TRUE ATTENDS CTA LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

CTA Region 2 organizes the largest regional Leadership Conference with over 600 attendees. The most recent one was held on October 18–20, 2013 at the Grand Sierra Resort in Reno, Nevada. TRUE was well represented at this conference. TRUE members in attendance were Ann Murray, Lisa Gant, Catherine Roller, Bill Avery, Julieanne Neal, Mysti Lingenfelter, Janet Schafer, Wendy Gallimore, and Edie Kuntz. Those in attendance were treated to keynote speakers such as past president of CTA Ed Foglia, current CTA President Dean Vogel, and NEA Vice President Lily Eskelsen-Garcia. TRUE members had the opportunity to choose from 80 different sessions on such topics as: advocacy, organizing, bargaining, communications, governance, human rights, school finance, political and legislative action, and professional development. Everyone learned a lot at this conference, and will be sharing information in this issue and in future issues of the TRUE News.
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

October 25, 2013

In the past two weeks I have had the opportunity to meet with the new Associate Superintendent of Human Resources, Jacqueline Perez, and the new Human Resources Director for Certificated Staff, Gina Lanphier, under her. I have also met with Superintendent Steven Martinez, done a site visit at Grant High School, sat in on our Organizing Team meeting, ran a PAC Meeting and have spoken to many members. There are many things that need to be worked on. It is amazing what does get done by the members who are currently working on TRUE Committees and serving on our Executive Board. As emails come your way for opportunities to give your support, please take these into consideration. You are TRUE.

Current issues being worked on:
- Sub Shortage
- Evaluations: Contract Language not being followed by certain administrators.
- Common Core Implementation: Where is the plan?
- Opening up our new round of contract negotiations (2014-17 Contract)
  There has already been input regarding this through emails, conversations and our General Membership Meeting. More opportunity to give additional input will be happening soon.
- Class Size Overage Payments

Every day brings a new challenge. Current conversations with District leadership have been positive and things are being worked on, albeit slowly, and some things are changing.

I look forward to doing more site visits, having more conversations with you, and continuing to keep you informed on the current news of our union and District.

Kristin Finney
TRUE President

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Professional Development Committee continues to focus its efforts on meeting the requests of educators in providing workshops and other opportunities of interest and value to them. Based on such requests, TRUE held a successful “I Can Do It!” classroom management workshop in August that was well attended by more than thirty TRUE members from a variety of grade levels and sites. Support was also provided by TRUSD for this event, and is part of our continuing collaboration with the District for certain opportunities.

On the calendar is a “Smarter Balanced Basics” workshop provided by CTA which will focus on the assessment which will be used with the Common Core State Standards. This is scheduled for Tuesday, January 14, 2013, more information will be forthcoming.

The Professional Development Committee met the first week of October and discussed other opportunities which are currently being planned. We meet monthly – typically the first Thursday of the month – and our next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 7th at 4:00 PM. These meetings are held at the TRUE Office and are open to all members. We’d love to see you there!

We are planning and providing professional development opportunities at the request of TRUE members, so if you have topics and areas of focus you would like us to provide, please do not hesitate to let us know at true.office@yahoo.com.

Edna Shoemaker
TRUE Professional Development Committee Chairperson
On October 15th, San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed, with the financial support of an Enron billionaire from Texas, filed the initial paperwork to qualify a November 2014 ballot initiative designed to allow public employers (i.e. state, city, county, SCHOOL DISTRICTS) to reduce pension benefits for current workers and allow them to do so without going through the collective bargaining process. This is a direct threat to the retirement security of millions of working families and a cynical distraction from the real retirement crisis we face in California and nationally - the private sector. Instead of encouraging solutions that allow all working people to retire with dignity and economic security, the billionaire backers of this initiative are working to undermine what little retirement security remains by scapegoating middle-class families with modest pensions. Nearly half of all working households face the threat of retiring into poverty.

