Four hundred and thirty-nine TRUE members, from all except two sites, participated in the TRUE principal survey. Members were asked to evaluate their principal in nineteen areas. The results point towards inconsistency among the TRUSD principals in all areas. The inconsistencies reported demonstrate the need for more consistent policy expectations for all school administrators.

TRUE leadership wants members to see the results of the survey, without posting a ranking of individual principals. Members transferring to another site will have access to the information on specific principals at the TRUE office.

1. Principal supports a safe and positive learning environment for students: 51.7% of principals meet or exceeded member expectations. Members expressed concerns with the “relaxed discipline philosophy” in our district, especially with the new 7/8 elementary configurations. Principals are inconsistent with consequences, and don’t suspend students that should be suspended. Many sites have incidences of bullying, theft, and drug use/sales during the school day. Some sites have serious safety issues, including several sites that do not have monthly fire drills.

2. Principal supports a safe and positive environment for TRUE members: 49.9% of principals meet or exceed member expectations. Teachers are not feeling supported with discipline issues. Several principals blame the teachers for the student’s poor behavior choices. There are instances of teachers being physically assaulted and injured by students.

3. Principal recognizes and celebrates TRUE members’ professional accomplishments: 57.3% of principals meet or exceed member expectations. Results here are inconsistent. Some staffs reported principals that celebrated members’ successes, while other staffs feel principals select favorites and practice inequitable treatments.

4. Principal celebrates student accomplishments: 62.1% of principals meet or exceed member expectations. Results are again inconsistent. Some sites reported assemblies and awards for student achievements. Other sites reported minimal celebrations for student successes. Most of the members responded that more celebrations for student successes would be helpful.

5. Principal communicates clearly with TRUE members regarding pertinent information: 46.2% of principals meet or exceed members’ expectations. Many members mentioned that they are rarely informed about the school budget. Even more members mentioned that they were not informed about dangerous students being placed in our classes or on our campuses.

6. Principal fosters a sense of community and cooperation with the community: 50.4% of principals meet or exceed member expectations. Members mentioned limited communication or coordination of community events between principals, the community, and educators. The majority of sites reported that more work in this area is needed. Staffs reported trying to foster a sense of community by running after school activities, but principals have not been involved. Furthermore, some principals were reported to hinder the sense of community by pitting teachers against other teachers or parents.

7. Principal fosters a positive school wide moral: 44.9% of principals meet or exceed member expectations. School wide moral is at an all time low for both students and staff. Teachers feel beaten down. Many teachers supported feeling as if their staff was fractured. Some feel as if they have been singled out for not being a principal favorite. Teachers feel overwhelmed and do not feel there is an adequate amount of prep time to get the mountain of tasks completed.

(Continues on Page 2)
Friday, March 16, 2012

There are eighty-one (81) days until the School Board Election. The race can be civil or contentious. We intend to take the high road, but will continue to point disagreement with the status quo, inappropriate expenditures (i.e. lawyer fees) and abusive site supervisors.

After spring break, the campaign will be in high gear. There are many jobs that need to be filled. Precinct walking, phone banking, and delivering signs are some of the tasks that need to be done. This election will offer clear-cut differences among the candidates. The future priorities and direction of the District are at stake. Volunteer to help!

Even during this election campaign, TRUE’s focus is on our 32 laid-off members and their families. We will fight at the lay-off hearings, in the public arena, and in the community to bring our members back by May 15th, or shortly after that.

John Ennis
TRUE President

PRINCIPAL SURVEY RESULTS (continued from Page 1)

8. Principal protects members’ instructional time: 62.4% of principals meet or exceed member expectations. Most members reported that their instructional time is valued, with only necessary interruptions. Many members reported being bothered by phone interruptions for silly things or intercom announcements at random times throughout the day.

9. Principal sets realistic discipline standards on a consistent basis: 38.6% of principals meet or exceed member expectations. There is not a set discipline policy for the district. For this reason, discipline throughout the district is not consistent and often weak. Members reported the need for more serious consequences for serious or habitual behavior infractions. At most sites, members reported discipline as ineffective and lacking. Most principals are hesitant about suspending even when ed-code suggests a suspension for a particular offense.

