The process towards reaching a Tentative Agreement (TA) and then moving it forward for the certificated staff vote, has been long and intense. The TRUE Negotiations Team began the process with the District during the summer of 2014, in preparation for the upcoming 2014-15 school year. A TRUE survey was sent out to members to give the team guidance as to the direction they should go at the negotiations table. The TRUE Negotiations Team held planning meetings as well as joint meetings with TRUSD, throughout the summer of 2014 and into the school year of 2014-15. In December 2014 a Tentative Agreement was finally agreed upon by TRUE and TRUSD.

Information on the Tentative Agreement was then taken directly to the members. TRUE Negotiations Team members and TRUE President Kristin Finney went out to many schools to discuss the T.A. and answer questions regarding details of the compensation, funding sources, benefits, language, etc.

The next step was to present information to the Site Representative Council to vote on recommending ratification or not. The Site Reps voted to recommend a yes vote to the membership in order to ratify the T.A. The final explanation on the details of the T.A. was presented at a Special General Membership meeting for all TRUE members. As established in the TRUE Bylaws, all this procedure is followed whenever there is a T.A.

Ballots to vote on the T.A. were delivered to schools and voting took place January 20 to 29, 2015. On January 29th ballots were counted and tallied; the final vote was 1002 Yes votes and 285 No votes. The T.A. passed by a broad majority vote. Pending approval by the TRUSD School Board on February 10th, we will have a new Collective Bargaining Agreement (Contract) with the District. This new Contract is for three years: July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2017. Salary compensation information is on page 4 of this issue; further details of the new agreement can be found on the TRUE website: www.trueassociation.org

Negotiations is an ongoing process. The next round will begin soon for re-openers, which are only a few Articles of the Contract. The entire Contract will not be open again for negotiations until 2017. The TRUE Negotiations Committee will be receiving input from TRUE members on items that may need to be included in the re-openers process; see more information in the President’s Message and on page 4 of this issue.

Ann Murray
TRUE News Editor
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

As you are aware, the Tentative Agreement has been ratified by the certificated staff. I am very impressed by the work of the Site Representatives getting the ballots in and the large number of voters. On February 10th, the TRUSD School Board will vote on the approval of this new Contract. After that, the negotiations process begins again. More information will be coming out regarding building the next TRUE Negotiations Team for the reopeners next school year. If you are interested in serving on the Negotiations Team, TRUE’s Standing Rules have the following criteria for nominees:

- Be an active member of the Association
- Demonstrate active membership by participating on Site Representative Council and/or on Association committee(s)
- Be able to maintain emotional control and positive attitude under stress or distress
- Be able to maintain confidentiality and credibility
- Be sensitive to other personalities
- Be committed to tenure of term of office and long hours of work
- Commit to representing the issues of all members consistent with the contract content and priorities determined by the Executive Board.

The community of Trustee Area 5 (the area where Regency Park Elementary and Norwood Junior High are located), together with community organizers, gathered over 1,000 signatures to hold a special election for that area’s Trustee seat on the Twin Rivers School Board. This seat was filled with the Board appointment of Sonya Cameron, but the successful signature gathering negates this appointment and forces a special election to be held on May 12, 2015. TRUE’s PAC is already at work getting ready for this election. We will be asking for members’ support to help fill this seat with someone who will listen to stakeholder input, have education knowledge and an understanding that all perspectives count. Especially the perspective from the individuals who are educating the students of TRUSD, us! With the resignation of Cortez Quinn, the loss of John Dexter and the return of Michelle Rivas, we have already seen a shift in the Board in the wrong direction. We need to gear back up to get our School Board back on track. More information to come!

