

## Centinela Valley Secondary Teachers Association Files Unfair Labor Practice Charge

CVSTA has filed an Unfair Labor Practice Charge with PERB (Public Employment Relations Board) over violations of the Educational Employment Relations Act (EERA). The District has interfered with the Union's representation of its members with retaliatory actions designed to silence Union leaders and the entire Bargaining Unit. In addition to the PERB charge, the Union has several grievances that the District has rejected at every level thus far. The grievances cover violations of the local's Collective Bargaining Agreement—the contract— and range from the District's handling of transfers and vacancy postings to the process used to fill new positions.

The teachers and counselors in Centinela Valley have been instrumental in helping to make positive change in the District. Two years ago, when the District was nearly bankrupt, the teachers agreed to a temporary class size increase. They also agreed to lengthen their school day to accommodate a new nutrition period that would not only be beneficial for hungry students, but would bring the District millions of dollars in new revenue. The District currently has an 18% reserve (a 3% reserve is required by the County). This is how Superintendent Jose Fernandez and his "bored majority" (not a typo) have thanked the teachers for their sacrifices to maintain solvency:

- ◆ The district involuntarily transferred 40 teachers—the majority of whom were union leaders/ reps, department chairs (contractually elected by bargaining unit members) and those who have been outspoken or critical of the District
- ◆ The district violated a Memorandum of Understanding regarding minimum days and lunch periods
- ◆ They've been unlawfully taking what they claim are overpayments from our teachers' and counselors' paychecks without authorization—or with coerced authorization. They continue to do so even after their lawyers agreed that they would not
- ◆ They unnecessarily RIFd (laid off) 69 teachers—A lawsuit by CVSTA helped convince the District to recall all the teachers
- ◆ The District did not recall the last three laid off counselors until this school year despite needing counselors and going so far as to fly the positions—the counselors were called back after the Union threatened further legal action on their behalf. They were laid off at the whim of the superintendent for a full school year
- ◆ The District has raised the superintendent's salary twice since the teachers agreed to the class size increase and nutrition school day extension. They also have given Superintendent Jose Fernandez a

contract provision for a 40-year home loan at a 2% interest rate. The Superintendent filed personal bankruptcy in June of this year.

- ◆ The District hired auditors to interrogate teachers about student store accounts—they questioned teachers over \$10 P.E. shorts and \$20 graduation sashes, but gave the superintendent the right to have the District finance a home in the millions of dollars.
- ◆ The teachers have gotten no pay increase since 2007 and did not ask for one as their primary concern was to keep the district afloat
- ◆ The Superintendent and his "Bored Majority" have also given hand-picked employees in his inner circle raises by using the Personnel Commission to reclassify their positions. Instead of a secretary, the superintendent now has an Executive Assistant. By his own admission, this was done so that he could pay the confidential employee more. This change was made at the first CV school board meeting after the community voted to support yet another \$98 million School Bond. If you are not keeping track, this is the second bond in Jose Fernandez' three year tenure for a grand total of \$196 million.
- ◆ Administrators have new iPads,

*More "CVSTA" page 2*

“CVSTA” from page one:

computers, furniture and cell phones while students at Loyde High School don't have books and teachers don't have classrooms. Some of the books that they do have at Loyde are over 10 years old.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of the violations and irresponsible, educationally unsound positions taken by this district. How is it that this type of mismanagement is allowed? The “Bored Majority” led by school board veteran Rocio Pizano. Rocio is currently the clerk of the board and has a close personal relationship with the superintendent. As clerk, one of her duties is to review the board's contracts, seemingly a good fit for her as she is an accountant for Honda, here in Torrance. Instead of questioning expenditures, she has stated repeatedly that she “trusts the superintendent”. While we believe all superintendents should be presumed trustworthy until proven otherwise, the community elects school board members to ensure that the District is run efficiently and in the best interest of the students. Power without accountability corrupts. Rocio Pizano and the “Bored” will not read any material provided to them for themselves. One was heard to say that it bores her. They vote the way the superintendent tells them to vote.

*“There is a very real relationship, both quantitatively and qualitatively, between what you contribute and what you get out of this world.” - Oscar Hammerstein II*

## Support for Centinela Valley Secondary Teachers Association

You can help our members in Centinela Valley by doing one of the following on your duty free time using your own personal email and equipment (phones, computers, etc):

- ◆ Call the District and ask them to settle the grievances (310) 263-3201.
- ◆ Call Rocio Pizano and ask her how much money she has taken from District contractors. Although the District provides her with a cell phone for school district use, that number apparently is not public. Try her at American Honda Motor Corporation in Torrance (310) 783-2000.
- ◆ Send Superintendent Jose Fernandez an email at [fernandezj@centinela.k12.ca.us](mailto:fernandezj@centinela.k12.ca.us) from your home email address and respectfully tell him how you feel about him getting two raises after the teachers lengthened their workday and increased class sizes. You may also want to comment (respectfully) on how you feel about his 2%-home-loan-for-40-years contract provision.
- ◆ Call Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, Bob Cox and respectfully ask him to put the “HUMAN” back in Human Resources. Stop ordering teacher paychecks to be unlawfully docked. Stop pleading ignorance to policies and contract provisions that his office ought to be the keepers of such as when, where and how to post vacancies and

how much to pay employees. He can sometimes be reached at (310) 263-3210 or email him at [coxb@centinela.k12.ca.us](mailto:coxb@centinela.k12.ca.us).

