some of the bad components of **SB 955**:

- Eliminates the notice to RIF'd teachers and eliminates their right to request a hearing.
- Allows districts to hold dismissal hearings between May 15 and September 15, when teacher witnesses are often unavailable. This would create great chaos during the beginning of school since most school districts begin their year prior to September 15.
- Changes the non re-elect notification deadline from March 15 to June 15 of the employees 2nd year of probation.
- Allows districts to fire employees for any reason, including speaking out on student safety and employment issues.

Call your state Senators at 1-888-202-2246 and tell them to vote against **SB 955** because it eliminates teachers' due process rights and will make it harder to keep quality certificated employees, and it scapegoats teachers in bad economic times. It does not save the state or districts money and does not improve student learning.

So please use the phone number I have provided and let your voice be heard in Sacramento. If we all do not start taking the time necessary to fight for reliable on-going funding for public education, we will all be looking for jobs in another profession. ACT NOW!

Please act NOW.

Inside this issue:

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE 1

Editorial— Negotiations 2

Generation Z 3

RIF'ED? 3

Members Benefits 4

Negotiations

Editorial by Laura Finco; Signal Editor

For educators in California, the union contract should be as vital as their student grade book or lesson planner. It's a critical document that's the culmination of the collective bargaining process. Understanding it and how it came about is critical to understanding how a local CTA chapter impacts its members' professional life in profound ways.

One of the benefits of being a member of a labor association is the right to negotiate that contract. Negotiations are accomplished between representatives of both interested parties. In SRVUSD, the two parties are the District and SRVEA. SRVEA representation includes educators from all three levels—elementary, middle, and high school, and includes those who are involved in special education as well as general education. Members of the SRVEA Bargaining Team report back to the SRVEA Executive Board and Site Rep Council for direction on how to proceed. These two bodies also communicate directly with membership (ie; survey, forums, dialogue, and updates) in order to ensure that the interests of all are being considered.

Historically, SRVUSD and SRVEA have engaged in what is known as "Interest Based" bargaining. I had the opportunity to go through Interest Based Bargaining training when I served as SRVEA Vice President a few years ago. The philosophy of Interest Based bargaining emphasizes that successful bargaining rests on the ability of the parties to achieve shared goals without undermining each other's ability to attain their separate goals or protect their traditional rights and responsibilities.

One of the most coveted premises of bargaining, especially interest based bargaining, is the ideology that bargaining is done "at the table." The representatives work within the scope of the bargaining philosophy. Bargaining is not done directly with the members. It is appropriate for the SRVEA Bargaining Team to survey and dialogue with its members regarding critical issues in order to know how to proceed in the negotiation process. It is not appropriate for the District to do likewise. As members of SRVEA, we are represented by the Association, not the District. Questions and concerns should be directed to the SRVEA Bargaining Team, headed by SRVEA President Darren Day. It is time for "bargaining over the airwaves" to cease and keep the discussions in their rightful place—the bargaining table. This will allow for all representatives—District and SRVEA alike—to be able to serve those they represent without interference and external debate.

CTA State Council Report

The top governing body of the 325,000 member California Teachers Association has voted to support State Attorney General Jerry Brown in his bid for governor, state Sen. Tom Torlakson for Superintendent of Public Instruction, as well as other candidates for other constitutional offices for the 2010 election.

"Jerry Brown is the choice of educators because he has shown himself to be committed to ensuring all students have a quality education and providing public schools and colleges with the resources they need to succeed," said CTA President David A. Sanchez. "California needs a leader who fully understands the problems that threaten the stability of our state and who knows what is needed to resolve them. We think Jerry Brown is the only candidate who will make public education a real priority and understands that an investment in education is an investment in our future."

CTA's State Council of Education also voted to support state Sen. Tom Torlakson for Superintendent of Public Instruction. "Tom is a former teacher who has been a true champion of public education as a legislator. He has carried legislation to increase funding for textbooks, and has worked with CTA to sponsor the Quality Education Investment Act, which has directed nearly \$3 billion for proven classroom reforms to assist lower performing schools rather than imposing sanctions. CTA wholeheartedly gives its support to his campaign," Sanchez said.



Help cover the cost of your school supplies! Each week during the months of March and April, we are giving away four \$25 Staples gift certificates. All you have to do is register or log in to the new www.cta.org. All members who have registered by April 30, 2010 will be eligible to win the grand prize: a \$250 Staples gift certificate.

Generation Z: The Most Technology Advanced Yet

Based on California Educator article

In the February 2010, *California Educator*, there was an article by Sherry Posnick-Goodwin, discussing Generation Z. This article is well worth reading.

