

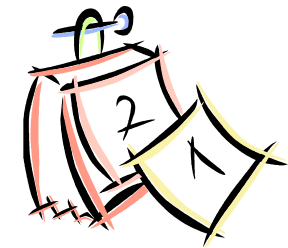


NEWSBREAKER

Volume 6, Issue 3

October 2010

Calendar



- 10/4 Eboard 4pm
- 10/18 Rep Council 4pm
- 10/15-17 CTA Region 1 Leadership Conference
- 10/22-24 State Council
- 10/29-31 CTA GLBT Conference
- 11/1 Eboard 4pm
- 11/2 Election Day!

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Melanie Driver

I am enjoying my visits to sites. This is truly the highlight of my day. I am hearing the many challenges that unit members are facing this year. The budget cuts are taking a toll on all of us.

Elementary teachers are faced with more contact time with students. In an effort to take some of the pressure off of elementary teachers, there will be allowances. A joint letter was signed that went out explaining changes that should help alleviate some of the burden. The changes include elimination of Words Their Way program, DRA testing only to proficiency level, progress reports for all students the first trimester and only for students below proficient for the second and third trimesters, parent conference first trimester for all students and only for students who have received a C and/or are below proficient benchmarks thereafter. If you have additional suggestions of ways we can reduce the workload, please feel free to forward them to me.

Many elementary sites have had a reduction in lunch and/or in the number of recesses during the day. This is compounded by not having release during the student day. I have requested that administration look at adding additional time at lunch and/or adding an afternoon recess at sites that currently do not have one. Kris Corey responded and stated that it would be brought up for discussion at cabinet. Hopefully by the time this Newsbreaker is published, there has been a change in the daily schedule by adding more breaks during the day.

All unit members are entitled to be compensated for meetings that they attend outside the workday unless it is covered in the contract. I want to remind unit members of contract language that can be used or referred to:

Article 19.3.a- *Staff meetings, department and/or team meetings, directly or indirectly related to teaching assignment, are not to be recognized as adjunct activities unless the number of these meetings scheduled in each month exceeds one (1) general staff meeting and one (1) department or grade level meeting relating to the teaching assignments. Special Ed teachers at many sites attend the regular staff meeting at the site. Special Ed teachers also attend monthly Special Ed meetings. In lieu of attending the second meeting at the site, a Special Ed teacher may count this meeting for their second monthly meeting. If the administrator at the site is requiring the Special Ed teachers to attend two meetings at the site, the administrator would need to compensate the Special Ed teacher for attending the monthly Special Ed meeting because this would mean that the Special Ed teacher is attending a third meeting and should be compensated.*

Article 19.3.b- *At the direction of the principal, any or all full-time members of this unit may be required to expend additional time for meetings and/or other school activities outside the established teacher workday. No employee shall be required to work more than a total of sixteen (16) hours per year for all activities.*

Article 19.9- *Unit member required to attend Individual Educational Plan (I.E.P.) meetings outside of their contractual workday (as identified in section 19.1.a.) shall be compensated according to the curriculum rate. (This is only for time above the requirements described in adjunct duty.)*

Article 22.10- *Special Education Certificated Staff-The form included as Appendix J will be utilized to describe the conditions under which a special education certificated staff member, by mutual consent between the staff member and the Special Education administration, will work beyond his/her contractual day to assist a colleague with IEP-related activities. (Special Ed teachers can receive additional compensation for extra time but this needs to be signed in advance).*

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(President's Message Continued...)

In many instances, site administrators are electing to provide substitutes so that required meetings may be held during the day. Some unit members have stated that site administrators are finding out it is more cost efficient to hold the meetings during the workday and pay for a sub.

The most current rehire list that I have been given has 119 unit members on it. Unit members remain on the list until they are fully rehired in a permanent position. There are 9 unit members that are on a leave of absence. That means that there are 9 unit members on the rehire list that are currently in temporary positions. There are about 13 unit members on the rehire list that have been partially restored. There are also 13 unit members that have told us that they have positions elsewhere. There are many unit members that have been offered positions that have passed so one may assume that these individuals have employment elsewhere. There are several positions that are working their way through the vacancy process and will eventually result in someone from the rehire list obtaining a position. We are working to try to have that happen sooner than later.

