



NEWSBREAKER

Volume 6, Issue 8

April 2011

Calendar



- 4/18 Rep Council 4pm**
- 5/2 Eboard 4pm
F-SUTA Officer
Elections Begin**
- 5/3 National Day of
the Teacher!**
- 5/13 F-S Officer
Elections End**

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Melanie Driver

I hope everyone had a wonderful and restful spring break. We are down to the final two months of school. I am sure they will be as chaotic and hectic as the last two years.

The RIF hearings are scheduled for April 18 and 19. There were 172 preliminary notices sent out to certificated employees. We received well over 100 individuals completing and returning Notices of Hearings and Consent to Legal Representation. The CTA staff and David Weintraub, the attorney that will represent us at the hearing, have been very busy looking over all of the documentation to determine if there are legal challenges.

The F-SUTA Executive Board and Bargaining Team went out to school sites to listen to members regarding bargaining. We then met on March 21 after the Representative Council meeting to discuss information that was brought back. The F-SUTA Executive Board gave direction to the bargaining team based on this information. We will continue to work toward reaching an agreement that is reflective of the desires of our membership.

We currently have a little over 1,000 members. The needs and wishes of our members are almost as great as the number of members we have. We know that we do not have the ability to make all of our members happy but our goal is to arrive at an agreement that best takes into account the needs and wishes of our membership. These are not easy decisions to make and we have not taken lightly our responsibility. We have heard a lot of rumors during this time about what was being bargained. The bargainers did not receive direction until March 21 after the F-SUTA Executive Board met. All of the rumors I have heard were not based on fact.

Another rumor I want to address is the MOU regarding preparation time for elementary teachers. It was brought to my attention that there is a rumor going around that elementary PE /Music is gone forever and will never be brought back.

There has not been any change to the collective bargaining agreement. The agreement that was signed on February 18, 2011 only remains in effect for the 2011-2012 school year. The following statements are found in the MOU:

- This memorandum of understanding shall remain in effect for the 2011-2012 school year and shall only be renewed or extended by mutual written consent of the District and the F-SUTA Negotiation Teams.
- The parties recognize that this agreement provides for options for each elementary school site that deviate from the 1994 arbitration regarding elementary preparation time. This agreement shall not be viewed as precedent setting.

We are aware that it is a priority of elementary sites to bring back elementary PE and music. Unfortunately, at this time, the state and district budget does not provide the revenue needed to facilitate this endeavor. Last year, the District saved over \$3 million by eliminating elementary PE and music, and moving the elementary prep. period outside of the student day. Each year, F-SUTA will reevaluate whether there is sufficient funding to reinstate PE and Music with the goal of bringing it back as soon as there is funding, if that continues to be the desire of our membership.

(President's Corner cont'd on page 2)

(President's Corner Cont'd...)

It is the time of the year that every site needs to elect F-SUTA Site Representatives and Alternate Site Representatives for the following year. It is important that each site is represented at the monthly F-SUTA Rep. Council meetings. Sites are represented based on a ratio of 1 representative for every 20 members or major fraction thereof. Many decisions are made and voted on at Rep. Council meetings. You and your site are not being represented if there isn't someone from your site in attendance at these meetings. Please consider stepping up to this position.

I have had a lot of positive response regarding the F-SUTA Executive Board and Bargaining Teams visiting school sites. I want to remind you that each site has an F-SUTA Executive Board member assigned to them. These are the individuals that sit with the sites at the F-SUTA Rep. Council meetings. If you have a need to have someone come to your site regarding an issue that has come up, feel free to contact your F-SUTA Executive Board member to set up a time for a site visit. Please give sufficient advance notice because we all have busy schedules.

Thanks for all that you do. Remember, you are my eyes and ears. Please keep me informed in regards to what is occurring at your site.

GOVERNOR BROWN SIGNS LEGISLATION



Governor Jerry Brown signed 13 bills on March 24, 2011 to reduce California's \$26.6 billion budget deficit. These bills account for \$14 billion in spending reductions and cost savings. That means that an additional \$12.6 billion of either revenue or additional reductions are needed in order to bring the 2011-12 State Budget into balance.

