

SBUT ANNOUNCER

South Bay United
Teachers
3551 Voyager Street #105
Torrance, CA 90503
(310)921-2500
Fax: (310)921-2502
sbut@aol.com
www.sbut.org

SEPTEMBER 2015

Everybody Needs a Union

Greetings! Welcome back to another great school year!

As you settle into the ebb and flow of your daily routine this year, don't forget that your good working environment is a good learning environment for kids. If your classroom or office is too hot or too cold, it is too hot or too cold for students too and students have trouble learning as they should when they are uncomfortable. When you have good health benefits, you miss less work and your students' education proceeds with less interruption. When teachers advocate for themselves, it helps students and the entire school community is better for it.

Unions are the reason we have weekends off; a duty-free lunch; the ability to bargain as a unit and not have to go it alone. Teacher unions

continue to be at the forefront of racial and gender equality issues—supporting legislation and social actions that serve to educate not only students, but society at large.

In 1988, CTA and your local union worked to pass Proposition 98 which guarantees at least 40% of California's revenue is spent on schools. In 2012, your union won a huge victory with the passage of Proposition 30 which turned around the devastating cuts to California schools and ushered in a new era of school funding.

Sometimes we take for granted that the gains made will always be there. That may not necessarily be the case. If we grow complacent—leave the work of building the union to someone else—there may not be anyone else. And there are always forces threatening to undo the good

work that has been done.

We need you to be an active member of your union. Seek out your site rep and be sure you are indeed a member. Attend your union's meetings when they're held. Visit the SBUT website and take a look at your contract. (Go to www.SBUT.org and click on your Association's tab, then "Contract.") Consider running for rep yourself when the vacancy announcements are made.

Many who came before you put their own security on the line so that teachers (also counselors, librarians, nurses, and psychologists) could improve their lives and those of their families. Your union's job is to build on that legacy—that's your job too as a union member.

Have a great school year!

Election Season

There are school board member terms up in three SBUT school districts this year. Election Day is November 3, 2015. Candidates will face-off in Centinela Valley, and Palos Verdes, however, Manhattan Beach has seats that are not being contested this year. Union endorsements are in the process of being finalized. See your site rep for more information.

Check Your Credential

It's September! A good time to check the expiration date of your credentials. You can renew six months before it expires so don't run out of time!

SHOULD I CONTRIBUTE TO THE CATASTROPHIC LEAVE BANK?

California enacted a law allowing for paid time off in order to care for seriously ill family members. The law, however, is only for those who pay into SDI (State Disability Insurance) which does not apply to teachers, who are covered by the State Teachers Retirement System. What to do, then, when you have a seriously ill family member? You are no doubt aware of the Family Medical Care Leave Act that allows for up to 12 weeks in a 12-month period for time off for this purpose as well as the California Family Rights Act which does essentially the same thing. Both acts protect your job and the district continues to contribute to your medical benefits while you're out, but the leave is UNPAID except where the district agrees to allow you to use accrued sick time.

Con't, page 2 "CLB"

Each chapter also has a provision in the contract for Catastrophic Leave. In Centinela Valley, this provision only applies to members' serious illnesses. In Manhattan Beach, Palos Verdes & Redondo Beach, however, this can apply to a serious illness or injury of a family member.

It is not an automatic process—you must apply and be approved – and

there are a few other provisions of which to be aware, but you want to give serious consideration to contributing to the bank since, in most cases, you must contribute in order to withdraw from it, and in CV and PV, your only window of opportunity to contribute is between September 1 and October 1.

Catastrophic Leave Provision Contract Articles

CVSTA	Article 6.11
MBUTA	Article 11.3
PVFA	Article 13.17
RBTA	Article 10.2

KNOW YOUR CONTRACT— Grievances

Teachers are great team players. You recognize that working together is in everybody's best interest, especially the students. So how could this possibly go wrong?

Teachers don't typically have their contract memorized. And even if you've read it more than once, how could you remember everything in it, especially after a few years and all the obligations that teaching involves? So if an administrator asks you to do something and your inclination is to do it, that's all fine and good unless it turns out the request is a violation of the contract.