All site representatives are currently passing out membership cards. Please check all of the information on the card to verify that it is correct. The left side of the form needs to be returned to F-SUTA. If all information is correct, initial and return to your site rep. Please make any corrections on the form and return to your site rep if there is information that is not correct. Keep the right side of the form because this is your membership card. Unfortunately, cards have not been returned in the past which means that CTA records have not been updated. Once the forms are returned, they will be sent to CTA for them to update the membership records. If the form is not returned, the CTA database does not get updated.

POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

The purpose of Political Action Committee (PAC) is to support and help elect members of the FSUSD Governing Board who will be receptive to teacher's ideas and concerns regarding the governing of the District. This doesn't mean that they will always vote the way we wish, but that the Board member(s) will give our views due consideration when voting on issues that concern us.

With the resignation of 2 Board members over the summer, Chuck Wood and Gary Laski, the PAC for the Association submitted and had published a letter to the editor in The Reporter and the Daily Republic. The letter is on the F-SUTA website. The letter addressed qualities the Board should consider when they appoint candidates to fill the vacancies.

You also need to check the green F-SUTA rosters. Your site representative should be bringing them to you to verify your information. Please check your information and also the category you are listed. If you are not listed at the site you are working at, make sure that the site rep adds you to the roster. If you are listed as category 6, you are not a member but an agency fee payer. If you would like to become a member, please ask your site representative for a membership form.

Thank you to everyone that returned the canvas cards regarding the upcoming election. CTA is prioritizing contacting members about the upcoming election. If you filled out the canvas card and indicated how you are planning on voting, you will not receive a phone call from CTA. If you did not return the canvas card and/or did not indicate how you plan to vote, you will most likely receive a phone call. There were some cards turned in that did not include names. Some individuals will receive phone calls because there is not a way to identify the individual that turned in the card.

Many sites have also turned in the Healthy Air, Healthy Kids checklists. This helps us to determine if there are issues that need to be dealt with immediately. Thank you to everyone that has taken the time to complete the checklist. Our goal is to have the best working/learning conditions possible for our unit members and students.

You are my eyes and ears. Please remember, if you do not tell me I will probably not know. If there are concerns, please let me know. Individuals assume I have been informed. Often I am the last to be informed. Feel free to send me an email, give me a phone call or cc me on an email. Thank you for everything you do every day. You are making a difference in the lives of the students in the Fairfield-Suisun community.



The PAC is also recruiting phone bankers to call in support of the CTA endorsed candidates and propositions in the November election. The phone banking begins October 6 and will continue every Wednesday through October from 5-8 pm. If you wish to volunteer to help protect public education and your pension, contact your site rep or Kevin McNamara directly through *Groupwise*.

The PAC is seeking members to increase our ability to influence to outcomes of elections that have a direct effect on our careers. If interested in becoming a member of the PAC contact Kevin McNamara at Green Valley through *Groupwise*.

MELANIE MORAN, VU NEWS - NASHVILLE, Tenn. - September 21, 2010

Rewarding teachers with bonus pay, in the absence of any other support programs, does not raise student test scores, according to a new study issued today by the National Center on Performance Incentives at Vanderbilt University's Peabody College of education and human development in partnership with the RAND Corporation. This and other findings from a three-year experiment - the first scientific study of performance pay ever conducted in the United States - were released at a conference on evaluating and rewarding educator effectiveness hosted by the National Center on Performance Incentives at Vanderbilt.

Paying teachers bonuses based on their performance has been a controversial issue nationwide since the 1950s, but until now the concept has never been scientifically researched.

"We tested the most basic and foundational question related to performance incentives - Does bonus pay alone improve student outcomes? - and we found that it does not," Matthew Springer, executive director of the National Center on Performance Incentives, said. "These findings should raise the level of the debate to test more nuanced solutions, many of which are being implemented now across the country, to reform teacher compensation and improve student achievement." The Project on Incentives in Teaching, called the POINT Experiment, took place over the 2007 - 2009 school years with participation by mathematics teachers in grades 5 through 8 in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools. Nearly 300 teachers, approximately 70 percent of all middle-school math teachers in Nashville's public schools, volunteered to participate. The complete study, including set up and analysis, began in 2005 and ended in 2010.