Kristin Finney
TRUE President

TRUE PAC UPDATE: SCHOOL BOARD SPECIAL ELECTION

A special election has been called in Trustee Area 5 to fill the seat vacated by Cortez Quinn. Initially, the School Board appointed Sonya Cameron to fill the seat. However, the Board failed to follow the process they outlined to the community. These actions were of great concern to community leaders; in response they spearheaded a signature gathering effort, successfully gathering more than 1,000 signatures to force a special election. The timetable for the special election is as follows:

- Candidates must submit a declaration of candidacy by 5:00pm on February 13, 2015
- Election held May 12, 2015

This election is approaching very quickly and TRUE PAC is already preparing to decide which candidate TRUE will endorse for the TRUSD School Board. This is important work and will help determine how our School Board functions in the future. TRUE is asking for volunteers who are interested in serving on the Board candidates interview panel. We are especially urging teachers from Norwood Jr. High and Regency Park to become involved in their area’s election. Interviews of School Board candidates will take place the first week of March 2015. If you are interested in serving on one of our interview panels, being a dedicated phone banker or precinct walker, please let us know via e-mail at: true.office@yahoo.com Remember to include your cell phone number and personal e-mail address.

Rebecca LeDoux and Lisa Gant
TRUE Political Action Committee Co-Chairs
As a California public school employee, your rights to pregnancy and parental leave are governed by California state and federal law as well as by your collective bargaining agreement. The following describes the basic rights provided by law. You should confirm with the District what paperwork you need to file when, and with whom, to qualify for the different leaves.

**PREGNANCY-RELATED DISABILITY LEAVE**

**Unpaid** leave for the duration of any pregnancy-related disability—either before or after you have your baby. You will likely qualify for pregnancy disability leave, meaning unpaid leave from work for the duration of any physical disability you experience as a result of pregnancy and/or childbirth. Your need must be verified by your physician and may not exceed four months’ time. You can take pregnancy disability leave intermittently as needed. For example, you could take leave during the first trimester for severe morning sickness, in the last trimester for bed rest and following birth for recovery, so long as your physician verifies your need for each period of leave.

**To receive pay** during the period of your pregnancy-related disability leave, you can use any sick leave that you have accumulated: If you work full time for a school district as a certificated employee, you accrue at least 10 days of paid sick leave a year (Educ. Code 44978) -You get **11 sick-leave days in Twin Rivers**. If you work part-time, you accrue sick leave proportionate to the number of days per week that you work (Educ. Code 44978).

Unused sick leave accumulates from year to year with no cap and can be transferred from one school district to another. (Educ. Code 44979).

Once you have exhausted your sick leave, if you still qualify for pregnancy disability leave, you can obtain **extended sick leave**, which is often referred to as differential leave pay, for the remainder of your pregnancy disability leave. Differential leave pay is the amount remaining of your salary after the district pays a substitute to fill your position. Differential leave pay is available for up to five months for each illness (Educ. Code. 44977). You must exhaust your sick leave in order to qualify for differential leave pay.

**PARENTAL LEAVE**

Up to 12 weeks of unpaid parental leave. If you have worked for the district full time for a full year, you have the right under the California Family Rights Act (“CFRA”) and the federal Family & Medical Leave Act (“FMLA”) to up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a new or adopted baby or foster child. The leave must be taken within a year of the baby’s birth or the child’s placement in your home. You must also provide your employer with 30 days advance notice of your need for parental leave, when your need for the leave is foreseeable.

During the period of your parental leave, your employer must maintain your health insurance coverage and must continue to allow you to accrue seniority and receive the other benefits you would ordinarily receive on other types of leave, such as life, short-term or long term disability or accident insurance coverage, and pension and retirement credit. Your right to unpaid leave under the CFRA and FMLA run concurrently, meaning you are only entitled to one 12-week unpaid leave, not to a 24-week leave. As long as you return to work at the conclusion of 12 weeks, the district must assign you to the same or an equivalent position. If you remain on leave longer than 12 weeks, you can continue to maintain your health insurance by paying the premiums yourself under COBRA, but the district is not obligated to hold your job for you until you choose to return.

If you were on pregnancy disability leave, you may take your 12 weeks of unpaid parental leave after your physician clears you to return to work. If you were not on pregnancy disability leave, you may take your 12 weeks of unpaid parental leave upon the birth or placement of your child or at any time during the subsequent year. The parental leave must generally be taken in one block of time, although the district may approve the use of the leave intermittently in some cases.

**OTHER PREGNANCY RELATED PROTECTIONS**

Both federal and state laws prohibit your district from discriminating against you based on your pregnancy. In addition, state law requires a school district that has a policy, practice or collective bargaining agreement requiring or authorizing the transfer of temporarily disabled employees to less strenuous or hazardous positions for the duration of the disability, to honor a request to transfer to such a position by a pregnant employee.

