



12966 Euclid Street, Suite 220
Garden Grove, CA 92840
(714) 638-7480

AD NOTES

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Issue Editor: Eric Padget

Teach your students to use what talents they have; the woods would be silent if no birds sang except those that sing best.

Anonymous

\$250 Federal Teacher Tax Renewed

The \$250 Teacher Tax Credit was recently renewed for the 2006 and 2007 tax years. Congress first passed legislation in 2002 giving teachers and paraprofessionals a \$250 federal tax deduction for out-of-pocket expenses for instructional materials and classroom supplies. The legislation represented an acknowledgment — for the first time — that teachers and paraprofessionals are spending their own money to equip their classrooms. The deduction has been extended several times and is currently set to expire at the end of the 2007 tax year.

NEA supports making this deduction permanent, increasing it to \$400, and expanding it to cover professional development expenses as well.

New Teachers - Open Enrollment for Disability Insurance

The CTA disability insurance open enrollment for new teachers has been extended this year to 150 days. Teachers hired for the 2006-07 academic year have until January 31, 2007 to enroll without health questions or exams. Don't miss this opportunity! For more information, visit the GGEA website at www.ggea.org and click on the UnumProvident link or call the GGEA office.

Pre-Retirement Workshop

On Saturday, February 3, 2007, CalSTRS will be presenting their pre-retirement workshop. This will take place at the Hyatt Regency Orange County located at Harbor and Chapman in Garden Grove. It will begin with Registration and a Continental Breakfast at 8:30 AM and the workshop will take place from 9 AM to noon. Topics included will be the State Teachers Retirement System and Social Security. Watch for a posting on your GGEA board at your site or call the GGEA office. The registration deadline is Wednesday, January 31, 2007.

Credential Renewal Changes

Great news! As of January 1, 2007, you will no longer be required to show that you have completed 150 hours of seat time to renew your teaching credential. Senate Bill 1209 (Scott) eliminated this condition. Teachers are now encouraged to engage in an individual program of professional growth with no specific hour requirements. Also, after January 1st, all credential renewals will be handled online. The holder will be required to submit an application and fee for renewal to the CTC every five years and meet certain professional requirements relating to good moral character. Please be advised that if you fail to renew your credential prior to expiration, the Orange County Department of Education will withhold your paycheck until such time that your credential is renewed.

Attorney available at the GGEA Office

GGEA provides its members with the opportunity to meet with an attorney for 30 minutes about non-job related issues free of charge. This is on a first come, first served basis. There are 4 spaces per day available on the following dates: January 24, February 6 and 21, March 21 and 28, April 4 and 18, May 2, 16, and 30, and June 6. Appointment times begin at 3 PM. Call the GGEA Office if you wish to schedule an appointment.

Employee Information System (E.I.S.)

The Orange County Department of Education has provided the district with a new way for employees to view their sick leave balances as well as their paycheck stubs. This new system is called the Employee Information System (EIS) and is available to all district employees that have direct deposit or net check. It is a secure website that is accessible from your home.

Information on how to access this information system has been sent to each school site. If you cannot locate the information, contact your site administrator or call the GGEA office.

A+ Home and Auto Insurance

As a CTA member, you qualify for A+ Auto & Home Insurance Plus managed by California Casualty. The special rates are negotiated exclusively for CTA members and their families. A special feature they offer is a zero deductible for vandalism to your vehicle parked within 500 ft. of a school campus or during a school function off campus. Another is coverage up to \$3000 for your own educational equipment and materials when used on school premises or in school activities. You can link to the A+ website via www.ggea.org.

Happy New Year