



UTP VOICE

United Teachers of Pasadena

January 2010

Volume 14, Issue 4

Acting President's Message by Jeffrey Leming

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Happy New Year and welcome back! Hopefully your break was a good one and you're ready to return to PUSD for the second half of the school year. I have been happy to be here serving as Acting President until Bethel returns from maternity leave. Below is a summary of some of the main issues that UTP is actively addressing.

Budget News

As you may have heard, the Board of Education approved the District's recommendations for budget reductions for the 2010-2011 school year. These budget reductions, which are not negotiable, will impact our members in the following ways:

- Hourly Teacher Reduction (no elementary summer school)
- Eliminate Athletic Director allocation (0.2 employee each high school = 0.8 employee)
- Reduce encroachment by Rose City, class size increase from 23:1 to 28:1 (5 employees)
- Special Education (7 employees)
- Tier III (17.5 employees)
- Class Size Reduction 9th Grade English/Math, class size increase from 20:1 to 36:1 (8.3 employees)
- Class Size Reduction K-3, class size increase 31:1 (82 employees)
- Counselors -increase ratio 600:1 (5 employees)
- Library Services (17 employees)

All together, the reductions total approximately 12 % of our membership. Not mentioned above, the School Board also approved reducing 3-5 administrators, which would equal approximately 4% to 7% reduction in administration. The District is in the business of instructing children but the comparison of cuts to the classroom and cuts to administration hardly represents an effort to keep cuts away from the classroom. Needless to say, cuts that mostly come from the UTP membership will be devastating to the instructional program as we are responsible for working daily with the students.

In order to alleviate the District's fiscal condition, the District has asked us to

Schedule of Events

- January 11th—UTP Executive Board Meeting, UTP office, 4:00 p.m.
- January 12th, 26th—PUSD School Board Meeting, Ed Center, 6:30 p.m.
- January 18—Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- January 19th—UTP/PUSD Bargaining Session, CTA, 8:00 a.m.
- January 11th—UTP/PUSD Bargaining Session, Ed Center, 8:00 a.m.
- January 25th - UTP Rep. Council Meeting, CTA office, 4:00 p.m.

January 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

General Information

UTP Website:

www.utofp.org

UTP Office:

United Teachers of Pasadena
2303 E. Washington Blvd.
Pasadena, CA 91104
(626) 798 - 0928
Fax: (626) 798 - 5452

UTP Officers:

Bethel Lira, President
Jeff Leming, Vice President
Monica Villegas, Secretary
J. Manuel Carcido, Treasurer

Area Directors:

Tia Acosta, Area 1 Child Dev.
David Berk, Area 2 Elem. I
John Lira, Area 3 Elem. II
Yolanda Munoz, Area 4 Elem. III
Darius Hines, Area 5 Middle Schools
Carol Locke, Area 6 High Schools

P.U.S.D. Board Members:

Renata Cooper: rcooper@pusd.us
Bob Harrison: bharrison@pusd.us
Ed Honowitz: ed@edhonowitz.com
Ramon Miramontes: ramonm@maciso.org
Scott Phelps: sphelps@alumni.caltech.edu
Elizabeth Pomeroy: ewpomeroy@sbcglobal.net
Tom Selinske: tselinske@pusd.us

Frequently Requested

P.U.S.D. Numbers:

P.U.S.D. Ed Center (626) 396-3600

- Cert. Personnel ext. 88380
- Health & Benefits ext. 88383
- Substitute Line ext. 88382
- Payroll ext. 88360

Frequently Requested Numbers:

CAL STRS (800) 228 - 5453
CTA Group Life and Disability Insurance (800) 522 - 0406
CTA Auto and Home Insurance Program (800) 800 - 9410

Union Code of Conduct:

- I will not criticize any union member except to the individual directly.
- If any member is being criticized in my presence, I will confront the criticism and ask that it stop.
- I will not participate in any conversations with management that criticizes or negatively speculates about any union member.
- I will settle my differences with members within my union.
- I will engage in debate, offer others every opportunity for debate, and respect minority viewpoints. I will, however, observe and support the majority mandate of my union.

