

**Victor Elementary Teachers' Association  
Representative Council  
February 9, 2010  
Nisqualli Building  
(Pending Approval 3/9/10)**

President Nancée Fine called the Rep. Council meeting to order at 4:17 PM.

**Minutes and Reports**

- Minutes for January 2010 meeting were submitted by Penny Edmiston. Tina Hubbard moved to accept the minutes and Steve Dinise seconded; the minutes were unanimously approved with no corrections.
- President's Report was submitted by Nancée Fine (green).
- Treasurer's Reports (corrected 12/31/09 and 1/31/10) were submitted by Linda Smith (white).
- Victorville Chamber of Commerce Report was submitted by Melissa Timko-Miller (green).
- CTA State Council Report was submitted by Nancée Fine (green).
- San Bernardino County Coalition Report was submitted by Nancée Fine (green).
- High Desert Inland Employee/Employer Trust was submitted by Nancée Fine (green).
- Negotiations Retirement/Resignation (draft) was submitted by Penny D. Smith (white).

**Representative Training - Election Process**

Beth Fehrs gave training for VETA elections that will be held April 8 at each school site, for the positions of President, Secretary, Member at Large and 2 NEA/RA Reps. Training items included:

- Beth amended the deadline to change voting location to 2/12/10
- Beth can be reached at B.Fehrs@yahoo.com
- Beth distributed a packet which includes:
  1. Election Commitment Letter
  2. VETA Representatives' Instructions for Holding Elections
  3. Announcement of VETA 2010 Election
  4. CTA/VETA Timeline for Elections
  5. Declaration of Candidacy for Office

**Site Reports**

- All Sites were present except Puesta del Sol and Ed. Services.
- Considering time constraints, Regular Site Reports were suspended, however some Reps. shared the following concerns:
  - **Negotiations**

\*Impasse - If the district were to call "impasse" what could our team do? Penny D. Smith said that it was unlikely that this would occur because we have been bargaining in good faith. It is unlikely, as well that our team would call for "impasse" for the same reason.

\*IBB - is it in the members' best interest, should we stick with it? Steve Dinise responded that the process has been effective and professional this year and to the benefit of members. Although IBB takes more time, it also helps to prevent impasse as an entire process must be followed. The IBB process allows for input from both sides working together. Penny D. Smith added that the adversarial style of bargaining could take an even longer time; an example is the bargaining of recent prison guards. She explained that it is important that all team members have been trained and given experience in the IBB process. Also, we now have the benefit of John Levell as our facilitator who has a great deal of experience, as well as respect from both teams. She appreciates all responses (positive or negative) regarding bargaining.

\*Negotiations should occur earlier in the year so teachers can plan for possible cuts over a longer period of time. Penny D. Smith responded that the teams are trying the best they can to resolve issues quickly, but sometimes they need to take time until all information has been received.

\*General Meetings - Members would like to have more meetings to stay informed of the process. More meetings would give the opportunity for members to give additional input during the negotiations process. Regardless of IBB, more information needs to be shared.

- **Custodial Responsibilities** - When Day Custodians are absent for 4 days or less a substitute is not given - this creates an unsafe classroom environment when classes do not get cleaned. Is there anything we can do to help our classified custodians to receive a sub. sooner than the 5<sup>th</sup> day? Nancée suggested that we pose the situation to the staff at individual sites to think of creative solutions (such as have the teachers bag the trash, custodians to alternate days between cleaning boards and vacuuming, etc.). It was mentioned to be careful that if teachers take over duties it could become a permanent responsibility of the teacher and therefore take away work from the classified member.
- **Ratification** - More time should be given between the General Meeting and Ratification, make sure to include at least 1 Wednesday in between so Reps. can inform members.
- **Press Release** - Nancée shared that the "Daily Press" has not contacted her for information. In the past she was leery to make statements as people are often misquoted by reporters.
- **CTA Great Schools Survey** - coming to West Palms next week, congratulations!

## Old Business

- **State Budget** - Nancée announced that the state budget is getting worse, fast! The Governor may not balance the budget and California has yet to receive the \$6.9 billion expected from the federal government.
- **Communication Council Response** - Nancée shared highlights from this meeting.
- **State Council** - Nancée announced that the last "Kindergarten age 5" bill died in committee but a new one would be coming. While it is on the radar, it is not currently top of the list.
- **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](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/GQ76GHB) Also, they should forward this to any working or retired teacher who may be affected.
- **Good Teaching Conference** - Linda Smith reminded Reps. that this conference was being held at the Bonaventure Hotel, Los Angeles March 12 - 14. She also reminded Reps. to send her the invoice from registration ASAP with the \$200 deposit check. Linda can be reached at: [LMSmith@vesd.net](mailto:LMSmith@vesd.net)
- **Race to the Top (RTTT)** - Nancée shared that RTTT appears to be a successor to No Child Left Behind and is being endorsed by Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education as well as President Obama. CTA does not endorse RTTT.

## New Business

- **Corresponding Secretary** - Starlett Hale has agreed to accept this responsibility and send cards to members to express condolences or congratulations.
- **Read Across America** - Nancée announced this was being held 3/2/10 and she would be glad to visit classes to read to students. This year's NEA recommended book is Armadilly Chilly.
- **Initiatives** - Nancée shared that 2 initiatives are getting press and could actually hurt teachers. She encouraged members to investigate the "New Public Employee Benefit Reform Act" which would cause STRS to change retirement incomes from approximately 70% to 30% and allow for retirement only at the same age as Social Security (currently 66 years of age). The "Pay Check Protection Act" limits the amount that public employees may contribute to candidates while private parties are allowed to give unlimited amounts of donations. She encouraged members to NOT sign these initiatives.
- **RIF's** - Nancée announced that if/when RIF's are given, VETA will hold a meeting after February 24 to walk our affected teachers through this process, she is personally scheduled to attend training to learn more about this process and members' rights. If a teacher is given a RIF notice a personal meeting will be held to notify those candidates. These meetings will be held with a cabinet member during the school day with a substitute taking over the member's class. If members

have the same start date straws will be drawn to create a hierarchy to be used in the RIF process.

- **Teacher Appreciation** - will be held in April or May with gift certificates to go to all teachers. This is funded by VETA.
- **Food for Rep. Council** - Crystal Kerns and Scott Duncan volunteered to pick up food for Rep. Council meetings. The Executive Board will order the food and contact Scott and Crystal for the details about delivery.
- **March 4** - Nancée announced that this date was chosen as a symbolic day to support students from the UC system (tuition hikes) as well as publicize the cuts across all schools and to education. Nancée and Dr. Marsden will compile a fact sheet about the cuts which will be distributed to parents before school on 3/4/10. This event is being sponsored by VESD cabinet, VETA and CSEA. The Education Coalition suggests holding a disaster drill to signify the state's education budget is a "disaster"! Nancée shared that Dr. Marsden met with a parent group and was very blunt about the budget information and cuts.
- **Raffle** - \$10.00 gift certificates were won by Ann Hernandez, Tina Hubbard and Paul Valerio.
- **5 / 10 Minute Meeting Items:**
  - Political information - non VESD e-mail address needed
  - Continue to collect pink Yoplait lids and toiletries
  - Good Teaching Conference - Send confirmation to Linda Smith, Treasurer.
  - Initiatives - become informed on "New Public Employee Benefit Reform Act" and "Pay Check Protection Act", they are harmful to teachers.
- **Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.