



United Teacher

Award-Winning Newspaper of United Teachers Los Angeles • www.utla.net

Volume XLIII, Number 1, September 20, 2013

Fights worth taking on

UTLA takes legal action for our members.

In today's politically charged climate, union action takes place as much in the courthouse as in the schoolhouse. The legal fights UTLA must engage in have been growing exponentially over the past few years, as forces both inside and outside the District seek changes to our school system that aren't in our members' or our students' best interests. Here's a look at recent developments in three of the many legal proceedings.

UTLA opposes publication of AGT scores

Issue: The *L.A. Times* is seeking teachers' individual AGT scores from LAUSD personnel records so it can once again—like it did with the newspaper's own VAM ratings a few years back—post the data online. The *Times* went to court after LAUSD officials refused to release the information.

UTLA action: In this fight, UTLA and LAUSD are on the same side, and attorneys from both organizations argued the case before L.A. County Superior Court Judge James C. Chalfant. LAUSD and UTLA attorneys reasoned that the District cannot release the scores because they are part of confidential personnel records and their release would damage careers and schools by creating discord, stigmatizing teachers, and making it difficult to recruit personnel. UTLA attorneys also argued that, because AGT scores are unreliable and not useful as a sole measure of teacher performance, disclosure is not in the public's interest.

Why the fight is important: Since the *L.A. Times* first published its own discredited VAM teacher ratings, UTLA members have spoken loudly and clearly that they oppose the public release of personnel records, including AGT scores. UTLA will pursue all legal avenues to prevent their disclosure.

"The last time the *Times* published scores like this, we saw that nothing positive came from it," UTLA President Warren Fletcher said. "It only resulted in the blaming and shaming of teachers based on the discredited junk science of VAM and AGT."

Status: Judge Chalfant initially ruled that the District must turn over the data to the *Times*, finding that public interest

outweighs privacy rights under the California Public Records Act, but at UTLA and LAUSD's urging, he granted a stay of his decision last month to allow UTLA and the District to seek review by the State Court of Appeal. The public release of the data is on hold, pending that appeal.

LAUSD charged with retaliation against teachers

Issue: UTLA is charging that LAUSD targeted teachers for transfer in retaliation for their advocacy for colleagues, students, and parents. The current problems occurred at two schools: City of Angels, where an experienced chapter chair stood up to a new administrator, and Crenshaw High, where committed and outspoken

teachers were not rehired when the school was turned into three magnets.

At Crenshaw High, when LAUSD decided to ditch the school's groundbreaking Extended Learning Cultural Model in favor of "transformation" via magnetization, teachers—along with students and parents—spoke out against the damage to the educational program that this change would have.

When hiring decisions were made for the new magnet, a large number of Crenshaw teachers with excellent evaluations—many of whom led the charge against the magnet conversion or had a reputation for speaking out for school needs—were not asked to return. The decisions were clearly against the best interest of students, and Crenshaw lost a number of educators with

deep ties to the community.

"If there are no problems with my performance, then there is only one reason I was not selected to return, and that is my union advocacy," displaced Crenshaw High chapter chair Cathy Garcia said.

City of Angeles chapter chair Jeff Pott was unexpectedly transferred from the school after standing up to the school's new administrator, who violated the contract more than once regarding transfers and other issues. To protect his members' rights and a professional, productive work environment, Pott had filed a series of grievances on behalf of his colleagues.

"How was I rewarded for being an advocate for LAUSD's own policies?" Pott said. "By being transferred."

(continued on page 6)

School Board to vote on raising employee pay

At its next meeting in October, the LAUSD School Board will be considering a motion by member Steve Zimmer that calls for a salary increase for employees.

The text of "Investing Priorities for Equitable Learning Environments for All LAUSD Students" would require the superintendent to "prioritize incremental salary restoration for all employees to meet

at least the state statutes for Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) for the 2012-13 fiscal year and work with our bargaining unit partners to develop a strategy for District-wide restoration over time." The Zimmer motion also addresses staff rehiring and program restoration.

Prop. 30 and changes in the state's school funding formula will generate hundreds of

millions of dollars in revenue over the next few years for LAUSD, creating an unprecedented opportunity to rebuild students' educational program. UTLA continues to advocate for the funds to be used to increase employee salaries across the board and rehire RIF'd colleagues by lowering class sizes and restoring programs.

IT'S TIME FOR A RAISE

Last year LAUSD teachers and health and human services professionals had a salary increase

2007

Rank of LAUSD in veteran teacher's salary out of the 47 unified school districts in L.A. County

47th

What a \$50,000 salary earned in 2007 is worth in today's dollars

\$44,800

Sources: Fact 2: Salary rankings for teachers with 25 years' experience at maximum step and column placement from August 2010 Los Angeles County Salary Survey by the L.A. County Office of Education. Fact 3: Inflation erosion based on the annual Consumer Price Indices published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

UTLA principal survey: See who landed in the Top 5

United Teacher

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United Teacher (ISSN # 0745-4163) is published monthly (except for an extra election issue in January and a combined June/July issue) by United Teachers Los Angeles, 3303 Wilshire Blvd., 10th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90010. Subscriptions: \$20.00 per year. (Price included in dues/agency fee of UTLA bargaining unit members.) Periodical postage paid at Los Angeles, California. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to United Teachers Los Angeles, Membership Department, 3303 Wilshire Blvd., 10th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90010. Telephone (213) 487-5560.

President's perspective

VAM/AGT: Still a meaningless, dangerous number

By Warren Fletcher
UTLA President

The original version of this column was published in November 2011, before UTLA and LAUSD negotiated the 2012 Evaluation Agreement. UTLA was successful in those negotiations in rejecting LAUSD's attempt to include student test score growth as a factor in a teacher's final evaluation. That, unfortunately, has not dampened the enthusiasm of the VAM/AGT true believers, in L.A. and nationwide, who continue to promote this deeply flawed junk science.

I have been an English teacher in LAUSD for many years. I have always understood that my primary duty and loyalty must be to my students, first and last. Teaching is a profession; it's not merely a job. At a very deep level, we all understand this. And the public understands this too. Parents and the

written material; to spend less time teaching the actual skills that my students need and that their parents want them to develop for college or careers.

In a VAM/AGT environment, there is constant pressure to teach less and to reduce instruction to test prep. And that kind of pressure would apply to every teacher, regardless of grade level or subject field. Many of the people (including elected leaders) who push the hardest to link teacher evaluation directly to raw test score numbers are well intended. They believe that directly linking test scores to teacher employment decisions will transform all schools for the better. This belief is based on two obvious fallacies: first, that test scores are a direct and accurate (rather than approximate) measure of "student achievement"; and

It doesn't matter whether the proponents of VAM/AGT are wealthy or powerful; they are still wrong, and they are pushing a teacher evaluation system that is at best meaningless and at worst dangerous to instruction.

community don't expect that we will robotically "deliver" instruction to students. They expect that we will passionately advocate for their children and that we will speak up when the District tries to implement policies that will degrade the quality of instruction.

Individual VAM/AGT evaluation degrades instruction

As most of us know by now, LAUSD's Academic Growth Over Time (AGT) bears a striking resemblance to the Value-Added Measurements (VAM) being pushed across the country. The long-term goal of VAM/AGT is to eventually tie teacher pay and teacher retention directly to student scores.

As educators, we all understand how a narrow and punitive system of numerical evaluation like VAM/AGT can seriously degrade instruction and, as a consequence, hurt students. I mentioned earlier that I'm an English teacher. I know that if my pay, or even my continuance in the profession, were to be tied directly to my students' annual CST scores, I would be under intense pressure to spend less time teaching writing and teaching literature; to spend less time teaching my students how to clearly express themselves and to understand complex

second, that attaching test score incentives and threats to teachers' jobs will somehow "revolutionize" how teachers approach their teaching. People who believe these things are not evil—they're just wrong. And it's our job as professional educators to set the record straight.

Individual teacher VAM/AGT scores are virtually meaningless

The U.S. Department of Education is headed by Arne Duncan. Duncan is a strong proponent of VAM/AGT-type teacher evaluations. But Duncan's own department has released studies showing that VAM evalua-

In a VAM/AGT environment, there is constant pressure to teach less and to reduce instruction to test prep.

tions of individual teachers consistently have an error rate of more than 25%. In other words, one-fourth of all individual teacher VAM scores will be flat-out wrong. That's why the U.S. Department of Education recommends against using VAM scores for teacher evaluation decisions. Respected researchers from all over the country have rejected their use and



have warned of their unreliability. An individual teacher's VAM/AGT score, whether it was calculated by the District or by the *L.A. Times*, is virtually meaningless as an indicator of effectiveness or competence.

And speaking of the *L.A. Times*, it appears that they want to do another round of articles on teacher performance, once again accompanied by a searchable database of individual teacher scores, only this time, the data would be your individual AGT score. While UTLA is vigorously pursuing all legal channels to keep this data from being released, it is important to remember that any individual teacher AGT score is little more than a random and meaningless number determined through a formula that has been widely discredited.

While the obvious purpose of the last *L.A. Times* VAM series was the public belittling of public school teachers, it is important to remember that your or my individual "AGT number" is about as reliable an indicator of teaching quality as your or my driver's license number. When we forget that, we empower the people who want to disparage our profession. It doesn't matter whether the proponents of VAM/AGT are wealthy or powerful; they are still wrong, and they are pushing a teacher evaluation system that is at best meaningless and at worst dangerous to instruction. We have a duty to our profession and to our students to resist its implementation.

When any teacher starts to feel inadequate (or for that matter superior) because of something as meaningless as an individual VAM/AGT score, the enemies of our profession score a small victory. The advocates of individual VAM/AGT score evaluation all have one thing in common: They don't know the first thing about quality teaching. You do. Never forget that.

Letters

We welcome letters to the editor and will print as many as possible in the space available. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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iPads & misplaced priorities

The following letters also appeared in the L.A. Times.

The story of how L.A. Unified found the money to buy thousands of Apple iPads is one of biblical proportions. By deceiving those who voted for the bond measure to repair schools and practically misrepresenting the plan to the bond watchdog committee, District officials found the money.

This, when most elementary schools have no librarians, many schools have part-time nurses, and all but a few adult schools have been closed. All that is missing from the story of the tablets is the burning bush.

—Mark Elinson
Retired LAUSD teacher

While one could applaud L.A. Unified for forward-thinking sensibilities, spending \$1 billion to equip every student with an Apple iPad with limited software and without adequate teacher training is hard

to reconcile in this otherwise underfunded district, where school library budgets have been slashed relentlessly.

As libraries wither and the inventories of books (that have already been paid for) languish, will these iPad-using students be instilled with a capacity for reading that can be so uniquely fostered by a real-life, devoted librarian?

—Martha McMahon
Support Unit North

Are wireless classrooms safe?

The World Health Organization has classified the microwaves transmitted by Wi-Fi and wireless tablets as a Class 2B Carcinogen, a category that indicates they are possibly carcinogenic to humans.

NEA and UTLA have passed resolutions calling for schools to be safe from hazardous electromagnetic fields and insisting that all employees and parents be warned of changes in electromagnetic RF radiation exposure due to the installation of Wi-Fi and use of wireless tablets. (Read more about the health effects at bioinitiative.org, saferemr.com, or safeinschools.org.)

Some people report becoming electro-sensitive or developing electromagnetic hypersensitivity (EHS) due to exposure to the radio frequency radiation used by wireless. Symptoms of EHS may include headaches, tinnitus, difficulty sleeping, fatigue, cardiac arrhythmias, cancerous tumors, and leukemias.

In an effort to keep wireless cell towers off school campuses, in June 2000 the LAUSD School Board passed a resolution noting that the "National Institutes of Health recently concluded that enough evi-

dence exists to support the classification of electromagnetic fields as a possible human carcinogen. . . ." In May 2009, the LAUSD School Board passed another resolution recommending "responsible deployment of fiber optic broadband technology, which is superior to wireless technology in speed, reliability, security, durability and protections it affords people and the environment from the potential hazards of exposure to radio-frequency radiation. . . ."

After fighting to keep cell towers and other microwave-emitting devices at least 200 feet from schools, now the School Board has taken a drastic change in direction by moving those microwave-emitting devices inside our schools in close proximity to our staff and children with wireless classrooms, even though in their 2009 resolution, the School Board states that "there continues to be considerable debate as to the adequacy of existing public exposure standards including those promulgated by the Federal Communications Commission. . . ."

The fact is the FCC guidelines that are supposed to ensure the safety of wireless are not safety standards at all but are simply guidelines. The FCC is not a health and safety agency and has no one qualified to set safety standards, yet compliance with FCC guidelines is how organizations like LAUSD try to convince us wireless is safe. Current FCC guidelines only take into account thermal effects due to microwave exposure; that is, whether your Wi-Fi router, tablet, or cell burns you or not. They do NOT take into account non-thermal or sub-thermal effects even though multiple

(continued on page 19)

In the news

Quick reads on issues members care about.

School board takes action on parent trigger and Prop. 39 colocation:

The LAUSD School Board passed a motion last week to address ongoing concerns with the divisive parent trigger process. The motion, which passed on a 5-2 vote, requires public informational meetings for schools targeted in petition campaigns so that parents have access to objective, detailed information. Staff is also now allowed to correct misinformation that comes up as part of the campaigns (LAUSD officials had previously told staff they should stay silent). The motion was sponsored by Board member Steve Zimmer, who told the *L.A. Times* that some issues remain unresolved, such as how to handle parents who say they were misled about the petitions and want to rescind their signatures, as has occurred in nearly every parent trigger campaign effort.

At the same School Board meeting, the School Board passed a motion (also by Zimmer) to ask state legislators to clarify Proposition 39, the law requiring traditional schools to share space equitably with charters. What defines "equitably" has been hotly debated and has led to the loss of parent centers, playground space, and other key spaces at traditional schools. The motion also calls for rules to prevent charter school operators from recruiting students on public school grounds.

Testing bill suspends high-stakes tests for this year:

Teachers and students will likely be saying good-bye to the CSTs this spring now that the California legislature passed a bill to replace them with field tests tied to the Common Core State Standards. Governor Jerry Brown has indicated he will sign the measure, Assembly Bill 484. The new computer-based Common Core-aligned tests are being developed by Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium for California and two dozen other states. For 2013-14, the new tests would be low-stakes and focused on test development; the state will not keep track of student scores or school-level results until 2014-2015, when the state's new reporting system, the Measurement of Academic Performance and Progress (MAPP), would replace the current STAR system. The bill passed in the face of a last-minute threat by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan to withhold federal funds and to deny the waiver needed under NCLB to jettison the standardized test results for one year.

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Good-to-know info on Stull process and the Teacher Growth and Development Cycle.



Drew Middle School teachers Judy Jackson and Christine Baccus work collaboratively on Common Core standards-based lessons and performance assessments at a session of the Institute for Standards, Curricula and Assessment at the UTLA building. The work of ISCA is partially funded by a UTLA nonprofit organization, the United Teachers Educational Fund, which supports relevant professional development for educators. See more on page 12.

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In our schools

Stories from around UTLA

Teacher wins back pay with UTLA help, town hall tackles immigration, and more.

Valley East

UTLA wins six-figure check for underpaid teacher

A teacher at a UTLA-represented charter school in the Valley came to UTLA reporting that she had been grossly underpaid for three years. Research showed that she had been receiving the compensation of a day-to-day substitute. In fact, she was the teacher of record for all of the classes for several years, never missing a day of work, was on a probationary contract, and should have been paid as a regular teacher in the agreed-upon teachers' salary schedule. Her compensation, even on a substitute's pay rate, was insufficient, as it did not reflect long-term sub pay or the substitute's continuity rate increase.

Every year, this teacher, whom we will call Shelley Smith, moved on the salary schedule, which alone should have increased her salary. Additionally, Shelley took approved classes that would have earned her more salary points and ad-

ditional compensation. Shelley became a tenured teacher.

With each passing year, the gap between her correct salary and her actual salary widened. After three years of being underpaid, it was calculated that Shelley was owed about \$25,000. UTLA worked with Shelley and the school involved to correct her salary in a way that minimized the tax consequences of a lump sum payment by receiving her pay through monthly installments. With the last installment having been received, Shelley has allowed her story to be told, but for privacy reasons has asked for her real name and school to be kept in confidence.

