Our Crisis/Organizing team had its’ first Community Forum on Thursday, January 13, at the Roberts Family Development Center. By the time this article is printed we will have had a second Community Forum held at the North Highlands Community Center. Our intention is to have a third Forum on the North/West side of the district.

At the Roberts Family Center there were approximately 60 to 70 parents and community members in attendance. Our team was thrilled to have such a good turn out.

These Forums are intended to inform the community about our current impasse situation with the District. We talked about “Just the Facts” updates from TRUE, the overcrowded classrooms, the filthy classrooms, and the concessions that the District administration wants from the educators.

We shared teacher/student stories that focused on the crowded classrooms and the powerful influence one significant adult can have upon the aspirations of a student.

Two of our Board Members attended at different times, Mrs. Chasten came with her son for the beginning and then Mr. Quinn came and addressed the audience while answering questions about the “facts” and the difficulties in working with the current administration and Board. Members of the audience asked many excellent questions throughout the evening.

Class size was a big concern. Having furlough days was also a concern as it means the students are in school for less time. They also asked about late start Wednesdays and the negative effect it has on the routine and skills acquisition for the elementary students. Another concern was about the attorney fees and funding Mr. Porter’s legal fees out of the general fund. There were questions about possible asbestos at the Las Palmas center and the exchange of one safety concern for another.

The overriding feeling was one of support for the teachers, respect for all our efforts on behalf of the children in Twin Rivers and disdain for the top administration and the ineffective Board. The parents and community members at this meeting want to be heard and currently do not feel that they are being respected.

I want to acknowledge the Organizing Team members that conducted this event. Special thanks to Shirley Chambers, Cathy Mapes, Craig Green and others for leading the group in break out sessions, sharing “Just the Facts”, and telling personal stories from the classroom. It was wonderful to be part of such an enthusiastic, caring and knowledgeable team of dedicated teachers. Thank you to all the other members of the team whose efforts made this forum possible.

In Unity,
Jeanie Stockton
Crisis/Organizing Chair

*Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.* ~ Martin Luther King, Jr.
President’s Message -

January 14, 2011

The year 2011 promises to be interesting. Today I was briefed on the Governor’s Education Budget. Essentially, school districts will operate with two budgets for 2011-2012. The revenue will either be flat or our District will take a $6 or $7 mil hit, if the June 2011 Tax Proposition Extension does not pass.

At the School Board meeting on January 18, 2011, the District will propose a surprisingly generous “Golden Handshake” for all District employees who want to, and can, retire. Detailed information about this will soon be sent out to all employees. We believe this can nearly offset the final May 15, 2011 layoffs.

The first Impasse mediation session is scheduled for January 27, 2011. On page 3 of this issue of TRUE News you can find information on the Impasse Procedures. The TRUE Negotiations Team and the District continue to talk to try to resolve the issues. This Impasse process will likely go into the Spring. We will never accept the District’s Draconian cuts.

The TRUE Crisis/Organizing Team has visited many schools to talk with educators, inform them about negotiations, implications of Impasse and furloughs, etc., and to answer teachers’ questions. The Crisis/Organizing Team has also successfully convened Community Forums. Get involved in the Team’s activities!

John Ennis
TRUE President

Education is not a preparation for life. Education is life itself. - John Dewey

The District’s “Last, Best and Final” Offer

10.28.2010
DISTRICT PACKAGE

2. 18% STIPEND DECREASE for stipends in Article 9, effective January 1, 2011

4. Parent conferences at K-8 and Professional Days in lieu of parent conference at 7-12 = 0 days for 2010-2011, 0 days for 2011-2012) and thereafter. The days that were on the calendar for non-student attendance/parent conference and/or Professional Development will be revised on the calendar to be non-duty furlough days.

5. REDUCTION OF WORK YEAR (Article 4)
A. Two additional days of the instructional calendar will be removed from the instructional calendar for 2010-2011, and all years thereafter; the instructional year will be 175 days, while the work year will reduced 7.5 days for each Member, as compared to the original work year set forth in the salary schedules.