POINT tested no other types of incentives or systems of support for the teachers, such as professional development or guidance on instructional practices

- many of which have evolved over the past five years since POINT began.

"We designed POINT in this manner not because we believed that an incentive system of this type is the most effective way to improve teaching performance, but because the idea of rewarding teachers on the basis of students test scores has gained such currency," Springer said. "We sought a clean test of the basic proposition: If teachers know they will be rewarded for an increase in their students' test scores, will test scores go up? We found that the answer to that question is no. That by no means implies that some other incentive plan would not be successful."

Here's how the POINT Experiment worked:

- Following a year of detailed project design by a multi-disciplinary team from Vanderbilt and RAND, all middle-school math teachers in Nashville were invited to volunteer for the experiment. Approximately 70 percent of all middle-school math teachers in Nashville's public schools stepped forward to participate.
- Approximately half of the nearly 300 volunteers were randomly assigned to a "treatment" group, in which they were eligible for bonuses of up to \$15,000 per year on the basis of their students' test-score gains on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP).
- The other half were assigned to a "control" group not eligible for these bonuses. Teachers were evaluated based on an historical performance benchmark for MNPS teachers, not on competition with one another. All teachers in the treatment group had the

chance to earn bonuses. (The names of participating teachers - and which group they were in - have been kept confidential by the research team.)

- The annual bonus amounts were \$5,000, \$10,000 or \$15,000. Over the course of the experiment, POINT paid out more than \$1.27 million in bonuses. Overall, 33.6 percent of the original group received bonuses, with the average bonus being approximately \$10,000.

Teacher attrition occurred during the experiment. About half of the 296 teachers who initially volunteered remained through the end of the third year. The teachers who left the study either left the school system, moved to other grades or stopped teaching mathematics. Only one participating teacher specifically asked to be removed from the experiment.

While there was no overall effect on student achievement across the entire treatment group, the researchers found a significant benefit for fifth graders in Year 2 and Year 3 of the experiment: fifth graders taught by teachers who earned bonuses did show gains in test scores. However, the effect did not carry over to sixth grade when students were tested the following year. Springer said this finding raises questions about what is different about fifth grade and what factors - student development, curriculum, teaching and classroom structure - may have played a role.

He also noted that implementation of POINT went smoothly, with no complaints from teachers about the calculation of bonuses, the payment of awards, bonuses they did or did not receive or the fairness of the process. This in itself is a significant finding, Springer said, because historically, teacher associations have opposed performance or merit pay

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Cal-STRS Longevity Bonus

Longevity Bonus—Background Information

The longevity bonus is a permanent addition to the monthly retirement benefits of qualified members. Members who retire after January 1, 2001, and have 30 or more years of service credit before December 31, 2010, benefit from the bonus.

As of December 31, 2010, the window period to earn eligibility for the longevity bonus will close. If you have 30 or more years by December 31, 2010, you continue to increase your longevity bonus with each year of service credit up to 32 years.

Remember, if you do not have at least 30 years on December 31, 2010, you will not be eligible for the bonus.

Retirement Benefit Change

Eligibility for the longevity bonus permanently increases the amount of your monthly retirement benefit. The amount is set for the entire length of your retirement, unless you return to active service.

Your total years of qualified service credit at retirement determine your bonus, as long as you have at least 30 years by the sunset date.

Years of qualified service credit at retirement	Monthly bonus with no beneficiary option
30 years	\$200
31 years	\$300
32 years	\$400 (maximum)

The bonus for members with a beneficiary option is reduced based on the option chosen. For examples of option benefit factors, see the Service Retirement Option Factor Tables in [Section 6](#) of the *Member Handbook*.

There are many ways to meet the 30-year service credit requirement. [Achieving eligibility by December 31, 2010](#), is not complicated, but you need to know your options.

Detailed information on service credit options are also found in:

[Purchase Additional Service Credit](#)

Comprehensive information to decide which additional service credit to purchase (contains forms).