After all tax deductions—state, federal, STRS, and so on—Shelley netted about \$17,000 in back pay. We are delighted that we were able to help this fine teacher receive her proper level of compensation, and that she turned to her union for help. We are here to help you! Don't be afraid to ask questions and speak up for your rights.

—Steve Klein

UTLA Area Rep for Valley East

Valley West

Environmental Studies teacher gets field experience through Earthwatch

Valley Academy of Arts & Sciences teacher Lynnette Ryan joined an Earthwatch research team during the summer for an 11-day expedition in the Chiricahua Mountain Range and the Coronado National Forest to help scientists study the effects of climate change on caterpillars and their predator-prey interactions. From July 28 to August 7, Ryan joined 10 other Earthwatch volunteers from the United States for the "Climate Change and Caterpillars" project. The research team was led by Dr. Lee Dyer of the University of Nevada.

Ryan teaches AP Environmental Science and Environmental Studies and, as part of the fellowship requirements, will undertake a local community action project with her students during the 2013-2014 school year.

Working in the deserts and mountains around the Southwestern Research Station in the Chiricahua Mountains and the nearby Santa Rita Experimental Range in the Coronado National Forest, the team examined the factors that affect interactions among plants, caterpillars, and their natural enemies. The data collected in Arizona will be compared to results from other sites around the world to test hypotheses about how climate change affects these interactions.

"I was pleased to be able to contribute in a real way to this important research," Ryan says. "Working alongside top research scientists, I learned current data collection techniques that I will be able to use with my students in my environmental science courses. I also gathered great ideas about how to help my students make a positive contribution to our local and global communities."

Citywide

Immigration town hall tackles issue from many angles

UTLA played host on July 30 to the Asian American Pacific Islander and Latino Immigration Reform Town Hall, which was sponsored by a coalition of groups to keep the discussion going on this hot and timely topic.

The Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance offices in Los Angeles and D.C. were key to bringing a variety of people together to have a frank discussion of the complex issue of immigration reform in America. DREAMer Citali Chavez talked about her personal struggle as an undocumented student. Connie Choi from Asian Americans Advancing Justice-L.A. talked about the DREAM 9 who were imprisoned trying to reenter the United States (they have since been released to their homes in the United States).

Daniel Sharp from Central American



The Asian American Pacific Islander and Latino Immigration Reform Town Hall at UTLA brought together a range of voices, including Daniel Sharp from the Central American Resource Center-L.A. and Connie Choi from Asian Americans Advancing Justice-L.A.



Valley Academy of Arts & Sciences teacher Lynnette Ryan finds a worthy specimen on her last day out in the field as part of an Earthwatch research team studying the effects of climate change on caterpillars.

Resource Center Los Angeles (CARECEN-L.A.) talked about the complicated legal issues related to immigration, and Brent Wilkes from the League of United Latin Citizens (LULAC) covered the broad reach of people who are coming aboard to pass immigration reform. Francisco Duenas from Lambda Legal discussed the difficulties for LGBT people (singles, couples, or families) to even begin to address the issues of immigration, and Kent Wong of the UCLA Labor Center covered higher education access issues faced by DREAMers.

L.A. County Fed Executive Secretary-Treasurer Maria Elena Durazo spoke to the core of the issue—that people need a way to come out of the shadows. Los Angeles Community College District Board Member Mike Eng spoke passionately about the need to reform our immigration policy and keep families together. UTLA Treasurer Arlene Inouye brought greetings from UTLA and welcomed everyone to this very important discussion and shared a personal story about her experience with immigration issues. The meeting was moderated by Hector Sanchez from the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement.

Various people in the audience asked tough questions as we grappled with all the facts we had heard. We were encouraged to work together because this is an issue that affects everyone. Our night was concluded with supportive words from Johanna Hester, president of APALA National.

—Jennie Duggan
UTLA Board of Directors

UTLA meeting board

UPCOMING MEETINGS

OCTOBER 2

Elementary Committee: 4 p.m., UTLA building.

Secondary Committee: 4 p.m., UTLA building.

African-American Education Committee: 4 p.m., UTLA building.

PACE Committee: 6:30 p.m., UTLA building.

OCTOBER 5

Substitute Committee General Meeting: UTLA building

OCTOBER 9

Board of Directors Meeting: UTLA building.

OCTOBER 16

The following committees meet on the same day as the House of Representatives from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. (unless noted) in the UTLA building: Arts Education Committee, Asian-Pacific Education, Bilingual Education Committee, Capably Disabled Teachers Committee, Chicano/Latino Education, Gay & Lesbian Issues, Health & Human Services, Human Rights, Inner City, Instructional Coaches, Kindergarten Teachers, Library Professionals (4:45-6 p.m.), Middle Schools, Multi-Track/Year-Round Schools, Non-Classroom/Non-School Site, Options Committee, Physical Education Action and Dance, Professional Rights & Responsibilities, Pre-Retirement Issues, Salary &

Finance, School/Community Relations, School Readiness Language Development Program, Secondary School Counselors, Special Education, Substitutes, Violence Prevention & School Safety, Women's Education.

OCTOBER 18

UTLA-Retired General Assembly: UTLA building.

OCTOBER 21

UTLA/NEA Board Meeting: 4:30 p.m., UTLA building.

UTLA/NEA Service Center Council: 6 p.m., UTLA building.

OCTOBER 30

UTLA Area Meetings: See times and locations at utla.net.

Early Childhood Education Committee: 7 p.m., UTLA building.

NOVEMBER 7

UTLA/AFT 1021 General Meeting: UTLA building.

Adult and Occupational Education: Check time and updated meeting info at www.aeutla.net.

The National Board Certified Teachers Standing Committee: For meeting dates please check calendar at www.utla.net.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

OCTOBER 19

Pre-Retirement Issues Conference: 8 a.m.-1 p.m., UTLA building. See flyer in this issue.

Tops among teachers

The Top 5 of UTLA's annual Principal Survey.

This year's UTLA Principal Survey has a bittersweet top scorer: former Weigand Elementary principal Irma Cobain. Cobain was the target of a controversial parent trigger campaign and has since been transferred from the school. Her survey results confirm how highly regarded Cobain was by the staff and how misguided and destructive to a school program parent trigger campaigns can be.

UTLA conducts the Principal Survey annually to give teachers and health and human services professionals a chance to weigh in on how their administrators perform. Administrators are graded from 1 to 5 in 25 areas—including communications, decision making, management, and interpersonal relations—that are key to running an effective educational program. This year's principal survey followed the first-ever all-member Survey of the Superintendent, in which Deasy scored a dismal 1.4 on the same scale.

Making it onto the Top 5 list usually means a principal is collaborative and works with staff to create a collegial learning and teaching environment.

At Willow Elementary, a new school in South Gate, principal Gloria Buenrostro was hired through an interview process by a school panel. Her success on campus underscores the benefit of staff having a say in choosing their instructional leader.

"She grew up in the neighborhood and knows the community," chapter chair Mary Rodriguez says. "She also remembers what it is like to be a teacher."

Rodriguez has been in the classroom for 29 years, so she has been through her

share of principals and knows what makes a strong instructional leader. Less effective principals may micromanage or, at the opposite end, be very hands-off and let staff do all the work. That's not the case with Buenrostro, Rodriguez says.

"She comes as a partner," Rodriguez says. "She has ideas, but she also listens. Even when she doesn't compromise, she considers our point of view."

Bushnell Way principal Katherine Stehr impressed the staff in her first year with her vision for the school working as a team to help students, says chapter chair Claudia Juarez.

"She sets the tone for the campus," Juarez says. "She is focused on instruction, setting S.M.A.R.T. goals, and giving teachers guidance and support to reach them."

Juarez says the school has implemented strategies, such as new ways to identify students who need an extra push, that have shown results: The school's API score jumped by 32 points this year.

Chapman Elementary chapter chair Jennifer Trickett says her staff is not alone in valuing their principal, Emmanuel Annor: He scored high on the parent satisfaction survey too.

"He is supportive and respectful, and his door is always open," Trickett says. "It's a nice place to work. Our biggest problem is trying to convince him not to retire."

The principal survey this year was conducted online, which lowered participation from previous years. The lower completion rate will factor into plans for next year's survey.

Top 5 Principal Survey Scores 2012-13

Highest scores of sites with 10 or more members, with 60% or more of staff returning surveys. Scores run from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).

1. Weigand Elementary

Principal: Irma Cobain

Chapter chair 2012-13:

Rosario Hernandez

Score: 4.99

2. Chapman Elementary

Principal: Emmanuel Annor

Chapter chair 2012-13:

Jennifer Trickett

Score: 4.83

3. Willow Elementary

Principal: Gloria Buenrostro

Chapter chair 2012-13:

Mary Rodriguez

Score: 4.79

4. Bushnell Way Elementary

Principal: Katherine Stehr

Chapter Chair 2012-13:

Claudia Juarez

Score: 4.71

5. Ambassador Global Education

Principal: Jina Kim-Qvale

Chapter Chair 2012-13:

Tiffany Khaou

Score: 4.59

SOS: Chapter political coordinators needed

Successful political engagement requires site-based organizing.

By Juan Parrino
UTLA Political Organizer

Significant political battles were won in the past school year. Fall 2012 saw two key victories. Prop. 30 was passed, bringing much-needed funding into our schools. Prop. 32 was defeated, thereby preserving labor's essential role in the political process. In spring 2013, concerted voter outreach prevented a million dollar-plus effort to hijack the School Board District 4 seat from incumbent Steve Zimmer. Monica Ratliff's run-off victory in District 6 tipped the direction of the School Board. Shortly thereafter, Monica Garcia's School Board presidency came to an end.

These were meaningful wins that required much sacrifice and effort by our members. In each of these races, if dollars were the single predictor, the outcomes would have been very different. The single-most important factor was members' volunteering their time to communicate one-on-one with voters over phone lines and on doorsteps. UTLA members are a tremendous force, when your credibility as educators and your volunteer capacity are effectively deployed.

Now, that credibility and volunteer capacity need to be enhanced to take on another set of political challenges.

Challenge 1: Local engagement of School Board members and legislators

The one-sided parent trigger law, the site inequities brought on by Prop. 39 collocations, and full staffing and student services at school sites need to be at the forefront of UTLA's political agenda. We need to concertedly bring these concerns to our School Board members and our legislators. We need to build the relationships with local staff so that face-to-face meetings with our elected officials regularly take place. Community-based organizations and parents need to be engaged and partnered with. UTLA has a training module and structure in place for effective legislative advocacy. Let's put it to work.

Challenge 2: 2014 and 2015 electoral campaigns

Incumbent and ally Tom Torlakson is being challenged by ex-Partnership for L.A. Schools CEO Marshall Tuck for the California superintendent of public instruction seat. The primary election takes place on June 3, 2014, and is followed by a November 4 General Election. In 2015, LAUSD School Board races are calendared in Districts 1, 3, 5, and 7. Given the recent victories of Steve



Be part of a winning team: UTLA campaign coordinators Roberto Chavez (left) and Steve Leffert (right) orient precinct-walking volunteers during last spring's successful campaign to reelect School Board member Steve Zimmer. UTLA is now recruiting site-based chapter political coordinators (CPCs) to promote political activism at school sites.

Zimmer and Monica Ratliff, we anticipate aggressive and well-funded challenges from the "corporate reform" forces. They will treat the superintendent of public in-

struction and 2015 School Board races as national referendums, UTLA and its allies need to adopt the same stance.

(continued on page 9)

Evaluation update

Teacher Growth and Development Cycle Q&A

What to know while UTLA challenges District's unilateral implementation of nonnegotiated framework.

The District has begun the implementation of the Teacher Growth and Development Cycle (TGDC) framework, which they are attempting to impose as part of the evaluation process. UTLA has legally challenged the District's action on the grounds that it has not been negotiated with UTLA prior to its implementation, and the labor board has issued a complaint against LAUSD.

As UTLA continues to challenge the District's imposition and implementation of TGDC, we are distributing an Evaluation Toolkit, Part 2, to help protect your legal and contractual rights. (Part 1 was distributed last year to counter Superintendent Deasy's attempt to impose a specific test score percentage onto individual teachers' evaluations, in violation of the evaluation agreement.) The new toolkit contains a Q and A on TGDC (reprinted below) as well as a template letter that all members (even if you are not being Stulled) should submit to your principal to protect your rights and protest this District overreach.

It has consistently been the position of UTLA that applying cookie-cutter rules and procedures to the teacher evaluation process is counterproductive for both teachers and administrators. We all share the goal of an evaluation system where the work and judgment of professional educators is honored.

Does an individual teacher have to comply with or participate in the Teacher Growth and Development Cycle (TGDC) as part of this year's evaluation process?

The District arbitrarily imposed the TGDC, without negotiating it with UTLA. UTLA has filed an Unfair Labor Practice charge based on the fact that this should have been negotiated. However, for the most part, the TGDC is just a new way

of doing the observation and conferences covered in the existing Article X of the UTLA-LAUSD contract. Article X, which covers the evaluation process, has not been changed and will remain intact and enforced.

Does an individual teacher have a choice between participation in TGDC or objection to it?

An individual teacher cannot object and refuse to participate in TGDC without subjecting himself or herself to possible disciplinary action on the basis of insubordination. However, it is okay to make one's objections known, but a teacher must participate until UTLA prevails in the legal process.

Does the TGDC replace the contract?

No. Article X still governs the evaluation process.

Does the TGDC replace the Stull?

The Stull process is still intact and continues to be governed by Article X of the contract and the Education Code. Any below standard Stull can and should still be grieved.

Under the TGDC, can the District require me to include CST test scores or other CST data in my Initial Planning Sheet objectives?

No. Specific CST data can only be used to inform an objective. An objective must not include any specific data measurement. UTLA has posted sample objectives, which can be found on utla.net.

What if the principal imposes an objective that includes specific test data or objectives that an individual teacher does not agree to?

scarce school resources.

"When LAUSD creates a culture in which teachers are afraid to speak up, where people feel cowed, UTLA has to step up to the plate," UTLA President Warren Fletcher said. "When you silence educators who are advocates, schools suffer. Advocacy should be celebrated, not punished."

Status: The Public Employment Relations Board has asked the District to respond to the charge by October 7, 2013.

Labor Board issues complaint against LAUSD on evaluations

Issue: LAUSD officials improperly established a Teacher Growth and Development observation process that was not part of the teacher evaluation agreement approved by UTLA members and LAUSD last year. Specifically, LAUSD is trying to implement a four-level teacher rating system for the TGDC classroom observation: ineffective, developing, effective,

The individual teacher may indicate the lack of mutual consent on the IPS form and may file an appeal with the next highest administrative authority. Keep copies of both and be sure to send a copy to your UTLA Area Representative. UTLA has provided a template for this purpose teachers may use, which is on utla.net.

Are there any other issues or steps in the initial planning phase that an individual teacher may need to be aware of?

Yes. The TGDC does include other very time-consuming and non-determinative steps that the principal may or may not ask of the teacher, such as a self-reflection and Individual Growth Plan. However, only the Initial Planning Sheet is governed by Article X of the contract.

When the principal wants to observe me, do I have to fill out the TGDC's lesson design template?

No. Article IX, Section 4.1, expressly prohibits any specific format for lesson plans. In fact, even the District has expressly indicated to principals in their training materials that the specific lesson design template is NOT mandated.

How many observations does an individual teacher have to go through?

Despite the fact that the TGDC calls for two "formal" and four "informal" observations, individual teachers being evaluated should remember that there is no specific number under the terms of Article X, and that there is no difference between "formal" and "informal" observations.

What does an individual teacher need to know if called to an observation conference?

An individual teacher does not have a right to union representation at a routine observation conference. Teachers may be alone in these conferences. Also, a teacher should always be prepared with notes they took during the observation, as well as be prepared to take notes during the conference.

Is anything about the post-observation conferences different than before?