10. Principal responds to time sensitive issues and other communication: 63.2% of principals meet or exceed member expectations. Member responses indicate inconsistency among principals in this area. Some principals respond quickly to members, while other principals do not respond to any teacher emails or calls. Many read the initial email but do not respond.

11. Principal provides support and resources for members to do their job: 52.4% of principals meet or exceed member expectations. Staffs are mentioning having plenty of resources, but not time. Members feel that more collaboration and prep time is needed on Wednesdays. Sites that have added additional student support coaches or a VP noted improved support.

12. Principal involves members in making important school site decisions: 49.3% of principals meet or exceed member expectations. There is a great inconsistency between sites. Some sites have strong leadership teams that meet frequently to discuss important issues. However, there were more sites reporting infrequent leadership team meetings. There are a few sites that have not had any leadership meetings this year. Many members felt that more decisions could be made with the entire staff.

13. Principals facilitate positive, meaningful staff meetings: 58% of principals meet or exceed member expectations. This is another inconsistent area. Many staff members felt that staff meetings are not always productive and the information reported at meetings is not always pertinent. Members felt that there were too many items on the agenda, thus overloading the teachers. Members expressed concerns that the agendas were district driven; therefore they do not always fit with the individual sites needs. Many staffs reported unprepared administrators.

(Continues on Page 3)
14. Principal facilitates members in developing, refining, and modifying curriculum and instruction based on assessment data and multiple measures: 54.7% of principals meet or exceed member expectations. The responses again suggest inconsistency between sites. The idea of fidelity to the curriculum means different things at different sites. Some sites are forced to teach directly from the teacher’s guide while others are free to supplement in order to meet student needs. Sites suggested the need to have articulation meetings that offer suggestions for student improvement without blaming the teachers.

15. Principal fosters collaboration: 58.4% of principals meet or exceed member expectations. Collaboration time is inconsistent between sites. Some sites have time built into Wednesday morning meetings. However, many of these sites are given district tasks leaving little time to collaborate on specific grade level needs. Several sites rarely have any collaboration time. Members expressed a desire for more collaboration time, occurring more frequently.

16. Principal fosters a clear, school wide vision: 50.3% of principals meet or exceed member expectations. The responses again suggest inconsistency between sites. Many members reported having “no idea what our school vision is, other than what is passed down from the district.” Other sites the principals are very good at having the entire staff involved in getting the vision on paper but see no implementation on the campus.

17. Principal handles parent complaints in a professional manner that validates TRUE members and parent positions: 59.2% of principals meet or exceed member expectations. Member responses point to inconsistency. Some teachers felt supported and validated, while others feel as if they are being blamed for the poor behavior choice of the students. Many members felt that parents are listened to before teachers in an effort to keep the family happy. Teachers feel that they are not listened to and that the teacher’s decisions are always being questioned.

18 Principal promotes equity, fairness, and respect among community and all staff members: 59.5% of principals meet or exceed member expectations. Many sites strongly expressed that this is not happening at their sites. Principals play favorites and are inconsistent with all stakeholders at the site. There were no positive comments for this question.

19 Principal values members as professionals: 64.8% of principals meet or exceed member expectations. Once again, members reported inconsistency among sites. Some members feel valued and respected, as long as they do not disagree with the principal’s opinions. Some felt truly valued. Many comments suggest members feeling undervalued put down, devalued, and treated with a lack of respect.

Kristin Finney - TRUE Vice-President
Julianne Neal - TRUE Director-at-Large

### SUBS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION IEPs

I know we are running thin on resources and time. I am always looking for ways to alleviate the time constraints for our special educators. Sometimes scheduling an IEP during the day is the practical option for the parties involved. We are required to have a general education teacher present at our IEP meetings. Scheduling this during the day allows for that teacher’s presence, as well as other involved staff. When scheduling an IEP during your work day, please note that a substitute is available for our utilization. This is outlined in our Collective Bargaining Agreement in article 4.4.

