

President's Report 3/24/09

Pink Friday Demonstration- Pink Friday events, both during the day and the after school demonstration, went very well overall. Site Reps have reported positive results in the high number of teachers and administrators that participated. I also know that most District Office personnel participated, including our Superintendent Dr. Schwalm.

The after school demonstration was well attended. GGEA members held signs and donned Pink Friday t-shirts while picketing with other CTA members on the corner of Harbor Boulevard and Chapman Avenue. Many people from other districts expressed their thanks, especially when they discovered that GGUSD did not issue any RIF notices. The event was also well covered by the Garden Grove Journal, the local Garden Grove channel 3, and Saigon TV.

Workshops- GGEA has and will be hosting numerous workshops during the month of March. These workshops include New Teacher Training, a Retirement Forum, and Anti-Bullying Training put on by a CTA presenter. Our apologies to those that attended the Anti-Stress workshop. More stress was caused, as the presenter was a no-show. Thank you to Debi Lindberg and Susan Kaylor for filling the gap.

Budget Meeting- I coordinated and attended a Budget meeting with Judy, Eric Padget (Treasurer), Armon Akerboom (Negotiations Chair), Dr. Laura Schwalm (Superintendent), Dr. Sue McCann (Asst Sup Business Services), and Joli Armitage (Asst Sup Personnel). Together we examined the current financial picture, as we now know it as well as the current cuts the District is making that do not have to be agreed upon at the Bargaining Table. We will be working on a joint communication to be sent out to all teachers.

School Board Lunches- I met with KimOanh Nguyen-Lam, George West, Lan Nguyen, and Bob Harden over lunch to discuss pertinent GGUSD issues.

Meetings with District Personnel- We have continued to have meetings with District personnel, including weekly with Dr. Schwalm, monthly with Sara Wescott, Chris Weber, and as needed with Mike Miller and Gabriela Mafi. In addition, Judy and I continue to meet at least weekly with Assistant Superintendent Joli Armitage for Contract Maintenance.

School Visits- Judy and I visited or will visit the following schools during the month of March: Enders, Marshall, Murdy, Post, Simmons, Jordan, and Walton. We have visited all 7-12 schools at least once, and have a handful of elementary schools remaining. **If, for any reason, you would like us to visit again, please contact the GGEA Office.**

In addition to the above, I also attended a CTA Coordinated Bargaining effort with Heidi Brown (Bargaining Team Member), a local Association Presidents networking meeting, GGUSD School Board Meeting, a GGUSD Principal Interview Panel, and many meetings with teachers from different schools.

State Council

This past weekend was a very interesting (and long) State Council session. State Council consists of representatives from each local association in the state and it is the governing body of CTA, very similar to our Rep Council. Two major things happened at this session:

1. A new CTA Secretary-Treasurer was elected. Gail Mendes defeated incumbent Dan Vaughn in a very close election that was decided by less than 30 votes. Gail shared her cell phone number with the entire State Council during the conclusion of the meeting, so hopefully she will be receptive to our input
2. State Council took a support position on all of the Propositions that will be forthcoming in the May Special Election. There was much debate over the issue, but eventually a large majority approved of these positions. CTA, as directed by State Council, will not be going forth with the sales tax initiative. Instead, the funding budgeted for this initiative will now be directed toward the support of the five Propositions.

May Special Election

It is vital that the Propositions be passed in the upcoming May Special Election. A handout for each member has been prepared to explain the current budget as well as the Propositions. Again, if any of the budget-related Propositions fail (1A-1E) we could be facing further drastic cuts.

Garden Grove Unified School District is one of the few districts in the state that did not hand out preliminary pink slips (RIF notices). This does not mean the current financial crisis will not affect us. The following are ways we have been affected already:

- Staffing ratio increased K, 4-12 by two students
- Intermediate librarians back in the classroom halftime
- Intermediate intramural sports eliminated
- Many music and choral festivals eliminated
- School site budgets have been frozen for classroom supplies
- Fine Arts and Physical Education Block Grants have been taken back

We will continue to be feeling the effects of the cuts as we move forward in the coming years. It is important to do what we can now (campaign for Propositions 1A- 1E) to stave off further cuts. I am very grateful to be in the Garden Grove Unified School District during these tough financial times. Our higher level of reserves and fiscal conservatism have allowed us to delay some of the tough decisions that other districts have already had to make, but the decisions will still have to be made. I urge you to please contact me if you have any questions or concerns you would like addressed. It is important that GGEA membership stays educated and informed.