Districts must also honor such a temporary transfer request if supported by your physician, so long as the district can reasonably accommodate your transfer request.

Upon return to work, if you are a nursing mother the district must provide a reasonable amount of break time for breast pumping purposes, as often as needed, up to a year after the birth of your child. The district must also make a reasonable effort to provide you with a room or other location (it cannot be a bathroom) near or in your work area, in which you can express milk in private.

(Information taken from CTAinvest.org and US Dept. of Labor website)
Since the Tentative Agreement for the 2014-2017 Contract was ratified, the TRUE Negotiations Committee will start discussing re-openers for 2015-2016. The first meeting to do so will take place at the TRUE office on February 11th, at 4:00 pm. This meeting is open to all members and generally takes place before the entire membership is surveyed in regards to what Contract articles they would like reopened.

Because there is a Benefits Committee in place and the article on salary is already set to open for next year, the plan is to look at language in other articles that should be changed. If one group has specific concerns and needs more time, additional meetings may be held. As of January 20th, I have heard from Counselors and Librarians about language changes they would like to see. If you cannot attend the meeting, but you would like to have your voice heard, please send me an e-mail to: lefrancois1@earthlink.net

Paul LeFrancois
TRUE Negotiations Committee

The NEA Auto Buying Program offers members guaranteed savings through local dealers. Search for any new vehicle and view a wide range of used vehicle listings. There is never any cost to use the service or obligation to buy, plus all dealers are prescreened to provide you with the best car buying experience.

Guaranteed Savings on NEW CARS!
Members have seen an average savings of $3,221 off MSRP*. Get a price and your Guaranteed Savings before going to a dealership. Work with prescreened dealers for customer savings and a great experience.

NEA Member Discounts on USED CARS
Save up to $1,000 off used vehicles. Used car pricing tool lets you know you’re getting a great deal. Free CARFAX reports and/or warranties on select vehicles.

Go to: nea.truecar.com for more details on this great member discount program.

During the January 13, 2015 Site Representative Council meeting, the Site Reps discussed and voted to approve a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the District to allow changes to our health benefits:

On May 8, 2014 TRUSD and TRUE had agreed to the following:

1. The District will provide an additional $74 per month to the employee only, $100 per month for employee plus one and family coverage from July 2014 to December 2014.
2. All new employees hired after May 1, 2014 will not be eligible for cash in lieu under article 15.1.1.3
3. Employees hired prior to May 1, 2014 will not be eligible for 15.1.1.3 if they enroll in benefits as of May 1, 2014 or a later date, or currently have waived Medical Coverage or are currently not eligible for Benefits.
4. Employees currently receiving $100 per month (cash in lieu) will not receive an increase as a result of this MOU.

TRUSD/TRUE December 2014 Tentative Agreement:
TRUSD will increase the District’s Monthly Health and Welfare contribution to the amounts on a chart (see chart on TRUE website) when the District moves away from CalPERS to CVT or SISC JPA for Medical and Plan Design Changes for January 1, 2016 approved by TRUE/CSEA/TRPOA equal to $500,000.

TRUE agrees to the following Benefit Design Changes for January 1, 2016 to meet the terms of the MOU:

1. Office Visit Copay from $15 to $20
2. Emergency Room Copay (if not admitted) from $50 to $75
3. Prescription Copay from $5 Generic and $20 Brand to $10 Generic and $30 Brand for a 30 day supply
4. Prescription Copay from $10 Generic and $40 Brand to $20 Generic and $60 Brand for a 100 day supply

(Information taken from Memorandum of Understanding between TRUSD and TRUE)
TRUE ORGANIZING: LCFF & LCAP

The Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) officially became part of the law with the passage of the 2013-14 California State Budget Act. The new Local Control Funding Formula is for school districts and charter schools, and replaced the previous K-12 finance system. It is composed of uniform base grants by grade span: K-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-12, and includes additional funding for targeted students.

The Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) is an important component of the LCFF. Under the LCFF the district is required to prepare an LCAP which describes how they intend to meet annual goals for all students. In the plan there needs to be specific activities to address state and local priorities.