No, but there is a possibility that there may be more of them. In the same manner as always, UTLA recommends a written response to any conference summary.

Does an individual teacher being evaluated need to be concerned with any new observation ratings that may result under TGDC?

No. The only ratings that matter to an individual teacher are on the final evaluation, of which there are still only two—"Meets Standard Performance" or "Below Standard Performance."

Does the TGDC produce any outcomes that the traditional Stull process doesn't?

No. Under the terms of Article X of the contract, a final performance evaluation must be issued with the same traditional ratings as listed above and absent any specific test scores, CST data points or special weight given to test scores.

■ **To download the Evaluation Toolkit, Part 2**, which includes the template letter that all members should submit to their principal, go to www.utla.net/tgdckit2.

LEGAL ACTION

(continued from cover)

UTLA action: UTLA filed two unfair labor practice charges with the Public Employment Relations Board against LAUSD, claiming that teachers were denied a continued assignment at Crenshaw High School and transferred from City of Angels for engaging in protected union activity. The UTLA unfair practice charges paint a clear picture that these UTLA leaders were seriously involved in the work of improving schools, and they reveal telling details, including disparaging comments LAUSD officials made about union involvement (find links to the complaints on the home page of utla.net).

Why the fight is important: Union members—especially elected union representatives—must be free to advocate for their colleagues and bring voice to their students' needs without fear of reprisal. It's one of the bedrock principles of unionism. That right is even more important in the current climate of corporate-driven reform, misplaced budget priorities, and

and highly effective. These ratings are not part of the UTLA-LAUSD contract or the evaluation agreement reached between LAUSD and UTLA. As required by law, changes to the evaluation process must be negotiated with UTLA before they can be implemented.

UTLA action: UTLA filed an unfair labor practice charge with the Public Employment Relations Board to challenge the District's use of this framework without negotiation with UTLA.

Why the fight is important: Any attempted end-run around a fairly negotiated agreement must be challenged. Last fall, UTLA negotiated in good faith a supplemental evaluation agreement that was approved by a vote of the UTLA membership. Almost immediately, LAUSD tried to ignore its negotiated provisions. First, Deasy tried to impose a rule that student test scores must count for 30% of teacher evaluations, in direct violation of the agreement, which does not contain set percent-

ages and does not allow test score growth to be a factor in the final evaluation. Now LAUSD is trying to unilaterally implement the TGDC observation process without the union's consent or involvement.

"Contracts are the result of a collaborative, extensive process so that the people they affect have a voice in the product," UTLA President Warren Fletcher said. "Willfully ignoring their provisions is counterproductive at best. We need a district and a superintendent who obey the law without being drawn before a judge."

Status: On September 9 PERB issued a formal complaint against LAUSD, indicating there is cause to believe that the District has once again violated the state collective bargaining law. LAUSD must now answer the complaint at an informal settlement conference scheduled for September 26. If no mutual agreement is reached, an unfair practice trial will be held before a state administrative law judge.

Evaluation update

Stull Q&A

Key details about the process.

What is the Stull process?

It is the process by which most LAUSD teachers and health and human services personnel are evaluated. The Stull should be viewed as an opportunity for introspection by the teacher. It should also promote a dialogue between the teacher/support staffer and the administration. The Stull becomes part of a teacher's permanent record and can be used for future promotions. It follows this basic timeline:

Start of school year: Establish objectives with your administrator.

During school year: Administrator makes classroom observations and holds debriefing conferences to discuss obser-

vations. Assistance must be offered, if necessary.

Near the end of school year: Evaluations issued.

Who receives Stull evaluations and how often?

Probationary and permanent teachers receive Stull evaluations; probationary teachers must be "Stulled" each year. Until recently, all permanent teachers were required to be Stulled at least once every other year. AB 954 provides that teachers who have served at least 10 years in a district may be evaluated every five years if they received "meets or exceeds standards" evaluations. This longer evaluation

period of three, four, or five years requires the mutual consent of the evaluator and the employee. Emergency credential teachers, nontenured adult education teachers, and other provisional employees are evaluated on the District's Form 1022. Provisional and emergency teachers are subject to evaluations at any time. This Q&A only concerns Stull evaluations.

Do I have any say in determining my objectives for the year?

Absolutely. Your objectives should be developed soon after school starts (generally within eight weeks of the first day of regular services) by working with your administrator during one or more planning conferences. The contract (Article X, Section 4.0) says that you should meet with your evaluator to "work cooperatively to establish" your objectives. These "individual performance objectives" are to be mutually agreed upon, not merely imposed from the top. If you need assistance in formulating objectives, seek help from your department chair, grade-level chair, a veteran teacher, or your chapter chair. You and your administrator should agree on the objectives. The objectives should relate to the five areas on the evaluation form:

- support for student learning
- planning and designing instruction
- classroom performance
- developing as a professional educator
- punctuality, attendance, and record keeping.

What if I don't agree with the objectives?

If you do not agree with your objectives, you may appeal to the next higher administrative level, i.e., the local district superintendent. If you still don't agree, you may note on the objectives form that these objectives were not the product of your agreement. These rights are spelled out in Article X, Section 4.2 of the contract.

Why is setting the objectives so important?

The list of objectives included in your Initial Planning Sheet sets the criteria by which you will be evaluated. Needless to say, objectives should be measurable, reasonable, and attainable. Unrealistic or unrealistic objectives could set you up for failure.

Once my objectives are set, can they be changed?

Yes. Objectives can be modified if something prevents you from making progress toward your objectives or, alternately, your administrator feels you exhibit perfor-

mance problems. Changes can be initiated by either you or your administrator, but once again, you should reach agreement on the changes. If not, as in the question above, you can appeal to the next higher administrative level.

I feel that there are things that will limit my ability to meet my objectives. What should I do?

UTLA has developed a list of items—such as frequent classroom interruptions, outdated textbooks, and a shortage of supplies—that can hinder you from doing your job. UTLA feels that the following disclaimer should be written on all objective forms whether the teacher and the administrator agree or not: "Pursuant to California Education Code sections 44660-65, I specifically renounce and reject any standards, objectives, techniques, board rules, or policies which are not reasonable, professional, valid, or consonant with the growth of my students and with relevant education principles. I also incorporate by reference the UTLA list of constraints upon which the achievement of all valid goals and objectives is predicated." You can find the list of constraints on page 24 of this issue.

How will the administrator determine if I meet my objectives?

Your administrator should visit your classroom and observe your work. Observations should be followed by conferences, where he or she should make specific recommendations and offer appropriate help, if he or she sees a problem in your performance. Once again: If problems are identified, your administrator must give you specific, written recommendations for improvement, and you must be offered counseling and assistance. Within four working days of the conference, you should receive a copy of written records relating to observations, conferences, and assistance offered, along with any warning to improve performance, if your administrator intends to issue a below standard performance evaluation. You have a right to respond to conference summaries in writing. If the administrator does not determine that your performance needs improvement, he or she does not have to give you written records.

When will I be issued the final evaluation report?

Your administrator must issue your final evaluation report not less than 30 days before the last regularly scheduled school day of your scheduled work year. UNITED TEACHER will print information in the spring on your rights regarding your final evaluation report.

■ **For more information:** Refer to your contract, Article X, Sections 1.0-6.3 and 10.0. You can also ask your chapter chair. Chapter chairs can call their Area representative for additional help at (213) 487-5560.

Sample initial planning sheet

The following sample initial planning sheet, geared toward the Stull evaluation form, was developed by Peer Assistance and Review consulting teachers Emma Price and Odessa Cleveland.

Objectives	How to meet objectives
1. Support for Student Learning 1. To access student prior knowledge with learning goals	Journals, questions, KWL
2. To use a variety of instructional strategies and resources to meet the diverse needs of students	Cooperative group, pair share, triads, manipulatives, questions based on Bloom's Taxonomy
3. To engage students in critical thinking activities that make subject matter meaningful	Socratic questioning, graphic organizers, Gardner's Multiple Intelligences, accountable talk
2. Planning and Designing Instruction 1. To design short-term and long-term lessons to facilitate student learning	Thematic units, projects, internet research, interdisciplinary planning (use CSTP guide to access other means)
2. To use content standards to guide short-term and long-term planning	Differentiated instruction, re-teaching modified assignments, backwards planning
3. To integrate technology and other appropriate materials and resources	Scaffolding lessons, grade-level appropriate materials, graphics organizers, mentoring via email
3. Classroom Performance 1. To organize subject matter for student learning	Learning centers, Power Point, variety of reading strategies (Read-Aloud, Reciprocal Teaching, Jig-saw), open-ended questions
2. To maintain standards for student behavior, implement classroom procedures, and use instructional time effectively	Establish rules, consequences and rewards, state clear expectations, plan rigorous activities and engage in accountable talk, active questioning
3. To use a variety of assessments that are aligned with the state standards	Rubrics, portfolios, checklist
4. Developing As a Professional Educator 1. To establish professional goals and pursue opportunities to grow professionally	Set professional goals, attend workshops/conferences, join a professional collaborative, take part in banked time activities
2. To collaborate with students/parents/school community	Parent workshops/visitations, Back-to-School Night, send correspondence, Open House, student-led conferencing
3. To adhere to District and state policy	Follow District and state policies, laws and regulations
5. Punctuality, Attendance, and Record Keeping 1. To be punctual daily 2. To be present regularly 3. To maintain accurate and timely records	Roll book, progress reports, log communications

In your own words

Attendance: The best-known factor for student success

PSA counselors tackle barriers that keep students from going to school.

By Martha Godinez and the Association of Pupil Services and Attendance Counselors Board

As an educator in LAUSD, you have probably struggled to engage students who are either chronically absent or habitually tardy to school. It is common knowledge that regular school attendance and academic achievement are interdependent. Poor attendance patterns are usually symptomatic of other complex issues, many of which are difficult, if not impossible, to address within the classroom.

Some examples of the common causes of poor patterns of attendance include: chronic health problems, mental health issues, trauma, family dysfunction, loss of housing, grief and loss, financial problems, teen pregnancy, bullying, or school refusal. Students who are experiencing one or more of these issues outside of school have great difficulty attending school daily and benefitting from the support that they can receive through positive relationships with caring adults on campus.

By missing valuable instructional minutes, students who are chronically absent or tardy not only disrupt their own academic program, but that of other students in the classroom, because they

require academic remediation, taking time away from an already limited school day. *When students miss school, they miss out!*

September is School Attendance Month

September has been designated School Attendance Month by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, the City of Los Angeles, and LAUSD. As a part of this campaign to increase awareness about the importance of regular school attendance, the LAUSD Pupil Services division is holding special events throughout the month. One of the major events was the sixth annual city- and county-wide "Student Recovery Day" on September 6. The focus of this event is recovering students who have already disengaged and dropped out of school or whose chronic attendance patterns put them at high risk for becoming future high school dropouts. Over the past six years, pupil services and attendance counselors have assisted schools, recovered and prevented dropouts by providing resources and support to students and families, and reconnected students to school programs that will lead to a high school diploma. This event also increases awareness of the dropout problem

and informs community members about compulsory education laws and the impact of chronic absenteeism. Many volunteers and participants have reported a heightened sense of responsibility and renewed ownership for bringing students back to school as a result of their experience with past Student Recovery Day events.

PSA counselors would like all UTLA members to be aware of the large numbers of students who are chronically absent. During the 2012-13 school year:

- **26,510** K-12 students missed more than 25 full days of school.
- **40,351** additional K-12 students missed between 15 and 23 full days of school.
- **\$128,487,126** in potential ADA revenue was lost due to absences District-wide. This additional revenue could have been used to lower class sizes, provide a much-needed cost-of-living adjustment, and restore critical support services and programs to our schools.

PSA services bring in ADA funds

Everyone in LAUSD has felt the stress and strain that budget reductions have had on our students, our schools, and ourselves during the past few years. Many schools are now funded on a "per-pupil" budget. While the per-pupil funding model is a

complicated formula, the funding a school receives annually is directly related to norm day enrollment and average daily attendance (ADA).

Refer to the Attendance Landing Page of MyData to find out how much money your school lost last year as a result of absences, or ask your PSA counselor for that information. By providing critical services that support schools in increasing in-seat attendance, PSA counselors often pay for their own positions, while also generating additional funds for school budgets. This increased ADA revenue can be used to return additional staff, programs, and services to the school site (teachers, art and music programs, school nurses, additional student health and human services support, supplies, and so on).

The anatomy of a PSA

Pupil service and attendance counselors work side by side with teachers, administrators, and other student health and human services support staff to address the multidimensional needs of our students. All PSA counselors hold a master's degree in the areas of social work, marriage and family therapy, psychology, or school counseling and a Pupil Personnel

(continued on page 17)

California State University, Northridge has Los Angeles teachers and administrators in mind for graduate-degree programs.



M.A. EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

This completely online program enables you to earn a degree from a university that educates and credentials more teachers than the entire UC system. Spring 2014 application deadline is October 31. edleadership.csun.edu

M.S. ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY STUDIES AND HUMAN SERVICES

This two-year, 10-course, fully online program is designed to prepare working professionals for rewarding careers in enhancing the lives of those who rely upon assistive technologies. Spring 2014 application deadline is September 15. atservices.csun.edu

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

As California's leading provider of MPA degrees, California State University, Northridge offers teachers, administrators and other public employees a program on campus, online and on site at the Los Angeles Unified School District as well as at other convenient Los Angeles locations. Spring 2014 application deadline is November 1. mpa.csun.edu

M.A. HUMANITIES

Learn new ways of thinking, new perspectives and how to tackle educational, political and cultural issues using the collected wisdom of the greatest thinkers in history. Accepting applications soon for 2014. humanities.csun.edu



Milestones

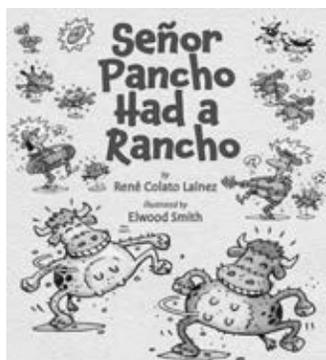
Achievements



Charles Zigman is the author of a new children's book, *The Belly Button That Escaped*.

UTLA member **Charles Zigman** has authored a new children's book, *The Belly Button That Escaped*, published by Allenwood Press. In the book, fourth-grader Artie loses his belly button (whose name is Cha-Cha), and it's up to gruff-but-amiable Detective Fred to bring him back. The illustrator is Janice Phelps Williams. The website for the book is www.thebellybuttonthatescaped.com, and it includes links for kids, teachers, and school librarians to buy the book from Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and most independent bookstores in the country. The website also includes printable games (mazes, wordsearches, coloring sheets, and so on) for kids. Zig-

man's first book, *World's Coolest Movie Star: The Complete 95 Films (And Legend) of Jean Gabin, Vols. I And II*, was awarded "Best Performing Arts Book" by Independent Publisher Book Awards and "Book of the Year" (Best Performing Arts Book) by *Foreword Magazine*.



Señor Pancho Had a Rancho!, by UTLA member René Colato Laínez, features a multicultural rendition of the favorite animal song, "Old MacDonald Had a Farm."

Fernangeles Elementary teacher **René Colato Laínez** has published a new book, *Señor Pancho Had a Rancho!*, with illustrator Elwood H. Smith. In the book, the barnyard animals on Old MacDonald's and Señor Pancho's farms have a hard time communicating. MacDonald's rooster says, "cock-a-doodle-doo," while Señor Pancho's gallo says, "quiquiriquí." The English-speaking chick says, "peep, peep," but *el pollito* says, "piro, pio." But then, the cow says, "moo"—and *la*

vaca says, "muu." Maybe they're not so different after all. This Spanish-English bilingual children's picture book introduces a multicultural rendition of the favorite animal song, "Old MacDonald Had a Farm." René Colato Laínez is the author of many books for children, including *From North to South*, which won the International Best Latino Book Award for best bilingual children's book.

Timothy Brooks, a sixth-grade teacher at John Adams Middle School, participated in

the 64th Annual Commencement of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena in June. He is finishing his last two courses for his master of arts in theology.