Most administrators are aware of the demands on teachers and respect their time as much as possible. We are big fans of good administrators. But if you find yourself buried in tasks,

or a request is made of you that doesn't quite feel right, you might start to question whether it should actually be expected of you.

If you've been sucking it up and "team-playing" for a period of time before questioning whether something is a problem, you might very well miss a deadline for bringing official action for an issue. This is known as a ***grievance***.

A grievance is simply a violation of the contract. A grievance is NOT a complaint ("I don't like the way my administrator talks to me") because those sorts of things are not addressed in the contract. If, however, you are being required to show up before your regular hours or are being required to work through your lunch, those types of things ARE potential grievances be-

cause the contract addresses them specifically.

The importance of recognizing whether something is 'grievable' is that these must be reported within a specific timeframe, or the district can claim that it's "too late" to do anything about it. This is a favorite argument for some districts and flies in the face of team playing, but does cause problems for successfully resolving a grievance. So don't let something that is impacting your ability to do your job go unchecked for a long period of time. Contact your site rep, check out your contract and see if there is a protection that is not being observed. If so, talk to your administrator (the "informal" step of the grievance process). Often that will take care of the situation. If not, it may be time to file a formal grievance.

	Contract provisions regarding filing grievances
CVSTA	10.2.5: A grievance must be filed within thirty (30) days of the alleged violation, or within thirty (30) days of the time that the grievant should reasonably have known of the alleged violation.
MBUTA	4.4.1: Level I Within thirty (30) days of when the grievant knew or should reasonably have known of the act or omission giving rise to the grievance, the grievant must present such grievance in writing, on the District Grievance Form, to the immediate supervisor.
PVFA	5-8.5: No grievance shall be valid unless it shall have been presented at the appropriate level within twenty-five (25) days after the aggrieved knew or reasonably should have known of the act or condition and its aggrieving nature that formed the basis of the grievance, and, if not so presented, the grievance will be considered as waived
RBTA	13.2.10 No grievance shall be recognized by the District or Association unless filed and presented no later than thirty (30) days after the alleged grievance is known or should reasonably have been known by the grievant. At any level of the procedure the time limits may be extended by mutual written agreement.

SBOT PICNIC

Join us for a casual day of fun.
Chat with your office staff and chapter leaders,
play some games, eat some food, win some prizes!

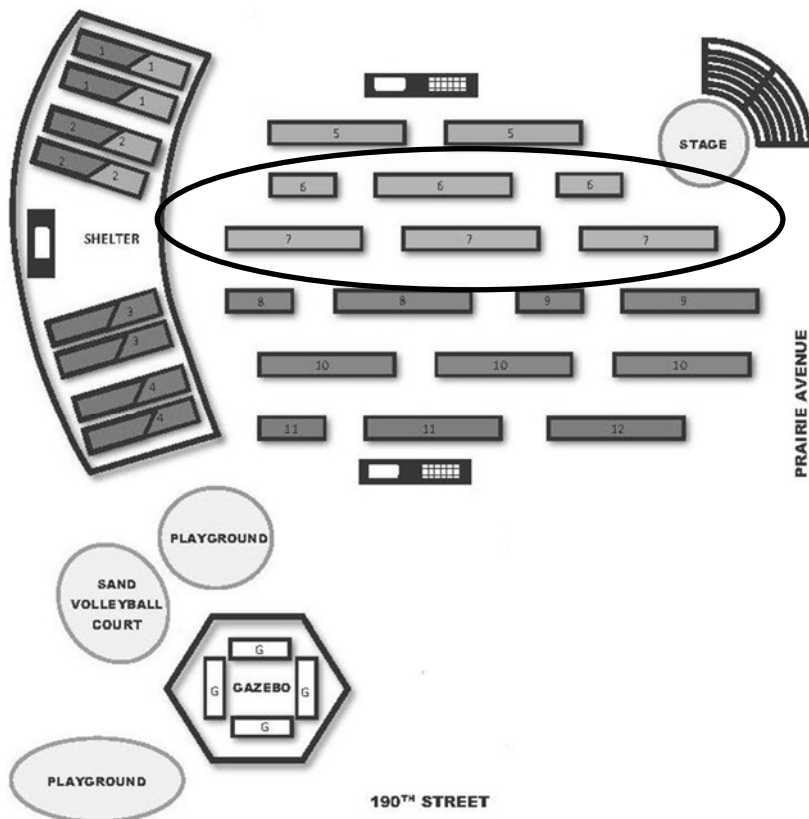
Saturday, October 10, 2015
10:00am-2:00pm



PLEASE RSVP
Families Welcome!
sbutoffice@aol.com

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We will be in area 6 & 7.