President's Message Continued

take on concessions in the form of furlough days, increased class sizes, and to pay for any future increases in the costs of our health and welfare benefits. UTP is concerned with the fiscal condition of the District but cuts must be of **equitable** distribution. Therefore, UTP stands for the following:

1. No concessions where they are unwarranted.
2. Equitable distributions of concessions.
3. No permanent concessions.
4. Full restoration of temporary concessions by a time certain.

Reduction In Force (RIF)

Reduction In Force simply means a layoff. As you have received a notice of your seniority date back in November, we can infer that the District is in anticipation of a Reduction in Force. A Reduction In Force can occur as a result of three different actions: through declining enrollment, through the increase of class size, and through the elimination of a particular kind of service (PKS). The School Board must vote and notice certificated employees by March 15 if it determines that a layoff is necessary. In the meantime, if you believe the District has made an error with your seniority date, you should contact the Human Resources Department and inform them immediately. Also, it would be a good idea to verify that you are a UTP member as UTP membership ensures that you will receive legal representation in the event of a Reduction In Force. You can simply e-mail our office secretary, Marcela Lara at utplara5@yahoo.com, to ensure your membership. UTP will keep you posted as we get more information of the District's intent to issue layoff notices.

Parcel Tax

On December 14, 2009, UTP took an official support position on the parcel tax. On January 12, the School Board approved the Parcel Tax and it will be put to the voters of Pasadena, Altadena, and Sierra Madre by mail voting in May. This could infuse PUSD with more than \$7 million dollars annually if approved by voters. UTP has committed its personnel and resources through our Political Action Committee to the passage of the parcel tax that will serve to secure much needed funding for PUSD. We will be calling on you to participate in a phone banking campaign to encourage voters to support this campaign measure. Your Site Rep will have details on how you can help in the near future.

Race to the Top Grant

The Race to the Top (RTTT) grant is a competitive grant for federal dollars. California plans to apply for these one-time funds of approximately somewhere between \$350 and \$700 million dollars. Within the grant are many requirements such as restructuring of schools and tying annual teacher evaluations to standardized tests. Additionally, there are two RTTT bills passed by the California Legislature that would include even more requirements to receive the one-time funds. PUSD's implementation of RTTT could impact bargaining in that the RTTT plan implicates mandatory subjects of bargaining such as evaluation criteria and procedures, job assignments, school calendars, class size, hours, and transfers. This would add another layer of bargaining to our bargaining cycle that began in October of 2008. We have many articles that have not been addressed and we are working with an expired contract.

School districts across the State were asked to submit an application along with a Memorandum of Understanding between the district and teacher association, although the signature of the teacher association is not a requirement to participate. PUSD indicated its intent to participate in the State's application and requested UTP to sign the RTTT MOU. UTP took an opposed position on Race to the Top and did not sign the MOU. Given that PUSD stands to gain a small amount of one-time money in exchange for potential costs and unknown mandates and given that it would cost PUSD dollars in terms of hiring personnel to implement RTTT, it is troubling as to why PUSD would want to participate.

Don't Forget! 2009 Dues for Tax Deduction Purposes

Your union dues are deductible! Below are the total dues paid to UTP/CTA/NEA for the year 2009.

2009 Dues with PAC allocation deducted
(most members fall into the category of those
who allocated funds to the UTP PAC):

Category 1	\$1057.05
Category 2A	\$563.54
Category 2B	\$317.02
Category 3B	\$354.09

2009 Dues without PAC allocation:

Category 1	\$1037.05
Category 2A	\$543.54
Category 2B	\$297.02
Category 3B	\$334.09

Reminder: The Federal "Educator Expense Deduction" is still valid for the 2009 tax year. Educators may subtract up to \$250.00 of qualified expenses when figuring their adjusted gross income for 2009 (\$500 if married filing joint and both spouses are educators, but not more than \$250 each). This deduction is available whether or not the taxpayer itemizes deductions on Schedule A.