■ **To submit an item:** Send details to Member Milestones, UNITED TEACHER, 3303 Wilshire Blvd., 10th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90010. Material must arrive at least three weeks before publication date, and please include a daytime phone number. Photos welcomed. We reserve the right to edit text for length and clarity.

POLITICAL YEAR AHEAD

(continued from page 5)

Challenge 3: Concerted PACE contribution drives

UTLA needs to build a war chest to fund the four School Board races; once again we have to defeat attempts to seat anti-union, pro-privatization candidates. These contests amount to four heavyweight bouts with the billionaires' boys club. UTLA will never be able to outspend the "deep pockets," but we have to have sufficient funds to counter a barrage of mean-spirited, false mailers and put an army of volunteers into action. Between now and the contests of 2015, we need to educate and engage our rank-and-file members in concerted PACE contribution drives that will effectively fund multiple

School Board elections. Our opponents will not rest and neither can we!

Chapter political coordinators are key

A critical component of meeting these challenges is the UTLA-wide recruitment of site-based chapter political coordinators (CPCs) who will promote political activism at school sites and help build an issues-based operation. We need chapter chairs to identify member activists willing to serve as CPCs, be trained, and coordinate with area political coordinators around UTLA's political program.

■ **To learn more** about this exciting opportunity, contact Juan Parrino at jparrino@utla.net or (213) 368-6216.

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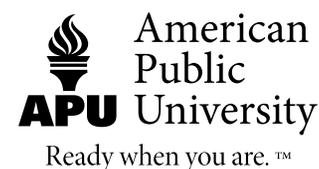
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*APUS Alumni Employer Survey, January 2006-December 2012

We want you to make an informed decision about the university that's right for you. For more about the graduation rate and median debt of students who completed each program, as well as other important information—visit www.APUS.edu/disclosure.



Supporting the profession

Workers' comp: Get the facts before you need it

Getting familiar with the program will help you deal more effectively with a workplace injury.



By Juan Ramirez, UTLA Elementary Vice President, and Janet Davis, LOOC Committee

Workers' compensation is something we all need to understand now, because nobody plans to have an accident in the workplace. Putting off learning how workers' comp works until after you need it is like choosing your medical provider after you get sick.

Workers' compensation provides wage replacement and medical benefits to employees injured in the course of employment. It will cover days you miss, and

you will not have to use your sick time. It will cover all the medicine and equipment you need without a copay, and it protects you if the accident results in any permanent damage.

With workers' comp there are some decisions that need to be made *before* you get injured, or you will default to the District's designated group of medical providers. In addition to making that choice, you need to understand how the system works because it's complicated, and when you have been injured, it is unlikely that you will be in the best shape to figure it out.

Key step: Fill out a Pre-designation of Physician Form

There is one form that needs to be completed before you have an accident: It's called a Pre-designation of Physician Form. If you have that form filled out, you can use your own doctor for treatment instead of having to use the doctors who are designated through workers' comp. (If you have Kaiser, you don't have to worry about this, because Kaiser will accept workers' comp insurance.) The California labor code defines "personal physician" as a doctor of medicine, or a doctor of osteopathy, who prior to the

injury, had directed the medical treatment of the employee and who retains the employee's medical records and medical history.

The form must be maintained at your worksite in your personnel file. Make sure you keep a copy for yourself and have it time stamped.

There are several things to be aware of if you decide to complete the pre-designation of physician form.

- You may still choose to use one of the groups that are approved by Sedgwick, the company that manages workers' compensation for the District. These groups specialize in industrial medicine and they know how to work effectively with Sedgwick to get you the services you need. They also have a lot of experience with the injuries that are typical for workers' compensation, e.g., an injury from falling, an injury from lifting, or an injury caused by a repetitive motion.

- Not all doctors will sign the pre-designation form because dealing with workers' compensation insurance is difficult for them too. There is a lot of paperwork, and there are tests or other things your doctor may want to prescribe that may not be approved.

- The District does not send your personnel file to a new worksite, so if you move to another school or worksite, either get a copy of the pre-designation form and take it to your new job or fill it out again. Again, always keep a copy for yourself and make sure that it's time stamped.

- If you change doctors, you will need to redo the form and have the new doctor sign the pre-designation form agreeing to care for you under the workers' comp insurance.

As a school staff, it might be a good idea to review the forms together, to make sure everyone is up to date.

Investigate other options

It is important that you understand the workers' comp system even if you fill out the pre-designation of physician form. For a variety of reasons, you may not end up having your personal physician treat you. If your personal physician is not

qualified to treat the injury or declines to provide treatment, Sedgwick will direct your treatment to an appropriate physician. However, you can also choose from the network. There are some excellent providers on that list, and some that may not provide an acceptable standard of care. If you end up with a provider who is not providing adequate care, you can be transferred to another provider within the network of approved providers. After 30 days you can return to your personal physician, or a physician of your choice. You also might decide that it's better to have someone closer to your worksite treat you if you need physical therapy or other treatment that requires many appointments.

We suggest you explore approved providers who are near your school. Talk to others about their experiences and collect a group of providers who have a reputation for providing good medical care. You might consider creating a custom directory of initial treatment center options within a reasonable radius of your school site.

The District website can be hard to navigate if you're not familiar with it. Each school site has an employee who is designated to deal with workers' comp forms. We also suggest you have another staff member get comfortable with the LAUSD disability management website and demonstrate how it works at a faculty meeting. Your principal will appreciate it, and you might consider including other classified staff or offering them a separate presentation. This is an issue that involves the whole staff, and your efforts will build goodwill and unity.

■ **For more info:** For info on workers comp, including what to do in the event of an injury, go to disabilitymanagement.lausd.net/workers-compensation. The basic link to the medical provider network is disabilitymanagement.lausd.net/medical-provider-network (you can also find the Pre-designation of Physician Form on the Resources/Forms tab at this site).

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New law impacts worker's comp

What you should know about getting treated for work-related injuries.

As of July 1, 2013, medical treatment for a work-related injury will be controlled by your employer more than ever before. With the passing of Senate Bill 863, California's latest workers' compensation "reform" (effective January 1, 2013), new deadlines must be adhered to and treatment requests will be scrutinized heavily.

"Mistakes and omissions give insurance companies the justification they need to deny a request for medical care," says David Goldstein, a workers' compensation attorney with Gordon, Edelstein, Krepack, Grant, Felton & Goldstein, LLP (GEK).

The attorneys at GEK suggest the following ways to help ensure that you receive the medical care you need, and what you can expect may happen along the way:

- In order to receive medical treatment, you must **file a Workers' Compensation Claim Form**. You are entitled to medical treatment within 24 hours of reporting an injury.

- **If you have properly pre-designated your own doctor** (must be done in writing *before* an injury), you may be treated by that physician from the date of injury until treatment is concluded. (See the pre-designation form on this page.)

- **If you have not pre-designated a doctor**, you will be required to receive workers' compensation medical care through LAUSD's Medical Provider Network (MPN). You will have to select a treating doctor from the network's approved provider list. The doctor chosen from this list could have a significant impact on your case.

- It is critical that your doctor has a clear understanding of the workers' compensation laws and understands the reporting requirements and the process necessary to request medical treatment.

- The treating physician must request medical treatment by using a specific **Request for Authorization Form**. This form must be completed to the last detail or it will be returned as "incomplete."

- Treatment requests are subject to Utilization Review (UR), a process in which insurance companies can approve, delay, modify, or deny treatment. If the request is not approved, you have **only 30 days from the date of the UR decision to request an Independent Medical Review (IMR)** of the decision. The IMR will be conducted by an IMR organization designated by the California Department of Insurance. Following July 1, 2013, this is true for all workers'

compensation cases, **regardless of date of injury**.

- There are **new home healthcare limitations** involving service provider requirements, prescriptions, fee schedules, reporting requirements, and payment for services.

- Keep in mind that you may also be entitled to medical treatment for "con-

sequences" of your injury, including internal medical and/or emotional symptoms or complaints.

Gordon, Edelstein, Krepack, Grant, Felton & Goldstein, LLP (GEK) has more than 30 years' experience with workers' compensation issues. The firm can be reached at (213) 739-7000.

- **To pre-designate a physician:** Fill out the form on this page and return to your site administrator. Be sure to keep a copy for your own records. (Link to a fillable PDF is also available at <http://disability-management.lausd.net/workers-compensation>.) The original must be maintained at the work location in the employee's personnel file.



Los Angeles Unified School District Workers' Compensation Program Pre-designation of Physician Form

In the event of a work related injury or illness, I request to be treated by my personal physician. I understand this designation may only be made **before** the date of injury. I understand that I must have group health coverage for non-industrial injuries or illnesses in order to pre-designate.

The physician I selected meets the following criteria:

- Within a reasonable geographical area from my residence or work location.
- A Licensed Physician pursuant to Chapter 5 of Division 2 of the Business and Professions Code.
- Is my regular physician, who shall be either a physician who has limited his or her practice of medicine to general practice or who is a board-certified or board-eligible internist, pediatrician, obstetrician-gynecologist, or family practitioner, and has previously directed my medical treatment, and retains my medical records.
- Agrees before the injury to be designated as my physician in the event an industrial injury occurs.

Please Note: The California Labor Code defines "Personal Physician" as a doctor of medicine, or a doctor of osteopathic medicine, who prior to the injury had directed the medical treatment of the employee and who retains the employee's medical records and medical history.

If my personal physician is not qualified to treat the injury or declines to provide treatment, my employer will direct my treatment to an appropriate physician.

Employee Name: _____ Employee Number: _____

Pre-designated Physician's Name: _____ Telephone No. _____

Address: _____

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Site Administrator Signature: _____ Date: _____

I, _____ am a physician and I have read and certify that I meet and will adhere to the requirements listed above as the pre-designated personal physician for _____.

Physician's Signature _____ Date: _____

The physician is not required to sign this form, however, if the physician or designated employee of the physician does not sign, other documentation of the physician's agreement to be pre-designated will be required pursuant to Title 8, California Code of Regulations, section 9780.1 (a)(3)

This form must be maintained at the work location in the employee's personnel file.

Check out the Grapevine page:

Workshops, exhibits,
and more

From the treasurer

UTLA fund goals: Support teaching and learning

Member contributions drive the good work of the United Teachers Educational Fund.



By Arlene Inouye
UTLA Treasurer

Did you know that UTLA has a nonprofit organization called the UTEF (United Teachers Educational Fund) that supports student scholarships and the professional development of educators?

The mission of the UTEF is to raise student achievement and improve communication between school and education stakeholders. To those ends, UTEF provides funding and support for student scholarships and several unique programs housed at UTLA that model teacher education and professional development that truly supports what teachers do. You can find specific scholarship information throughout the year, including deadlines, at www.utla.net.

Last year, the six scholarship programs under UTEF were given \$6,000 each from member dues. This is eight cents a month or .14% of full-time members' dues, or half that amount for part-time members. Additional contributions are collected throughout the year from members and the broader community that directly support UTEF scholarships. A volunteer committee of UTLA members with UTLA staff support determine the recipients for the scholarships, plan fundraising events, and develop everything that goes into the actual awards event. Your membership dues, paired with volunteer effort, make these scholarships possible:

Student scholarships

Christa McAuliffe Scholarship: Christa McAuliffe, teacher astronaut of the *Challenger* crew, symbolizes the dedication of educators to America. The scholarships assist students from preschool to high school in continuing their studies, increasing their knowledge, and expanding their abilities.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship: Each spring the UTLA African American Education Committee celebrates the life of the civil rights legend by offering a scholarship to LAUSD students in grade K-12. The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. scholarship awards are given to LAUSD students who desire to "keep the dream alive" by continuing their education past their high school career.

Rigoberto Ruelas Scholarship: The

Rigoberto Ruelas Scholarship is granted to graduating college-bound seniors who attend any LAUSD high school. Rigoberto Ruelas was a teacher in LAUSD who dedicated his life to teaching and guiding the students and families of Miramonte Elementary School.

Ruben Salazar Scholarship: The Ruben Salazar Scholarship is awarded annually to graduating college-bound seniors and community adult school students who attend any LAUSD high school or adult school to increase their studies. It is given in honor of Ruben Salazar, an award-winning journalist killed in 1970 while covering the demonstration and riot during the Chicano Moratorium against the War in Vietnam.

Sue Embrey Scholarship (Asian Pacific Committee): The Sue Embrey Scholarship provides recognition for students and their teachers who demonstrate an understanding of the vision and guiding principles by which Sue Embrey lived her life. Embrey was a teacher and journalist who was incarcerated during World War II and promoted social justice.

Stonewall Scholarship: This scholarship helps gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students enhance their self-esteem and stay in school by providing financial assistance to further their educational goals. The name "Stonewall" comes from the Stonewall Rebellion, a key event in the LGBT civil rights movement.

Teacher education and professional development

UTEF also has programs that support teacher education and professional development that are made possible by grants, donations, and volunteer efforts. These programs are housed at the UTLA building and include:

The Institute for Standards, Curricula and Assessment (ISCA): ISCA supports teachers working in single subject or interdisciplinary teams through an inquiry-based approach to designing engaging and challenging standards-based teaching units that include both lessons and performance assessments of student content mastery. ISCA provides technical and technological support, instructional techniques and options, protocols for constructive peer feedback and assessment data analysis, internet access, research methods, and time to think deeply and creatively.

For more information go to www.iscaonline.org or contact Day and Charlotte Higuchi at dhiguchi@iscaonline.org or (213) 639-0800.

The Support Network preparing teachers for National Board Certification: The Support Network is a collaborative project between LAUSD and UTLA that provides a comprehensive program of professional practice support for National Board Certification for pre-candidates, first-time candidates, and continuing candidates. This includes a curriculum created and presented by National Board Certified teachers, hours of facilitated



What meaningful PD looks like: South East High teachers Janie Long and Nelson Palencia work on Common Core standards-based lessons and assessment at a session of the Institute for Standards, Curricula and Assessment. ISCA is partially funded by the United Teachers Educational Fund.

support, study groups, training, and more. UTLA is proud to be a national leader when it comes to National Board Certified teachers (who also earn a 15 percent salary increase according to our agreement with LAUSD). For more information go to www.thesupportnetwork.net or contact Michael de la Torre at mdelatorre@thesupportnetwork.net or (213) 251-1444.

Donate to the UTEF: Members can make individual donations to UTEF through the Sharing Brings Hope LAUSD campaign or throughout the year by sending a check, payable to UTEF, to UTLA (3303 Wilshire Blvd., L.A., CA 90010). You have the option of your donation going to a specific program or scholarship. Every penny helps! For more information about UTEF please contact Arlene Inouye, UTLA treasurer, at ainouye@utla.net.



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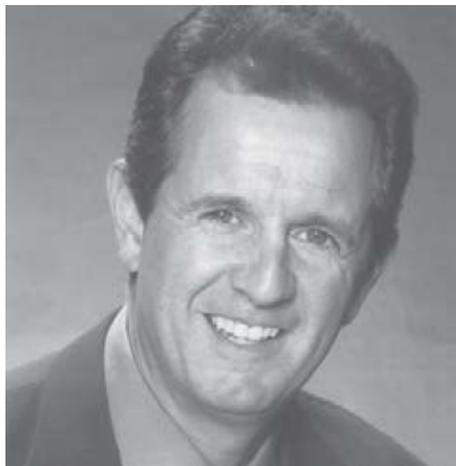
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Dispelling the rhetoric

District budgetary priorities

LAUSD gets it wrong, whether it's the use of outside money or the misguided policy on substitute teachers.



By David Lyell
UTLA Secretary

It's no surprise that when Superintendent Deasy presented the proposed Common Core budget to the School Board in August, it contained a recommendation to spend \$113 million of the one-time funding from the state to pay for 200 out-of-classroom positions—spending that, in future years, would have to be paid for out of the general fund.

While one-time funding options do provide unique opportunities, a better use of this particular funding: paid training

time for Common Core preparation for teachers and health and human services professionals.

Concerns about one-time money bring up another issue: the unscrutinized use of outside money (not from the state) by LAUSD.

