

**Victor Elementary Teachers' Association
Representative Council
April 13, 2010
Nisqualli Building
(Pending Approval 5/11/10)**

President Nancée Fine called the Rep. Council meeting to order at 4:20 PM.

Minutes and Reports

- Agenda for today's meeting was submitted by Nancée Fine. Gerry DeLa Houssaye moved to accept and Debra Watson seconded.
- Minutes for March 2010 meeting were submitted by Penny Edmiston. Penny D. Smith moved to accept the minutes and Trish Covarrubias seconded; the minutes were unanimously approved with no corrections.
- President's Report was submitted by Nancée (blue).
- Treasurer's Report was submitted by Linda Smith (white).
- High Desert Service Center Council Report was submitted by Nancée (blue).
- CTA State Council Report was submitted by Nancée (blue).
- Victorville Chamber of Commerce Report was submitted by Melissa Timko-Miller (blue).
- Negotiations Report was submitted by Penny D. Smith (sky and clouds).

Representative Training - No training was given at this meeting.

Site Reports

- All Sites were present and gave reports. Discussion items included:
 - **Academy Fundraiser** - will be held at Applebee's 4/15/10 from 4:00 - 9:00 PM.
 - **Donations sought** - Paul Valerio gave information about donating to "Mustard Seed".
 - **Budget Concerns** - A question was posed: if teachers had approved 5 furlough days would RIF's had occurred? Penny D. Smith answered that during the negotiation's process the district could not give any guarantees about the number and amount of concessions and whether they would affect the number of RIF's. In fact, Penny mentioned that 5 furlough days would not have equaled the 2.2 million shortfall the district needs to budget and RIF's would still have occurred. Another question posed: If teachers ratify a pay cut for 2010-2011 would that effect the rate of pay for substitute teachers? Steve Dinise said that he would investigate and report back. Reps shared concerns that their sites have specific programs that will be severely impacted with the RIF's.
 - **Negotiations** - Suggestions to the Neg. Team: bargain for all sick days to be considered "No Questions Asked" days; encourage the district to use on-line scheduling of substitute teachers as a cost saving measure; establish a means

whereby teachers can donate sick days to those with extreme hardships; emphasize that each site and department can do more with less money; grade level council meetings could be held after the school day (teachers would receive the substitute rate as compensation); make sure any pay cuts are distributed among as many paychecks as possible; members would like a survey to come soon; members want to be more informed during the negotiations process.

- **Substitute Teaching Compensation** - Nancée explained the formula for the rate of pay that tenured RIF'd teachers would receive when acting as a substitute teacher. She also notified Reps that many neighboring districts are lowering the rate of pay for substitute teachers. She stated that VESD averages 30 - 40 substitutes used on a daily basis.
- **Friday Collaboration Time** - Teachers shared a concern that the principal was holding non-voluntary staff meetings during this time. Nancée said that she would investigate this.
- **RIF'd Teachers** - Reps shared that some RIF'd teachers are having difficulty obtaining health insurance. Nancée encouraged Reps to have any teachers in this situation contact her and she will help them resolve this issue. She stated that COBRA has been adjusted so RIF'd employees only need to pay 35% of the cost to continue coverage. This is in effect until March 31, 2010. Nancée said that discussions at the federal level are occurring to extend these benefits until 12/31/2010 and she will notify Reps as soon as she hears any news.
- **Staffing** - Reps reported that currently 42 students are enrolled in a kindergarten class with a teacher and $\frac{3}{4}$ day substitute - classes are "bursting at the seams". Nancée said that she is checking the J-8's each month next year to ensure that students are not in classrooms over state limits.
- **School Board Liaison** - Nancée announced that in the past each VESD board member was assigned a teacher liaison. If anyone was interested in serving in this fashion, please notify her.
- **Custodian Substitutes** - A concern was again shared about the need for substitute custodians. Currently sites only receive substitutes after the 5th absent day - members are concerned for students' safety and health issues. Nancée stated that this is a classified issue that needs to be negotiated with CSEA. However, she did encourage members to work with their classified staff to brainstorm ideas such as the site purchasing sanitary wipes.
- **CTA Petition** - Nancée was asked if CTA is still petitioning to close the tax deduction so corporations pay their fair share. Nancée said that CTA is still involved and that she will forward these petitions to Reps.
- **Unification** - Members have been hearing rumors of unification with the high school district. Nancée assured members that she has not heard of any attempt at unification. Barbara Dew, Puesta Rep. and high school board

member, stated that this was indeed true, NO plans have been discussed for VESD to unify with VVUHSD.