This proposed constitutional initiative is an attack on the retirement security of California families at a time when we need to be helping our brothers and sisters in the private sector afford retirement. It is a cynical ploy to divide working families and hasten the race to the bottom. We need to fight this now! Talk to your friends, families, neighbors, colleagues and the parents of your students. Urge everyone not to sign the petitions that are being circulated by the paid signature collectors at your local grocery store, the mall, etc. We need to stop this attempt before it qualifies to get on the November 2014 ballot. If you want more information about this issue, contact DDillon@cta.org. Dana Dillon is our District D, CTA Board member, who also serves as the Chair of the California State Teachers’ Retirement System Board. She has held this position on the pension Board since being elected in 2003.

**Catherine Roller**
Grant High School Site Representative
GRIEVANCE

**Documenting with E-mails** - Have you ever been in a meeting that turned into a bad situation, but does not warrant a grievance? It is the recommendation of TRUE and the Grievance Team that any meeting or discussion you have with someone, you should follow-up with an e-mail. An e-mail is better than a face to face meeting or phone call, because it is a time and date sensitive document that can be traced and not misplaced or said that it didn’t take place. The e-mail should state what the meeting was about as well as your side of what took place at the meeting. It should include a list of all of the people that attended the meeting, as well as the date and time. The content of the e-mail should be written with “I” statements instead of directing comments toward an individual. When you send the e-mail, make sure you send a copy to your personal email account; you have the right to “cc” your union rep or the TRUE office (true.office@yahoo.com), although it is not required.

Sharon Reichelt
TRUE Contract Enforcement
(Grievance Team)

CHARTER SCHOOLS ARE HERE TO STAY

Yes, and they are growing every year, according to information shared with Region 2 Conference attendees at our Capitol Service Center Council meeting. CTA Staff, Mary Ann Lukinbill presented valuable information to help us understand what is really happening in charter schools. It is projected that by 2021 there will be 1.6 million students enrolled in charter schools in the US. The fact is that teachers at independent charter schools desire to obtain the same rights and protections that union teachers enjoy, including job security, and safe working environments.

WE - TRUE/CTA/NEA members, must reach out to our colleagues at independent charter schools. We need to encourage and support charter teachers to obtain fair contracts and union memberships. If you know a charter school teacher, talk with him/her and let them know that the members of CTA stand ready and willing to assist them in organizing and we will embrace them in our CTA family.

Catherine Roller
TRUE Educator & Site Rep

ORGANIZING

TRUE Organizing Committee met October 17, 2013. We started planning for two open forums with TRUSD Superintendent Steven Martinez. The forums will give TRUE members an opportunity to ask Dr. Martinez questions or to inform him of situations at member sites. Please plan on attending one of the forums.

The first forum is set for November 7, 2013 at Foothill Ranch Middle School (5001 Diablo Drive, Sacramento 95842), in the annex from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The second forum will take place at Noralto Elementary School (477 Las Palmas Ave, Sacramento 95815) on November 14, 2013, in the school cafeteria from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The Organizing Committee is also working with the TRUE Executive Board to calendar a TRUE Listening Campaign. TRUE wants to hear from you. We will be visiting different sites throughout the school year. The first two sites visited by the TRUE President and Vice-President were Grant High School on October 23, 2013, and Highlands High School on October 30, 2013. The Listening Campaign Calendar will be sent to sites as each months site visits are planned.

Julieanne Neal
TRUE Organizing Committee Chairperson
KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!!!

Do you understand your Weingarten rights?
By Sherry Posnick-Goodwin, CTA

Your principal calls you into her office, shuts the door and asks you to sit down. She questions you about the way you handled a certain situation and begins to make accusations. You start to feel anxious and worry you could face disciplinary action. Should you invoke your Weingarten rights? The answer is yes, absolutely.

Based on the 1975 U.S. Supreme Court ruling of NLRB v. J. Weingarten, Inc., union employees are entitled to have union representation at meetings with supervisors that are investigatory or that could lead to disciplinary action. These rights have become known as the Weingarten rights.