When John Deasy began working at LAUSD, his salary was initially picked up by his employer at the time: the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. In 2011, as has been widely reported, Superintendent Deasy, along with more than 30 other LAUSD senior managers, had the cost of their salaries converted from private to publicly funded positions. In other words: They were initially hired with salaries paid by foundation grants and outside funding. Now their salaries are paid out of the general fund.

Is it just me, or isn't there something wrong with that?

There's definitely a place for philanthropic projects related to public education. But when a foundation with a sharply defined political agenda (the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation strongly advocates for, among other proposals, efforts to expand charter schools, merit pay, standardized testing, and the elimination of seniority and due process pro-

visions in hiring and firing decisions) essentially takes a management role in the second-largest school district in the nation, and it does so without voters being asked whether they approve of this change or not, it shouldn't just raise a few eyebrows. It should raise alarm bells. Niagara Falls-size alarm bells.

Were taxpayers ever asked if they wanted the tax dollars for the second-largest school district in the nation, with more than 500,000 students and a \$6 billion operating budget, managed and operated by individuals whose ideological and political agenda closely mirrors that of Bill Gates?

I would think *60 Minutes* would be investigating.

Of course, we can now see the results of such a decision.

Teachers and health and human services professionals are constantly reminded to uphold high standards, and morale is low given the lack of respect afforded teachers by senior management, yet the District still doesn't want to provide us with the tools and training necessary to accomplish successful implementation of the new standards.

While District leadership pressures school leadership to reduce suspension rates, causing very real behavior problems to continue to be ignored (FYI: if your principal says you can't suspend a student in class for being willfully defiant, ask to get that in writing), we also live in an environment where District leadership has done everything possible to try to overwhelm UTLA with grievances and legal battles.

We live in an environment where students knowingly and openly talk on YouTube about the best ways to get their teacher fired, and yet the District routinely moves to dismiss any teacher on even the flimsiest of unsubstantiated, vague accusations—and LAUSD appeals almost

every case we do actually win, at an even greater fiscal and emotional expense to UTLA and our members.

We live in a time when there is literally a department in LAUSD called Talent Management. Yes, because, after all, the path to bridging the achievement gap begins with brain-storming to come up with transformational acronyms.

What LAUSD senior management seems to miss is that the way to improve our schools is to nurture a sense of community. As we start the new school year, displaced teachers are being sent across town to fill substitute teacher assignments, often overriding a teacher's request for a specific substitute teacher. This process takes time. If an employee inputs a request for a specific substitute teacher in Subfinder, on those rare occasions when the request is honored, the resulting time loss between when the request is input in the system and when it is honored negates any potential benefit to students. Forcing everyone to rush around at the last minute creates an environment of uncertainty; causes undue stress on students, parents, teachers, and administrators as they wonder if a substitute teacher will show up; and creates havoc that does not benefit our communities.

A school is not a spreadsheet. When students see a substitute teacher they have previously worked with, that prior connection helps save inordinate amounts of time, as there is already a clear sense of expectations among the entire school community. Having that bond, having that familiar face, helps develop and solidify those bonds with parents, students, and community members. Parents feel more secure as well knowing that they are leaving their loved ones—their precious children—with a familiar face. When students and parents see a revolving door of substitute teachers, it diminishes morale and causes an already tenuous relationship between the school and community to be further called into question.

I understand the need for the District to save money—but, as with any venture, that cost savings has to be weighed against the negative impact such a decision has on student achievement.

If saving money harms our schools, is that really a cost savings worth pursuing?

For feedback or to connect, please call at (213) 368-6244 or email dlyell@utla.net. Thank you.

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Secondary VP notebook

Tasks that will improve your campus life

Get engaged and stay engaged.



By Gregg Solkovits
UTLA Secondary Vice President

Now that you have survived (for the most part) the balancing of classes, the setting of your class rosters, and the inevitable late-summer heat wave, I thought it would be a good idea to suggest a few easy tasks that will both help your union help you and, at the same time, make your professional life better.

Before you tell yourself, *I have no time to do anything else*, let me assure you. Each task is quite easy and does not require tremendous amounts of energy, but each

task will make your life on campus easier. So here goes . . .

Task 1: Check your class sizes

Have you let your chapter chair know and, through her or him, let UTLA know if your class sizes are much bigger than the contract allows? Class-size limits were not eliminated. Though we do not have a hard cap on class size, class sizes *must* adhere to certain limits across the matrix. Go to www.utla.net/secondary for more information on the numbers. Even though we are past norm day, let your chapter chair know, so that UTLA can take action if your school is not in compliance with the numbers in the contract.

Task 2: Reach out to your students' parents

Here at UTLA we often talk about working with our school's parents and community. The best way to do that is to start in our classrooms. Send a letter or some kind of communication to your students' parents. Establish regular communication with them—not just about how their daughter or son is doing, but about the great things that you and your colleagues are doing at your school. Like anyone else, parents feel best about people

and institutions that reach out to include them. YOU are the key building block in creating strong parent/school connections. And you will find that student engagement in your classes increases, too, I would bet!

Task 3: Find out when your school's SSC and SDM/LSLC meet

Schools are filled with committees and acronyms. There are no more important committees for you as a professional educator, and for your school, than the School Site Council and the Shared Decision Making Council/Local School Leadership Council. The SSC functions under federal and state law, while the SDM/LSLC is established by our LAUSD-UTLA contract. The decisions these committees make are vital to you and your colleagues. They have different roles and responsibilities, but both *require* teacher representatives, as well as community/parent representation, administrator representation, and, at secondary schools, student representation.

Article XXVII of our contract delineates the role of the SDM/LSLC, and if you go to www.utla.net/secondary, you will find information on both the SSC and the SDM/LSLC. In brief, the SDM/LSLC has authority over the use of certain equipment (including the copy machine), ALL schedules, half of ALL Professional Development, the promulgation of the school's student discipline guidelines and code of student conduct, and the Instructional Materials portion of the school's budget.

More importantly, however, I want you to attend at least one meeting of each of these bodies. Agendas must be posted/distributed in advance, so you know what will be discussed at the meeting. Find out and attend!

Task 4: Ask your chapter chair how you can help

There is no more rewarding and no more difficult job in our school than the job of



UTLA Secondary VP Gregg Solkovits represented UTLA at the August 14 Caravan and Rally on behalf of immigration reform. Solkovits, seen here with L.A. County Federation of Labor leader Maria Elena Durazo, traveled from Los Angeles to Bakersfield to join representatives from the County Fed and from labor groups from across the state.

the chapter chair. Trust me on this. As a chapter chair for 18-plus years, I can tell you it is a lot of work to do a good job. But you can make sure that your school's chapter chair can do a great job by asking her or him what small task you can help her or him with. Better yet, grab some of your friends on campus and go see the chapter chair together and volunteer. You and your UTLA chapter will be the better for it!

Four simple tasks. Do these, and your professional life will be better.

Last but not least, I am in the process of working with Secondary Committee Chair Diane Newell and others to put together two salary point projects/conferences that will focus on getting teachers and health and human services professionals information and tools for implementing the Common Core Standards. There will be a salary point project in the fall, and there will be our annual (since I have been secondary VP) Secondary Conference, which will be in late February 2014 and will focus on the Common Core Standards. The Secondary Committee will be working with the Elementary Committee in putting together the conference. You will be receiving more information in the coming weeks.

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News from UTLA/NEA

Help for the Common Core

UTLA to hold October workshop for members.



By Mary Jan "MJ" Roberts
UTLA/NEA Vice President

If you don't feel fully prepared for the Common Core, you are not alone. UTLA's survey of members about Common Core readiness found that a majority felt unprepared to teach the new standards and that 95 percent of teachers want more planning time and more time to collaborate with colleagues on CCSS. Those results dovetail with a nationwide survey by the AFT (our other affiliate) earlier in the year. The survey found that while teachers generally support the Common Core State Standards, only

one-third said their school districts have given them the training and resources to teach to the fidelity of the new standards.

These sentiments are not unlike those I heard from colleagues I talked with at this year's UTLA Leadership Conference. The most confident statements I have heard about readiness for implementing the Common Core State Standards have generally not come from rank-and-file members in LAUSD, but rather from CTA colleagues who received early professional development and technological support from personnel at the direction of their superintendent of schools, along with ongoing grade-level or subject-specific opportunities to network with their colleagues. Additionally, more comfort with CCSS has been expressed by CTA colleagues whose districts collaboratively engage them as stakeholders. For many of these other school districts, professional development seems to have commenced prior to and throughout 2013.

It's a different story in LAUSD. The District's chief instructional leader must have known from the onset that exemplary professional training would be necessary for the effective implementation of the Common Core State Standards. It is most unfortunate that Superintendent Deasy elected to invest

in out-of-classroom positions rather than collaborative time for personnel at our local school sites. His administration has placed more emphasis on eradicating and demoralizing UTLA membership than on enhancing professional practices. Poor implementation could turn the use of the new standards into another failed education reform. Implicit in this analysis is the fact that teachers will be blamed for unfavorable student achievement outcomes.

To help deal with this unfortunate LAUSD scenario and to provide a meaningful service to members, UTLA/NEA will be sponsoring a Common Core State Standards Conference on October 12 at UTLA headquarters. The objective of this conference is to provide information and professional development that supplements other training and is delivered in a supportive environment. In addition to offering interactive grade-level and subject-specific workshops, the conference will feature keynote speaker Patricia Ann Rucker, a governor-appointed member of the California State Board of Education and a legislative advocate with the CTA Governmental Relations Department. Rucker was a classroom teacher for numerous years prior to employment with the California Teachers Association.

Conference planners are optimistic that participants will acquire valuable information for themselves and for sharing with their colleagues at local school sites.

■ **UTLA/NEA-sponsored Common Core State Standards Conference:** The conference will be held October 12 at UTLA Headquarters, second floor auditorium, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Participants can earn professional development hours toward salary point credit. Online conference registration is available at utla.net; also see the flyer below.

Come on board in 2013-2014

Mark your calendar for upcoming UTLA/CTA/NEA Meetings

UTLA/CTA/NEA Service Center Council Meetings

Location: UTLA Headquarters, Auditorium
Time: 6 p.m. on Mondays: October 21, 2013; January 13, March 24, and May 19, 2014

UTLA/NEA Board of Directors Meetings

Location: UTLA Headquarters, Room 911
Time: 4:15 p.m. on Mondays: October 21, 2013; January 13, March 10, and May 12, 2014

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UTLA/NEA Common Core State Standards Conference

Saturday, October 12, 2013

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Doors will open at 8:30 a.m. for refreshments & networking

Location:
UTLA Headquarters
2nd Floor Auditorium
3303 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90010

Keynote Speaker: Patricia Ann Rucker

California State Board of Education
CTA Governmental Relations Department Legislative Advocate

This Common Core State Standards Conference will provide valuable information, not only for participants, but also to share with colleagues at your local school site.

This conference is with Professional Development Hours towards a Salary Point.

Stay tuned for more information on the UTLA website and Area Meetings.

Online Conference Registration is available at www.utla.net

If you have any questions please call: Vivian Vega at (213) 368-6259 or e-mail at yvega@utla.net

Betty battles back

Recharging the labor movement

Education advocates connect with larger union movement at AFL-CIO national convention in L.A.



By Betty Forrester
UTLA/AFT Vice President

“Together We Are Stronger” . . . “Reclaiming the Promise” . . . “Working America: Jobs and Democracy” . . . “Dream, Innovate, Act.” These were the calls made by national unions, community allies, and activists from throughout the country to creatively bring promising ideas to building the movement that working people need for the future.

These calls came out of “listening sessions” held by the AFL-CIO during the past year. Those ideas and more were shared at

the AFL-CIO’s convention in Los Angeles from September 8 to 12. One of UTLA’s national affiliates, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), is a member of the AFL-CIO and sent national delegates. As a member of the L.A. County Federation of Labor, I attended as a guest.

Two L.A. schools were among the 21 sites nationwide that were “adopted” by the AFL-CIO this year: Miguel Contreras Learning Center (chapter chair is Philip Busalacchi) and Dorsey High School (chapter chair is Noah Lippe-Klein). On the first night of the convention, each site received a \$5,000 check from L.A. County Federation of Labor Secretary-Treasurer Maria Elena Durazo. These schools will get help to look at the future and ask young workers to speak up!

As AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka gave his keynote address, representatives from the 50 unions present stood behind him. Representing the AFT and standing with communication workers, carwash workers, grocery store workers, engineers, electricians, healthcare workers, miners, and many others was UTLA Board of Director member and Venice High School teacher Brad Jones.

Here’s what Brad had to say about his experience: “I was deeply honored to



Standing strong together: AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka (on screen) is backed by representatives from each of the 50 unions at the AFL-CIO Convention in Los Angeles this month. On the stage for teachers was UTLA’s own Brad Jones from Venice High (second from left).

represent L.A. educators and the AFT on stage with President Trumka. The energy in his speech and in the response to it by the delegates was inspiring. I was also impressed by the desire of those present to reach out in a serious way to young workers and low-income workers. I left the convention hall feeling energized and hopeful that the AFL-CIO will rise to the challenge.”

We were there to hear decisions made at this convention that focused on:

- changing the labor movement to speak for working people now and in the future through growth, innovation, and political action;
- creating a voice and prosperity for all in the global economy; and
- building genuine, durable community partnerships and effective grassroots power.

AFT President Randi Weingarten met

with the leaders to share details of the AFT’s fight, “Reclaiming the Promise of Public Education” (go.aft.org/promise and #ReclaimIt). The commitment to a high-quality public education for all children as an economic necessity, an anchor of democracy, a moral imperative, and a fundamental civil right was shared by union after union and organization after organization. Their public pledges to stand with educators who are under attack by those who demand and pursue austerity, polarization, privatization, and deprofessionalization gave me hope. UTLA needs to build those allies in L.A. and use that power for you and your students.

I am proud to be a union sister. I was proud to represent my UTLA brothers and sisters. I believe in: “Together We Are Stronger” . . . “Reclaiming the Promise” . . . “Working America: Jobs and Democracy” . . . “Dream, Innovate, Act.”

Change of carrier for LAUSD life insurance

As of January 2014, ING will be the new carrier for basic life insurance provided by LAUSD and optional life insurance for which employees may apply and pay individually.

You may wish to review and, if necessary, update your current beneficiary designation. Metlife (the current carrier) will provide beneficiary information to ING during the transition period.

For those people who have optional life insurance coverage, the payments will automatically go to ING in 2014. There is no need to take any kind of action on your

part. Retirees with the optional coverage will be billed directly.

■ **To access a beneficiary designation form:** Log onto www.lausd.net, click on “Offices” in the top banner, and then scroll down to “Benefits Administration” and click. This opens their home page; then click on “Publications/Forms” in the top banner, click on “Optional Life Insurance” and then on “Beneficiary Designation” (it’s a two-page form). Follow the directions to submit to MetLife Record-keeping Center.

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Northridge

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**NEW COHORTS CLOSE TO WORK OR HOME STARTING
January 21, 2014 (Spring Semester)**

LAUSD Educational Services Center North & ISIC
Classes to be held at Daniel Pearl High School

Classes meet one night a week beginning at 4:20 PM

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:

Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
California State University Northridge - 818 677 2591
<http://www.csun.edu/coe/elps>

or

Christine Hayashi at Christine.Hayashi@csun.edu

IN YOUR OWN WORDS

(continued from page 8)

Services credential with an emphasis on Child Welfare and Attendance. In addition to being experts on the California Education Code Compulsory Attendance laws and LAUSD policy regarding attendance, enrollment, and dropout prevention, we are also skilled experts in building relationships, engaging students and families, responding to crises, conducting needs assessments, and linking students and families with community resources to meet student and family needs such as medical, mental health, housing, and so on. A PSA counselor's mission is to ensure all LAUSD students are enrolled, attending, engaged, and on track to graduate.

School-purchased PSA counselors provide comprehensive student support directly to the school community. PSA counselors work "in the trenches." Whatever it takes and wherever it happens, we reach out to students and families and bring the support to them, which often means to their homes. A unique and essential aspect of a PSA counselor's daily job duties is conducting home visits and providing in-home counseling. We work with disengaged students, who are many times viewed as being defiant as a result of the numerous barriers they face and are unable to resolve without support. Using a solution-focused approach, PSA counselors engage and return the child to a school program that meets their educational needs.

