

SBUT ANNOUNCER

South Bay United
Teachers

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IT'S SEPTEMBER - WE'RE OFF AND RUNNING

Welcome Back Members! We certainly hope you had a wonderful summer and your school year is off to a great start. While there are many things that have happened over the last few months that could have been handled better by your district, be certain that your Union is working hard to advocate on your behalf.

Thank you to those of you who called and wrote to your congressional representatives over the summer. Because of your help, teachers and support staff will be back in the classroom and at school sites this school year...and pay cut days (furlough days) will be restored. What's good for students is also good for our members.

Education Jobs Fund and Medicaid Assistance Act of 2010

We've been calling it Ed Jobs Money and it has been allocated to bring back the jobs of teachers and support staff that were to be cut this school year. That means that the district should not have any other teachers laid off and more teachers can be hired to bring down class size. It also means that school nurses, counselors and psychologists can be hired or rehired right away. Districts can also use the money for employee benefits... Districts will get these funds at the end of Septem-

ber. Our South Bay Districts will be receiving the following amounts:

Centinela Valley	\$1,687,613
Manhattan Beach	\$1,292,402
Palos Verdes	\$2,254,307
Redondo Beach	\$1,648,679

Districts are prohibited from using these funds on administrators and they cannot use it to pad their reserves. This money is indeed one-time money, but it is stimulus money designed to keep people working and paying their mortgages and taking care of themselves and their families.

There have been plenty of other things going on since the spring. Lots of your leaders attended CTA's Summer Institute, a huge training for teachers and educational support staff held at UCLA every summer. We had representatives in the Bargaining, School Finance, Communications and Emerging Leaders strands.

Your leaders have been representing you on a number of issues. Here are some major ones that all chapters are facing to one degree or another:

Complaints

Each one of our unions has a section in the contract that covers this issue. CVSTA Article 20, MBUTA Article 10,

PVFA Article 17 and RBTA Article 9. While the specifics may vary somewhat, there is a provision in each for members to "face their accusers" so to speak. There is no provision for an anonymous complaint and districts should not place any such complaints in a member's personnel file. Take a look at what your contract says. Go to www.sbut.org and click on your chapter, then click on contract and go to the appropriate article referenced above. It's also a good idea to check your personnel file periodically to make sure you know about everything that has been placed in it. There should not be any surprises. Contact your union rep if you are told there has been a complaint about you.

Involuntary Transfers

They almost always follow when there have been layoffs, but not the case in Centinela Valley. Did you know that last year CV was the only one of our four locals not to have lay-

Teacher Rights Workshop

Attorney Rick Schwab will be conducting a teacher rights workshop for SBUT members on Wednesday, October 27, 2010 at 3:45 at the SBUT office in Torrance. Please RSVP as seating is limited.

offs? They had a 10% plus budgetary reserve (thanks to teachers agreeing to a nutrition program that extended their workday as well as a temporary increase in class size.) After trying to work with the District to solve the financial crisis, the District opted to transfer 1/6 of all the teachers in the district! Some teachers were given 24 hours to move their classroom contents and report to the new site. Some teachers have been sent to sites with no classrooms while their old site has rooms that are empty and students spilling outside. Pay attention CVSTA members, there will be much more on this in the months to come. Stay in touch with your site reps and officers as there will be many ways for you to participate in the fight to make it right.

Are you a Palos Verdes teacher who was involuntarily transferred or re-assigned? The district can't do this again for three years. Check out Article 12-3 for the specifics and ask your rep if you need clarification.

Technology in Student Hands

All members need to be aware that we have had several instances of late where students have recorded teachers either with a digital camera, cell phone or FLiP-type camcorder and posted the images, and in some cases sound, to the Internet. While it is against the law for a student to record a teacher in a classroom without consent, school districts have still been willing to pursue teacher discipline after viewing some of the material. It is very important that teachers and support staff understand that students are everywhere and whether you are "on the job" or on vacation, they may have a camera and an opportunity to take what to them is a funny picture. Profes-

sional conduct is a term that is often used when districts want to reprimand a teacher. Be careful that your actions cannot be in any way interpreted as being outside of the district's definition.