4.4 The Special Education and Student Services Department may provide a limited amount of substitute support to Special Education staff when the school site has determined a need to hold Individualized Educational Plans and Section 504 meetings during the school day. A form to request these services must be completed, submitted and approved by the Special Education and Student Services Department prior to the Department providing the substitute support.

The form to request a sub is available through the District office and via the TRUSD intranet; I have also sent copies to your department chair for distribution and use. Please note that the form must be submitted and approved by Student Services prior to the meeting date. I would utilize this option the same as a translator (have it approved and scheduled a couple of weeks in advance).

Chris Bach
TRUE Director-at-Large
for K-12 Special Education
INFORMATION ON SEVERAL ISSUES

Voluntary Transfers

Any available openings for voluntary transfers will be posted on Ed-Join after April 1st. Please check www.edjoin.org regularly so you don’t miss out on any opportunities.

TRUE Communications

TRUE has a Facebook page. If you are a Facebook user, all you have to do is ask to join the group (on Facebook, search for Twin Rivers United Educators. Once we verify your status as a TRUE member you will be added to the group. The decision was made to have this as a “closed group” so that our members can engage in open dialogue with each other without worrying about who else might be reading. It is also a great way to get questions answered.

Another great tool we have for communication is our CTA award winning website: www.trueassociation.org. You can find information about upcoming elections, lay-offs, contract issues, and online copies of our newsletter (also CTA award winning!).

It is also very important to make sure the TRUE office has an updated personal e-mail address for you (NOT District e-mail). We send out important information to our members this way. The TRUE office can be contacted at true.office@yahoo.com.

Retirement Information

There is no retirement incentive being offered this year. However, if you have decided to retire at the end of this school year, please notify Human Resources as soon as possible. That information could be favorable for the 32 TRUE members that are facing final layoff notices. Thank you for your assistance in this important matter.

Chris Moran
TRUE Exec. Board Secretary

“Education is what is left over after you have forgotten the facts.”

Anonymous

APPLY FOR A TRUE SCHOLARSHIP!

There is a total of $7000.00 a year in the TRUE Scholarship Fund. TRUE Scholarships are available for TRUE members, TRUE members’ dependent children entering college or already in college, and for TRUSD Seniors. Scholarship applications are now available at the TRUE office or on the TRUE website www.trueassociation.org.

TRUE scholarship applications are due at the TRUE office no later than Friday, May 4, 2012. Scholarships will be awarded in $250.00 increments for community college and $500 increments for 4 year universities. We will announce scholarship recipients at the May Site Rep. Council meeting. Money will be awarded in September, after proof of enrollment has been presented. The available scholarships are as follows:

- 8 Member scholarships: 4 university and 4 community college
- 8 Members’ dependent children scholarships: 4 university and 4 community college
- 3 TRUSD Seniors scholarships: one university and 2 community college

Sharon Reichelt
TRUE Scholarships Chair
John Dexter: Nobody works harder than teachers to prepare our students to meet the challenges of tomorrow. Things need improving. We can’t improve our schools if parents, teachers and classified employees don’t have a seat at the table where the decisions are made. As your school board member I will build a team to make partnership not politics a priority. I will bring people together, not pull them apart and where everyone is valued, teachers, students, parents, staff, administrators and the school board. We need a school board that respects the teachers and the parents and works with them, in partnership to make decisions that affect the future of our students. I know we need cooperation not conflict to overcome the challenges that face our students. I graduated from CSU- Sacramento after serving in the US Army. I am a 27 year resident in the Foothill Farms area. I have raised 4 children who attend Rio Linda Elementary Schools, and all graduated from Grant and Twin Rivers School District Schools. I am a proud Manager for the Department of Public Health for the State of California. I have a strong sense of community. I value the daunting task that faces parents and teachers alike. The fiscal uncertainties that face our public schools can’t be ignored. We need to grow our enrollment, cut unnecessary spending, make sound business decisions, value all employees and put our students first. I ask for your vote for Twin Rivers School Board, Area 2 and I promise to include and value all members of the Twin Rivers Community and above all, put our students first.