School-based PSA counselors assess school data trends to create and imple-

ment attendance intervention protocols and dropout recovery efforts and coordinate multidisciplinary teams such as the Student Success Team (SST), Student Attendance Review Team (SART), Coordination of Services Team (COST), and the school and District Crisis Teams. Furthermore, PSA counselors provide District-wide services under the homeless unit, neglect and delinquent unit, foster care unit, diploma project, and city partnership. For more information on these specialized units, please visit <http://pupilservices.lausd.net> or call (213) 241-3844.

Pupil services and attendance counselors hope to continue serving the students of LAUSD and ensuring graduation for all through the best-known factor of success, attendance.

Air your opinion

We welcome submissions to "Speaking Out" and "In Your Own Words," which are open forums for opinions on timely topics. "Speaking Out" and "In Your Own Words" state the opinion of their authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of UTLA, its officers, or UNITED TEACHER.

By mail: Editor, UNITED TEACHER, 3303 Wilshire Blvd., 10th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90010.

By fax: (213) 487-3319

By email: UTnewspaper@utla.net



**EDUCATORS.....
KNOW YOUR BENEFITS.....**

Are you new, in the middle or towards the end of your career in Education?

This conference is for you!!!!!!

Learn about

- CALSTRS Benefits....
- Social Security Windfall and Offset Acts
- LAUSD Health Benefits
- 403b and 457 Retirement Benefits

Please bring your most recent CalSTRS Retirement Progress Report

**UTLA
Pre-Retirement Conference**

Saturday, October 19, 2013

8:00 AM – 1:00 PM

(Registration starts at 7:00 AM)

United Teachers Los Angeles
(Auditorium)

3303 Wilshire Blvd., 2nd Floor, Los Angeles
Directions: 2 blocks west of Vermont at Berendo.

Free Parking Available

*UTLA Parking Structure located off Berendo.

Registration at the door - \$5.00 per person Open to all UTLA Members

Conference is limited to the first 300 attendees

* Access for the disabled is available through the elevators in the UTLA basement.

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Involvement opportunity

CTA State Council Elections for unexpired seats

By Erika Jones
UTLA/NEA Election Committee

UTLA/NEA members will elect CTA State Council representatives to fill unexpired seats at the October 30 Area meetings. These delegates will join the other UTLA representatives when the council begins in January for the 2014 year.

The State Council acts as CTA's policy-making body, meeting four times a year. Each representative is expected to serve on a standing committee, which debates business items involving academic freedom, retirement, civil rights, political action, teachers' rights, and statewide negotiation issues. State Council representatives also vote for CTA's statewide officers. In the 2014 year, all State Council meetings will be held in Los Angeles.

All necessary expenses for representatives are covered by CTA, including

hotel, mileage, and food costs. Meetings begin at 9 a.m. Saturday, 7:15 a.m. Sunday, and usually end around 4 p.m. both days. Subcommittee meetings on Friday evenings and voluntary caucus meetings before and after the general weekend meeting times can enrich the representative's knowledge of issues facing California educators. UTLA delegates are rewarded for their time and effort by getting a chance to make a statewide difference in education.

If you find the idea of participating on a statewide level intriguing, fill out and mail in the self-nomination form on this page to run for CTA State Council. Forms are due by October 7 via U.S. mail (no faxes or e-mails). Forms may also be dropped off at UTLA headquarters on the 10th floor (attention: M.J. Roberts, UTLA/NEA VP) during regular business hours from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

CTA State Council of Education Year-Round Absentee Ballot Request

I am requesting an absentee ballot for the CTA State Council Election.

My vote will correspond to CTA's election guidelines, which allow for voting by mail for off-track CTA members in areas with year-round schools or CTA members on formal leave. This request must be received by 5:00 p.m., October 7, 2013, by U.S. mail to UTLA, 3303 Wilshire Blvd., 10th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90010, Attn: M.J. Roberts, UTLA/NEA VP. I understand that my request will be checked for accuracy by election committee members. Absentee ballots will be mailed October 14, 2013, and must be received via U.S. mail by 5:00 p.m., October 30, 2013.

Name _____

Employee number _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Home phone _____

Non-LAUSD email address _____

School _____

School Phone _____

UTLA area (Circle one) N S E W C VE VW H

Absentee ballot requested for (Check one):

October 30 December 4

CTA/NEA Board member

I hereby declare that the above information is accurate.

Signature _____ Date _____

Return this request to UTLA/NEA VP M.J. Roberts by 5:00 p.m., October 7, 2013, via U.S. mail to UTLA, 3303 Wilshire Blvd., 10th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90010. Forms may also be dropped off at UTLA headquarters on the 10th floor (attention: M.J. Roberts) during regular business hours from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. **NO FAXES OR EMAILS.** Form must be received by UTLA by October 7, 2013.

2013 CTA State Council Election Notice

Are you interested in representing UTLA/NEA members at the state level? CTA (California Teachers Association) State Council, a policy-making body that meets quarterly, has openings for representatives to fill unexpired terms. If you wish to run for one of these positions, complete and return the self-nomination form by U.S. mail to UTLA/NEA VP M.J. Roberts at UTLA. The form must be received by 5:00 p.m. on October 7, 2013. The election will be held at the October 30, 2013, area meetings. For those members who cannot vote at their area meetings, voting will also be held at the UTLA building from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on October 30, 2013.

Self-Nomination Form

Name _____

Employee number _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Home phone _____

Non-LAUSD email address _____

School _____

School Phone _____

I certify that below is the signature of the candidate whose name appears above.

Signature _____ Date _____

(Required)

Return this request to UTLA/NEA VP M.J. Roberts by 5:00 p.m., October 7, 2013, via U.S. mail to UTLA, 3303 Wilshire Blvd., 10th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90010. Forms may also be dropped off at UTLA headquarters on the 10th floor during regular business hours from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (attention: M.J. Roberts). **NO FAXES OR EMAILS.** Form must be received by UTLA by October 7, 2013.

CTA State Council election timeline 2013

August 23 and September 20: Nomination form, timeline, and absentee ballot request published in UNITED TEACHER.

October 7: Deadline for nomination forms to be received by U.S. mail (no faxes or emails). Forms may also be dropped off at UTLA headquarters on the 10th floor during regular business hours from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

October 7: Deadline for absentee ballot requests to be received by U.S. mail. Forms may also be dropped off at UTLA headquarters on the 10th floor during regular business hours from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

October 8: Acknowledgement letters sent.

October 14: Absentee ballots sent out.

October 30: Election at Area meetings and at UTLA headquarters from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

October 30: Deadline for absentee ballots to be received back by U.S. mail (no faxes or emails).

November 4: Ballots counted. Letters sent to winners and results posted at www.utla.net within 48 hours.

November 14: Final date for challenges for first round to be submitted in writing to UTLA/NEA Vice President M.J. Roberts at UTLA. Please call Vivian Vega for appropriate form at (213) 368-6259.

November 20: Absentee ballots for runoff sent.

December 4: Runoff election if needed at Area meetings and at UTLA headquarters from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

December 4: Deadline for absentee ballots to be received back by U.S. mail (no faxes or emails).

December 9: Ballots counted. Letters sent to winners and results posted at www.utla.net within 48 hours. Those who are not elected delegates will become alternates.

December 19: Final date for challenges for runoff to be submitted in writing to UTLA/NEA Vice President M.J. Roberts at UTLA. Please call Vivian Vega for appropriate form at (213) 368-6259.

Note from the UTLA-R president

By John Perez
UTLA-Retired President

UTLA-Retired General Assemblies, 2013-14: The first UTLA-R General Assembly for this school year will be held on Friday, October 18. As is our practice, the guest speakers will be from the Health Benefits Committee to discuss our benefits. The other General Assembly dates are January 24, March 21, and May 23.

Education 101: Last month I reported that based on National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores, our District did better than Chicago under Arne Duncan, New York under Michael Bloomberg, and Washington, D.C., under Michelle Rhee. Our scores were better than the districts led by these “reformers” because our active colleagues work very hard under very taxing circumstances. Now comes the report that last year’s California API scores went DOWN, but the API for the District went UP! In reporting this story the *L.A. Times* said that our great and wonderful superintendent credited the uptick in the LAUSD to the District’s “staff.” Do you think the man can say, “teachers”? When things go wrong, it is always the fault of “bad teachers,” but when things go right, it is because the site administrators are motivating their staffs and the District’s bureaucracy is making it possible for the schools to “do their work under difficult conditions.” How about thanking the people responsible for the kids in our District showing improvement year in and year out, the men and women who are in the classrooms every day teaching our students.

Economics 101: I came across an interesting fact the other day. For the first time since economists have been tracking increases in productivity and wages, wages have not gone up in lock step

with increases in productivity. Since 1973 worker productivity has increased 80 percent, but wages (when adjusted for inflation) have only gone up 10 percent. At the same time wages as a percent of the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) have slipped from over 50 percent to just 43.5 percent today. Meanwhile profits as a share of the GDP are at an all-time high. Seven of the ten top job categories in America pay less than \$30,000, and while things have stagnated for the average American, the income of the top 1 percent, the top 10 percent, and for America’s CEOs continue to soar into the upper stratosphere. In the 1960s CEO salaries were under 50 times what the typical worker made. Today America’s CEOs on average make 354 times what their workers make (and let’s remember that it’s the workers who make their companies the profits that pay the CEO salaries).

Labor 101: All of these negative statistics as they relate to the average worker happened as the percentage of employees in labor unions has dropped from over 30 percent to barely 7 percent. Labor unions can no longer set wage rates in any industry. But at long last labor is fighting back, and efforts to unionize workers in the fast food industry are under way. The owner of Papa John’s Pizza hates the Affordable Care Act and says his company is not going to do anything to make it work. Maybe instead of a pizza, you want a cup of coffee; if so, visit Starbucks. The CEO of Starbucks says his company will NOT cut the hours of its workers to get around “Obamacare.” While in college one of my daughters worked for Starbucks and had enough hours to qualify for their health plan, but ours was better so she stuck with LAUSD.

Perez can be reached at vpapabear46@aol.com.

LETTERS

(continued from page 3)

studies have shown harmful biological effects, including cancer, cardiac, and immune system disease at levels below heating.

Current FCC guidelines explicitly exclude children, pregnant women, and the elderly; yet LAUSD feels comfortable thoroughly exposing these groups to RF radiation in our schools. Women absorb more microwave radiation than men and thus are more negatively affected as are children due to their developing neurological systems and smaller stature. The FCC guidelines were designed for a 220-pound, six-foot male—not the small children LAUSD will be exposing.

What can you do? Organize at your school. Go to each School Board member and demand that they connect to the internet through wired connections and use wires to connect to tablets or more versatile laptops. The solution is simple: wired versus wireless. A wired connection eliminates the microwave exposure issue. Insist each School Board member put

the health and well-being of students and staff over all other considerations. As it is now, they are using a cost-benefit analysis where the health of you and your students is an expendable cost. It is time to change their thinking.

The Council of Europe has recommended a ban on Wi-Fi in the classroom to protect their children due to health concerns; why can’t we?

—Kevin Mottus
UTLA Violence Prevention and School
Safety Committee Member
UTLA Health and Human Services
Committee Member
kmottus@gmail.com

Editor’s note: The scientific community is divided over the safety of wireless technology; some studies find a possible link between wireless devices and cancer and other illnesses, while other studies do not. People on both sides in the debate have been calling for more and longer-term studies.

Retirement: It’s closer than you think

Take advantage of National Save for Retirement Week.

Are you on track to meeting your retirement goals? When it comes to saving for retirement, there is never a better time than today to assess your prospects of meeting your retirement savings goals.

National Save for Retirement Week (the week of October 20 to 26, 2013) is the first congressionally endorsed, national event formally calling on all employees to take full advantage of optional plans available to supplement retirement pensions (such as our CalSTRS pension).

Experts predict that retirees will need from 80 percent to 100 percent of their pre-retirement income to maintain their lifestyle after retirement. The average CalSTRS member retires at age 62 with approximately 62 percent of his or her income.

As an employee you participate in the CalSTRS defined benefit plan, which will provide you with a foundation once you enter retirement. Most UTLA members will receive an offset (reduced) amount of any earned Social Security benefits at retirement age. In most cases, your CalSTRS pension will not be enough. You will need your own additional retirement savings in order to live comfortably during your retirement years and to fulfill your retirement plans and dreams.

Among the optional plans for UTLA members is the LAUSD employee benefit 457(b) plan that is provided by CalSTRS in partnership with TIAA-CREF. The in-

vestments, expenses, and performance in the LAUSD 457(b) plan are overseen by a committee consisting of representatives from all unions, including UTLA, as well as outside consultants. Additionally, there are several 403(b) plans available, and you are encouraged to go www.403bcompare.com to evaluate your 403(b) investments.

So it is important to begin saving today for retirement—or increase your contributions if you are not meeting your goals. Take advantage of pre-tax dollar savings.

National Save for Retirement week is dedicated to showing you how important it is to meet your objectives by contributing regularly and investing wisely for the long term.

—Dr. Sandy Keaton
UTLA Pre-Retirement
Issues Committee Chair

■ **UTLA Pre-Retirement and Investment Conferences:** The UTLA Pre-Retirement Issues Committee will be hosting two Pre-Retirement Conferences (October 19, 2013, and March 15, 2014) and two Investment Workshops (December 7, 2013, and April 26, 2014) in the 2013-14 school year. Dates are published in the UTLA calendar and in the UT. The investment workshops require pre-registration. You may pre-register for the December 7, 2013, Investment Workshop by sending an email to investwksop@utla.net.

TAKE CREDIT FOR MAKING A SMART CALL.

For a limited time, switch to Sprint from another carrier and receive a \$100 service credit for each eligible newly activated line of service.

OFFERS FOR EMPLOYEES OF LAUSD

SAVE WITH DISCOUNTS

18% off select regularly priced Sprint monthly service. Req. new 2-yr agmt.

GET A SERVICE CREDIT OF

\$100 for each eligible new-line activation when you move from another carrier. Req. new 2-yr agmt/activation per line.

VISIT SPRINT.COM/PROMO/iL30788PC

within 72 hours of port-in activation to request your \$100 service credit.

Don't delay!
Offer ends 1/9/2014.

Get your best deal online at: sprint.com/california12education

Use this code to claim your discount.
Corporate ID: GДСCA_WCA_ZZZ



Activ. Fee: May req. \$36/line. Credit approval req. Early Termination Fee (sprint.com/etf): After 14 days, up to \$350/line. IL Port-in Offer: Offer ends: 1/9/2014. \$100 port-in credit for smartphones, feature phones and mobile broadband devices. Available only to eligible IL accounts with valid Corp. ID. Requires port-in from an active number (wireless or landline). Svc credit request must be made at sprint.com/promo within 72 hours from the port-in activation date or svc credit will be declined. Ported new-line must remain active 61 days to receive full svc credit. Excludes Nextel Direct Connect devices, tablets, upgrades, replacements, and ports made between Sprint entities or providers associated with Sprint (i.e., Virgin Mobile USA, Boost Mobile, and Assurance), all CL and plans less than \$10. Port-in Payment Expectations: Svc credit will appear in adjustment summary section at account level. If the svc credit does not appear on the first or second invoice following the 61st day, visit sprint.com/promo and click on "Where's my Reward?". Individual-Liable Discount: Available for eligible company, org, or agency employees (ongoing verification). Discounts subject to change according to the company's org.'s or agency's agreement with Sprint and are available upon request for monthly svc charges on select plans. No discounts apply to second lines, Add-A-Phone lines. Unlimited Talk, Text, My All-in Plan, Mobile Hotspot or add-ons \$29.99 or less (excludes Unlimited, My Way Data). Other Terms: Offers and coverage not available everywhere or for all phones/networks. Restrictions apply. Nationwide Sprint Network reaches over 278 million people. Sprint 3G network reaches over 276 million people. Sprint 4G LTE network reaches over 150 markets, on select devices. Visit sprint.com/coverage for info. Sprint 4G LTE devices will not operate on the Sprint 4G (WiMAX) network. See store or sprint.com for details. ©2013 Sprint. All rights reserved. Sprint and the logo are trademarks of Sprint. Android, Google, the Google logo and Google Play are trademarks of Google Inc. The HTC logo, and HTC One are the trademarks of HTC Corporation. LTE is a trademark of ETSI. Other marks are the property of their respective owners.