8. Each Member will have 7.5 UNPAID FURLOUGH DAYS PER YEAR, effective July 1, 2010, this will continue until restored under restoration language

9. CHANGE IN DISTRICT BENEFIT CONTRIBUTION EFFECTIVE MARCH 1, 2011 - ARTICLE 15.1.1.2
a. District contribution for Single: Current $5,505 changes to $5,005
b. District contribution for Employee plus one: changes from current $10,395 to $9,395
c. District contribution for Family: changes from current $13,065 to $11,065

Equals per payment change (with ten payment plan) of: $50 single, $100 employee plus one, $200 family. Effective January 1, 2011

10. $1500 per cell, all cells, all salary schedules except ECE, effective June 30, 2011; across the board salary reduction, ongoing until restored under restoration language. All hourly schedules except ECE will be decreased by $1.00 per hour in each cell.
What does Impasse mean?
Under collective bargaining law, when one or both parties in a round of bargaining cannot offer further concessions to get to an agreement, they are at an impasse. Bargaining laws establish a set of procedures to follow when at impasse. The “impasse procedures” have two distinct phases: mediation and fact-finding.

What is Mediation?
In mediation, the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) appoints a mediator who meets with the parties to resolve the dispute. The mediator has two kinds of leverage:

1. He or she can use the power of one of the parties to make the other offer further concessions. We provide such leverage when we mobilize to put pressure on the School Board. If we don't mobilize, the leverage is against us.

2. The mediator has the power to certify the dispute to fact-finding. Only the mediator can do this.

What is Fact-Finding?
If the mediator certifies the dispute to fact-finding, one party must initiate it by sending a request to PERB. Once this is done, each party names an advocate to serve on the Fact-Finding Panel, and they choose a neutral fact-finder from a list provided by PERB. The two advocates and the neutral form the Fact-Finding Panel.

The Fact-Finding Panel hears a presentation by each of the parties. After the presentation, the neutral issues his or her findings of fact and a recommended settlement. The two advocates can agree or not with the neutral’s recommendations; their statements are combined with the recommendation to form the Fact-Finding Report. The District must make the Fact-Finding Report public within 10 days of having received it.

Are the recommendations binding?
No. The recommendations are advisory and are not binding on either party.

Are the facts really “found”? 
Sometimes. Fact-finding is really an extension of bargaining. The relative leverage of the parties still determines the outcome.

What happens then?
After fact-finding, the District and the Association must consider the report. Once that is done, the District is free to adopt its “last, best and final offer”.

What happens to the Contract?
When only re-opener articles are being negotiated (which is the case right now for TRUE), and the parties have not reached an agreement, in general terms it can be said that those articles would cease to be in effect.

When the entire Contract is what’s being negotiated, and the parties have not reached an agreement, then there would be no Contract at all.

What can the Association do?
The Associations’ legal recourse is to ask its members to strike. Strikes are legal only after the impasse procedures have been exhausted.

Why not just let the District adopt its “last, best and final offer”? 
Not only is that “offer” not good enough or beneficial for the educators, but even worse, that would mean the end of collective bargaining in this District. The District would have learned that it could simply stonewall until the impasse procedures were exhausted and then get its way. Not one of our working conditions would be safe if this were to happen.

We must ALL get actively involved in fighting to protect our rights!
Know your Rights: When Facing Charges of Serious Misconduct

Occasionally school employees face charges of misconduct that could form the basis for dismissal, credential revocation or criminal prosecution. Too frequently, school officials who investigate these charges seem only to believe the students or parents. School employees facing serious charges need competent legal counsel before they talk to anyone. Although you know you are innocent, school officials will investigate on the assumption that you are guilty.

What you should DO:

1. Contact your Association immediately. You are entitled by law, and should demand, Association representation in any meeting with school officials to discuss any complaint against you. You forfeit this right, either by failing to request representation or by attending the meeting without Association Representation.

2. Seek referral to a CTA Legal Services Attorney. The CTA lawyer will provide advice and consultation, and representation in cases directly involving your employment. Initial consultations are paid by CTA. Depending on the problem, you may be entitled to representation at CTA expense.

3. Keep a diary of all communications from anyone about the situation. Keeping a diary not only helps you make sense of what’s happening during a time that is usually difficult and often very emotional, but it will also help you to remember details.