Consult your tax preparer or the IRS at 800-829-4477 to listen to Topic 458 if you have questions. You may also visit the IRS website at <http://www.irs.gov/taxtopics/tc458.html> for further information.

UTP Leadership Election's Calendar

Declaration of Candidacy forms sent to all members:	January 19, 2010
Deadline for submission of Declaration forms:	February 5, 2010
Open Nominations at Rep Council:	February 8, 2010
Ballots distributed to school sites:	March 17, 2010
Elections held at school sites:	March 22 – 24, 2010
Ballots counted at the UTP office:	March 25, 2010
Announcements of election results:	March 26, 2010

Note: Only UTP members are eligible to participate in this election process.

Know Your Contract

7.4 Voluntary Transfer

- 7.4.9.1 An employee may file a transfer request for the following year by submitting a request to transfer form to Human Resources no later than March 15 of each school year. An employee may request consideration at up to three (3) specific schools/grades within the employee's authorized credential.
- 7.4.9.2 Properly filed transfer requests shall be valid until August 30. Continuing transfer requests must be renewed in writing after August 30.
- 7.4.9.3 The filing of a request for transfer is without prejudice to the unit member and shall not jeopardize the unit member's present assignment.
- 7.4.9.4 A request for transfer may be withdrawn by the unit member in writing to Human Resources at any time prior to official notification of transfer approval.

Online Beneficiary Registration at MyCTA!

The CTA Death & Dismemberment Plan is designed to provide a life insurance benefit to Eligible Members of CTA.

- Provided by the CTA Economic Benefits Trust
- A Death Benefit of up to \$2,000
- An Accidental Death and Accidental Dismemberment Benefit of up to \$10,000
- A \$50,000 Benefit if the member dies or suffers a dismemberment due to an accident or assault while engaged in any activity which was in the expressed or implied terms of his or her occupation, or while acting in the capacity of an Association Leader
- A life insurance benefit that increases with each year of continuous CTA membership, until the maximum benefit is reached after ten (10) years.

You may name anyone as your designated beneficiary. To check to see if you have a beneficiary on file, or to designate or make changes to a beneficiary, simply click on My Profile under the My CTA tab at www.cta.org (login required). By doing so, you will not only ensure that your designated beneficiary is registered, you will have personal security that comes with your CTA membership.

This is not a complete description of the Plan. For a complete description, please refer to the booklet entitled "CTA Death & Dismemberment Plan and Summary Plan Description," and to make a claim or for more information contact the CTA Member Benefits Department at (650) 552-5200 or e-mail member_benefits@cta.org.

It's Never Too Early or Too Late to Plan for Your Retirement!

CalSTRS offers several types of workshops to meet the growing need CTA members have for information regarding CalSTRS benefits as well as retirement planning. Each workshop is designed around the needs of educators at different career stages:

1. Demystifying CalSTRS—Recommended for early career educators with one to five years of service credit.
2. CalSTRS Fundamentals—Recommended for mid-career educators with ten to 20 years of service credit.
3. CalSTRS Retirement Check-up—Recommended for late career educators who have five years or fewer before retirement.
4. CalSTRS Retirement Income Management Workshop—Recommended for CalSTRS members age 45 and older, and retired educators that are interested in developing a post-retirement plan.

As you review the list, choose the one that best fits the stage you are in now. To view a complete list of workshops and to register, visit the CalSTRS website at www.calstrs.com.

Teachers' Rights

If you are called into a meeting with an administrator, you have the right to:

- Ask what the meeting's purpose is before attending.
- Be represented in meetings that might lead to discipline.
- Request unusual directives in writing before complying.
- Give no explanations until after consulting with a union representative.
- Refuse to submit a written statement until after consulting with a union representative.

