



VEA Voice



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October 2012

President's Message

As you well know, we are in full swing for the 2012 Campaign Season. By now, you should have received a visit from one of the VEA Executive Board members to discuss CTA/VEA's position on Proposition 30 and Proposition 32. We are encouraging members to vote YES on Prop 30 and NO on Prop 32. In order to make sure that Prop 30 passes & Prop 32 is defeated, we will need every single member to get the word out. There will be numerous opportunities for phone banking and precinct walking in the month of October. Please sign up for at least one night of phone banking or precinct walking. Dave Henderson, VEA's Vice President and Communications Chair will be coordinating our "Get Out the Vote" (GOTV) efforts.

When members ratified the last tentative agreement with the District, we agreed to take up to five no-learning/paycut days this school year if Prop 30 was defeated. It cannot be stressed enough that if it fails and the trigger cut is larger than anticipated, *VEA may have to go back to the bargaining table to discuss further cuts in the school year.* That is why we absolutely need every member stepping up to the plate during this campaign season. If you care about your paycheck, then you should care enough to do at the very least, one thing to get the word out. Now is not the time to rely on others to do for you what you should be doing for yourself.

Overages

VEA is well aware that the District continues to ignore the contract when it comes to class size limits and student

contacts. Per 10.1.1, elementary class sizes are not to exceed 32 students. Per 10.1.2, middle school class sizes are not exceed 33 students and 160 student contacts. Per 10.1.3, high school class sizes are not to exceed 35 students and 160 student contacts. For PE, class sizes are not to exceed 40 students and 190 student contacts. Any overages, including members teaching 1.2 contracts, need to be approved by VEA. The District has not asked for any approval on overages. Any teacher who is over should first address the issue with their school site administrator and then if the class size is not immediately adjusted, a grievance should be filed. Members do not have to take any student that puts them over their contractual limit.

Grievance forms can be found on our website at myvea.org. When you file a grievance, please e-mail Kevin Steele at kmerles@msn.com so that he can keep track of the timeline.

VEA is looking at what our next steps will be if the District continues to ignore the contractual language on class sizes. Members will be given updates on our website, through Facebook, and of course, hard copies.

Membership

We continue to work on getting out membership cards to everyone. If you have not received your CTA membership card, please contact the office at 707-864-6193 and talk to Martha, our terrific new Office Manager.

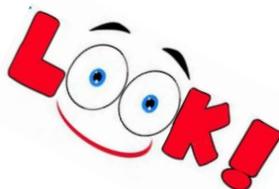
Susanna Urias, VEA's Membership chair, is getting the word out on our next Chevy Social. Make sure to look for the flyer at your school site. The next Social is scheduled for Monday, October 22nd. Be sure to mark your calendars! This is the day before our first day of VEA's Fourth Annual "Helping Hands" event.

I do hope every member will make the attempt to come to at least one of our Socials this year. This is our opportunity to connect with colleagues and celebrate the hard work we do every single day in the classroom.

Sincerely,
Christal Watts,
VEA President

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TEACHER HERO

By Suzanne DuBois

James Coffin, special education teacher at Franklin Middle School, and 20 of his Skateboard Club members worked all day on September 15, Coastal Clean-Up Day. And that was not the first time that the skateboard club has participated in a community event to help out.

Mr. Coffin started his skateboard club two years ago with a two-fold purpose

- To give skateboarding middle school students a safe, fun, and legitimate place to participate and
- To contribute to the community and improve the image of skateboarders, through community service.

In his weekly meetings, he teaches safety rules and shows videos. He has raised hundreds of dollars in donated skateboard equipment, which students can win by being entered in drawings if their grades are C's or better. Prizes are also awarded when students participate in community service. For example, every student who helped on September 15 received a pair of skateboarding shoes.

He often gives up time on the weekend to arrange out of town field trips to skateboarding contests. Mr. Coffin is working with the Vallejo City Parks and Recreation Department to create safe skateboard parks. He recently showed me the skateboard logo, a panther on a skateboard (Franklin Middle School's mascot), which will be placed on club T-shirts, which he has also gotten donated.

