

Victor Elementary Teachers' Association
Representative Council
June 2, 2009
Nisqualli Building
(Pending Approval 9/22/09)

President Nancée Fine called the Rep. Council meeting to order at 4:13PM.

Minutes and Reports

- Minutes for May 2009 meeting were submitted by Penny Edmiston. A correction was made for the spelling of "Barnes and Noble". Trish Covarrubias moved to accept the minutes and Ann Smith seconded. The minutes were approved with the correction.
- Treasurer's Report was submitted by Linda Smith.
- Negotiation's Report was submitted by Penny D. Smith

Site Reports

- All sites (except Puesta del Sol and Lomitas) were present and gave reports.
- **Additional Concerns Discussed:**
 - **Renewing Credential** - Although the state has not audited members, it is still the responsibility for all teachers to verify that they have maintained appropriate professional time. It is important to document this time in case of an audit when it is time to renew your credential.
 - **Principal Survey** - Members wanted clarification on how to submit their feedback in an appropriate way. Nance explained that principals were told that they could invite their staff to complete the survey during staff meeting time, (in a computer lab, or classroom setting), or off hours at home. Additionally, principals were told to share with their staff that if anyone wanted a hard copy of the survey, they could request one from Nancée.
 - **Kindergarten Teachers** - The duties of Kindergarten teachers were clarified. If they have no partner with which to team, then when their students leave for the day, they can be assigned duties that work with other primary students. Nancée also added that their additional duties, in the past, have been assigned by site decision.
 - **Negotiations Update** - While Steve Dinise is acting principal of Lomitas, he will step down from the Negotiation's Team. Alternate Angela Woodruff will fill in for Steve during this time.
 - **Career Fair** - Reps shared that the students and parents who attended were very impressed with the outstanding job done on projects and the fair recently held at West Palms. Concerns were shared that some sites were told participation was mandatory and even required the staff member attend the Saturday event, while other sites were given the option of participation.

Additionally, the end of the year seemed a very busy and hectic time to complete the needed tasks for the career portfolio.

- **VETA Website** - Kudos were given to Jeff Bragg for responding in such a timely manner in posting and revising information on our Association's website.
- **Release of Probationary Teachers** - Concerns were shared that so many probationary teachers were released, and of the majority they came from a site where the principal was also released. It was suggested that the district should have in place a plan that would allow a teacher to be re-evaluated in this situation. It was shared that in the past Janet Young had been willing to give a teacher in a similar situation a re-evaluation and they were able to retain their position. Nancée also shared that she has been informing non-reelect teachers that they are eligible to re-apply for employment in our district.
- **District Writing Test** - Concerns shared that the administration and grading of the tests is not equitable across the grade levels. Some grade levels must have each test graded by 2 independent scorers, other grade levels are allowed to send 10 tests per classroom to be graded, other grade levels are allowed to score tests during the professional day, etc. Confusing information was given referring to the Grade Level Councils as if teachers had voted on changes, when in fact they had not. As the district faces budget cutbacks, more activities will be delegated to the sites. A suggestion was made to use writing scores from classroom evaluations and the data readily available on the report cards instead of administering an additional district test. If teachers are assigned the task to assess district tests, additional scoring time will be needed.

Old Business

- **VETA Scholarships** - 13 scholarships were awarded to graduating students who are dependents of VETA members. They each will receive \$400 to be used for educational expenses and will be presented with their checks at their school's award ceremonies. Today, 8 of those recipients were able to attend the Rep. Council meeting for recognition, congratulations, and refreshments.
- **Politics** - The Governor has proposed 7.5 furlough days to cut school budgets. Nancée also clarified the dates that teachers can be given a Reduction in Force notice (RIF = lay off). The first date is March 15; the second permissible date for RIF's is 2 weeks before the first contract day.
- **Day of the Teacher** - Celebrated May 13, 2009. Tanya Benitez gave \$10 Sonic gift cards to Reps. to distribute among their teachers. The gift certificates were purchased out of the VETA budget, and are considered a "chargeable expense" as it benefits all members.

- **Scandia** - Nancée shared flyers for the VETA family event. She also told reps that they would receive a copy via e-mail. Please make sure all staff members are aware of this event and the deadline to purchase discount tickets is June 10 (\$11.95 checks sent to Greg Galvez at Discovery).

New Business

- **VETA Budget** - Linda Smith shared the proposed 2009 - 2010 VETA budget approved by the Executive Board. Reps compared the proposed budget to the current year's budget to see where revisions have been made, as well as the amount used from our reserve. Approximately \$9,000 less will be spent next year compared to the current year. Linda explained that expenses listed as "non-chargeable" can not make up more than 20% of the budget, per CTA guidelines. Also, it is important to maintain our "non-profit" status; therefore there are limits to the amount of money allowed to be held in reserve. Nancée explained that the budget is a working document, therefore expenditures can be voted upon at any rep. council meeting. Bev Thomas moved to accept the budget, Brenda Sanchez seconded and the budget was approved unanimously with no abstentions.
- **Rep. Council 2009 - 2010** - Nancée reminded reps that selecting the VETA Representatives should take place by the first staff meeting each school year. At that time representatives will decide with their staff who will serve as VETA Rep. and who will serve as TAC Rep. Beth Fehrs asked reps to please notify her when members have changed sites or moved so she can keep accurate records. The first Rep. Council meeting of 2009 - 2010 will be held September 22.
- **Sacred Tuesdays** - Reps were reminded to discourage their staffs from scheduling meetings during Tuesday afternoons as this is reserved for Association business. Nancée said that she would also remind principals.
- **Open Enrollment** - If members wish to make changes in their health benefits, open enrollment is being held from now until June 15.
- **Consensus vs. Collaboration** - Each site determines their governance model at the first staff meeting. Collaboration means the principal makes decisions with input from the staff. Consensus means that every staff member has one vote in the decision making process. The VETA rep. should work with the principal to explain both of these options to the staff. In August Nancée will e-mail reps the ballots to be used to select, by secret vote, the governance model to be used.
- **Fire Code / Bulletin Boards** - Staff members have been told not to take items to dry cleaners for fire retardant spray. This spray has not been approved to be safe. Displayed material that is not fire retardant may not take up more than 10% of the

classroom wall area. The wall area is determined by calculating all walls (do not deduct windows), as well as ceilings.

- **VETA Survey** - The member survey that will be used to help guide the negotiation process has been drafted, but is waiting for final recommendations from CTA as well as new budget information that will be out soon. It is anticipated that the survey will be distributed as soon as school resumes so tabulation would be complete 2 weeks thereafter.
- **Summer Communication** - Nancée informed reps that she would be sending additional e-mails throughout the summer that concern VETA business and financial information. If you do not check your district e-mail account, please make sure to provide Nancée with an additional e-mail address.
- **Congratulations** - Tanya Benitez, Tiffany Lyons and Liz McDonald have been selected as principals (Green Tree East, Montessori and Challenger).
- **Raffle** - \$10.00 gift certificates were won by Kelly Pfannenstein, Joan Herdlein, Trish Covarrubias and Karen Bossi.
- **5 / 10 Minute Meeting Items:**
 - Announce Scandia Event, June 20. Discounted admission can be purchased by June 10 by sending \$11.95 to Greg Galvez at Discovery.
 - Pictures for the District web site should be sent to Bill. It is important that individual students are not recognizable.
- **Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned at 5:47 PM.