

**Victor Elementary Teachers' Association
Representative Council
December 8, 2009
Nisqualli Building
(Pending Approval 1/12/10)**

President Nancée Fine called the Rep. Council meeting to order at 4:21 PM.

Minutes and Reports

- December Agenda was submitted by Nancée Fine. Steve Dinise moved to accept, Brenda Sanchez seconded and the agenda was approved.
- Minutes for November 2009 meeting were submitted by Penny Edmiston. Brenda Sanchez moved to accept the minutes and Trish Covarrubias seconded; the minutes were unanimously approved with no corrections.
- President's Report was submitted by Nancée Fine (purple).
- Treasurer's Report was submitted by Linda Smith (white).
- Victorville Chamber of Commerce Report was submitted by Melissa Timko-Miller (purple).
- Fall Leadership Report was submitted by Nancée Fine (purple).
- Negotiations Report was submitted by Penny D. Smith (multi colored).

Site Reports

- All sites were present and gave reports.
- Reps were asked to share celebrations or sympathies at each site, give possible dates that Nancée or another Executive Board member can visit at a staff meeting, discuss how the site has voted to use conference money, and how are teachers using the 15 minutes before and after student day.
- **Concerns Discussed:**
 - **Nancée and/or Executive Board Visits** - Reps. shared that Nancée has either visited, or is scheduled to visit. Other sites have not yet scheduled, but will let her know. Nancée said she would only use a small portion of time to ask the staff 3 brief questions and hear concerns following the CTA Organizing Plan.
 - **Conference Money** - Several Reps. were not sure how money is being spent, but would report back at the next council meeting or e-mail Nancée. Those that did have information shared: Sites allowed \$300 per conference as a first come, first granted basis; grade levels were allocated money that was then divided among teachers; some sites had not contributed to discussions about how any money for conferences would be used; some Reps. reported that their conference budget was cut in half; some members were allowed to spend the same amount on conferences that they would have received if they had attended the district's Summer Institute (they were given the choice);

some sites gave teachers \$500 for conference expenses; other sites were given classroom money that could be used for either supplies or conferences; some sites reported that the money is spent on conferences as the principal determines and some sites have conference money that some teachers use, while other teachers don't.

- **15 Minute Before and After Student Day** - Most teachers announced that they are required to open their doors for students 10 - 15 minutes before student arrive, or have rotating AM duties. Some sites have breakfast programs and the proctors supervise students before school. In the PM, some teachers are assigned permanent or rotating duties, which may extend beyond contract time (usually parent-pick up duty).
- **Placement Students** - A question was asked about the protocol for placing students who have been expelled from their school into a new school within the district pending a placement hearing. There was concern that some schools received a larger share of these students. Nancée announced that last year the determination was made based upon space availability at each site. A plan will be developed that will help distribute more equally for upcoming years.
- **Health Insurance** - A suggestion was made to consider contracting Kaiser as a possible health provider within our trust.
- **Newspaper Article** - A recent *Daily Press* article quoting district administration discussing certificated cuts that had not been negotiated were concerning. An apology was sent from the administration to certificated staff, via e-mail.
- **Retirement Seminar** - A member was told the upcoming seminar with John Crump STRS would be full, and wondered if others would be scheduled. Nancée said she would relay any information she hears.
- **Possible Salary Cuts** - Teachers wondered if pay cuts were to be negotiated, would they be retro-active or begin upon approval? Penny D. Smith informed Reps. that the Negotiation Team did not want to make any recommendations that would put members in jeopardy and that they were hoping to conclude negotiations by February.
- **Possible Reduction in Force (RIF's)** - A Rep. asked how RIF's would be determined (if utilized) among teachers who are interns, probationary or lacking CLAD credentials. Penny D. Smith said that this would be clarified within the negotiation process and language would be included in our next agreement to clarify this situation. Another Rep. asked if teachers were hired the same date, but started teaching at a year-round school (earlier start date than other schools) would they have more seniority? They were concerned of the fairness of this situation as new teachers were randomly assigned schools and had no choice if their 1st contract day was in August or September. Nancée clarified that they do indeed have more seniority as the

State Education Code states that their first work day determines their first day for seniority. It was suggested that VETA send an e-mail to members who may be RIF'ed to let them know their options, and what benefits they may receive.