A few guidelines:

- ◆ Be very wary of posing with students away from school. Use good judgment.
- ◆ If a student has a recording device in the classroom, ask him/her to turn it off and put it away.
- ◆ If you allow such devices, consider having guidelines for student use in the classroom.
- ◆ If your school/district has a policy against the student having cameras, cell phones, etc. follow-through with the appropriate discipline. Mention the prohibition of such devices in your course outline/syllabus.
- ◆ Always behave as if you are being recorded.

Evaluate Me

Have you ever uttered those words? More often than not, school district administrators do not conduct evaluations in the manner specified by your contract. More often than not, they are an afterthought at the end of the year when an administrator realizes they haven't been completed. What often follows is a meaningless shuffling of papers and signatures and if you are liked by an administrator, yours are filed away never to be seen again. If you are not, the evaluation can become a tool that is used to push you into another subject or grade level or school or something else.

Your Union leadership feels very strongly that evaluation should not be a "gotcha", but an opportunity for teachers to grow and good administrators to

contribute to that growth. They can best do that by adhering to the timelines. They should make a date with you to sit down and come up with goals and objectives and then set times during the year to come in and look for evidence that those goals and objectives are being met. Teachers (and counselors and psychologists and nurses) ought to have a written record of the observations and the observations should be limited to the goals and objectives. If completed in a timely manner and according to contract, evaluations can provide an opportunity for administrators to express what their expectations are and teachers can know they have achievable targets for which to shoot.

Email

SBUT and your union will not use school district email. Make sure we have a non-district email address on file for you.

Are you registered to vote?

If you've moved recently or just never registered, you have until October 18, 2010 to get registered in time to vote in the November 2010 election. This is an extremely important race for anyone who cares about public education. Please see your site rep as soon as possible for some very important information regarding the election and an opportunity for you to make a difference. Don't know your rep? Go to www.sbut.org and check out your chapter's rep information.

"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

FEE PAYER OR MEMBER?

When you are hired by a local school district as a certificated educator, you become part of the local “bargaining unit” which means you are covered by the contract negotiated by the teachers’ union. You do not have to join the union as a member, but you do have to pay a “representation fee” or “agency fee” which covers the cost of bargaining on your behalf.

Agency Fee payers are not protected

by the chapter liability insurance or legal consultation for non-contract employment matters (parent or student accusations, credentialing issues). Fee Payers are not eligible for chapter benefits such as credit union services, insurance programs, notary services and the tutoring program.

Becoming a member provides you with some great benefits. But it also makes you part of the team that to-

gether works for the betterment of, not just your employment conditions, but public education as a whole.

You must be a bargaining unit member and **complete and return an enrollment form** in order to be a full member of your chapter. NOTE: If you are returning from a leave of absence, your membership may have lapsed. If you are unsure whether or not you are a member, e-mail or call the office.

MAINTAIN YOUR MEMBERSHIP WHILE ON AN UNPAID LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Are you planning on taking a leave of absence due to maternity, illness or other personal reasons? If so, keep in mind the importance of maintaining your Association membership while on leave. Your dues are automatically deducted from your paycheck. However while on leave, if you are not paid, your deduction will stop. Therefore, when taking a leave, remember to contact the SBUT office if you wish to continue your membership.

Maintaining your membership while you are on leave ensures your eligibility to participate in the following member benefits programs:

- **Death & Dismemberment Benefit Plan:** If you cease to be a member of CTA, you cease to be covered under this plan and all previous years of continuous membership are forfeited.
- **CTA Group Legal Services Program (GLSP):** CTA membership must be maintained through-

out the entire time assistance is being provided.