UTP is on Twitter

In order to have a strong membership, UTP members need to be informed and educated of UTP business and issues that affect them. UTP is committed to communicating with its members so that the membership receives the most current information in a timely manner. To accomplish this, we are now using Twitter to communicate association information to our members. Twitter is used by many companies, celebrities, politicians, artists, and news corporations to send out information to their customers, viewers, and followers. UTP plans to post updates whenever possible to keep membership informed about association business, both local and state.

To sign up for a Twitter account you must do so via the web at www.twitter.com. Follow the online instructions for signing up and be sure to add a device (cell phone) under settings. Using the cell phone is the preferred method because it will allow you to get instant text message updates (using SMS – short message service) whenever and wherever possible. Make sure you enable device updates under UTP on the list of those you are following.

While all of us do not have access to the internet at all times, almost all of us have cell phones. We know that busy UTP members have such little time, which is why we recommend using the SMS text messaging service with Twitter. Set it up once, and you'll never have to go on to the web to retrieve UTP updates – they'll all be sent directly to your cell phone. You can turn on or off the updates or remove yourself at any time. Please note that if you do not use a device (cell phone) you will have to log in to your Twitter account periodically to check for UTP updates.

In order for us to add you, please sign up with your name so that way we can verify UTP membership. You can also send an email to utpmarcela@yahoo.com and we will send you an invitation to sign up. Our Official Twitter Website can be found at <http://twitter.com/utofp>

Happy Tweeting!

What to Do in an Employment Related Emergency

It is extremely important that in the event of any adverse action affecting your employment status that you immediately contact the UTP office at 626-798-0928. Examples of adverse actions are: notification of dismissal, suspension, child abuse, non-renewal, transfer, demotion, civil or criminal charges, or any contract violation.

Assert your rights if an administrator wants to meet with you concerning any adverse action, the appropriate response for you to say is: "I am a UTP member and I am claiming my right to union representation for this meeting." Until you are able to contact the UTP office:

Do Not admit anything; sign anything; make any verbal or written statement; resign or be insubordinate. Do not speak to your colleagues, principal, administration, parents, or the police about the incident.

Do remain calm and courteous. Immediately upon receiving notice of any adverse action, contact United Teachers of Pasadena at 626-798-0928. Keep copies of all papers relating to the situation.

You have the right to halt any conference already in progress if it becomes disciplinary, and to reschedule when representation is available. Have the meeting at a time and date that is convenient for you and your union representative.

Are You a UTP/CTA/NEA Member?

REMEMBER – An automatic deduction on your paycheck **DOES NOT** mean you are a UTP/CTA/NEA member; **you must sign the membership form**. Call the UTP office at 626-798-0928 to verify your membership or to obtain an enrollment form.

NOTE – In the event of any adverse action affecting your employment status with the District (e.g., dismissal, child abuse, non-renewal, civil or criminal charges) you will not have access to a CTA attorney or be represented by the Association in legal matters other than contract violations if you are not a member.

Celebrate Reading with NEA's Read Across America on March 2, 2010

The National Education Association annually sponsors Read Across America. Now in its fourteenth year, NEA's Read Across America Focuses the country's attention on how important it is to motivate children to read in addition to helping them master basic skills.

NEA launched the Read Across America program in 1997. The nationwide reading celebration takes place each year on or near March 2, the birthday of beloved children's author Dr. Seuss, who epitomizes a love of learning. Dr. Seuss's use of rhyme makes his books an effective tool for teaching young children the basic skills they need to be successful.

Your read Across America celebration can be simple or elaborate as time and inclination allow. Whether you choose to scale up or scale down, keep in mind the basic premise and your event is almost certain to be a success: *On March 2, 2010, the National Education Association is calling for every child to be reading in the company of a caring adult.*

NEA provides all of the tools and resources you'll need to provide successful Read Across America activities. Whether you're planning a Read Across America Day event or a year-long reading challenge, visit NEA's web site at www.nea.org/readacross for an online toolkit, calendar, resources, and tips.