Christine Bush Jefferson: To meet the challenge of the next generation, our students have to be prepared. That means we have to create an environment where teachers are supported to do what they do best – teach. As your school board member I will promote policies that encourage kids to take responsibility for themselves. I will support prevention programs to keep our kids off drugs, to stay away from gangs and violence. This also means building on the basics in teaching reading and math. Our kids are only in each grade once, so every day in class matters. What they learn there has to stay with them because school is for life. I graduated from Grant High School in 1972, and I am a 38 year employee of the Twin Rivers School District. My community service includes TLC Soup Kitchen, Grant High School cheer leading coach, Grant Little League Board, MLK 365 March Board, Del Paso Heights Community Association Board, Chief Job Steward, Negotiator for the District, District Mediator for employee/employers disputes and on the United College Action Network Board,

Michael Baker: Through our schools, we must build our future but, our schools must have the tools to do the job. If I am elected I will promote policies, which remove obstacles to student achievement. I will work in partnership with parents and teachers, and give the schools the tools they need to give the students the skills they need. This means having safe, healthy and clean classrooms with the technology needed for modern teaching. It means supporting the programs which will help our kids stay on the right track. I have lived in our district for 33 years. My parents went to our district schools. I went to our district schools, and now my kids go to our district schools. I live here with you, I share your concerns. Our district needs leadership and with my love for this community I know I can bring leadership and experience to the board. On June 5th I ask for that chance I ask for your vote.

Francisco Garcia: Nobody knows better than parents what their kids need. Teachers work hard to prepare our students to meet the challenges of tomorrow. In Twin Rivers things need improving. Parents and teachers do not have a seat at the table where the decisions are made in our school district. As your school board member I will build a team to make partnership not politics a priority. I will bring people together, not pull them apart – teachers, students, parents, administrators, and the school board. We need a school board that respects the teachers, parents, community and works with them, in partnership to make decisions about our schools. I know that we need cooperation, not the conflict we presently have in Twin Rivers, to meet the challenges ahead. I have experience on the school board of North Sacramento School District, where I worked with teachers, parents and the community to improve the education of our children. I want to continue serving my community to provide our children the best learning environment possible. I am looking forward to working with my community, please give me your vote.

Partnerships for Progress in Twin Rivers!
MEETING FOR ECE TEACHERS

Early Childhood Education teachers are invited to attend an ECE issues meeting on Wednesday, April 25, 2012, from 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm, at the TRUE office (3318 Howard Street, Suite 10, McClellan, CA 95652).

Please come prepared to share your questions and concerns, as well as ideas for solutions. Directors-at-Large from the TRUE Executive Board will be there to help draft potential language to submit to the TRUE Negotiations Team. SAVE THE DATE!

ELECTIONS UPDATE

In the month of March several elections are taking place for TRUE. By the time you read this newsletter the election for the NEA-Representative Assembly (RA) State and Local delegate seats will be completed, and the ballots for the Tentative Agreement will have been counted on Thursday, March 29. All TRUE members, as well as Agency Fee Payers, are given the opportunity to vote on the Tentative Agreement. The results for the NEA-RA elections will be posted on the website and the results for the Tentative Agreement will be e-mailed to all TRUE members on our e-mailing list.

The Election Announcement for TRUE Directors-at-Large of the Executive Board were sent to all the Site Reps to post in their schools and was also posted on the TRUE website. Due date for Declarations of Candidacy: March 29 by 4 pm; voting will take place from April 12-26.

Finally, look to the TRUE website in April for the Election Announcement and Declaration of Candidacy form for one TRUE State Council Representative seat.

