

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

FEBRUARY 2010

It feels like 2009 all over again. The FSUSD is in the position of having to put together a budget projection for the next three years based on current information. This budget must be completed by March 15. The FSUSD uses the January Governor's Budget proposal as a basis but the budgetary information is constantly changing.

The February 2010 Summary Analysis regarding the Statement of General Fund Cash Receipts and Disbursements states, "The State's General Fund revenues improved again in January 2010. Compared to estimates found in the 2010-11 Governor's Budget, total General Fund revenues were \$1.28 billion higher (18.6%) than expected. Personal income tax revenues were \$930 million better (17.2%) than anticipated. Corporate tax revenues came in above projections by \$189 million (74.4%), and sales taxes were also up by \$157 million (17.5%)."

This information gives us reason to be cautiously optimistic that our worst fears will not be realized. We can hope that this trend continues as we move forward. The unfortunate fact is that until a state budget is in place we will not know what the true budgetary reality will be for our district and we are forced to design a budget based on the information that we have at this time.

A special governing board meeting has been set for February 22 to give an update on the FSUSD budget. The next regular meeting of the FSUSD Governing Board is February 25. This will be the first opportunity for us to find out the direction that we may take in addressing our budgetary situation.

We're pleased to announce that our chapter is holding a Disability Insurance Chapter Campaign, 3/1/2010 through 3/31/2010, with the only CTA-endorsed provider, The Standard Insurance Company. During the month, you will receive information in the mail explaining the plan details, how to enroll, and how you can transfer your current coverage so that you can take advantage of the CTA group plan benefits. This is an opportunity to purchase disability coverage or additional life insurance without providing proof of good health. If we meet our campaign goal of 5% participation, you will not need to provide proof of good health. For a limited time that means NO doctor exams, NO blood tests and NO complicated forms.

Benefit Consultants will be making site visits during the month of March during lunch and after school so that you can get your questions answered. You may also contact The Standard's dedicated CTA Customer service team at 800-522-0406 (Mon-Fri, 7-6) to answer your questions or to assist you with enrolling. Visit MyCTA at www.cta.org to learn more about the coverage features.

The CTA Institute for Teaching is proud to announce the kick-off of the IFT Mini Grant program. Competitive educator grants will be awarded in amounts up to \$5,000 and chapter grants will be awarded in amounts up to \$20,000. All applications must reflect innovative efforts to achieve school and district reform and be strength-based and teacher-driven. Applications must specify how the proposal would improve teaching and learning conditions, how student outcomes will be improved and what the overall benefit of the proposal is for educators.

Applicants can download grant applications by going to the IFT website- www.Teacherdrivenchange.org and clicking on the mini-grant link.

California teachers and educational support professionals can help our state get its fair share of more than \$400 billion in federal tax revenues by encouraging the community to complete the 2010 Census. Teacher friendly standard based lesson plans and information on the 2010 Census are available at www.census.gov/schools. We need to make sure that everyone in our community is counted.

GPO-WEP (Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision)

The GOP-WEP penalizes some public employees by reducing or eliminating entire Social Security benefits they or their spouses earned. Teachers are in this category. California is one of the fifteen states that fall under this provision. Some do not realize that when a person retires to another state and resides there, they will not receive what they paid into Social Security.

There are currently over 300 members of the House and over 30 members of the Senate that have signed on to repeal the GPO-WEP. The problem lies in getting the Social Security Fairness Act out of committee when it has a multi-billion dollar price tag on it. The NEA is currently conducting a survey of members at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/GQ76GHB>

This survey is only for CTA members and is state specific. Please pass this information on to all teachers who you know are CTA members and ask them to complete the survey on-line. Please help us get the message out that this provision is unfair and needs to be repealed.

The New Public Employee Benefit Reform Act (Fritz Initiative) is out for signatures. **Do Not Sign** this initiative. It would set up a two-tier system and limits the retirement benefits for new teachers. It would not impact current teachers or teachers hired prior to July 1, 2011. It would cap the maximum benefit at 1.65 percent per year of employment (based on highest three years of base wages). The current factor could go up to 2.4 percent for persons who retire after age sixty. It changes the age of retirement on Social Security eligibility age, which is currently sixty-seven. At this time there is no sponsor for this initiative.

The next few months will be very rocky. Keep working together as we move forward during this difficult time.