N135215CA

UTLA prepares for UTLA citywide elections

In early 2014 UTLA members will be electing the UTLA citywide officers and members of the UTLA Board of Directors, which includes directors who serve a UTLA Area and directors who represent a special category of members. The complete list of offices is below. Together, the officers and Board work with UTLA staff to carry out the mandates of the UTLA House of Representatives and help oversee the operation of the union.

Citywide officers

President
NEA Affiliate Vice President
AFT Affiliate Vice President
Elementary Vice President
Secondary Vice President
Treasurer
Secretary

Board of Directors

Each area elects 3 NEA directors and 1 AFT director

North Area
South Area
East Area
West Area
Central Area
Valley East Area
Valley West Area
Harbor Area

Board of Directors: Special category

Adult and Occupational Education
Bilingual Education
Early Childhood Education Centers
Health and Human Services
Special Education
Substitutes

UTLA 2013-14 Election Timeline

September 20: Election announcement and timeline published in the UNITED TEACHER.

October 18: Election announcement, timeline, Declaration of Candidacy, Voter Area and Special Category Designation forms, and election rules published in the UNITED TEACHER.

November 15: Election announcement, timeline, Declaration of Candidacy, Voter Area and Special Category Designation forms, and election rules published in the UNITED TEACHER.

December 5: Deadline to file Declaration of Candidacy form (due by 5 p.m.). There will be an orientation meeting for all candidates and the drawing of ballot positions at 6 p.m.

December 20: Election announcement, timeline, and election rules published in the UNITED TEACHER.

January 3: Deadline to file Voter Area and Special Category Designation Form.

January 9: Deadline for photo and statement drop-offs for the Special Election

issue of the UNITED TEACHER (due by 5 p.m.).

January 9: Candidates drop off flyers between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. only.

January 24: Special Election Issue of UNITED TEACHER published.

January 24: Candidates' flyers mailed first class.

February 3: Ballots mailed to membership.

February 13: Deadline to call for a replacement ballot.

February 27: Ballots picked up by Election Committee at post office at 8 a.m. First round of ballots counted. Deadline for filing Financial Disclosures Statements (due by 5 p.m.).

March 17: Second round of ballots mailed to membership.

March 21: Results of first round of balloting published in the UNITED TEACHER.

April 10: Ballots picked up by Elections Committee at post office at 8 a.m.

Second round of ballots counted. Deadline for filing Financial Disclosure Statements (due by 5 p.m.).

April 18: Results of the second round of balloting published in the UNITED TEACHER.

April 28: Third round of ballots mailed to membership.

May 22: Ballots picked up by Elections Committee at post office at 8 a.m. Third round of ballots counted. Deadline for filing Financial Disclosures Statements (due by 5 p.m.).

July 18: Results of the third round of balloting published in the UNITED TEACHER.

July 18: Candidates' Financial Disclosure Statements published in the UNITED TEACHER.

For election results: In addition to publication in the UNITED TEACHER issues, balloting results will be posted on www.utla.net as quickly as possible.

Approved by the UTLA Board of Directors on August 2, 2013.

The rules for the election, the Declaration of Candidacy, and Voter Area and Special Category Designation forms will appear in the October and November editions of UNITED

TEACHER. Election rules and the election timeline are available on the 2014 UTLA Elections website. A link is on the UTLA homepage. The forms will be available at the site when the

October UNITED TEACHER is mailed. Official candidate statements and photos will appear in the upcoming UNITED TEACHER Special Election edition.

GRAPEVINE

(continued from page 27)

George Lopez (glopez@passageworks.org) or call (303) 247-0156.

Salary point workshop on language arts and social studies in the Common Core

Rigorate Education is holding a workshop on the three essentials for rigorous learning: 1) close reading of complex non-fiction and fiction texts; 2) inquiry-based discussion of text-dependent questions; and 3) written argumentation using textual evidence and warrants to reinforce student claims. Ideal for social studies and language arts teachers, grades 6-12, these four 7.5-hour (one day per week), sequential, hands-on workshops will present a compelling approach for implementing the Common Core State Standards across the curriculum. The next workshop series happens at the UTLA building, on four consecutive Saturdays: October 26, November 2, November 9, and November 16. (Participants who are unable to attend all four September sessions may attend makeup workshops in sequence during subsequent series.) Teachers who complete the series earn one LAUSD salary point. The four-day registration fee is \$350, payable in three monthly installments, or \$305 paid prior to the workshops. Fee includes workshop, teaching materials, and parking. To learn more about Rigorate

Workshops and to register: www.rigorate.com/workshops; workshops@rigorate.com; call/text (951) 285-4171.

Free online class on building literacy in the 21st century

"Building Literacy in the 21st Century" is a free online course designed to help teachers bring their instructional practice up to speed with the technology of Internet blogging. It will also cover ways to meet the needs of all your diverse learners and support continued student learning at home. Delivered Mondays/Wednesdays in September and October, participants will learn how to set up a working classroom blog of their own and engage in captivating peer group discussions analyzing the significant research on technology and literacy instruction. Learn how to tailor this media to fit the needs of instruction, home to school communication and/or professional development. Prerequisites: Intermediate computer skills (e.g., navigating the Internet and using a web browser) and proficient knowledge of word processing applications (Microsoft Word, Pages, etc.). This is an accelerated four-week course. Please be aware that the pace moves quickly with support. Certificated employees can earn one salary point. Classes uploaded Mondays/Wednesdays on September 30/October 2, 7, 9, 14, 16, 21, 23. To register, email Caitlin Wong at caitlinwong@me.com with your

last name, first name, employee number, school name/office, and email address. Registration deadline: September 29, 2013.

Foster parents needed

The Child Welfare Initiative is looking for families to serve as foster parents to help the county's most vulnerable children—those who have been identified as needing therapeutic foster care. Therapeutic foster care (TFC) involves children who have greater behavioral and emotional needs and require a greater level of care from their foster parents. Therapeutic foster care uses a team-oriented approach where each parent is surrounded by professional support available at any time, day or night, in addition to forums and support groups. Collaborating with six respected foster family agencies in the greater Los Angeles area (Aviva, ChildNet, Children's Institute Inc., Five Acres, Hathaway-Sycamores, and Olive Crest), CWI has created an interactive community of resources housed at www.Extraordinary-Families.org that serves as a gateway for learning about therapeutic foster care and getting involved. For more information on how to make a difference for the children who need the most attention, visit www.Extraordinary-Families.org or call (323) 549-3426.

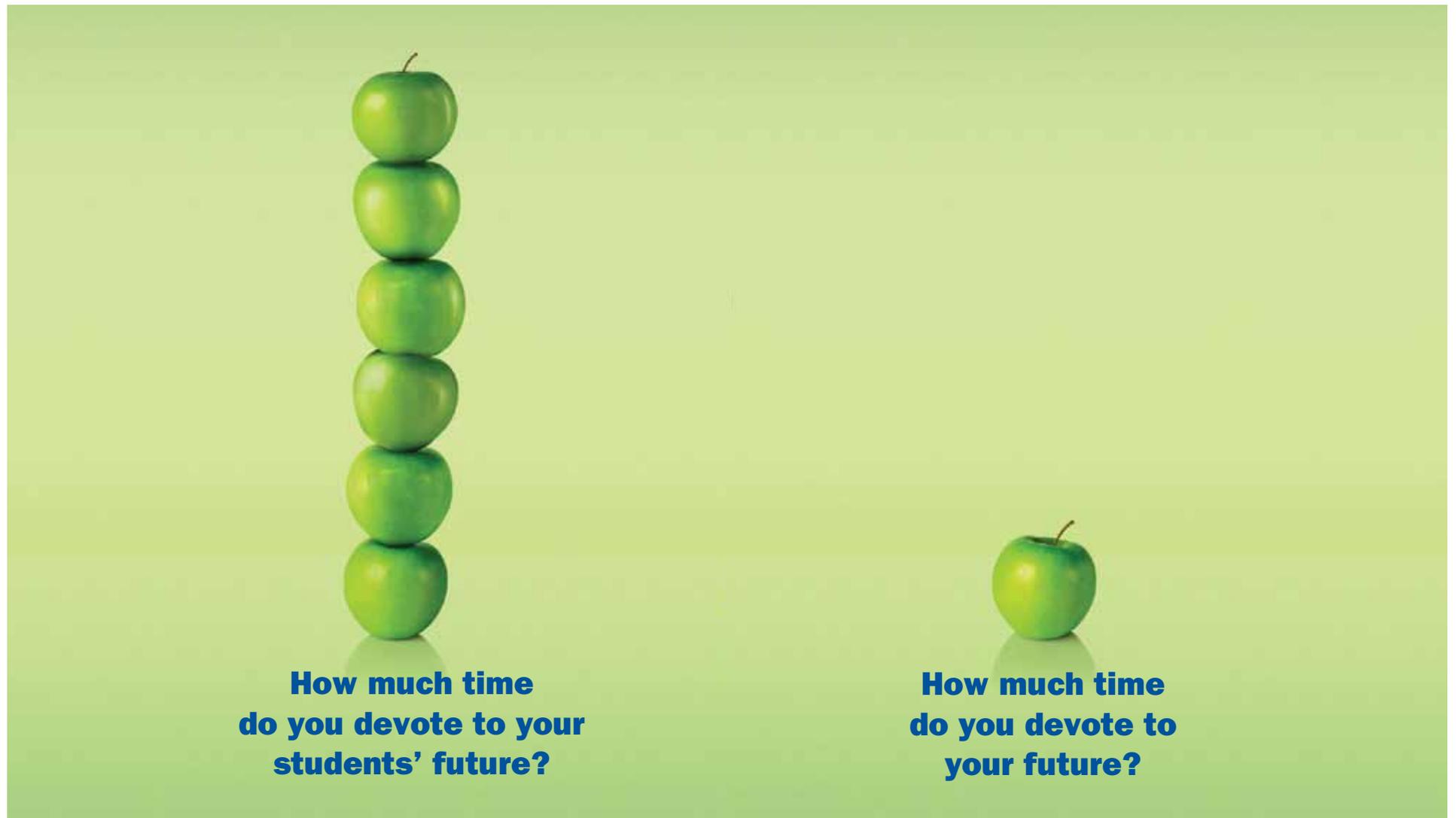
Underground Railroad film offered free to educators

A coming-of-age historical fiction set in the 1850s, the female-centric educa-

tional film *Never Give Up! Ama's Journey to Freedom on the Underground Railroad* provides content on slavery in the United States as well as on everyday acts of resistance by enslaved people. The 28-minute film weaves live footage of students acting out the story of an enslaved girl named Ama with original illustrations and historical photographs. For a free DVD and curriculum, visit www.nevergiveupfilm.org.

Salary point class on classical art

Expand your knowledge of Classical heritage by enrolling in "Greeks and Romans for Geeks a-Roamin'." The class will visit the Getty Villa (near Malibu), the L.A. County Museum of Art, and the Huntington Library. This District-approved class is open to all K-12 teachers, is worth two salary points, and will expose participants to resources that can supplement their teaching. Participants will meet at Francis Polytechnic High on November 9, 16, and 23, and December 7, at 8 a.m. From Francis Polytechnic High, we will commute to the three locations (one each class day, except for December 7). The course fee is \$175, pre-registered (\$185 on the first day), which includes materials and museum admissions. Enrollments will be accepted until—and including—the first day of class (November 9, 2013), or until cap is reached, whichever happens first. For further information, email en4ed@earthlink.net or visit: www.en4ed.com, or call Larry Carstens at (818) 645-4259.



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Bilingual education issues

Misinformation abounds about the Master Plan.

I was called by a school with a concern about two siblings who had recently arrived from out of the country and whose parents wished them to be in a transitional bilingual program, which that school offers. A transitional bilingual program (TBE) is a K-3 program whose goal is literacy in English. The parents were told that, while the kindergartener could be placed in the bilingual program, the second-grader could not because "he will just have to exit next year anyway, so why do it?" These parents were given incorrect information. A parent request is all that is necessary as long as there are 20 per grade level. After I contacted the ESC superintendent, the matter was clarified for the school and the second-grader was placed in a bilingual class.

A second school called to say that an eighth-grader from out of the country had been incorrectly placed a year ago in an English immersion class instead of a newcomer class, as is directed by the Master Plan. Now, a year later, after a hugely successful year for the student, who is taking additional ESL classes on Saturdays, the school wants to put her in the newcomer program. Doing this means she will be double-blocked for ELD and not able to take algebra. Her parents were against this because she is, evidently, quite gifted in math and they want her on a college prep track. The school convinced the parents to agree to the newcomer placement, but the student could have been placed in a regular sheltered program and given one period of ESL. The parents should have been the

ultimate decision makers.

Today I went to visit a school where there is much concern about homogeneous groupings of EL students for class organization. The staff members strongly believe in heterogeneous groupings and say that it has been their practice for years. We had a long discussion about the need for differentiation for core instruction, which the District believes is more possible in the homogeneous setting. The teachers expressed a strong desire to speak with an EL expert from the District in order to have a conversation about this policy.

Misinformation abounds. A lack of information abounds. The directives of the Master Plan are either not understood, or simply not followed. The quality of the professional development relating to Master Plan concerns has been abysmal. Despite research, the achievement gains of students in bilingual and dual-language programs are just not being made known. If the District is serious about closing the achievement gap, better information must be brought to administrators and teachers. For more information about the Master Plan, Transitional, or Dual Language Programs (one-way or two-way), please contact me. I will be happy to come to your site.

Next Bilingual Ed Committee meeting:
October 16, 4:30 p.m. at UTLA, Room 828.

—Cheryl Ortega
UTLA Director of Bilingual Education
cortega@utla.net



UTLA/NEA "WHO" Awards Dinner "We Honor Ours" Monday, October 14, 2013 5:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Join the celebration honoring UTLA/NEA members for their activism and service and to recognize community support of our public schools.

2013 Recipients

Local "WHO" Awards

Sean Abajian
Shirley Bass
John Paul Cabrera
Ginger Fox
Venida Korda
Laura McQuinn
Ange McNeil
Robert Stromoski
Karen Tisor-Lee
Ingrid Villeda
Jamie Wolf

State "WHO" Award

Linda Guthrie
Hattie McFrazier

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Olé Córdillo
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(Business Attire)

Special Guest Speaker
Tony Mendoza
Former California State Assembly Member

For information contact Vivian Vega at 213-368-6259 or vvega@utla.net.

To reserve your seat for the UTLA/NEA "WHO" Awards Dinner please complete and return the form below along with your check for \$40 via U.S. Mail with proper postage affixed to: Vivian Vega c/o UTLA, 3303 Wilshire Blvd., 10th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90010.

UTLA/NEA "WHO" Awards Dinner Reservation — Must be received no later than October 1, 2013

Name _____ Employee# _____
 Address _____
 City _____ Zip _____
 Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____
 Work Location _____ E-Mail _____
 Please Seat Me with _____

Circle Your Entrée Selection: Beef Chicken Fish Vegetarian Meal

Enclosed is my check for \$40 per person (payable to UTLA/NEA)

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Notice to new LAUSD employees concerning UTLA dues/agency fees

The collective bargaining agreement between the Los Angeles Unified School District ("District") and United Teachers Los Angeles ("UTLA") provides that as a new, certificated bargaining unit employee of the District, you are required to do one of the following within your first 30 days of employment:

1. Join UTLA; or
2. Pay "agency fees," unless you come under the religious exemption listed below.

The agreement states at Article IV-A, Section 4.0:

"Agency Fee/Dues Obligation: Commencing within thirty (30) days of employee's initial employment, throughout the term of this Agreement, each employee (as defined in Article I of this Agreement) is required as a condition of continued employment either (a) to be a member in good standing of UTLA, or (b) to satisfy the agency fee financial obligations set forth in Section 4.1 below, unless qualified for religious exemption as set forth in Section 4.2 below. Newly hired bargaining members shall have deductions for dues or agency fee made on the first warrant received from the District. If this warrant covers several pay periods, a deduction shall be made for each pay period."