What you should NOT DO:

1. Do Not talk to the police. If the police wants to talk to you, simply tell them that you are unwilling to talk to them without your lawyer present.

2. Do Not talk to anyone about the details of the situation, except your spouse, until you have talked with your attorney. Discussions with your spouse are covered by a rule of “spousal privilege. There is no privilege for communication with a fellow employee, friend, school official, a representative of Child Protective Services, or even your union representative.

3. Do Not be misled by statements that “Nothing will happen if you will just tell us what happened.” School officials, even those you trust, have a duty to investigate student/parent complaints and to take appropriate actions. You must protect yourself and follow professional legal advice.

4. Do Not make any decision concerning your job. A promise to “keep the investigation quiet in exchange for your resignation” is without credibility. Making a deal does not immunize you from further action by the District, Child Protection Services, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, or parents who want to “punish” you.

Chuck Denonn
TRUE Contract Enforcement Committee Chair

News from The Standard

Happy New Year from The Standard! - To learn more about CTA-endorsed Disability and Life Insurance from The Standard, call their dedicated CTA Customer Service Dept.: 800.522.0406 from 7 am to 6 pm, or by visiting www.cta.org/thestandard.

Family status changes - Remember that within 31 days of a Family Status Change, you can add or increase Life Insurance coverage up to $200,000 and/or add Disability coverage. Family Status Changes include: birth/adoption, marriage/domestic partnership and other qualifying events. For more information about this enrollment opportunity, or to file a maternity Disability claim, visit us at www.cta.org/thestandard.

Keep your records up-to-date - At the start of this new year remember to call The Standard if you’re moving to a new address or need to make changes to your beneficiary designations. It’s very important to keep your records up-to-date, and it’s easy to do. Simply call The Standard’s dedicated CTA Customer Service Department at 800.522.0406 or go online to www.cta.org/thestandard.

For costs and further details of the coverage, including exclusions, benefit waiting periods and any reductions or limitations and the terms under which the policy may be continued in force, please contact The Standard’s dedicated CTA Customer Service Department at 800.522.0406.
Open Meeting of the NEA Resolutions Committee

California Delegates to the NEA Resolutions Committee met in mid-January as part of CTA’s annual Issues Conference to plan the year’s activities, to conduct an Open Hearing on NEA Resolutions, and to report results from local and regional hearings. TRUE member Chuck Denonn was one of the 14 California representatives to attend the committee meeting. Chuck represents all TRUE members and thousands of other Sacramento-area teachers on the NEA Resolutions Committee. He reported the results of his yearlong dialogue with local members and the results of the Open Hearing he conducted at the October 2010 Region 2 Leadership Conference.

NEA resolutions are the formal expressions of opinion, intent, belief, or position of the NEA. Broad in nature, they set forth general concepts in clear, concise language. They express positions of the NEA positively, consistent with the goals set forth in the Preamble to the NEA Constitution. NEA Committee members will use the input of members made at local, state, and regional hearings to develop the Preliminary Report of the NEA Resolutions Committee at the winter meeting in Washington in February. The report will be voted on by delegates at the annual Representative Assembly in July. Members may download a copy of the NEA Resolutions document at www.NEA.org.

Any member can make a request to change or amend the NEA Resolutions document by attending a hearing or working directly with a Resolutions Committee member. A Sacramento-area Open Hearing is scheduled for an upcoming Capital Service Center Council meeting. Another Open Hearing will be held in conjunction with the NEA Pacific Region Meeting in late February. Members can also contact Chuck Denonn directly to make recommendations for changes to the annual NEA Resolutions Report. He can be reached at (916) 765-2431 or cdenonn@peoplepc.com.

Chuck Denonn
TRUE Director-at-Large

TRUE CARS+ CORNER

TRUE CARS+ last meeting was held on January 20th at 4:30 in the Walnut Room at the Twin Rivers District Office. Special Educators from Twin Rivers, San Juan and Elk Grove are all working together to help with the annual CARSplus convention. This year the convention is being held here in Sacramento at the Doubletree Hotel on February 18th and 19th. TRUE members Nancy Nos and Gayle Green will both be presenting workshops for special educators from all over the state.