Governor Brown has called for state legislators to let the people of California vote on whether to temporarily extend existing taxes or make deeper cuts to core services like education and public safety. Without the tax extension, the Governor indicated that schools would likely experience \$4 billion to \$5 billion in cuts.

For K-14 education, the Governor's signature includes:

- \$2.1 billion deferral from 2011-12-2012-13
- \$80 million augmentation for AB 3632 services in the current year
- \$90 million for mandate payments
- An ongoing 8.92 % reduction to basic aid school districts
- Two-year extension of the categorical flexibility provisions
- \$716 million in child care savings
- \$400 million reduction to the California Community Colleges
- California Community College fees increase from \$26 per unit to \$36 per unit



The Fairfield Suisun Unified School District Governing Board will be recognizing the Site Teachers of the Year at the April 28 Governing Board Meeting. The Governing Board meeting begins at 6 p.m. The District Teacher of the Year will also be announced during this meeting. We are encouraging all F-SUTA unit members to attend this meeting to support and recognize the outstanding contributions of these individuals to the Fairfield Suisun Unified School District and the communities of Fairfield and Suisun. We look forward to seeing you on April 28 at 6 p.m. in the Board Room of the Fairfield Suisun Unified School District Central Office.

STATE COUNCIL OF EDUCATION

APRIL 1-3, 2011

Action Taken:

- Approved the friendly incumbent candidate recommendations of Dana Dillon and Harry Keiley for the CalSTRS Board.
- Approved the NEA Candidate Recommendation of Princess Moss for NEA Executive Committee.
- Elected by secret ballot on Saturday, April 2, 2011
 - CTA Vice President-Eric C. Heins
 - CTA Secretary-Treasurer-Mikki Cichocki
 - NEA Director, District 3-Greg Bonaccorsi
 - NEA Director, District 10-Elizabeth Ahlgren
- Elected on Sunday, April 3, 2011
 - CTA Board of Directors, District A-Larry Allen

A report from UCLA's Institute for Democracy, Education, and Access entitled 'California Education Opportunity Report-Free Fall: Education Opportunities in 2011' was passed out to all State Council Delegates. A summary will be sent out to all unit members at the April Rep. Council meeting. Your Site Rep. will be responsible to distribute them at the site. The full report can be accessed online at: www.edopp.org.

Committee Recommendations:

- The Curriculum and Instruction Committee wishes to encourage CTA members to go to the CDE website and read the Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Plan using the following link:<http://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ca/rl/srclhomepage.asp>. Members can email their feedback to strivingreaders@cde.ca.gov.
- Retirement committee discussed the Little Hoover Commission report. CTA representatives asked the Commission to inquire if CalSTRS would be included in the report. When the report was issued an analysis was NOT conducted to compare the different California pension systems. The report was very misleading and incomplete. The CTA and CalSTRS responses to the Little Hoover Commission are available on the CTA website on the new Retirement page. Go to [CTA .org/Issues-and-Action/Retirement/Retirement.aspx](http://CTA.org/Issues-and-Action/Retirement/Retirement.aspx) for the latest information on retirement issues, which includes accurate data to counter the misinformation used in the political attacks against pensions, including the responses to the Little Hoover Commission report.
- Special Education Committee reviewed information about People First Language and feel strongly that all educators should use this language. People First Language (PFL) represents more respectful, accurate ways of communicating. People with disabilities are not their diagnoses or disabilities; they are people, first. PFL is *not* about "political correctness," it's about good manners and "the golden rule." "Sticks and stones may break your bones, but words can never hurt you," is a very harmful myth. *Words do matter!* They can raise or lower expectations; hurt or help; crush hopes or create dreams; and so much more. Visit www.disabilityisnatural.com for more information.
- School Safety/School Management Committee recommends that unit members visit www.fivealive.us or www.tosaveachild.org to view material on suicide prevention.
- The Civil Rights in Education (CRE) Committee is requesting that all CTAmembers respond to this request: The Social Security Fairness Act was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Congressman Buck McKeon. Senator Diane Feinstein has refused to introduce this in the Senate. NEA is urging members to call Senator Feinstein's office at 202-224-3841 asking her to introduce this bill.