Joining UTLA

If you join UTLA, you will be responsible for paying union dues. As a member of UTLA you are entitled to the benefits of member-

ship, including the right to fully participate in the internal activities of UTLA, such as voting on internal union elections, and eligibility for any member-only services and benefits, such as a half-hour free legal advice.

Paying agency fees

If you choose not to join, you will pay agency fees as determined by UTLA pursuant to an annual independent audit. These fees will be deducted from your paycheck and will not be more than the combined dues, initiation fee, and general assessments that UTLA members pay. If you choose not to join UTLA and object to UTLA spending your agency fees on matters unrelated to collective bargaining and the administration of the UTLA/LAUSD contract, your fees will not go toward political contributions or certain aspects of lobbying, ballot measures, publications, organizing, and litigation, as determined by law. A copy of the Notice to Non-Members that was sent last year and which explains the independent audit process can be requested by calling the UTLA Membership Department.

Religious exemption

You can be exempted if you are a member of a bonafide religion that meets the legal standard for traditionally objecting to employee organizations. The exemption will apply only to an employee "who is a member

of a religious body whose traditional tenets or teachings include objections to joining or financially supporting employee organizations. . . ." An eligible employee will pay, in lieu of an agency fee payment, an amount equal to the agency fee, to a nonreligious, nonlabor, charitable organization. Should you wish to apply for this exemption, you should contact the District's payroll division.

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Stull evaluation: List of constraints

Use on your initial planning sheet.

See accompanying Stull Q&A in this issue.

The following items keep teachers and students from achieving according to their potential. Circle the ones that apply in your situation and attach to your initial planning sheet.

1. Crowded classes that prevent individualized instruction and promote discipline problems.
2. Traveling or roving, which prevents teachers from setting up a good learning environment.
3. Improper use of common planning time.
4. Burdening overtaxed teachers with the chores of secretaries, policemen, and collection agents, e.g., cafeteria supervision, hall patrol, playground and bus duty, lavatory checking, money collection, duplication of material.
5. Understocked and understaffed libraries.
6. Unreliable and rigid requisition and delivery system for school supplies.
7. Shortages of necessities, such as audiovisual apparatus (including TVs, VCRs, and current videos) teacher manuals, CDs, DVDs, legible paper, music materials, science kits and equipment, computers and software, pencils, crayons, construction paper, PE equipment, staplers, tape, etc.
8. Delays in repairing and servicing equipment, windows, and structures.
9. No expense account to buy needed teaching aids.
10. Frequent classroom interruptions.
11. Favoritism in rotating assignments among difficult or slow classes.
12. Closed stock rooms.
13. Lack of textbooks that meet the differing reading abilities of students.
14. Inadequate teacher workrooms, lounges, or lavatories.
15. Lack of separate rooms for counseling, remedial reading, speech therapy, art, music, and the RSP program.
16. Teacher staff development that is run by nonteachers, poorly planned, and/or performed outside school hours.
17. Frequent assignment of duties during a teacher's lunch period.
18. No adequate program to diagnose and treat disruptive students. Readmission to regular classes without corrective or therapeutic action.
19. Frequent failure of administration to support a teacher in a discipline case. Not enough time to talk personally with students.
20. Insufficient number of telephones for teachers and counselors to contact parents about their students.
21. Lack of academic freedom from administrative interference in conducting class, grading students, handling controversial subjects, and innovating instruction.
22. Arbitrary or capricious teacher evaluation procedure.
23. Pressure requiring secondary teachers to forgo their preparation period in order to cover classes or further filling an overcrowded elementary classroom with more students from an absent teacher's class.
24. No District procedure for faculty to evaluate or have an incompetent administrator removed.
25. Lack of a daily preparation period for every teacher.
26. Failure to provide all students with specialists in the fields of music, art, and physical education.
27. Not enough psychologists, counselors, coordinators, and mental health teams to handle the problems of students.
28. Lack of time for department chairs to provide services to members of department.
29. Patronage system in the appointment of administrators.
30. Assignment of teachers outside their field of competence and training.
31. Culturally insensitive school program.
32. Depriving students of needed workbooks for reading, math, and English.
33. Failure to provide economically disadvantaged students with needed services in schools to meet their needs.
34. Outdated curriculum in many areas, controlled by nonteachers.
35. High transiency rate.
36. Failure to provide library centers and reference books adequate for each elementary classroom.
37. Split grade classes that further inhibit instruction and widen the achievement range of pupils.
38. Lack of access to stockrooms, book room, supply cabinets, and Xerox machine.
39. Lack of collaboration between parents and teachers.
40. Nonsupportive school climate.
41. Hostile, noncaring administrators.
42. District-mandated programs and pacing plans that are not based on needs of students.
43. Lack of intervention mechanisms.
44. Other: _____

Signature: _____

Stull Disclaimer:
 "Pursuant to California Education Code sections 44660-65, I specifically renounce and reject any standards, objectives, techniques, board rules, or policies which are not reasonable, professional, valid or consonant with the growth of my students and with relevant educational principles. I also incorporate by reference the UTLA lists of constraints upon which the achievement of all valid goals and objectives is predicated."



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UTLA CALENDAR

<p>Friday, September 20</p> <p>UNITED TEACHER Publishes</p> <p>Wednesday, September 25</p> <p>UTLA Area Meetings (in the Eight UTLA Areas)</p> <p>Saturday, September 28</p> <p>CFT Committees and Division Councils (Oakland)</p> <p>Sunday, September 29</p> <p>CFT State Council (Oakland)</p> <p>Wednesday, October 2</p> <p>PACE, Elementary, Secondary, and African American Committee Meeting</p> <p>Friday, October 4</p> <p>LAUSD Pay Day</p> <p>Saturday, October 5</p> <p>Substitute Committee General Meeting</p> <p>Wednesday, October 9</p> <p>Board of Directors Meeting</p>	<p>Monday, October 14</p> <p>WHO Awards Dinner (Knollwood Country Club)</p> <p>Wednesday, October 16</p> <p>Standing Committees House of Representatives</p> <p>Friday, October 18</p> <p>UNITED TEACHER Publishes UTLA-Retired General Assembly Meeting</p> <p>Saturday, October 19</p> <p>UTLA Pre-Retirement Issues Conference</p> <p>Monday, October 21</p> <p>UTLA/NEA Board Meeting UTLA/NEA Service Center Membership Meeting</p> <p>Friday, October 25-27</p> <p>CTA State Council (Westin Bonaventure)</p> <p>Wednesday, October 30</p> <p>UTLA Area Meetings (in the Eight UTLA Areas)</p>
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- ⇒ My school has a new curriculum, but we're still trying to write units for it.
- ⇒ I have these great tricks for making it easier to be an educator.
- ⇒ My friends have been passing around a great book about teaching, and we're talking about how to "bring it to the classroom."
- ⇒ I'm an NBC Teacher, but I don't know what to do for my 92 hours.
- ⇒ I haven't maxed out my salary points!
- ⇒ I just need a little "something" to expand my repertoire.



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Oct 17	Mar 20		
Nov 21	Apr 17		
Dec 19	May 22		
	Jun 12		

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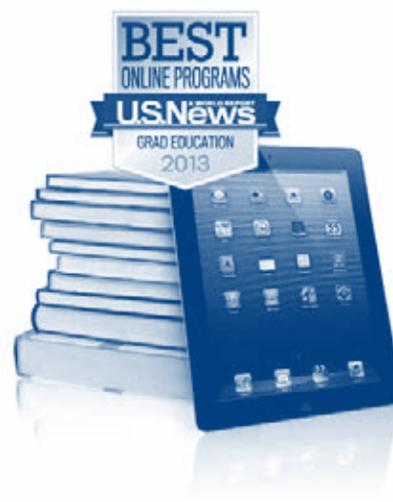
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FOR RENT

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RETIRED TEACHERS

Protect your retirement benefits. Join the California Retired Teachers Association (CalRTA) Division 19 for lunch Friday, October 11, 2013, 10 a.m. at the Northridge women's Club, 18401 Lassen Street, Northridge 91324. Our featured speaker, Dawnnsha Smith, Community Outreach Manager, department of Consumer Affairs, will discuss how to protect against "Identity Theft." Enrich your retirement experience, meet new friends and browse our boutiques and book sales table. For reservations and a \$15.00 catered lunch, call Diane Kleinfeld, (818) 360-5014.

LAUSD EMPLOYMENT

Job share/employment available ads in LAUSD employment section are FREE.

JOB SHARE

I am a new mom and would love to job share at my school (or possibly yours) for this spring 2014 semester. 8th grade Science position at an amazing middle school in the west valley. You would teach Tuesday, Thursday, and a half day on Friday (9 am-1:30 pm). Students and faculty are great here. Email or call Rachel ASAP before the Nov. 15th deadline. Gdfrnd@gmail.com or (818) 414-6927.

Job share partner wanted for spring semester 2014 in North Hollywood/Valley area. Friendly and orga-

nized campus. Paperwork must be filed in November. Please contact Jennifer. Text message or call (323) 493-3991.

Job share looking for a science substitute teacher for up to 12 weeks at West Valley middle school. Call Rachel at (818) 414-6927 or email Gdfrnd@gmail.com.

Job share partner wanted. Your school or mine—third grade West L.A., awesome school. Must have paperwork filed in April for August start. Adrienna, (310) 494-8422.

How To Place Your UT Classified Ad

Print your ad from your computer or use a typewriter. If you're using the coupon below, please print clearly. Count the number of words in your ad. Area code and telephone number count as one word. Email and web address count as one word. Street address counts as one word. City and state, including zip code, count as one word. Abbreviations and numbers are considered words and are charged individually. The classified ad rate is \$1.25 per word for each time your ad runs (there is no charge for LAUSD job share/employment available ads). Multiply the number of words in your ad by \$1.25. This is the cost for running your ad one time in UNITED TEACHER. If you're running your ad in more than one issue, multiply the one-time total by the number of issues you wish the ad to appear. We have a ten word minimum (\$12.50). **All ads are payable in advance by check or money order.** Please make check payable to UTLA. The deadline to receive your classified ad at the UTLA Communications Dept. is noon on the Monday that falls two weeks prior to the publication date. Any questions? Call (213) 637-5173.

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2014 Secondary/Elementary Conference

THE CALL FOR PRESENTERS

Proposal Submittal Deadline: November 18, 2013

You are invited to participate in the 2014 UTLA Elementary/Secondary Conference at UTLA by organizing a conference session. Presenters can earn NBC hours or a salary point. This conference is for all grade levels and all subject areas. Come share your expertise with your colleagues and support your union!

This year's theme is
Let's Talk Common Core
 Presenting Dates: Feb. 21st & 22nd

Submission of Proposals

Proposals may be submitted to:
 Diane Newell at dnewell@utla.net or Princess Sykes at psykes@utla.net

Proposal Contents	Presenter's Information
Please make your submittal as complete as possible, but don't hesitate to let us know where you are still refining and may make future changes or updates. We will work with you. Proposals must provide the following information: • Session or workshop title: A short and catchy title that accurately reflects the focus of the session. • Summary of Session: A short description of the session to be used in the conference program, not exceeding 50 words. • Abstract: A short description of the session and relevance to conference topic, not exceeding 200 words. • Each presenter's contact information and short biography.	UTLA will provide complimentary registration in exchange for presenting at the conference and PD or NBC hours. Presenters can attend any sessions before or after their presentation Meals will be provided UTLA will provide a LCD projector/screen Internet Access You must provide your own laptop Please make enough handouts for your group (tba)

ALL GRADE LEVELS – regarding Common Core : Math, new generation science, language arts, history, PE, activities, lessons, budgeting, PD ideas, school governance, special education, gifted, arts, interdisciplinary activities...

Questions? Contact UTLA Secondary VP Gregg Solkovits at 213.368.6220
 Fax: (213) 251.9891 contact person: Princess Sykes

UNITED TEACHER

GRAPEVINE

Evenings for Educators at LACMA

For over 30 years LACMA's Evenings for Educators program has provided K-12 teachers with opportunities to look at, learn about, and create works of art. On October 1 from 4:30 to 8:30 p.m., teachers can explore works of art that reflect the social histories, cosmologies, and cultural practices of unique peoples. Examine 18th- to 20th-century thrones, scepters, and commemorative figures that speak to the complexity of Luba society, featuring the exhibition "Shaping Power: Luba Masterworks from the Royal Museum for Central Africa." Enjoy complimentary parking and dinner catered by the Patina Group as well as curriculum filled with images, lesson plans, and resources. Tickets are \$15 per person. For more information, please visit www.lacma.org/programs/education/evenings-educators or call (323) 857-6093.

Events for teachers at the Natural History Museum

The Natural History Museum has the following events of interest to educators:

- *Natural History Museum Educator Open House: Saturday, September 28, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.*

Enjoy a continental breakfast, explore new exhibits, and enter to win resources for the classroom. Find out more about the

day and RSVP online at www.nhm.org/ for-teachers by September 22 to receive free parking.

- *Schoolyard Wildlife: A Makers Workshop: Saturday, October 12, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.*

Hear about how the museum's biologists study urban wildlife (mountain lions in Griffith Park? bugs in our backyard?) and how they capture their data, and then learn to make and use tools to document wildlife at your school. RSVP with name, phone, and email to info@nhm.org; subject line: Schoolyard Wildlife Registration. One name per registration please. Workshop is free.

- *iNaturalist Drop-In Training: Saturday, October 19, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.*

Drop in anytime to get one-on-one training and help from our educators on how you and your students can contribute to existing research projects in iNaturalist, or create your very own. No registration required. No fee.

Salary point class on cultural diversity

"Valuing Difference" is an interactive seminar on cultural diversity, family history, media and societal impacts, and effective communications. The salary point workshop covers the important role your own culture plays in day-to-day interac-

tions and includes interactive exercises in which participants review various issues from a variety of viewpoints. The next session is October 26 and 27 (Saturday and Sunday). The workshop runs from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on each day. The fee is \$75. Location: 8339 W. 3rd Street, Los Angeles, CA 90048. One multicultural salary point available. For more information or to register, call Kari Bower at (323) 653-3332 or email ShawnGrifLA@aol.com.

Art field trips for teachers & friends

Looking for a fun way to spend a Saturday learning about art? Want to incorporate more art into your classroom? Need NBC professional growth or GATE hours? Join two NBC art teachers for one (or more) adventures exploring art in Los Angeles. Below are the dates and topics for Saturday PDs. You are welcome to bring someone too.

- *Saturday, October 26, 2013, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.:* Dia de los Muertos at Olvera Street

- *Saturday, February 1, 2014:* Location TBD

- *Saturday, March 8, 2014, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.:* Alexander Calder's Mobiles at LACMA

- *Saturday, April 26, 2014, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.:* Ezra Jack Keats at Skirball

To sign up, email Kristin Taylor, NBCT, M.A., at kav6532@lausd.net or Patricia

Naczinski, NBCT, at pmn6434@lausd.net, and they will send you the agendas.

Workshop on creating engaged classrooms

PassageWorks Institute is holding a workshop, "Creating Engaged Classrooms," on a practical approach to fostering connections, compassion, character, and academic excellence. This highly experiential course for K-12 educators will offer core practices and principles that foster students' social, emotional, and academic development and support teachers to develop and sustain an intentional teaching practice. Educators will experience practical tools and strategies for creating rigorous, relationship-based learning communities. This approach supports students to excel academically, think creatively and critically, develop their leadership capacities, manage their emotions, work with others who are different from themselves, and communicate effectively. The workshop takes place October 12 (9 a.m.-6 p.m.) and October 13 (9 a.m.-5 p.m.) at the Westridge School in Pasadena. The fee is \$450. One graduate credit available through Colorado State University or 22 hours of continuing education credit. For more information, contact

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