The case is based on an employee who worked at a food outlet operated by J. Weingarten, Inc. She was summoned to an interview with supervisors and questioned about failing to pay full price for a box of chicken. The employee, a member of the Retail Clerks Union, asked for a union representative several times, but her request was refused by the manager each time. The employee reported what had happened to her shop steward and other union representatives. As a result of her being denied a union representative, an unfair labor practice charge was filed with the National Labor Relations Board, and the ruling in favor of the employee was appealed numerous times until it went before the high court.

To invoke Weingarten rights, a union member should say something like this: "If this discussion could lead to my being disciplined, I request union representation at this meeting, and that the meeting be postponed until my union representative arrives." When the employee makes the request for a union representative to be present, management has three options: It can stop questioning until the representative arrives; it can call off the interview; or it can tell the employee that it will call off the interview unless the employee voluntarily gives up their rights to union representation (an option the employee should always refuse).

Employers will often assert that the only role of a union representative in an investigatory interview is to observe the discussion. The Supreme Court, however, clearly acknowledged a representative's right to assist and counsel workers during the interview.

The Supreme Court also ruled that before an investigatory interview, management must inform the union representative of the subject of the interrogation. The representative must also be allowed to speak privately with the employee before the interview and at any time during the interview. During the questioning, the representative can interrupt to clarify a question or to object to confusing or intimidating tactics.

While the interview is in progress the representative cannot tell the employee what to say — but may advise them on how to answer a question. At the end of the interview the union representative can add information to support the employee's case.

Employees must demand their right to be represented in these investigatory interviews," says Priscilla Winslow, assistant chief counsel of the CTA Legal Department. "Don't be afraid to ask for what you are entitled to."
**NEA NEWS**

**Los Angeles Sees Sharp Decline In Suspension Rate.**

The LA School Report (10/15) reports that the Los Angeles USD has seen its suspension rate fall from 8.1% to 1.5% since the 2007-08 school year, noting that the decline “has been even more pronounced since John Deasy was appointed Superintendent in 2011.” The piece quotes Deasy stressing the importance of the issue, and attributes the decline to the district’s Discipline Foundation Policy, “which aimed to lower suspensions by ‘using effective classroom management and positive behavior support strategies by providing early intervention for misconduct and appropriate use of consequences.’

**Education Researchers Eager To Study Common Core Implementation.**

Education Week (10/9, Sparks) reports on the coming efforts to study the rollout of the Common Core Standards, noting that their lack of specific curricula “creates a rare opportunity—but also requires a massive lift—for K-12 education research to fill in the blanks.” The article notes that much of the funding for studying the Common Core comes from the Federal government, and explores how this “could make people suspicious of federal stakes in the initiative.”

**Education Experts: Classroom Management Instruction Needs Improvement.**

Education Week (10/14, Rebora) reports that surveys indicate that many teachers report struggling with classroom management, and that it is “a top area of need for professional development.” The piece notes that teacher coaches and other pedagogical experts also see classroom management as a problem, “lamenting that schools of education tend to focus far more on curriculum issues and developmental psychology than on the mechanics of running a classroom.” However, Education Week reports, such experts “say that in most cases teachers can develop their classroom-management capacities.”

**MEMBER BENEFITS**

Did you switch school districts this year? If you moved to a new school district this year, you have a special, limited-time opportunity to apply for CTA-endorsed Disability and Life Insurance from Standard Insurance Company (The Standard).

Eligible CTA members who apply within 120 days of starting work in their new jobs can get up to $200,000 of Life Insurance coverage without answering any health questions.

You can also get Disability Insurance, which can help with everyday bills that continue even when you can’t work – like your mortgage and utilities. The CTA-endorsed Disability Insurance plan was specially designed to address the gaps in coverage that many California educators face.

And because these plans are endorsed by CTA, you can trust that they provide benefits that other plans can’t match.