(Continued on next page)

State of Emergency-There's no debating that our schools, colleges and communities are suffering because of continued state budget cuts. California has the 8th largest economy in the world, but continues to shortchange our students of the education they need and deserve. What's worse, some Republican California lawmakers hijacked state budget negotiations in order to block a June ballot public vote to extend tax revenues, which were part of Governor Brown's balanced budget plan. Enough is enough. We must take bold action designed to force legislators to do their job and pass the tax extension outright. That will take a 2/3rd vote of the legislature and a lot of pressure from us and our supporters.

State Council unanimously approved a State of Emergency statewide week of action for May 9-13, 2011. This week is designed to put pressure on legislators to finish their work on the state budget and pass the temporary tax extensions outright.

State of Emergency Plan:

Overall Goal: Protecting public education and essential public services.

Short Term Goal for this week of action May 9-13: Force legislature to pass tax extensions to prevent deeper cuts to schools, colleges and other essential public services.

Objectives:

- **Short-term: Convince the Legislature to pass the state budget with tax extensions.**
- **Long-term: Educate and convince communities to change tax structure and achieve tax fairness in order to achieve adequate, stable and ongoing funding for public education and essential public services.**

May 9-13, 2011, will be a week of escalating action ending in a bold statewide unifying activity. The entire week of action will involve a broad coalition of the Education Coalition (this includes PTA, CSBA, SASE, SEIU, County Offices and County Administrators, School Business Officials and Superintendent of Public Instruction), parents, all other unions, faith and community groups. The week begins and ends with a group of educators (with others invited to join) taking over the State Capitol.

To Guide our internal organizing through this week of action, we are using the acronym L.E.A.R.N.:
Legislative/Every Parent/Appreciation and Allies/Revenue/Not Business as Usual

Monday, May 9

Focus on Legislative activities-Calls, visits, emails, target Republicans in critical areas

Tuesday, May 10

Reach out to Every Parent-Phone call, flyers, letters home, walking neighborhoods

Wednesday, May 11

Use Day of the Teacher to Appreciate educators and allies

Thursday, May 12

Promote the need for Revenue for schools and other essential public services;
Educate members and community about Tax Fairness; "Refrain from Shopping" day.

Friday, May 13

It's Not Business As Usual. Declare a State of Emergency; 300 volunteers to sit-in/occupy state capitol beginning Monday, May 9; Regional rallies calling on legislators to "free the occupants" by passing the tax extensions and protecting public education and other essential public services.

CTA is committed to making this a successful campaign. We will send out information as plans become finalized. CTA staff and organizing committees across the state will be involved in finalizing plans. We need all members committed and involved to make this event successful. Please join us in letting your voice be heard.

The Need For Due Process Laws

AN ARTICLE FROM CTA

Due process for K-14 public school teachers developed and exists fundamentally as a protection for pupils and schools to ensure their rights to a continuing program of quality education. Pupils deserve the best instruction available, in schools staffed by qualified professionals hired and retained on the basis of professional criteria. Such instruction is possible only if the employment practices of the schools are free from discrimination or economic bias. Because of the critical importance to pupils and teachers of the schools of guarantees of academic freedom, protection from arbitrary dismissal actions, and defense against external pressures that would restrict the student's right to learn, it is vital that procedures providing for these matters be based in law. The denial of teachers' rights to due process protection in dismissal actions would create havoc in the orderly operation of the schools and place the pupils of California in a vulnerable position subject to the political and social biases and pressures of school boards, special-interest groups and ambitious itinerant school administrators. The concept of due process as a basic protection for pupils and their educational program is too important not to be secured firmly in statutory provisions.

Process of Due Process

Due process exists primarily to maintain and improve the educational opportunities of pupils by protecting their right to learn from the interference of political, social or economic pressure groups that would restrict or distort the educational program in conformity to their special purposes. To this end, due process operates (1) to set

up definite, orderly procedures by which incompetent, unsatisfactory teachers may be dismissed; (2) to protect competent, satisfactory teachers from unjust dismissal; (3) to protect teachers in the exercise of their rights and duties as American citizens; (4) to encourage boards of education to place the welfare of children above the selfish interests of those political or economic groups which may seek to dominate the schools.