The TRUE CARS+ chapter has been invited to have a local group organizational display to encourage new membership. They have also been asked to assist with some of the transportation and hospitality for out of town convention attendees. We are all very excited about hosting this year’s annual CARSplus convention. If you would like to participate, please contact Jane Pena, Barbara Oliver or Joyce Childs.

Joyce Childs
CARS+ Region 7 Director

Negotiations Update

On Tuesday, November 30, the Twin Rivers Unified School District officially filed for Impasse in negotiations with TRUE.

We will still meet with the District on language for school closures, reconfigurations and other categories of transfers. The mediation will begin around the end of January. If nothing is resolved with a mediator, we will move on to fact-finding. The process for mediation and fact-finding could take us through the rest of this school year.

Paul LeFrancois
TRUE Lead Negotiator
Rhee Taking Education Reform Message Nationwide.

The AP (1/10, Armario) reports that former DC schools Chancellor Michelle Rhee “is continuing her fight to improve the nation’s classrooms through a new organization, Students First. This time, she’s hoping to better tap into discontent with the state of public schools across the country.” According to the AP, “On Monday, she’ll announce the group’s agenda, focusing on three areas: the teaching profession, empowering families with information and choices; and developing more accountability.”

California Education Chief Declares Fiscal Emergency For State’s Schools.

Bloomberg News (1/7, Marois) reported that California Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson said that “California’s public schools are mired in a fiscal crisis” and cautioned “that renewed cuts might push some districts further toward insolvency after three consecutive years of deficits.” He added that 174 California districts “are in financial jeopardy and may require state oversight. He called on Governor Jerry Brown to resist making more cuts to elementary and high-school education.”

KGO-TV San Francisco (1/7, Anthony) added on its website that Torlakson also said, "The law won't let me call out the National Guard. Your schools need your help. And they need it now. Continuing some of the current taxes that are in place, that the taxpayers got used to paying, that were put in place to protect schools and education, we need to do that."

The San Jose Mercury News (1/7, Gonzales) observed that in addition to Torlakson’s declaration, he also identified ways that his office hopes to save districts money ahead of the Governor's budget announcement. Specifically, “Torlakson’s ideas of giving districts additional financial flexibility and streamlining the school construction process pleased local education leaders.” Howard Blume also covered this story in a blog for the Los Angeles Times (1/7).

K-12 Funding, Policy On Radar For New Congress.

Education Week (1/7, Klein) reported, "President Obama has a long list of K-12 items on the policy agenda for his next two years in office, but it remains to be seen how his priorities will jibe with those of the new, more conservative Congress that took office last week with many members intent on shrinking the federal government and squeezing spending. Although renewal of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—whose current version is the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002—is being touted as one area of potential common ground, the task is politically tricky for reasons that go beyond partisan divisions: There are deep disagreements within both parties over the best direction to take K-12 policy." Also, "the new Republican-controlled House could step up oversight of key Obama programs, including the $4.35 billion Race to the Top program."
Grievance Update

The TRUE Grievance Committee held a meeting with the District to review procedures on November 19. At that meeting, a number of grievances were resolved. We are having many issues with members turning in units in order to move over on the salary schedule. Every time this takes place, the District is auditing your units from the past. A number of mistakes have been found, but we feel it is time to move on and honor whatever the past four districts claimed our members had. CTA is working on this from a legal point of view and our Union Officers are also aware of the issue.

If you feel that you have a grievance against the District, please email the TRUE Office (true.office@yahoo.com). They will put you in touch with the right member of the grievance team to help resolve the problem. Remember that a grievance is a violation of the contract, not a complaint.

Paul LeFrancois
TRUE Grievance Team

Organizing News!

The Organizing Team has been very busy this past month planning Community Forums, getting fliers to schools and communicating with Site Representatives on how they can support our Team’s efforts.

As of the date of this newsletter, we have had 2 community forums and another one is being planned. We invite all teachers to attend to hear what our families and community members are concerned about.

We are also continuing to work on a “Support Survey” to send out to all members, to find out where you can support our organizing efforts during this Impasse Process.

We are now asking our members to WEAR RED ON TUESDAYS to show solidarity during our Impasse Process and to support a national movement to support public education. Educators around the country will be wearing red on Tuesdays.

