

### **State Budget Update**

As you know doubt have heard, California finally has a budget. The new budget includes a deferral of \$1.7 billion for K-12, which schools will receive in July 2011. The approximate amount is \$272 per ADA for unified districts. The budget also provides a \$300 million down payment for settle-up dollars for unfunded mandates, including \$90 million in claims for 2010-11 & \$210 million for prior year claims. This will be paid via ADA. For Child Care, the budget restores the \$1.4 billion in cuts proposed in the Governor's Budget & May Revision.

As more information becomes available as it pertains to Vallejo specifically, I will share it in the VEA Voice, in this report as well as on [myvea.org](http://myvea.org).

### **Race to Nowhere**

Have you bought your tickets yet?

This movie takes a hard look at the testing culture that now exists in many of our schools nationwide. It examines this focus on testing and its impact on our students, families, and teachers. As we all know, in Vallejo there has been more & more emphasis on raising test scores in Language Arts & Math and less emphasis on making sure that actual learning is taking place. Teachers at the elementary level are being told to reduce and/or eliminate the teaching of history & science in lieu of the only subjects that seem to matter: language arts & math. Between District assessments, school site assessments and the state test, many of us believe that our kids are being tested to death. Quite simply, kids are losing their love of learning.

Some have asked why we are charging admission to watch the film. The reason for this is to help cover the costs of distribution for the producer of the film, Vicki Abeles. Ms. Abeles was unable to get a major distributor and so, she decided to turn to educators and other concerned community members to help show this film. Doors will open at 6:30 and the movie will start at 7:00. Go to [myvea.org](http://myvea.org) to purchase tickets & encourage everyone else to do the same!

In order to cover the costs of the film, VEA needs 100 tickets sold. Tickets are only \$10 if they are purchased in advanced by going to [myvea.org](http://myvea.org) and \$15 at the door. Students with student ID's will purchase tickets at a reduced rate of \$5.00 at the door. The school site with the highest percentage in turnout of parents, students, and faculty will receive a \$500 gift card from Staples. Second place and third place will receive \$250 and \$100 respectively. Site Reps from the winning schools will receive the gift card and will help teachers at their school sites determine the best use of spending the money from the gift cards.

### **Union Academy**

VEA requests your presence at the Union Academy on Wednesday, October 27<sup>th</sup> from 4 to 8. Dean Vogel, CTA's Vice President is our special guest. This academy is open to ALL unit members who are interested in learning more about what it means to be part of a union, the grievance process, due process and more!

Dinner is on us and you have a chance to win prizes! Contact Marie McPherson at x 58320 or McPherson\_Marie@yahoo.com.

### **Community Outreach Committee**

Our "Helping Hands" event was our first community outreach event for the 2010-11 school year. The film, *Race to Nowhere*, will be our second. In the upcoming months, we hope to roll out more events as well as have a well defined Community Outreach program. However, in order to do this, we need people who are willing to commit some of their time to help make this a success. In our next VEA Voice, there will be a brief community outreach survey for all unit members to complete. Those who wish to take the survey online will find the link on myvea.org. Only complete one version of the survey. The deadline for the survey is Thursday, November 4<sup>th</sup>. Site Reps are encouraged to collect surveys to bring to November's Site Rep Council meeting.

Our first Community Outreach committee meeting will be on Tuesday, November 9<sup>th</sup> at Springstowne Middle in Room 3 from 4 to 5:30. Contact Lynette Henley, Community Outreach chair at henleyl@aol.com for more information.

### **School Site Council Training**

VEA is co-hosting with the District our second School Site Council training for parents, teachers, and community members. The training will be conducted by Jane Robb from CTA. This training was well received last year when it was open to QEIA schools and requests were made to have it again this year. This year it is open to ALL school site councils. Fliers will be distributed by the District, but please be sure to let your site administrators and interested community members know about this training.

It will be on Monday, November 1<sup>st</sup> from 5 to 7 p.m. in Rooms 115/116 at the District Office.