As an association and as educators within the District, we have the right to contribute to the development of the LCAP in Twin Rivers. Soon you will have site staff meetings lead by your Principal, to discuss the Districts’ goals, the progress made, and suggestions for the next year. The TRUE Organizing Committee will also be gathering data to submit to the District. To that effect, we have sent TRUE members a survey to provide you a chance to reply candidly and anonymously. TRUE plans to submit the data collected from this survey to the District, as our contribution to the LCAP.

The Organizing Committee is currently meeting to plan LCAP informational meetings and member contribution to the LCAP, activities that will help us provide a more unified contribution to the plan. If you have activity ideas, we would love to hear from you. Our next Organizing Committee meeting is scheduled for February 12 at the TRUE office, from 4:15-5:30 pm We hope to see you there!

Julianne Neal
TRUE Organizing Committee Chair

NEW CONTRACT SALARY COMPENSATION

Now that the new Contract has passed and is pending approval by the TRUSD Board, TRUE members want to know when the compensation will show up in their paychecks. We are waiting on final confirmation from the District for exact dates of retro pay, but so far, this is the information we have:

The 2% Salary Schedule increase to Base Salary will be retroactive to July 1, 2014. This increase goes on all salary schedules and the retroactive pay to July will be paid in March. The April paycheck and all paychecks thereafter will show this increase.

The 3% off Salary Schedule increase in 2014-15, will be paid out of Supplemental Concentration Funds: 1.5% will be paid in April, and 1.5% will be paid in June. This 3% increase will be added to the Salary Schedules for 2015-16 and will start appearing on the August 2015 paycheck.

Also added onto the Salary Schedule will be .5% for a half day of district wide staff development and half day teacher collaboration. This increase will be added onto the 2015-16 Salary Schedule as of July 1, 2015.

The 2.5% one time off Salary Schedule bonus for those at the top step/column of the salary schedules will also be paid 1.25% in April and 1.25% in June.

TEACHER-DEVELOPED COMMON CORE LESSON PLANS FOR FREE

NEA and BetterLesson have teamed up to bring together more than 130 outstanding teachers from across the country to share user-friendly and classroom-ready lessons around Common Core. The site features thousands of comprehensive lessons for Kindergarten through High School, including narratives, videos, personal reflections and classroom resources. Visit http://betterlesson.com/common_core to take advantage of this wonderful free resource.
January 9, 2015

Taking on an issue that has received relatively short shrift in the raft of reforms being implemented in California schools, Gov. Jerry Brown ventured for the first time during his governorship into the challenge of preparing – and retaining – teachers.

While the $10 million he is proposing is tiny in the context of the state’s overall budget, the reforms he is calling for have far-reaching implications.

“It is significant,” said Linda-Darling Hammond, a professor in the Stanford Graduate School of Education and chairwoman of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. She said the measures Brown has proposed represent a first step, and that she expects the state to take more steps to “build a high-quality workforce of teachers and school leaders.”

The budget calls for improving the way the state accredits teacher preparation programs. “State oversight of the educator preparation system is currently not robust enough to verify that programs are meeting preparation standards and producing fully prepared teachers,” the budget summary states.

Among the reforms it calls for are:

- Providing funds to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing to establish a panel to recommend how to “streamline preparation standards” and to develop surveys of students enrolled in teacher preparation programs, and of school districts who hire them, to assess the “quality and effectiveness” of those programs.

- Revising the Teaching Performance Assessment that all new teachers must take before they can begin teaching.

- Proposing for the first time to develop a similar assessment for school principals and other administrators.

As the budget summary notes, “there is no assessment to determine if a person is prepared to be a school principal.”

State Board of Education President Michael Kirst said the budget proposals “signal a more aggressive role for the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.” They also send a message that “we are concerned about the quality of new teachers,” he said.

The budget proposal also addresses another major challenge in strengthening the teacher pipeline in California – providing support for teachers in their first few years on the job. Teachers have been required to participate in what is called an “induction program” – primarily the state’s Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program – in order to receive their full or “clear” credential. Support programs make it more likely that teachers stay in the profession, rather than dropping out in large numbers.