Wear Red for Public Ed!

More information at: https://sites.google.com/site/sosmtm/

Your Organizing Team is coming! We are continuing to try to fit in as many site visits as possible to keep you up to date and informed on the Impasse Process and to listen to your concerns and answer your questions. Site visits can be arranged by contacting the TRUE Office or emailing Jeanie Stockton at jeanie.stockton@gmail.com.

We are the Twin Rivers United Educators, working with families and the community to provide the best education for our students.

Jeanie Stockton and Kristin Finney
TRUE Organizing Team

Twin Rivers Employee Relations Council (TRERC)

The Twin Rivers Employee Relations Council (TRERC) is an interest based problem solving forum. Information is shared between the District and TRUE in an attempt to head off potential problems and to resolve conflicts on non-bargaining issues. In addition, the TRERC works to resolve administrative transfers each spring. The TRUE team meets once a week before each TRERC session to discuss the "hot" item issues facing our membership. Members may email concerns to the TRUE Office (true.office@yahoo.com) that they want discussed at future TRERC sessions. The TRUE TRERC team consists of: Mark Hales, Shirley Chambers, Kathy King, Chris Moran, Paul Le Francois, TRUE Executive Officers rotate their attendance at meetings.
# TRUE TEAM:

## EXECUTIVE BOARD:

**OFFICERS:**
- President: John Ennis - true.office@yahoo.com
- Vice-President: Kristin Finney - pazgirlk@yahoo.com
- Secretary: Joyce Childs - joyandmic@sbcglobal.com
- Treasurer: Rick Mau - rickmau@trueassociation.org

## DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE:

For Pre-K - Grade 6
- Julieanne Neal - julieanneneal1@surewest.net
- Sharon Reichelt - sreichelt23@gmail.com
- Jeanie Stockton - davejavu1@comcast.net
- Lisa Gant - lisasing@sbcglobal.net

For Grades 7-12
- Paul Le Francois - lefrancois1@earthlink.net
- Chuck Denonn - cdenonn@peoplepc.com

K-12 Special Ed.
- Chris Bach - bacher3@aol.com

Minority Rep.
- Aaron Chan - achan19@yahoo.com

Specialty Groups.
- Maria E. Gallegos - gallegos4@gmail.com

## NEGOTIATIONS TEAM

*Lead Negotiator: Paul Le Francois - lefrancois1@earthlink.net*
- Michelle Dice-Hodgdon - Chris Moran - Patty Reetz

## CONTRACT ENFORCEMENT (Grievances)

- Chuck Denonn - cdenonn@peoplepc.com
- Paul Le Francois - lefrancois1@earthlink.net
- Ann Murray - annblowmurray@earthlink.net
- Sharon Reichelt - sreichelt23@gmail.com

## ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Committee Chair: Julieanne Neal - julieanneneal1@surewest.net

## POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (PAC)

Committee Chair: Lisa Gant - lisasing@sbcglobal.net

## TRUE Reps on the Employee Relations Council (TRERC)

- John Ennis
- Paul Le Francois
- Chuck Denonn
- Mark Hales
- Chris Moran
- Kathy King
- Shirley Chambers

## CTA STATE COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

- Janet Schafer
- Wendy Gallimore
- Kerri Asbury
- Ann Murray
- Chuck Denonn
- Alternate: Catherine Roller

## TRUE NEWS

- Editors: Ann Murray - annblowmurray@earthlink.net
- Juliaanne Neal - julieanneneal1@surewest.net
- Editing Assistants: Jen Turner
- Evelyn Alvarado

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**Calendar of Events**

- Jan. 27: Impasse Process Begins
- Feb. 1: TRUSD Board Mtg
- Feb. 8: TRUE Exec Board Mtg
- Feb. 15: TRUSD Board Mtg
- Feb. 21-24: Presidents Week No School
- Feb. 25: Furlough Day
- Mar. 1: TRUSD Board Mtg
- Mar. 8: TRUE Exec Board Mtg
- Mar. 29: Site Rep Council Mtg

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**T.W.E.**

United Educators

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**TRUE/CTA/NEA**