



On The Board

The Salinas Valley Federation of Teachers

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Board Highlights from JUNE/JULY 2015

Reported By J.J. Campos

I HATE YOU ALL...



Assuming you're all basking in the spoils of Summer break, consider yourselves warned... I was working, and I'm still cranky. Just kidding! Of course I don't hate 'cha... but while you are away, The

Eye on the Board was in full force, albeit in shorts and sandals. And since we knew you were unlikely to read your District email while you were sipping Mai-Tai's, we decided to give you a double-header. A Double-shot. A 'je ne sais pas. Oui Oui? Folks, this one's long and tedious but full of important info. And plenty to cheer about. And other things...not so much. Read on!



WELCOME BACK FROM SVFT

Newly elected SVFT President Kati Bassler welcomed everyone to the impending school year and mentioned she was excited to be entering this new position and added she was happy to be a part of the negotiations process. So far, so good. We welcome her and wish

her the absolute best of luck as she embarks on what is sure to be a wonderful adventure full of stress, toil and thanklessness (that sounds oddly familiar hmmm) ☺ Just kidding. We luv ya' and wish you nothing but success! We're in good hands people!

That's Just Mean

Trustee Tabera and Patty Padilla-Salsberg commented on an email they perceived to be either threatening or mean-spirited in nature. Said Tabera, "I've never been threatened before. I was emailed from a builders' union where I was told we were acting as nothing but hand maidens." In the email, signed an Eric Christian, stated the Board was warned and would be "held accountable for your actions and are unfit to govern a free people." Freedom! Freedom! Click [Here](#) for George. Tabera took personal offense and added that the Board had always looked out for students, and that he wished he were here. Cue Pink [Floyd](#) people! Trustee Ramirez shared concerns that they lost a good vice principal at Everett Alvarez High School and would like to see stability there. "Two Vice

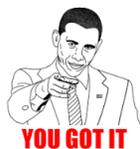
Principals have been there a year or less and constituents may ask why there is so much movement." Could it be the food? All Board members spoke about graduations and how great they were



and how they looked forward to another year. Tim Vanoli thanked our Board for attending the events District-wide and took a moment to introduced Anthony Hinton as the new principal of WMS. Said Hinton, “I pledge to continue to work as hard as I can so that students can have a safe school. Thanks for the opportunity” We wish him the best of luck! He also welcomed newly hired Manager of Operations and Safety, Rick Alvarez. Mr. Alvarez took a moment to thank the Board and said he would work diligently.

ARE WE THERE YET?

Associate Superintendent Dan Burns gave another update on the much famed LCAP monies. He presented the Board with a 62 page document which delineated how LCAP monies were being utilized. Trustee Padilla-Salsberg wanted some clarification on the wording of the report. She mentioned the report stated 85% are Latino and 74% of those are disadvantaged, to which Burns replied, “no, it means 74% of all students are poor.” Sheesh, well that’s a relief! Of particular note, Burns added that baseline results were fairly low with respect to college readiness, math etc...but that given the nature of it being a baseline report, it would give the District something to “chip away at”. Or in our case, hammer. Aaaaand as usual, Trustee Kathryn Ramirez wasn’t cuttin’ anyone any slack and asked Burns if the District was getting positive feedback from District-wide trainings regarding Professional Development related to LCAP. Burns replied in the affirmative. Interestingly, Ramirez pointed out that some sites don’t give parents an ability to contact a principal. Say what?! Again, Burns replied that they “were working on that option.” Hmm, contacting a principal be shouldn’t be an “option”, but a right...right? Tabera wanted to know if there was demand for BCLAD to teach content in students’ native language and if so, why was there only \$20,000 allotted for training? Burns’ replied



that teachers weren’t showing a lot of interest. Tabera and Trustee Lila Cann also inquired as to why only \$12,000 was allotted for classified training but Burns was quick to point out that these were supplemental funds to training budgets that were already in place. Oh. I see. Trustee Eva Marie wanted to know who would greet parents at LCAP meetings and that “We need to make sure we're allotting for classified staff because they are the first to use new technology. I would like them to be trained and certified in that technology and we're not there yet.” Burns clarified that LCAP monies can’t “be used for ongoing salaries.” There was also talk about vacancies that were yet to be filled and Trustee Cann asked how many of those were in the math and science departments. Burns said they were scattered but mostly in those two areas. Trustee Martinez asked once again asked on behalf of her constituents for administrative support in the evenings at District schools, to better serve working parents. We hear ya’! I mean, what good’s a meeting if you can’t have parents attend it. Finally, Tabera asked for concrete numbers with respect to how many Full-Time and Part Time positions were being offered. Burns replied most were 6 hour positions to which Tabera asked if all parties were aware of this. Associate Superintendent Randy Bangs said these items or concerns were being addressed. Finally, Tabera stated he wanted to make sure all parents knew where we were and based on the “baseline” LCAP year we just went through, we have a long way to go in achieving that goal. We’re not there....yet.



Preliminary Budget Report

SUHSD Manager Of Business Services Ana Aguilon spoke about some “assumptions” to

build the budget upon, and you can “assume” it was crazy positive. That’s right...crazy. Overall, we’ve seen an 11.8% growth in ADA and she mentioned that added a quick \$5 million dollars to the budget alone. That’s a nice little find wouldn’t ya’ say matey?! Arrrrghh indeed. But wait! There’s more. Uncle Jerry from Sacramento handed down another \$8.1 million dollars to the general fund over the summer, so it goes without saying, things are looking rosy. Or is it peachy? It’s a vegetable of some type. The gravy train has arrived.



Dude, It’s Over.....Or Is It?