Thank you Mr. Coffin for going above and beyond the call of duty to contribute to our students and our community! ❖

Please send Suzanne DuBois (sduboisvallejo@comcast.net) articles about the heroes at your school. ❖



TEACHERS!

YOU ARE INVITED

Chevys
FRESH MEX[®]

157 Plaza Drive ~ Vallejo

for a complimentary evening

Enjoy refreshments, food and fun!!



BE SURE YOUR COURSE WORK COUNTS!

TO: All Certificated Staff
FROM: Sue Levy, Chair
Professional Growth Committee

- ✓ Are you planning to take any classes or attend workshops this year?
- ✓ Are you participating in un-paid, after duty day activities at your site that are listed in your School Level Plan (like Leadership or PTA)?
- ✓ Do you need credits to move over on the salary schedule in order to earn more money?
- ✓ Did you know that you can apply for Professional Growth credits through the district, **at no charge**, that enable you to move over on the salary schedule?

Questions?

Please call Sue Levy at extension 60125

NOTE: Professional Growth credits do not transfer with you if you leave Vallejo City Unified School District. There is also a limit on how many PG credits count for salary movement – see the salary schedule in the contract to be sure!



Here's what you need to do:

1. Apply for Professional Growth before you attend the class or workshop - applications are available at school sites and must be received at the District office before you begin.
2. Write a one-page summary of what you learned and how it will improve your teaching practices when you are done.
3. If you are participating in school activities, your administrator should submit an application on behalf of everyone at your site (check with your administrator to be sure it is done). You can also apply by yourself – remember that your hours do not count until the application is received at the district office.
4. Keep a log of your hours, and submit it, signed by your administrator, before the end of the school year.
5. After receiving confirmation from the Professional Growth Committee that your units have been awarded, verify with the Human Resources department that they have been posted.



WHO IS THAT BEHIND THE FRIENDLY VOICE YOU HEAR WHEN YOU CALL THE VEA OFFICE?

.....By Suzanne DuBois

Why it's Martha Hatcher, who started June 18, 2012, as our new office manager. Martha is a real Vallejo girl; she grew up here and attended Highland Elementary, Franklin Jr. High, Vallejo Jr. High, and Vallejo High School. She has worked in the past for VCUSD in the Bilingual program and is now living in Fairfield. She is happily married to her husband John and they just celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary. She has three wonderful children and three



even more wonderful grandchildren (and one on the way). She can't help herself if she's a huge Los Angeles Dodgers fan and a major craft fanatic. Don't forget to thank her when you call for taking messages, making copies, answering questions, dealing with the personnel office of VCUSD, organizing and keeping track of all of us!

Welcome Martha, thank you for all your hard work and for taking such good care of us!

I CAN DO IT WORKSHOP

The **I Can Do It Workshop** is for teachers who are in the first 5 years of teaching and/or are struggling with discipline and/or just want a great day with fellow educators and some professional development credits thrown in.

Comments from previous participants include:

The most significant thing I learned was...

-  I am not alone
-  I am not as unusual as I thought
-  That many teachers have some of the same problems I have
-  I am not alone, other teachers struggle with same issues
-  To stay humorous, believing in myself is key to positive classroom mgmt
-  CTA is there for me!
-  Problems encountering ...not unusual...I am not alone...in fact compared to others...I can go in Monday and realize this is not too bad
-  I am not alone...no set answers

This workshop will be held on Saturday, October 20 from 8 am to 4:30 pm. It will be led by Janice Sullivan, previous VEA president and elementary teacher and Suzanne DuBois, secondary teacher. To register complete the form below by Friday, October 12 and you must also pay a \$25 check refundable upon completion of the workshop.

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Send in your registration through district mail to VEA, Christal Watts. Registration must be received by Friday, October 12. Direct questions to the VEA office at 707- 864-6193. PLEASE PRINT the following:

Name: _____
Home Address: _____
City: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____
School Site: _____
Grade/ Assignment: _____ School Ext.: _____

It is free to members of Vallejo Education Association. However, you must include a check for \$25 with your registration (make your check out to VEA), which will be returned to you upon completion of your training.