Generation Z is defined as:

- Well educated and the most technologically advanced generation.
- Growing up in smaller households with older parents.
- Until recently, more materially endowed.
- Headed for careers that don't even exist today.
- Likely to have at least five careers and more than 20 employers.
- Very concerned about the environment

These are our students. As quoted by Larry Rosen, professor at CSU Dominguez Hills, in the article, "To Put It Simply", these children have grown up in an environment where technology is everywhere and much of it is invisible. Most children have grown up with the largest storehouse of information in

history—the Internet. They use it for a variety of purposes that are beyond the scope imagined just a decade ago."

Our students, although engaged in a very "hands-on" activity, lead sedentary lives. Their physical activity level has decreased while their intellectual activity may have increased. Studies show that American youth are overweight, many bordering on obesity. There needs to be a balance between time spent at the computer and time spent outside.

Some educators think that the majority of students who are fed a constant stream of electronic information are easily overwhelmed by TMI (too much information), which can make it difficult for youngsters to filter — and make it difficult to make a decision.

"This generation is less independent than previous generations," says Alec MacKenzie, a member of Hillsborough TEA. "They are more dependent on technology to do things for them. I may give them an assignment to do in class, and they will say 'I don't get it' or 'I

need you to help me' instead of trying to figure out how to get it done."

Technology has led students to expect instant results for all things, says Daniel Watts, a computer graphic arts teacher for at-risk youth at Elinor Lincoln Hickey Junior/Senior High School in Sacramento.

The best thing about this generation is that they know where to get information to solve problems way faster than I do," says Mackenzie, "They answer questions much more quickly; they are curious and they're smart."

"They are much more connected to the outside world than previous generations," adds Mackenzie, an eighth-grade Spanish, language arts and film teacher at Crocker High School in Hillsborough. "They know what is hanging in the Louvre because they've seen it on the Internet. They know more about the world because they visit it on the computer."

Certificated personnel who have recently received a RIF (reduction in force) notice have certain rights. There is a guide on the CTA website (go to www.cta.org and follow the links for Legal Advice) that every certificated employee who has received a "pink slip" should download and review.

This year over 25,000 certificated employees have received RIF notices statewide and there is the projection that nearly 60% of them will not be overturned due to improvement in any local or statewide budgets. With that knowledge it is important that all teachers be aware of their rights as they pertain to rehire rights, whether as a regular teacher or a substitute.

The RIF Guide covers information including a break-down defining the various categories of teachers— permanent, probationary, temporary, and categorical. It also goes into detail about rehire rights such as for permanent teachers:

1. You have the right to be rehired in the order of seniority
2. You have the right to be rehired in a temporary or substitute position
3. If you are rehired as a substitute and work 21 days or more in a 60-day period, your pay would be no less than if you had been reappointed to a permanent position

Probationary teachers have similar rights.

Teachers who are laid off or not re-elected are eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. In addition, a probationary employee who resigns effective the end of the school year after being given the choice to resign or be non-re-elected, is also eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits. There is additional information in the RIF guide on how to go about obtaining unemployment insurance benefits.

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PUBLISHED BY THE
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Enterprise Rent-A-Car Discounts

Many of you may be making travel plans. Did you know that CTA Member Benefits offers discounts on car rentals for members?

This program provides for rentals at a defined flat rate as low as \$33.00 a day, regardless of location. While it does not include other potential rental related charges, like optional insurances, the flat rate is very competitive, particularly in areas where vehicle rentals are usually the highest, including major airports. This rate is also available for one-way rentals within the state of California.

It is fast and easy to make arrangements for your car rental needs nationwide with Enterprise Rent-A-Car!

Online:

- Visit www.enterprise.com
- Enter your Account Number: NACA068
- Enter CTA as the Company Name

By phone:

- Call (800) RENT-A-CAR for the nearest branch
- Provide your Account Number: NACA068
- Make your reservations with the rental branch



Visit www.cta.org to obtain more information about the CTA Rental Car Program through Enterprise Rent-a-Car.

CTA Travel, Entertainment, and Purchasing Discounts

Are you tired of winter and starting to day dream about your summer vacation? If so, you should be aware that your CTA membership provides travel services and entertainment discounts through TSA Special Member Services that can be of assistance. For travel offerings, visit TSA Travel at www.tsaspecialservices.com/travel.htm or call (800) 570-7877. For discount entertainment tickets to exciting California attractions such as Disneyland, San Diego Zoo, and California's Great America, visit TSA Special Member Services at tsa@tsaspecialservices.com. Order your tickets by calling TSA on (800) 537-8491.

CTA HAS A NEW WEBSITE!

Go to www.cta.org and register today on the new website. It is easier to navigate, full of information and news, and is yours! If you have any questions, contact Laura Finco; mizfinco@aol.com on the CTA Website Advisory Committee and SRVEA webmaster.