[Purchase Service Credit Now](#)

Two-page fact sheet of service credit and its affect on final retirement benefits.

For more information, go to: http://www.calstrs.com/Members/Defined%20Benefit%20Program/lb_bkgd_info.aspx

SAVE SOCIAL SECURITY FROM EFFORTS TO CUT IT

NEA seeks to retain, maintain, and improve the nation's successful Social Security system. NEA strongly opposes any attempts to privatize Social Security with risky, costly individual accounts that rob members of hard-earned benefits, including disability and survivor coverage. NEA also strongly opposes efforts to reduce current Social Security benefit formulas for future recipients. We believe all members—regardless of state of residence—should support each other when working on federal legislative proposals that affect some or many members with differing needs related to Social Security.

For those members in the 15 states where some or most public school employees do not have Social Security coverage, NEA works to repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) provision, which reduces Social Security spousal or survivor benefits by two-thirds of the individual's public pension. NEA also works to eliminate the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP), which reduces the earned Social Security benefits of an individual who also receives a public pension from a job not covered by Social Security.



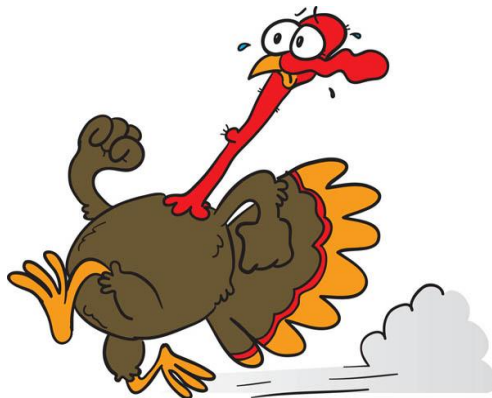
[NEA.ORG](http://www.NEA.org) HAS NEW INFORMATION ON THE FISCAL COMMISSION, INFORMATION REGARDING EFFORTS UNDERWAY IN CONGRESS, AND LINKS TO A VARIETY OF BACKGROUND/RESOURCE MATERIALS AT [WWW.NEA.ORG/HOME/16491.HTM](http://www.NEA.org/home/16491.htm)

2010 SOLANO TURKEY TROT

Local nonprofit groups are seeing a severe decline in community donations while simultaneously facing hard-hitting budget cuts. In order to continue providing services to the county's disadvantaged, organizations must learn new ways to raise funds and awareness.

The very best solution is to join forces and collaborate with one another. That is exactly what is happening with four nonprofit organizations who serve the needy in Solano County, as they host the 2nd Annual Turkey Trot. Solano Hearts United is a collaborative including Children's Nurturing Project, Heather House, Meals on Wheels of Solano county, and Mission Solano. Turkey Trot is a family friendly 5 & 10k walk/run held on Thanksgiving morning, 2010.

F-SUTA will be asking its unit activities this year where we community activities. This is We are encouraging with their family and/or sites event. If you are unable to donation, you may send forward them to Solano contribute to the registration



members to participate in three involve our membership in the first one that we have selected. participation of our unit members to send teams to participate in this participate and would like to send a donations to F-SUTA and we will Hearts United. You may also wish to fee for unit members at your site.

The Turkey Trot will begin on Thursday, November 25, 2010 at 8 a.m. at Solano Community College. Early Bird registration is \$35/10k run and \$25/5k walk/run; add \$10 for late registration. There will be health and fitness booths, a farmer's market and fun activities for the kids and kids-at-heart.

The Solano Turkey Trot is being held next to the Fairfield Campus of Solano Community College in beautiful Suisun Valley. Free parking is provided by Solano Community College. When you enter Solano Community College, you will be directed to the parking lots. The 10K Run starts at 8:30 a.m., the 5 K Run at 8:40 a.m. and the 5 K Walk at 8:50.

Children and strollers are welcome on the course. \$10 event entry fee for children age 6-12, includes a T-Shirt. Children 5 and under have free entry into the event. T-Shirts for children 5 and under are \$5 while supplies last.