- **Confidentiality of Concerns** - A Rep. shared that they wanted to ensure that issues that were discussed at Rep. Council were shared in a confidential way so site principals would feel that concerns discussed were done so professionally and not in a negative way towards their specific site. Issues that are discussed may concern ALL members and should not be connected to only the site whose Rep. discussed it.
- **Seniority List** - Some Reps. were concerned about the seniority list being shared to all members via e-mail and the confidentiality of this practice. Nancée shared that this was a better practice than possibly posting at each site where non-certificated personnel (possibly parents, school visitors, etc.) would have access to the information.
- **Classroom Temperatures** - Reps. shared that many classrooms are particularly cold in the winter and warm in the hotter months. Is there any way to adjust the thermostats correctly?
- **Career Day** - Lomitas announced that Career Day for grades 4 - 6 would be held tomorrow, December 9.
- **Class Size** - A Rep. asked if information could be gathered to find which sites had classrooms filled to capacity.
- **Pupil Services** - Karen Bossi shared that the counselors have recently sent an e-mail to teachers that will help with student behavior and interventions. If you did not receive the e-mail, or can not open it, just let her know.

Old Business

- **State Budget** - Nancée announced that nothing was getting better with the budget, there is a \$22 billion deficit. January, 2010 will begin a new cycle of possible cuts. If CTA holds any rallies, she will share information. Greg Galvez announced that in times like these, it's good for chapters to have a PAC. He said that if there was enough interest we could raise up to \$10,000 with a minimal contribution of \$20 per member. These funds would help support candidates in school board elections who were aware of teachers' concerns.
- **$\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ Day Substitutes** - Penny D. Smith clarified information about how sites could use the $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ day substitutes and/or colleague pay. This was additionally outlined in the Negotiation's Report given tonight.
- **Communication Council** - There were mixed feelings about the recent Communication Council; some Reps. felt that it was a good forum to share concerns with mutual respect; others reported that they felt an atmosphere with a lack of trust, that the administration was not listening to teachers' concerns.

- **Elections** - This year elections will be held at school sites, therefore it is incumbent upon the Reps. to abide by the guidelines and rules to ensure security of the ballots. Reps. must attend at least 3 of the training sessions that will begin in January to clarify their responsibilities and will be asked to sign a letter that they understand their duties. VETA will also need volunteers who can work on the Election Committee; this will entail about 1 - 2 meetings, in addition to assisting on Election Day. Please share the news with your members that we need volunteers on this committee and have them contact either: Beth Fehrs, Jeff Bragg, or Linda Smith of the Executive Board. The election timeline will be distributed in January.
- **Fall Leadership Conference** - Reps. who attended this conference in November felt that they received good information, especially in this financial time of crisis. A Rep. suggested recommending to CTA to organize the conference in-state to give the revenue to local facilities. Additionally, members who attended the "Members' Rights" sessions received cards and information regarding disciplinary action towards a teacher, per the Weingarten ruling. It is important that members know that if they are called into a meeting that may result in disciplinary action, they have the right to request representation. These cards were shared with Reps. to distribute among their members.
- **CTA State Council Report** - Nancée said that as soon as she has completed the State Council Report, she will e-mail it to Reps.

New Business

- **Human Rights Chair** - Melissa Timko-Miller has volunteered to be on this committee and would gladly share responsibilities if anyone else is interested.
- **Unconscious Bias** - Melissa announced that Reps. who attended this session of Fall Leadership felt so positively about the information that she will try to schedule an overview training for all of our teachers through Ed. Services. It is likely that the training will be held during the contract day and sites will need to provide the cost of substitutes.
- **Heart and Soul Training** - Nancée announced that this humanistic training is available from CTA and will try to schedule for our members.
- **Good Teaching Conference** - Nancée would like Reps. to gather information from their members about who would be interested in attending this conference at the Bonaventure Hotel, Los Angeles March 12 - 14. She will discuss again in January concerning the number of members that VETA can fund.
- **Raffle** - \$10.00 gift certificates were won by Janine Schneider, Kelly Pfannenstein and Tina Hubbard.
- **5 / 10 Minute Meeting Items:**
 - Political information - non VESD e-mail address needed
 - Continue to collect pink Yoplait lids and toiletries
 - Good Teaching Conference - Begin a list of potential attendees.

- **Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.