But there have been multiple problems with the funding and implementation of the BTSA program, as noted in an EdSource report released last fall. Brown is calling for an evaluation of “the burden of the current requirements” on teachers to complete induction programs like BTSA, the budget summary says. He also wants to encourage local districts to provide the supports that new teachers need to succeed, including providing mentor teachers.

The budget summary says the Brown administration won’t wait until the fiscal year begins in July to begin working on this issue, but will begin “engaging with stakeholders” on this issue in the coming weeks.

Darling-Hammond said that in some districts induction programs aren’t even offered, or teachers have to pay thousands of dollars to enroll in them. In other cases, districts may offer “help groups,” but no mentors or actual coaching in the classroom.

The reforms aimed at improving teacher preparation – and to support teachers after they begin teaching – indirectly addresses the issues raised by the Vergara vs. California lawsuit, including the time and expense of firing incompetent teachers.

In his press conference Friday, Brown described the challenge of firing such teachers as “a nightmare.” If his proposed reforms result in significant changes in teacher preparation and support, that could improve the effectiveness of teachers across the board and reduce the number of ineffective ones.

(Continued on page 7)
TRUE MEMBERS ARE ACTIVE IN LOCAL POLITICS

Many know that TRUE member Kerri Asbury is the Chair of the Democratic Party of Sacramento County. Wendy Gallimore, Joyce Childs and Rebecca Le Doux, also TRUE members, are members of the Democratic Central Committee and actively participate with a voice for public education in state and local politics.

In California, every two years the Democratic Party holds public elections for the positions of delegates to the Democratic State Party convention. This year, Rebecca Le Doux and Joyce Childs ran for delegate positions in Assembly District 8, that of Assemblyman Ken Cooley. They were both elected on January 11, 2015. One citizen from each assembly district is also elected to represent their district at the state party level. Joyce Childs was elected for a position on the Executive Board of the California Democratic Party to represent Assembly District 8.

CTA’s strategic plan asks for educators to become involved in public policy at the local level. Both Rebecca and Joyce have been spending their personal free time working with local activists and stakeholders to ensure that local policy makers understand the importance of public education. Recently they were also elected to the Board of the Women Democrats of Sacramento County, and were honored to be sworn in by Assemblyman Kevin McCarty on January 19, 2015.

Governor Targets Teacher Preparation

(Continued from page 6)

What the budget summary does not address is the challenge of recruiting new teachers. The number of students enrolled in teacher preparation programs has plummeted over the past decade – from more than 77,000 in 2001-012 to less than 20,000 in 2012-13.

Darling-Hammond said the decline was in part a response to the massive layoffs inflicted on teachers as a result of the state budget crisis precipitated by the financial collapse of 2008. She said districts now have a “pent up demand” to hire teachers back as they reduce class sizes and respond to rising enrollments in some areas.

“I am quite sure there will be a lot of attention to this in the next few years, to make sure we can underwrite people coming into the profession,” she said.

Louis Freedburg
EdSource Executive Director
CHECK OUT TRUEASSOCIATION.ORG

Just in case you missed it. The last edition of TRUE News was an online version only. It was a combined edition for December 2014/January 2015. Along with the usual articles, the following titles were featured:

• Show Of Unity At Board Meeting—TRUE’s silent show of unity at the Nov. 18 Board Meeting
• Tentative Agreement Information (Look here to see the changes to our new agreement with the District)
• Local Control and Accountability Plan—LCAP (By Bill Avery)
• Degrees Not Debt
• What To Do If Injured At Work
• Thomas R. Brown Athletic Grant
• Part 2 of Special Ed From a Gen Ed Teacher (Part 1—was in November TRUE News, By Ann Murray)

DATES TO REMEMBER

February 10…………TRUE Executive Board Meeting, 4 pm, TRUE Office
February 10…………TRUSD Board Meeting, Open Session starts at 7 pm
February 11………Negotiations Committee Meeting, 4:00 pm, TRUE Office
February 12………Organizing Committee Meeting, 4:15 pm, TRUE Office
February 12………Professional Development Meeting, 4 pm, TRUE Office
February 16-20…..President’s Holiday Week—No School
February 24…………TRUSD Board Meeting, Open Session starts at 7 pm
March 2……………Read Across America
March 3……………TRUSD Board Meeting, Open Session starts at 7 pm

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