- **School Board** - A question was posed about the amount of pay and benefits school board members receive. Nancée approximated the pay to be \$400 per meeting as well as receipt of health benefits. Questions were posed if these benefits extended to spouses and were they given for life. Nancée said that she would investigate and notify Reps. with additional facts. Greg Galvez asked members to encourage potential candidates to speak to him about VETA's plan to interview candidates and seek funds from CTA for their behalf.

Old Business

- **State Budget** - Nancée shared that the state's budget is still a mess with no "fix" anytime soon. She announced that the May Revise, after May 15th will give more information.
- **VETA Scholarships** - Linda Smith announced the extension of scholarship applications until April 20th. Usually recipients receive between \$300 and \$500. Applicants will need to include with their applications letters of recommendation and transcripts.
- **NEA Social Security Offset Survey** - School district employees who have held other jobs that paid into social security are affected by the proposed Social Security Offset. Reps. are asked to share with those members the following web site: www.surveymonkey.com/s/GQ76GHB Also, they should forward this to any working or retired teacher who may be affected. Nancée announced that this survey will take approximately 3 minutes to complete.
- **RIF Updates** - Nancée announced that the RIF hearings were held with the CTA lawyer. She explained that once the judge rules, the final seniority list will be complete and distributed to all employees. VETA provided lunch and most teachers felt the meeting was well organized.
- **VESD Board Election** - Greg Galvez explained that previous attempts for VETA to form a political action committee (PAC) were not successful. However, with upcoming board elections there is a way that members can get involved. Greg will be forming a School Board Election Committee that will interview candidates, per CTA guidelines, and share those interviews with members. Once the interviews are held, the committee can recommend a candidate that would then be eligible for CTA funds to help in their campaign. Greg announced that he would like as many volunteers as possible, and it is likely that the committee would meet a few times over the summer.
- **Day of the Teacher** - Penny Edmiston announced that gift cards would be ready for the May Rep. Council meeting to share with all members. Starlett Hale moved to distribute gift cards on May 12th. Trish Covarrubias seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

- **President Release Time** - Janine Schneider asked Reps to discuss with their staff the necessity of having our VETA president released from classroom duties. Penny D. Smith shared that if VETA members wanted to ensure that the president had release time, then the Association should consider paying 100% of the salary and benefits. Currently the district pays 75% of the cost and VETA pays the remaining 25%. Other Reps expressed the need for the president to be housed at a school site.
- **Elections** - Greg Galvez made a correction to a recent e-mail stating election results. He clarified that the NEA/RA Rep. is a 1 year term. Also, he shared that many members gave positive feedback about the ability to vote at each individual site.
- **Attendance Reporting System** - Nancée shared that our district will be using the SIA/IQ program for keeping attendance records. It would require teachers to take attendance on-line and would automatically send SARB letters to appropriate students. Schools piloting this program will begin April 19th.

New Business

- **CTA/IFT Grants** - Nancée announced that these grants could provide up to \$5,000 and were sponsored by the Institute for Teachers.
- **CTA Dues** - Nancée announced that CTA will be raising their dues by \$18.00 per year (\$1.80 per month).
- **Raffle** - \$10.00 gift certificates were won by Kent Berryman, Debra Lynn Watson and Sandy Walker..
- **5 / 10 Minute Meeting Items:**
 - Members interested in being a liaison with a VESD board member should contact Nancée
 - Members interested in joining the School Board Election committee should contact Greg Galvez
 - CTA dues to increase 2010/2011 by \$18.00
 - Political information - non VESD e-mail address needed
 - Continue to collect pink Yoplait lids and toiletries
 - NEA Social Security Survey, as printed in agenda
 - VETA Scholarships open to graduating high school dependents of VETA members. Application, transcripts and letters of recommendation must be postmarked to Linda Smith by April 20
- **Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned at 6:18 PM.