

Victor Elementary Teachers' Association

Representative Council

February 12, 2008

Nisqualli Building

(Pending Approval 3/11/08)

President Nancée Fine called the Rep. Council meeting to order at 4:24

Minutes and Reports

- Minutes for January, 2008 meeting were submitted by Penny Edmiston. Nancée called for revisions, hearing none Nancée called for approval. The Minutes were approved unanimously with no corrections.
- President's Report was submitted by Nancée Fine.
- Treasurer's Reports for December 2007 and January 2008 were submitted by Linda Smith.
- Negotiation's Team Report was submitted by Penny D. Smith.
- Chamber of Commerce Morning Insight Report was submitted by Nancée Fine.

Site Reports

- Endeavour, Mojave Vista, Village and 6th Street Prep. were not represented; all other sites gave reports.
- **Concerns discussed within Site Reports:**
 - **Lack of substitute teachers** - Still a concern. Questions arise when a kindergarten class does not have a substitute and the teacher needs to cover both classes. Suggestions include having the administration or support personnel assist, especially during transition and lunch time to allow for appropriate breaks.
 - **Long Term Substitutes** – Because of increased enrollment, some schools have hired long-term subs to handle the overflow of students. These substitutes should be involved in planning and assessing of students, just as the regular teachers do. Their responsibilities include collaborative planning during staff meetings and minimum day Fridays.
 - **Program Improvement Schools** – Staff members are beginning the planning process for next year.
 - **Class Size** – The district establishes a maximum number of students in each grade level. However, after April 15, class size may increase due to new enrollment.
 - **Friday Planning Time** – Questions arise about how this time is to be used. Currently the Negotiation team is working to revise language to include collegial time and training opportunities during minimum day Fridays. Additionally, members can check at their school site to see if they have filed a "Contract Wavier" which would allow additional uses of this time. If the "Contract Wavier" cannot be found, check with Sheryl McNeese who was previously serving on the Contract Wavier Committee.
 - **Informal Observations** – Teachers at Program Improvement schools may be receiving many 'informal observations' as the staff refines their programs.

Old Business

- **TAC** – No report was given.

- **Good Teaching Conference** – Will be held March 7 – 9 in Irvine. Linda Smith announced that she needs to receive information from Academy/Irwin, Endeavour, Lomitas, Village and Parkview. She needs to have a copy of the registration and room confirmations, as well as a deposit check. If the schools don't respond, their positions will be given to other teachers on the waiting list who want to attend this conference. Linda can be reached on her cell phone at 760-885-0578. Nancée will contact Reps from the above schools to gather information.
- **Teacher Appreciation Week** – Tanya Benitez has volunteered to lead this committee.
- **Read Across America** – Nancée shared that information is available through www.nea.org and encouraged members to invite a community leader to attend school and read to students.
- **Elections Committee** – Upcoming elections will be held for the positions of president, secretary, NEA/RA Representatives (2), and both at-large directors. Officers whose terms are not expiring will serve on the election committee (Linda and Beth), as well as Elsbeth, (who will be giving up her position as at large director due to retirement). Additional volunteers will be needed to help with this event and it may require approximately 3 meetings. The committee handed out 2 important pieces of paper: the timeline of events for the election, which include March 11 to declare candidacy and April 8 as Election Day, as well as the form needed to declare candidacy. Daisy Flores has volunteered, via Galileo rep, Melissa Timko-Miller, to help this committee.

New Business

- **Retirement Contribution** - VETA has received a request from the committee organizing the retirement party for Janet, Marie and Jerene to help defray the costs. Nancée asked if VETA would like to contribute \$500 for this cause. Penny D. Smith moved to approve the expenditure, Karen Bossi seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
- **Membership** – Acting on the duties as Vice President, Beth has received CTA training that allows her to maintain membership records. If a member needs to change address, or school sites, please let her know so she can update the files. Members are encouraged to approach newly hired personnel (short term contract or new hires) and invite them to join VETA.
- **Scholarships** – Both Elsbeth and Joe Hodges shared information about available scholarships. More information can be found on the VETA web site for VETA, CTA, and NEA scholarships. Members and their dependents are encouraged to apply as the deadlines will be approaching soon.
- **PAC Training** – Training for establishing and maintaining a Political Assistance Committee will be held March 5 from 3 – 5PM at the Hesperia RRC building. Any member may attend.
- **Electronic Voting** – Nancée announced that Jeff was absent from today's meeting as he is attending CTA training on electronic voting. These ideas may facilitate our upcoming election and he will report his findings at the March Rep. Council meeting.
- **NEA Award for Teaching Excellence** – Nancée announced that she has forms available for nominations. See her for more information.
- **CTA Region Re-designation** – Nancée discussed the proposed re-districting that CTA has recommended for the High Desert region. Currently we are in Region 4, and CTA has recommended changing the boundaries and placing the High Desert in Region 3. Nancée shared

several concerns that would result from this change and will continue to inform our members as decisions are made.

- **High Desert Trust** – Nancée announced that renewal rates are favorable. She encouraged members to continue using the plan appropriately. Nancée will have additional information that will be sent to reps. within the next week.
- **Governor’s Challenge** – Nancée shared information from the Governor Schwarzenegger encouraging physical fitness. There are incentives for students, teachers and schools that participate.
- **Dues** – It was announced that the vote to increase dues will be held in April. The Executive Board has asked Dawn Murray, CTA rep to attend the March meeting to discuss this issue with reps. Please discuss this issue with your members and be prepared to vote in March.
- **California Public Employers Employees Health Care Coalition** – Nancee and Karen shared information from a recent CPEEHCC meeting.
- **MLK Scholarship** – Joe Hodges shared information about the CTA sponsored Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarship. The application is due March 14, 2008.
- **By-Laws Revision** – Elsbeth shared proposed changes to the VETA by-laws concerning Articles VIII – Officers, and IX – Executive Board. The proposed changes would use more precise language to explain that the officers of President, Secretary and one At-large Director serve terms that offset the offices of Vice President, Treasurer and one At-large Director. The term of each office is 2 years.
- **Raffle** – \$10.00 gift certificates were won by Allison Stewart, Penny D. Smith and Debbie Gerberich.
- **5 / 10 Minute Meeting Items:**
 - Confirmation for teachers attending the “Good Teaching Conference” must be given to Linda Smith.
 - Elections to be held April 8. Nominations must be made by March 11. The offices of President, Secretary and both At-large Directors (one director for a 1-year term, the other director for a 2-year term) as well as 2 NEA/RA Representatives are open.
 - Scholarships are available, check the www.vetaonline.org to see VETA, CTA and NEA sponsored scholarships.
 - A proposed increase in dues will be voted upon at the April 8 Rep. Council meeting.
 - High Desert Trust has been used judiciously and renewal rates are projected to be favorable; additionally discuss the wellness and prescription programs.
- **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 6:03.