Due process, then, is a process relating to the dismissal of teachers, based on evaluation of instruction, and related directly to the quality of instruction in the schools. California Teachers Association policy emphasizes that teachers must be held to the highest standards of professional preparation and satisfactory performance. It insists only that those standards relate to the quality of education, and, when charges of substandard teaching are made, that the reasons for the charges are substantial and that they do, indeed exist.

Evaluation: Key to Excellence

It is the hope of the California Teachers Association that California will never return to the days before it had due process law, when the characteristic hiring and firing practices of that era were rooted in paternalism, nepotism, favoritism, caprice, whimsy, political patronage, and the personal preferences of individual administrators and board members. A return to that era would once again leave the state's educational programs at the mercy of any political or vested interest groups sufficiently motivated and equipped to wage campaigns of pressure to achieve their special ends.

Employment Abuses

The experience of teachers in five classifications is available to give

evidence of the conditions that apply when guarantees of fair dismissal practices are not present. These classifications are (1) teachers dismissed before due process legislation was first enacted in California; (2) teachers in districts with fewer than 250 ADA, in which due process provisions are merely permissive under the law; (3) probationary teachers for whom separate dismissal procedures are provided under the law; (4) temporary teachers who may be dismissed at any time merely at "the discretion of the governing board"; and (5) substitute teachers who often are not asked to substitute again without any reason. In each of these classifications, experience has demonstrated abuses of due process, an absence of sound evaluation practices, and violation of fundamental procedures of fairness and reasonableness in employment practices. Cases in the files of the California Teachers Association indicate that when full protection of due process and impartial decision-making authority is absent, as in the five classifications above, dismissals in many cases have been characterized by:

(a) Nepotism and political patronage: (dismissing teachers to open jobs for relatives and friends or to repay political debts stemming from election to the office of school board member.)

(b) Political and social bias: (dismissing teachers because they hold political views unpopular with the employing board or come from social or ethnic backgrounds against which influential board or community members are prejudiced)

(c) Favoritism, bossism, or bureaucratic despotism: (dismissing teachers because of the personal preferences of administrators or because of teacher activity in professional associations, etc.).

EDUCATORS LEGALLY MUST PREVENT GLBT BULLYING

By Priscilla Winslow, CTA Assistant Chief Counsel



Standing up for students who are harassed or bullied by their peers isn't just good policy and an ethical duty; it is required by state and federal law. Failing to do so can have dire financial consequences for both teachers and school administrators who ignore student hate crimes or harassment.

Just ask any of the administrators who were personally sued by several students who were either gay or lesbian or perceived to be by other students in the case *Flores v. Morgan Hill Unified School District*. The plaintiffs complained to principals and assistant principals about harassment and bullying they suffered, including being physically beaten by students who yelled, "Faggot, you don't belong here." Two girls who had started dating each other in high school were verbally harassed by boys in the school parking lot.

In both instances, when the students complained, the administrators responded in a perfunctory manner, such as urging the students to report the incident to the campus police, but failing to follow up. The boy who was beaten up was transferred to another school, and only one of his six assailants was punished. The court held that the administrators could be held liable for failing to take effective remedial measures to stop the harassment. "Effective" in this context meant taking further steps if the initial discipline was inadequate and

doing a thorough investigation of complaints. Instead, the district failed to discipline the harassers, and failed to train students, teachers and other school personnel about the district's policy prohibiting harassment on the basis of sexual orientation.

State statutes also prohibit discrimination in schools on the basis of sex, race, sexual orientation or gender identity, physical disability, religion, and national origin (Ed. Code sections 200 and 220). The State Board of Education is charged with the responsibility of adopting policies directed at creating an environment in K-12 schools that is free from discriminatory attitudes and hate violence. This includes revising curriculum guidelines to include fostering an appreciation of diversity (Ed. Code section 233).

Students between fourth and 12th grades can be suspended or expelled if they engage in hate violence, which includes assault or battery or other violent acts that are motivated by prejudice on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical disability, etc. (Ed. Code section 48900.3; Penal Code sections 422.6, 422.7).

