

VTA Representative Council Meeting Minutes

Date 11/27/07

3:45 pm – 5:35 pm

Jepson Library

In attendance: Gary Ballard, Michael Turrini, Joanne Baker, Christine Williams, Mike Spezzi, David Billings, Julie Timmerman, Doug Appel, Denise Williams, Suvi Smith, Nancy Hiestand, Dawn Kelly, Todd Blanset, Daniel Rodriguez, Derenda Faias, Peggy Macaulay, Cathy Pranke, Steve Clark, Bill Jacks, John Namisnik, Tim Sisson, Margaret Sisson, Brenda Hensley, Larry Baker, Kent Puddy, Gary Masterson, Tim Yearnshaw, Moira McSweeney, Sharon Riehl, Linda Phelan, Diane Dahl, Katherine Epstein, Sylvia Aquino, Chris Lindberg, Bob Blaine, Scott Bassett, Ginny Miller, Tracy Moss, Nancy Madonna, Corey Penrose

1. Approval/Corrections to the agenda –

-“Me too” clause.

-Communications committee.

2. Approval/Corrections to the minutes –

-The recording secretary will revise his copy more closely.

3. President’s Report–

-NLCB reauthorization has been delayed for another year – The past two months CTA members made more than 15,000 phone calls to members of Congress, wrote post cards, e-mailed legislators and participated in local rallies asking Congress to oppose a draft House NCLB reauthorization proposal that would have placed even greater emphasis on test scores.

-All meetings outside the duty day, as per article 4.22 of the contract, are billable to the district at 25 dollars per hour. Be sure to request the timesheet forms when you attend them.

-Medical benefits for retirees – if teachers nearing retirement have 18 years of service in VUSD, once they retire, they will receive 50 percent of medical for 8 years – but they have to be currently enrolled in our medical plan. If they’re taking In Lieu, they will not be eligible for this insurance.

-Bereavement leave is available to unit members. The relevant language can be found in section 6.2.6 of the contract.

-Corresponding Secretary Chris Lindberg will send cards and other nice personalized touches to unit members; simply forward her the information from your school site.

4. Vice-President's Report-

-Special Education teachers, caught between the demands of being a caseworker and teacher, are having many issues arising from these concerns. To that end, special education teachers are encouraged to methodically document EVERYTHING and contact Larry if they have any concerns or problems arising from contract violations. Solutions discussed included:

-Attending CTA classes on strengthening the bond between regular and special education teachers.

-Adding a special education person to the grievance committee.

-Holding a meeting with all of the special education teachers to determine specific issues and solutions. Derenda and Larry, therefore, will work together arrange this meeting.

5. Reports-

a. Bargaining -

As of right now, the district negotiating team is not returning phone calls and refusing to schedule another bargaining session meeting. Classified and administration have settled at a 4.5 percent raise and this proposal will be ratified on the December 13th board meeting.

b. Treasurer-

The treasurer's report can be found at www.vacateachers.org. Some older bills for release time have finally been processed and received. The treasurer's report passed, unanimously.

c. Grievance

The January grievance is going forwards as planned. There have also been some issues with site administrators failing to meet specific evaluation deadlines, as set forth in the contract, specifically the pre-observation conference which must have occurred within six weeks of the beginning of the school year. If this deadline has been broken, be sure to contact Sylvia Aquino. Some questions asked included:

-Can this conference happen during a staff meeting? – No, it must be done individually

-Can this conference happen via e-mail or notes? – No.

More information on this topic can be found here:
<http://www.vacateachers.org/evaluations.html>

d. State Council

Brenda and Larry will be attending on Jan 25th. If you have any questions or concerns you'd like to see them address while attending, please let them know.

e. CTA Staff Report-Doug Appel

-As mentioned earlier, over the past two months, CTA members made more than 15,000 phone calls to members of Congress, wrote post cards, e-mailed legislators and participated in local rallies asking Congress to oppose a draft House NCLB reauthorization proposal that would have placed even greater emphasis on test scores. The CTA office in Sacramento received a phone call from George Miller's Office, asking them to cut back on the number of faxes and phone calls – their fax and phones, put simply, had stopped working under the weight of our combined efforts. The CTA also prepared a radio advertisement condemning the proposed changes in the NCLB reauthorization and, within two days, the proposed changes were abandoned.

-CLAD certification – On August 2006, the state superintendent announced that CLAD authorization, instead of being required for teachers of 20 or more EL students, would now be required for teachers of just one EL student. Of our 700+ unit members, 110 do not have this credential and, put simply, time is running out. If the state determines a teacher is teaching an EL student with the wrong credentials, the superintendent will receive a notice of reassignment, and the district will have 30 days to affect the necessary changes. The CTA will defend teachers without a CLAD to the best of their ability but the districts options include:

- Reduction of force (layoffs) for those without a CLAD – and the CTA might not be able to stop it.
- Transfer of teachers who don't have a CLAD – and the CTA might not be able to stop this either.
- Suspension without pay until the CLAD is earned – the CTA will probably be able to stop this.

What should be done? If you are unsure of your credential status, call the district office or Patti Dineen at SCOOE. The time to delay earning that credential, however, is gone and, ultimately, professional credentials are responsibility of the credential holder.

6. New Business

-Is there a “me too” (classified receiving whatever raises certified receive) in their contract? – Yes.

-Communications committee – will be started. This committee will prepare a monthly newsletter and other projects. David Billings will be the chairperson. Any input should be directed to him but the president must vet the newsletter prior to publication.

-Rewriting VTA bylaws – the following five revisions were submitted and motion to be accepted.

1. A minimum of five negotiating team members must be separately appointed (or reappointed) each year through the current appointment process outlined in the VTA bylaws.

2. that a minimum of one person will be appointed through the current bylaw process to be an observer as they learn the bargaining process with the understanding that they may become a member of the bargaining team through the usual appointment process when an opening becomes available.

3. That no person shall be appointed to the negotiating team who is pursuing an Administrative Credential or Administrative position within VUSD.

4. that members appointed to the bargaining team be offered that position with the understanding that they will not apply for an administrative position for at least two years after they leave the bargaining team.

5. That any current bargaining team member must remove themselves from the bargaining team before submitting an application for an administrative position within VUSD.

Since the ideas, instead of specific revisions to bylaw language, were submitted, there was some confusion about just what rep council would be voting upon. Therefore, this item of new business was sent back for revision. Once the specific by-laws are revised, they will be resubmitted.

-Site reps – The issue of specific reps for Vaca High and Sierra Vista still needs to be resolved and the website needs to be updated.

6. Raffle – There was a happy winner.

7. Site Concerns – These issues were addressed under new business.

8. Adjournment - At 4:57.

Respectfully submitted, Corey Penrose