At the July 26th Board meeting, Trustee Padilla-Salsberg once again commented on Paul Farmer, a vocal critic of our District’s move to implement a Project Labor Agreement in the construction of our new high school. “We already voted and the community should respect our decision. I’m hoping we don’t continue to receive mail on this.” Padilla said she had never received intimidating emails of this nature before and that it was disconcerting to see. No doubt, the PLA has stirred a contentious and impassioned debate among stakeholders. It’s clear the Board doesn’t want to hear about it anymore because at this point....dude, it’s over....Or is it?



An Emotional Goodbye

Dr. Bob Martinez gave an emotional farewell after 16 years in our District and if you know Dr. Bob, he IS the numbers man. He was far from your typical numbers guy that night and in good fashion, said his goodbyes. Dr. Bob Martinez thanked Tim Vanoli for his guidance and support. “The District has administered 500,000 tests collaboratively.” He sounded off kudos to a

number of people such as Gloria Hill, Kati Bassler, Ethelvina McDowell, who have aided him over the years. But most importantly, he quoted teachers as “People who take on the most challenging job, kudos, my hat goes out to you. Me retiro, con cariño, adios.” Tears were flowing and his voice broke as he said it. Allow me to translate....that means he’s really sad to go. We’re gonna miss you Dr. Bob.

I Take That Back.... Lease-Lease Back I Mean

Faced with several approaches as to how our District will approach the bidding process in the construction of our new high school, Devon Lincoln from the Lozano-Smith law firm has her hands full in trying to explain bidding legalities/procedures to the uninitiated (that being EVERYONE). That’s like saying Lincoln has to weld a door with a lighter. Really, it’s complicated. As you may recall, the District is looking to use what’s called a Lease-Lease Back approach to bidding the project. Basically, the way it works is the District leases a property to a contractor/construction company for \$1 a year and then leases it back later for a price equivalent to the building costs for the projects. It’s been pretty popular across the state but trust me, it is REALLY controversial. Lawsuits are being thrown around all over the place. Why? Money! That’s why. Anyhow, Attorney Devon Lincoln explained that based on the political landscape, and despite the fact that she originally supported a Lease-Lease



Back approach to bidding, she was no longer able to recommend it. “Based on the state of law, it will remain unsettled for years...and it is difficult for me to give



you advice...therefore, I am changing my recommendation to a design-bid-build process to minimize legal conundrums.” Design-bid-build is the standard process, so it begs the question if that kinda brings the District back to square one, with reference to the PLA. She cited Fresno Unified involved in a lawsuit where it significantly critiqued the Lease-Leaseback process. The case is currently being appealed by Fresno Unified Board and as Lincoln mentioned, “We won’t know if the Supreme Courts accepts the appeal.” Tabera made his thoughts known right away and cited his concerns over people who are taking intimidating positions based on the Board’s decision to go with a PLA. Our position is to start this project because we need this school in 3-4 years. We should look at design-bid-build.” Trustee Cann was concerned with ensuring the construction jobs would stay local but Padilla-Salsberg was more optimistic saying “We have no reason to believe that design-bid-build will negatively impact our PLA.” But folks, it doesn’t stop there. Private Construction advocates such as Dick Johnson and Paul Farmer continued to make a stink over the PLA. Johnson had this to say, “Contrary to what the Board says, PLA is not in place until it is signed.” Actually, he’s wrong on that front, once it’s signed, it’s done, but he added, “a PLA raises cost, typically 10% more. Millions should belong more to modernization. The Board needs to be responsible to its constituents. This Board is self-serving.” Whhooooee! Paul Farmer brought data pertaining to a local Hartnell Construction project and gave the Board reports detailing where the money went. According to Farmer, only 10% of the work stayed locally when done under a PLA, vs, 56% staying locally in a non-PLA construction project. He thanked Vanoli for data on prior builds such as Everett Alvarez where the



Board would be able to see hard evidence of the positive results from a Non-PLA build. The question is, if it was so great, why has the Board unanimously decided FOR a PLA? hmmm. But the ...



didn’t stop there (see what I did there?) because Lincoln had a couple other pressing items up her sleeve. Boy, I wish I had a mood ring to show ya’ how quickly a Board member’s mood can change, when asked the right question.... Or the wrong one ☺. Lincoln asked for direction on whether ancillary contracts, add alternates, consulting contracts, furniture etc.. would be part of the PLA. “I need to know from the board...is it for the large contract....or all contracts post completion work, off site work etc...? I want to clarify that we all understand which contracts are associated with a PLA.”

Annoyed, Padilla-Salsberg wanted to know “Why are we going there?” with the understanding that all contracts were under a PLA. Not so fast. They are not. Trustee Carlos Rubio didn’t understand either, and he felt that these items were “chipping away at the PLA”. Padilla-Salsberg continued “I feel like I’m repeating myself, when I made my original vote (pertaining to PLA)” Enter Tim Vanoli who stated, “Maybe in your mind, you have. We just need to hear from other members. ” Ouch. Karen Luna, weighed in and explained there were other outside firms that consult with the project that are not part of the original plan. Trustee Eva Marie Martinez



said she understood the issue but simply wanted to know how “local” would be defined as to the local workforce hiring our Board has pushed fervently for. Trustee Ramirez asked when the PLA was supposed to end yada yada yada. Folks, this went on seemingly forever and due to current restrictions on the Brown Act, all these little details have to be discussed in open session. THANKFULLY, after deliberation from all Board members, input from Lincoln, and after Karen Luna’s recommendation, it was agreed that ancillary contracts should NOT be a part of the PLA, as to avoid confusion, potentially disastrous overruns, and me losing my sanity. Man o man.