Blue Shield Members: Log in to Healthy Lifestyles Rewards – Earn \$175

Blue Shield has recently added an additional benefit to our insurance plan. If you are a Blue Shield subscriber, then simply log on to blueshieldca.com/hlr to enroll in the program. You will receive a \$25.00 gift card just by taking a Wellness Assessment. Once you've completed the Wellness Assessment, you will be ready to start getting healthy.

The Healthy Lifestyle Rewards program offers resources, motivating tools and articles, and support for healthy eating, getting fit, stress management, quitting smoking, and more. When you log in and use the tools, trackers, and resources throughout the site, you earn cash. For every 12 weeks you participate (up to 36 weeks total), you earn \$50.00. Weeks of participation do not have to be consecutive, so if you miss a week or two, there is no need to worry. Participation for 36 weeks and completion of the Wellness Assessment earn you a total of **\$175.00!**

Enroll today at blueshieldca.com/hlr, track your progress and earn rewards!

The CTA Martin Luther King Memorial Scholarship Fund Drive Kick Off for 2010

Each year in January we commemorate the life of a tremendously important leader; we celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. It is a time for the nation to remember the injustices that Dr. King fought. A time to remember his fight for the freedom, equality, and dignity of all races and peoples. A time to remember the message of change through nonviolence.

January 15, the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, signals the "kick-off" of the CTA Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund campaign! We are asking the total CTA Family to participate in this important organizational program. In 1968 after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., CTA and Student CTA (SCTA) established a living memorial in the form of a scholarship fund to aide members of ethnic minorities in preparing for teaching related careers in public education.

This scholarship fund is supported by voluntary contributions from the CTA membership and corporate donors. CTA recognizes the shortage of ethnic minority teachers and the demand for continuing professional growth. The goal of the Fund is to encourage ethnic minority students to become educators and to promote professional growth for ethnic minority teachers. If you would like to donate to this worthy cause, contact the UTP office or for more information and an application for the MLK, Jr. Memorial Scholarship, visit the CTA website at www.cta.org.

“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”

— *W.B. Yeats (1865—1939)*

**Dear:
Teachers, Staff, Employees**

Whether you are dreaming of buying a new home, lowering your existing payment or taking cash out, CalSTRS Home Loan Program can help by offering competitive rates on a variety of mortgage loan programs.

Now Available

(Conventional 15 or 30 Year Fixed Programs)
Competitive rates are available for buying a new home or refinancing your existing home. Mortgage loan amounts are available up to \$834,000.

(80/17 Purchase Program)
Put only **3% down** with an 80% first mortgage and a deferred 17% second mortgage that has no payment due for 5 years! Mortgage loans are available up to \$650,000

RATE ONE
FINANCIAL

Pete Katsafados
CalSTRS Loan Specialist



Direct: 626.991.0412
Office: 626.389.1806

922 E. Green St. • Pasadena, CA 91106
Real Estate Broker - CA Dept. of Real Estate # 01449281
Loan programs subject to change based on availability

United Teachers of Pasadena is Online!

Visit our website at www.utofp.org for information on the following:

- UTP/PUSD Contract
- Salary Schedules
- School Year Calendar
- Grievance Resolutions
- UTP Meetings and Leadership
- Member Benefits
- Frequently Asked Questions
- And more . . .

NAME / ADDRESS CHANGE?

Please notify the UTP office of any name/address/email change(s) so that we may update our records. You may send in the form below to the UTP office via school mail, or email the office at utpmarcela@yahoo.com. Please include the following information:

Name: _____

New Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State: _____

Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____

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6187 Carpinteria Ave, CA 93013
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The UTP VOICE

The UTP VOICE is published monthly by United Teachers of Pasadena, an affiliate of the California Teachers Association and the National Education Association. Our newsletter is distributed to over 1,000 members consisting of teachers, nurses, librarians, and counselors in PUSD schools.

To submit information or articles to the UTP VOICE, contact the UTP office. We welcome contributions. Copy deadline is the 7th of every month.