School districts have an obligation to develop, implement, and annually review a school safety plan (Ed. Code section 33280). Discrimination and anti-harassment policies must be part of the overall school safety plan, and school employees and parents should be involved in the formulation of such a plan (Ed. Code section 32282).

In addition, school safety is something about which the employer has an obligation to negotiate with the employee organization, so don't hesitate to demand to bargain over any harassment or bullying issues that affect employment.

ETHNIC MINORITY EARLY IDENTIFICATION & DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Currently, CTA faces challenges that threaten the very existence of public education as well as CTA's ability to function as a guardian of that institution, our students and members. Today we face unrelenting attacks that fragment the public's support for our schools and divide educational employees' support for CTA's efforts to come to the aid of public education.

The development of new leadership is one of the cornerstones of a strong local and a strong statewide organization. Many CTA chapters and Service Center Councils offer programs locally to identify and develop new leadership. CTA leadership has recognized the need to support these local efforts to surface and encourage potential ethnic minority leaders. CTA's combined efforts will strengthen our association and at the same time create an organization that is more representative of CTA's membership.

CTA has had a long-standing commitment to increasing ethnic minority leadership and staff. This program is both evidence of that commitment and reinforcement to continue it in the future.

PROGRAM GOAL

To increase the number of ethnic minority leaders in roles such as: President, Bargaining Chair, State Council Rep, Service Center Council Chair and Officers and any other respected leadership role/position.

PROGRAM DESIGN

The Ethnic Minority Early Identification and Development Program has been created to identify ethnic minority members who are interested in expanding their roles in the organization. Once identified and accepted in the program, participants are paired with a coach who assists them in defining goals and identifying appropriate steps to achieve those goals. The program builds on existing CTA/NEA programs, trainings, conferences, events as well as incorporates interaction and coaching with Local Chapter, CTA, and NEA.

For more information on this program, go to www.cta.org/emeid. The application deadline is **May 2, 2011**.

You make a difference



Unity

Just a reminder, F-SUTA has a Facebook page (Fairfield-Suisun Unified Teachers Association, <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Fairfield-Suisun-Unified-Teachers-Association/122906071100988>) and we are working on establishing the Twitter feed (the connection didn't work before...if anyone has any hints that can help they would be appreciated).

On the Facebook page, there are discussion threads set up by grade level (k-6) and subjects (middle and high school levels) but these are just starting points. There is a new thread for teachers who have received a RIF notice. Please feel free to create new discussions and to add topics. It is our hope that you will find this page useful and that you will take advantage of the opportunity to connect with others throughout the district.



It is never a good idea to have current or former students as friends on your social network pages. There have been many teachers throughout the country who have found themselves in trouble due to students accessing their pages or due to things that students have posted on their pages. Please remember to put your pages on the highest privacy settings and refrain from "friending" students.



This space is reserved to congratulate those who have recently wed, become parents, or have accomplished a dream (earned a degree, been recognized or honored in some way that they would like to share with their colleagues, or anything else you can think of). Send the name and events to be recognized to me, Stacie Ryan, at lilreader1@yahoo.com.



This space is reserved to provide public recognition of others whom you would like to thank for their assistance. Just email me at lilreader1@yahoo.com with the name of the person you would like recognized and why, then watch for the information to appear in the next *Newsbreaker*. F-SUTA's E-Board would like to thank the site reps who were able to attend the recent rep. council meeting. We are always excited to talk to you and to provide each site's reps an opportunity to talk to one another.

INSTITUTE FOR TEACHING GRANTS

The CTA Institute for Teaching (IFT) has established a competitive grant program for CTA members and chapters to support strength-based, teacher-driven reform for public schools. The grant application process is open to individual CTA members, small teams of educators in amounts up to \$5,000, and to chapters 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 is strength-based, how it will improve teaching and learning conditions, and how student outcomes will be improved.

The deadline for this year's IFT Grant application is April 30, 2011.
For more information, visit the IFT website: www.teacherdrivenchange.org.



WORKERS' COMPENSATION

The Fairfield Suisun Unified School District provides Workers' Compensation benefits to employees who experience an injury/illness arising out of employment.