- **BabyWise Program:** If you are on maternity leave and participate in the BabyWise program, CTA membership must be current.
- **Voluntary life and disability plan:** You may jeopardize your voluntary life and disability coverage underwritten by *The Standard* if membership ceases.
- **Auto and home insurance:** Policies offered by A+ Auto and Home Insurance Plus may result in a premium increase due to cancellation of your CTA membership.

If you have any questions regarding your membership, please contact SBUT or the CTA Membership Accounting Department at membership@cta.org. For questions about your benefits, email member_benefits@cta.org.

Did you know you're insured?

(If you're a member, you automatically receive these benefits)

DUES-TAB (NEA)	CTA ACCIDENT & SURVIVOR BENEFIT
<p>Dues-Tab insurance is an <i>automatic</i> group term-life and accidental death and dismemberment insurance benefit for NEA members.</p> <p>The coverage is a modest amount for death by natural causes (the amount equal to NEA dues paid during continuous membership, up to \$1000), but increases with some types of death and dismemberment, up to \$50,000.</p> <p>You do not have to do anything to be covered. However, it is a good idea to inform NEA of your beneficiary preference, and to keep the NEA benefits phone number with your other insurance information for easy reference. NEA Benefits: 800-637-4636.</p>	<p>As a union member, you have a similar benefit with CTA. The Accident & Survivor Benefit is \$200/year for each year of continuous membership up to a maximum of \$2000. The Accidental Death & Dismemberment benefit reaches a maximum of \$10,000.</p> <p>To register a beneficiary with CTA, call the Risk Management Department at 650-552-5200, or log on the CTA Member section of the website: www.cta.org</p>

WHO ARE WE?

If you're new to your district, "SBUT" may not yet be familiar to you. So who/what is it?

South Bay United Teachers is a joint venture of the Centinela Valley Secondary Teachers Association, the Manhattan Beach Unified Teachers Association, the Palos Verdes Faculty Association, and the Redondo Beach Teachers Association. It is administered by a Board of Directors - with representatives from each chapter. The purpose of South Bay United Teachers is to provide the four local chapters and their members with programs and services through the employ-

ment of professional staff and the maintenance of office facilities. South Bay United Teachers and the four local chapters are affiliated with the California Teachers Association and the National Education Association. These state and national organizations provide support for SBUT's services and programs.

Visit the SBUT website (www.sbut.org) and click on the "Who We Are" tab for a link to "Frequently Asked Questions" for more information.

SBUT TUTORING PROGRAM

Don't forget the tutoring program available to members who wish to provide private tutoring. Check out the website (www.sbut.org) and click on the tutoring tab on the right. If you are not currently listed and would like to be, print out a form, complete and return it to the SBUT office.

Notarial Services for Members

Your office staff are notary publics and will provide notarial services as part of your membership. Call the office to make an appointment.

ATTENTION NEW EDUCATORS

If you're a CTA member, you can enroll in CTA's **Voluntary Disability and/or Life plans** for up to \$200,000 from The Standard without completing the health questionnaire during your first 120 days of employment. Check out the programs available at <https://connection.standard.com/deliver/ctaenrollment/index.html>

ALL MEMBERS

Any member may apply for coverage at any time, but applications will be subject to health evidence underwriting and insurance company approval.

Call or e-mail the SBUT office for an enrollment brochure or visit The Standard website <https://connection.standard.com/deliver/ctaenrollment/index.html>

12-MONTH PAY

This issue comes up regularly when contract negotiations begin since many teachers like the idea of getting 12 paychecks. Bargaining issues aside, you may do this yourself by setting up a summer savings account, with money automatically deducted from your check, and a little interest earned in the process.

The CTA-endorsed credit union, **First Financial**, offers a Summer Saver Account with a minimum opening balance of \$50. Check it out at http://www.fffcu.org/rates/rates_shares.htm#save or give them a call at 1-800-537-8491.