Julieanne Neal
TRUE Elections Chair

NEA NEWS

States Struggle To Cope With Underfunded Teacher Pensions.
The AP (3/16) reports that according to a recent analysis, a "majority of states' teacher retirement funds are underfunded," placing a heavy burden on "financially strapped states" as a new cohort of teachers supplants those preparing to retire. "The situation has stoked political fights in statehouses across the country as legislators weigh options such as moving teachers from a traditional defined benefit pension to a 401(k)-style plan, raising the retirement age or making teachers wait a decade to be vested in their plans." The AP adds that NEA Director of Collective Bargaining and Member Advocacy James Testerman "said for teachers, the issue is particularly emotional. 'One of the promises made to them, if they contributed to every paycheck from the very first day that they started working with children, was that they would be provided a modest and secure retirement,' he said."

Pressure Mounts To Change R Rating For "Bully."
Brendan Sasso writes at The Hill (3/16) "Hillicon Valley" blog that the parents and students who appear in the bullying documentary "Bully" are "pleading" with former Sen. Chris Dodd, "now the head of the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), to change the film's R rating. And Harvey Weinstein, the film's producer who was also at the screening at the MPAA's office in Washington, echoed those pleas, saying, 'The reason everyone wants the PG-13 is so kids can see the movie themselves.'" The piece notes that harsh language in the film led to the rating.

Washington Post's (3/16) "Reliable Source" blog reports that the R rating could be "the best thing that ever happened to 'Bully'" because of the publicity surrounding the push to have the rating changed. "Weinstein's battle over the rating with the Motion Picture Association of America - he's enlisted the support of Meryl Streep, Johnny Depp, Justin Bieber and a 17-year-old Michigan girl collecting thousands of petition signatures - has certainly drummed up a marvelous amount of publicity for the new film."
IS BULLYING HAPPENING AT YOUR SCHOOL?

Not by students, but by a site administrator to you or another staff member?

Are you:
• Facing constant criticism and nit-picking?
• Being shouted at or undermined?
• Subject to personal remarks?
• Given goals and deadlines that are unachievable or changed without notice?
• Denied support?
• Getting harassing e-mails or phone calls?
• Getting the silent treatment?
• Having excessive monitoring, supervision, or micromanaging?
• Subject to constant threats of disciplinary action?
• Being intimidated by being interrupted, contradicted, or being glared at?
• Is your point of view is never considered?
• Does your administrator avoid direct eye contact with you?

What can you do if you feel you are being bullied or harassed at your site by your principal or site administrator?
• Stay calm and consider your options. Do nothing to escalate the situation.
• Do not meet with this administrator without a union representative. This person can be your site representa-
  tive or someone from TRUE. You have a right to a reasonable amount of time to get a Representative the
  meeting is disciplinary in nature or you feel the meeting will lead this way. Do not refuse to meet, BUT: listen, take notes and if asked to respond say, “I’ll be happy to respond after I talk with my association.”
• Document all interactions with this individual. Keep track of emails, notes left for you, or negative verbal in-
  teractions and who was present during those.
• Don’t allow your administrator to intimidate you.
• Do your job and do it well.
• Support fellow staff at your site when they are being bullied. A bully picks on those who do not stick together.
• Bring concerns you have to this administrator and get other staff to support you in doing so. A bully does not
  pick on a group but select members individually to harass.
• If a principal is disciplining you in front of your class, respectfully say, “I understand you would like to speak
  with me at this time about your concerns, but I need to teach my class. I can speak with you at a time, when
  I am not teaching, and that is convenient for both of us.”
• Contact the TRUE Office as soon as you feel like the situation is beyond your control.

Being bullied costs you!
• It impacts your emotional and physical health.
• You become more dissatisfied with your current job.
• Becomes a source of stress.

It’s easier to ignore or minimize rather than have courage to stand up against the bully. Get support from your
friends, members of your staff, your site representative or an Officer from TRUE.

Kristin Finney
TRUE Vice President

Other resources:
www.bullyfreetwork.com
www.workplacebullying.org
www.nea.org
www.BalanceEducationalServices.com
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TRUE/CTA/NEA

UNITED FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 2-6... Spring Break
April 9......Furlough Day #4
April 10......TRUSD Board Meeting
April 11-12 ... Layoff Hearings
April 17......TRUE Executive Board Meeting
April 24......TRUSD Board Meeting
May 4.........Applications for TRUE Scholarships are Due