To report a workplace injury/illness:

Call Company Nurse at 1-877-778-2576 & Report the injury to your supervisor

For life-threatening injuries: 911 should be called immediately, and then another employee should notify the supervisor, Company Nurse, and Jennifer Taylor, Risk Manager, at 707/399-5083 as soon as possible.

For all other injuries: FSUSD participates in a Medical Provider Network for the treatment of workplace injuries/illnesses. Employees in need of medical treatment may be seen at the following locations *:

NorthBay Occupational Health
1101 B. Gale Wilson Blvd, Fairfield
707/429-7701

Walk-ins OK (preferably before 3:30 p.m.)

Emergency
Vallejo Medical Center
975 Sereno Drive, Vallejo CA
707/651-1000

Emergency/911
NorthBay Medical Center
1200 B. Gale Wilson Blvd, Fairfield
707/429-3600

Kaiser Occupational Health
Vallejo Medical Center
975 Sereno Drive, Wing H, Vallejo CA
707/651-1370

Hours: M-F 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Kaiser Occupational Health

Kaiser Occupational Health
Vacaville Medical Office Bldg A
1 Qualify Drive, Vacaville CA
707/624-2480

Hours: M-F 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

After-Hour/Urgent Care
Minor Injury Clinic
Same Location/
Hours: M-F 1:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

After-Hour / Urgent Care
Minor Injury Clinic
975 Sereno Drive, 1st Floor, Hallway A
Vallejo, CA
707/651-1370
Hours: M-F 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 a.m.

***Failure to report an injury to Company Nurse prior to arriving at the clinic may result in delays in receiving medical treatment.**

Employees have the option of pre-designating their personal physician to treat work-related injuries & illnesses. For more information on Workers' Compensation benefits or pre-designating your personal physician, contact Jennifer Taylor, Risk Manager, at 707/399-5083. Workers' Compensation claims are administered by North Bay Schools Insurance Authority. www.nbsia.org

2010 – 2011 F-SUTA EXECUTIVE BOARD & CHAIRS

POSITION	NAME	SITE	SITE PHONE	CONTACT #
President:	Melanie Driver	F-SUTA Office	864-6193	707-290-0153
Vice-President:	Earl Handa	Anna Kyle	421-4105	707-372-9277
Recording Secy:	Laurie Thompson	Anna Kyle	421-4105	707-425-9298
Corr. Secy:	Stacie Ryan	Anna Kyle	421-4105	707-334-4579
Treasurer:	Janet Robertson	Suisun Elementary	421-4210	
Member-at-Large:	Stephanie Cobb	Laurel Creek	421-4291	707-386-3110
	Steve Patton	David Weir	399-3348	707-372-5010
	Kathy Wiegand	Anna Kyle	421-4105	707-337-3959
	Kevin McNamara	Green Valley	646-7096	707-310-3971
	Orawin Juntanamalaga	Cleo Gordon	421-4125	510-863-2968
	Debra Back	Nelda Mundy	863-7920	863-7920 ext.109
State Council:	Laurie Thompson	Anna Kyle	421-4105	707-425-9298
	Melanie Driver	F-SUTA Office	864-6193	707-290-0153
	Shari Salomon	Wilson	421-4225	707-246-8165
Past President:	Mike Oxley	Fairfield High	438-3033	707-422-8672
Bargaining Chair:	Stephanie Cobb	Laurel Creek	421-4291	707-386-3110
Comm. Outreach:	Stephanie Cobb	Laurel Creek	421-4291	707-386-3110
Elections Chair:	Liz Osburn	Cleo Gordon	421-4125	707-372-3105
Grievance Chair:	Art Aronsen	Armijo		707-694-5114
Health & Safety:	Joan Gaut	Crystal Middle	435-5800	707-399-9566
Membership Chair:	Regina Williams	Fairfield High	438-3000	707-330-6915
PAC Chair:	Kevin McNamara	Green Valley	646-7096	707-310-3971
SEC Office	Stephanie Wall	F-S/SEC	864-6193	Fax: 864-6284
SEC Address:	4735 Central Way, Ste. C Fairfield, CA 94534 Email: soeducoal@sbcglobal.net			