In the next issue, *The Announcer* will be spotlighting other bad behavior in South Bay districts such as Palos Verdes failing to use the Ed Jobs money (\$2.2 million) as it was intended to restore instructional minutes, Manhattan Beach's failure to restore P.E. programs although they are sitting on a 38% reserve (not a typo). Last, but not least Redondo Beach is on a tear seemingly to try and dismiss a teacher every other month—often based on hearsay.

You may notice that the tone of this *Announcer* is quite different from previous ones and at this festive time of the year, but our members are under attack and we need you all to join in their defense. The school year is flying by and you and your students no doubt are looking forward to a well-deserved break. On behalf of the South Bay United Teachers Board of Directors and our office staff Elise Tubbs and Mary Sullivan, I wish you a very joyous holiday season and thank you all for the outstanding work you do for students and each other. Enjoy your break.

In Solidarity,  
Sandra Goins  
Executive Director  
South Bay United Teachers

### APPLICATIONS ARE NOW AVAILABLE FOR 2011 CTA SCHOLARSHIPS

The California Teachers Association will again be awarding five scholarships of up to \$3,000 to CTA members and thirty-five scholarships of up to \$5,000 to dependent children of CTA members.

Applications are available on the SBUT website: [www.sbut.org](http://www.sbut.org), “current news” link. The deadline for submission to CTA is February 4, 2011. Transcripts and letters of recommendation are required.



## The SEVEN Fund 2011 Teaching Fellowship Program

The SEVEN Fund is pleased to announce a competition inviting K – 12 teachers from around the United States to apply for a Summer 2011 Fellowship. The SEVEN Fund 2011 Teaching Fellowships enable teachers to travel to Rwanda and study enterprise solutions to poverty.

Fellows will travel to Rwanda for a two-week period during Summer 2011. The exact dates will be determined with the winners, but will occur between June and August 2011. Fellows will be provided with round-trip coach class airfare, lodging, and a daily stipend to cover incidental expenses, such as meals and local transportation.

### About Seven

SEVEN (Social Equity Venture Fund) is a non-profit entity run by entrepreneurs whose strategy is to markedly increase the rate of innovation and diffusion of enterprise solutions to poverty. It does this by targeted investment that fosters thought leadership through books, films and websites; supporting role models - whether they are entrepreneurs or innovative firms - in developing nations; and shaping a new discourse in government, the press and the academy around private-sector innovation, prosperity and progressive human values.

**Read more and submit an application at**  
**<http://www.sevenfund.org/teaching-fellowship/>**

### Dear NEA Colleague:

Have you visited Thinkfinity.org recently? Consider this your invitation to take a few minutes to point your browser to [www.thinkfinity.org](http://www.thinkfinity.org) and explore all this award-winning site offers.

Thinkfinity.org offers thousands of premium lesson plans, interactive learning games and activities, professional development programs and more all at no cost to you—all from leading educational organizations including the International Reading Association, the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics, the Council for Economic Education, the Kennedy Center and the National Geographic Society. Thinkfinity resources are always **free** and that stretches classroom and instructional budgets.

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If you've been looking for that **one right site** to find amazing, engaging, effective resources for your students, you've found it!



Best wishes for a peaceful, fun-filled holiday season.  
Members: Call or email the SBUT office by 4pm on Thursday,  
Dec. 16th to enter your name in a drawing for a  
See's 1 lb. box gift certificate.  
10 will be awarded!!

(Be sure we have your current home address when you respond)

## Hot Gifts

From Cyndi Stumpf, a second grade teacher in Jefferson Township, New Jersey:

"For the holidays, my students make a hot plate out of a 12-inch solid white tile. I purchase the tiles at a local home improvement supply store, and the students decorate the top with permanent markers. I spray the tiles with an acrylic paint sealer, which is also available at the same store. The students glue felt squares to the bottom for table protection. These hot plates have been a popular and useful gift as well as being applicable to all holidays."

## Word Therapy

From Susan Hall, an eleventh grade teacher:

"I devised a vocabulary exercise that I call 'Word Therapy.' When we begin a new unit, students choose a word to portray in a 'therapy session,' which we hold on Thursdays. We circle up like in a therapy group, and we, using our vocab words, talk about why we are there, our strengths, weaknesses, hobbies, family issues, etc. For example, I played the word 'masticate,' and the whole time I chewed gum in a noisy way. I revealed that I was in therapy because I felt like I had to be chewing something all of the time. Employers had become annoyed with me, and I was having difficulty keeping a job. "As long as the students make their words memorable, the level of retention is amazing. I have them wear a nametag during the therapy session to further help them remember who played which word. When we begin a new unit, they are so excited to choose their words. Some students look ahead to units coming up, so they can sign up for words in advance. It really brings vocabulary to life."

## Due in Two

From Jo Elliott, a fifth grade teacher in Ortonville, Minnesota:

"My students have an assignment notebook and folder that they keep on their desks at all times. Papers that are unfinished go on the left side of the folder, and when they are completed, they go on the right side. As soon as an assignment is given, everyone writes it down. The students have two days to complete each assignment, so when we write the assignment down, we also put the date it's due in the notebook and on the paper. If students do not have assignments completed on time, they must go to the noon study hall that day to finish it. They receive a lower grade because the assignment was not finished in time. The combination of the assignment notebook and folder, the regular due dates, and the consequences for late work has been very effective."

<http://www.nea.org/tools/Works4Me.html>



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**Dean Eggum (310) 328-8778**

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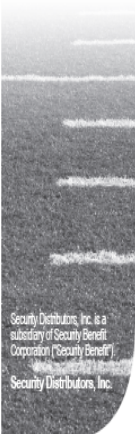
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