Remember, you only have 120 days to apply for this unique opportunity. Don’t miss out:

Visit standard.com/cta/newhire to learn more and apply online.

For costs and further details of the coverage and this enrollment opportunity, including exclusions, benefit waiting periods, any reductions or limitations and the terms under which the policy may be continued in force, call The Standard’s CTA Customer Service Department at 800.522.0406.
Open Forums with Superintendent Martinez

- Do you have questions you would like to ask the Dr. Martinez, the new Superintendent of Twin Rivers?
- Do you have suggestions for the future direction of Twin Rivers?
- Do you have stories to share about your working conditions?

Join us at one of the Open Forums with Dr. Martinez. Come ready to ask questions and share your stories.

November 7, 2013 4:30-6pm
@ Foothill Ranch Middle School
(5001 Diablo Drive, Sacramento, CA 95842)

&

November 14, 2013 4:30-6pm
@ Noralto Elementary School
(477 Las Palmas Ave. Sacramento, CA 95815)
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- October 30th - Highlands Site Visit by TRUE Executive Board Member(s)
- October 30th - TRUE Counselors Meeting with Director Bill Avery, 4pm at TRUE
- October 30th - TRUE Organizing Team Meeting, 4pm at TRUE
- November 1st - Professional Development Day (Non-Student Day)
- November 5th - TRUE Executive Board 4:00 TRUE Office
- November 5th - TRUSD Board Meeting
- November 7th - TRUE Open Forum-4:30 Foothill Ranch Middle School
- November 11th - Veteran's Day – No School
- November 12th - PAC 4:00 TRUE Office
- November 14th - TRUE Open Forum 4:30 Noralto Elementary
- November 19th - TRUE Site Rep Council Meeting 4:00 CTA Office
- November 21st - TRUE Negotiations Committee Meeting open to all certificated staff
  4pm TRUE Office
- November 21st & 22nd - Elementary Parent Teacher Conference Meetings (Non-Student Day)
- November 21st & 22nd - Secondary Collaboration Day (Non-Student Day)
- November 25th to 29th - Thanksgiving Recess

TRUE EXECUTIVE BOARD

OFFICERS:

- President: Kristin Finney - true.office@yahoo.com
- Vice-President: Chris Moran - rlteacher@yahoo.com
- Secretary: Michelle Dice-Hodgdon - dicehodgdon@aol.com
- Treasurer: Rick Mau - rickmau@trueassociation.org

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE:

- For Pre-K - Grade 6 Regular Education Teachers:
  - Julieanne Neal - julieanneneal1@surewest.net
  - Sharon Reichelt - sreichelt23@gmail.com
  - Lisa Gant - lisasring@sbcglobal.net
  - Luke Flores - lkflrs@gmail.com

- For Grades 7-12 Regular Education Teachers, Charter & Adult Ed.:
  - Paul Le Francois - lefrancois1@earthlink.net
  - Mysti Lingenfelter - mysti.lingenfelter@gmail.com

- For K-12 Special Education:
  - Chris Bach - bacher3@aol.com

- For Specialty Groups (Psychologists, Speech Therapists, Counselors, Nurses, Librarians, Program Specialists, S.L.Cs and S.S.Ts):
  - Bill Avery - fishny5501@gmail.com

- Minority Representative At Large
  - Ann Murray - annmurray456@gmail.com

TRUE Contract Enforcement (Grievances)

- Paul Le Francois - Grades 7-12 & Adult Ed.
- Sharon Reichelt - ECE to Grades 6.

TRUE Negotiations Team

- Chris Moran - rlteacher@yahoo.com
- Janet Schafer-Chris Bach-Mysti Lingenfelter

CTA State Council-TRUE Representatives

- Janet Schafer
- Wendy Gallimore
- Joyce Childs

  Alternates: Lisa Gant, Catherine Roller

TRUE Reps on TRERC (Employee Relations Council)

- Paul Le Francois
- Shirley Chambers

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- Evelyn Alvarado and Jen Turner