Know Your Classification

When you were hired, you signed an employment contract. This is separate from the negotiated agreement (also known as the contract or the Collective Bargaining Agreement) that memorializes salary, benefits and other working conditions for the entire bargaining unit.

In your personal employment contract, it should be made clear whether you are a temporary or probationary employee. It should also say what you are being hired in as (a counselor, school psychologist, English teacher, etc.) Your rate—which should be determined by placement on the negotiated salary schedule and when your service to the District begins should also be delineated. You should be given a signed copy of your employment contract before your first day of paid service.

If you have questions about your classification, contact your site rep.

Do You Know -

Student Loan Forgiveness

If you teach in a “high impact school” and have Stafford and/or Perkins loans, you may be eligible to have a portion of your student loans forgiven. Visit CTA Member Benefits website for additional information and helpful links, www.CTAMemberBenefits.org/studentloan.

Are You Protecting Your Loved Ones?

According to insurance industry research group LIMRA, 30 percent of U.S. households have no life insurance coverage. LIMRA's most recent *Trends in Life Insurance Ownership* study also found that 40 percent of U.S. households said that they would have immediate trouble meeting everyday living expenses if the primary breadwinner died today. September is Life Insurance Awareness Month, so take some time to check your own coverage and educate yourself about the options available to you as a CTA member. If you're a CTA member newly hired by your district, fall is a great time of year to get CTA-endorsed Life Insurance from Standard Insurance Company (The Standard). You have a special opportunity to apply for **up to \$200,000 of Life Insurance** within 180 days of starting work – without providing any proof of good health.

Call The Standard's dedicated CTA Customer Service Department at **800.522.0406** for more information or apply online by logging in at CTAMemberBenefits.org/life.

Do you subscribe to NEA's Works4Me? Practical classroom tips by teachers for teachers. Here is a sample of the e-mail tips you receive. You can sign up at nea.org/home/29166.htm

Three Ways To Calm Classroom Chaos

Recapture Students' Attention With Humor

Anonymous

My first year teaching, a long time ago, I was so frustrated with my unruly class that I disappeared into a huge walk-in closet I had. I heard whispers...where did she go? I had a bag of theatrical props in there so I pulled out a pair of Groucho Marks sunglasses with a fake nose and moustache, then proceeded to saunter out into the room. The kids collapsed laughing. I sat down and talked with them about frustration and how they'd feel if they were me. Things were much better after that, except they kept asking me the rest of the year, when I was going to do it again.

Good Old Reverse Psychology

Ruth

This is for those teachers who have tried every method of trying to keep a kid from bothering others around him or her. I find that reverse psychology works well. I quietly ask the child to walk into the hall and then ask very softly, "Do you like my class?" I usually get a stunned look, then shuffling of feet. "Uh, yes I do."

I continue. "Oh, I didn't think you liked my class because you're disturbing other kids around you."

Student: "I DO! I DO like your class."

Me: "Well, I really like having you in my class. What do you think will happen if you keep bothering people?"

Student: "I'll go to the Dean's Office?"

Me: "I really wouldn't want you to go there but if that's where you want to go.."

Student: "NO, NO, NO! I promise I won't bother anyone." I've been using that technique for over 30 years. Works every time with my sweet little darlings.

What Time Is It? Time For Consequences.

Michael

During the first week of school students tend to be chatty. I tell them that I'm going to start timing on my wristwatch to find out how long it will take for them to work quietly. If it takes longer than 30 seconds, they miss their entire recess.

Each year my fifth-grade students like to test me to see if I'll follow through with my threat. Usually within the first two weeks my disappointed class misses an entire recess. After that all have to do is quietly look at my wristwatch or the wall clock while students whisper to each other..."he's timing us."