Become a Solano Hearts United Champion for Change. As an individual fundraiser for the annual Solano Turkey Trot event, you qualify for a special Thank You gift and earn additional prizes when you raise \$250 or more. Visit www.solanoturkeytrot.org and click on the Solano Hearts United menu to learn more about this fundraising opportunity.

To register, go to <http://www.active.com/running/fairfield-ca/10-solano-turkey-trot-2010>

Save The Date!

Redwood Educators Conference

April 15-16, The Sheraton Hotel-Petaluma

Sessions Offered:

- Human Rights
- Women's Leadership
- Ethnic Minority Leadership Development
- Instruction and Professional Development
- ESP Issues
- Investing for Retirement

Registration: \$50 Get \$50 back at the workshop
A flyer and RSVP will be sent to all members to register.

Early Voting Incentive

The Redwood Service Center Council is offering a chance to win cash prizes in a drawing.

There will be 4 prizes:

\$1,000

\$500

(2) \$250

Return Tear off A from the ballot and return to F-SUTA by October

(Continued from page 3...)

plans, particularly if the pay plan awarded teachers solely on their individual value-added score.

Springer attributed this smooth implementation of the POINT experiment to a broad partnership involving the Metropolitan Nashville School Board and Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools administrators, the Mayor's Office, the Metropolitan Nashville Education Association, the Nashville Alliance for Public Education, the Tennessee Education Association and the Tennessee Department of Education. The POINT experiment team received guidance and support from these organizations, as well as the participating

teachers, throughout the project.

"We believe there is an important lesson here: teachers are more likely to cooperate with a performance pay plan if its purpose is to determine whether the policy is a sound idea, than if plans being forced on them in the absence of such evidence and in the face of their skepticism and misgivings," Springer said. The full report is available at <http://www.performanceincentives.org/>. Archived video of the announcement will be available at that website Sept. 22. The National Center on Performance Incentives at Vanderbilt University's Peabody College of education and human development partnered with the

RAND Corporation, a nonprofit public policy research institute based in Santa Monica, Calif., in 2006 to complete the study. The POINT experiment was funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. Performance bonuses were funded by a private donor.

Springer is an assistant professor of leadership, policy and organizations at Peabody College. For more information about Peabody College, ranked the No. 1 education school in the nation by U.S. News & World Report for the past two years, visit <http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu>. For more Vanderbilt news, [visit news.vanderbilt.edu](http://news.vanderbilt.edu).



The numbers speak for themselves. Almost three in 100 of today's 20 year olds will become disabled before reaching age 67¹. And every minute 4.8 families in the U.S. lose a loved one². To help protect you and your loved ones, CTA offers members Disability and Life insurance coverage through Standard Insurance Company. If you have any questions about the CTA-endorsed coverage available through The Standard, contact the dedicated CTA Customer Service Department at 800.522.0406 from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. or write to them at ctaservice@standard.com with any questions or concerns.

1 Social Security Administration Fact Sheet 2009

2 CIA World Fact Book; United States Entry (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/US.html>); April 23, 2009.

ENROLLMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW HIRES

If you're a newly hired CTA member, or if you are transferring to a new district, you have a special, limited-time opportunity to get Disability and Life insurance coverage from the only CTA-endorsed provider, Standard Insurance Company. During your first 120 days of new employment, you can apply for Disability Insurance and/or up to \$200,000 of Life Insurance – without showing proof of good health. Don't miss this limited-time opportunity! Call The Standard's dedicated CTA Customer Service Department at 800.522.0406 for more information.

FAMILY STATUS CHANGES

Remember that within 31 days of a Family Status Change, you can add or increase Life Insurance coverage up to \$200,000 and/or add Disability coverage, all without providing proof of good health. Family Status Changes include: birth/adoption, marriage/domestic partnership and other qualifying events. For more information about this enrollment opportunity, or to file a maternity Disability claim, visit us at Member Benefits at www.cta.org and click through to The Standard.

KEEP YOUR RECORDS UP-TO-DATE

Call The Standard this Fall if you're moving to a new address or need to make changes to your beneficiary designations. It's very important to keep your records up-to-date, and it's easy to do. Simply call The Standard's dedicated CTA Customer Service Department at 800.522.0406 or go online to Member Benefits at www.cta.org and click through to The Standard.