



On The Board

The Salinas Valley Federation of Teachers

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Board Highlights from September 2015

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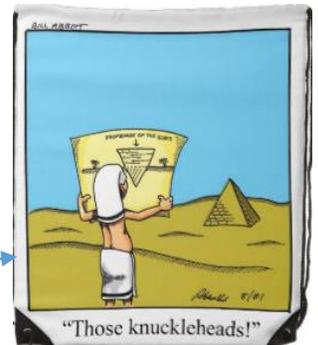
To Quote Shakespeare

“Common core, ‘o common core, common core, where art thou Common Core? ‘Tis I... the...core of controversy! I take thee at my word!”.....ok, I know that’s not how it goes but so far, it’s hard to take those who are gauging student success at THEIR word. Most likely, we’re in for a long debate on Common Core’s effectiveness. Surely, you all read the latest results posted all over the news as to our students’ academic deficiencies as measured by the recent Smarter Balanced Assessment given statewide. If you didn’t, what are you, a mole? It seems as if these first glimpses into said “deficiencies” will lay the groundwork for how the government will react to underperforming schools and so far, there is still much to be seen. Aaaand along with that, the LCAP is right there to ensure these standards are met. Associate Superintendent Dan Burns again gave an LCAP update to our Board during September’s meeting. In case you’ve forgotten what the initials mean, don’t worry,

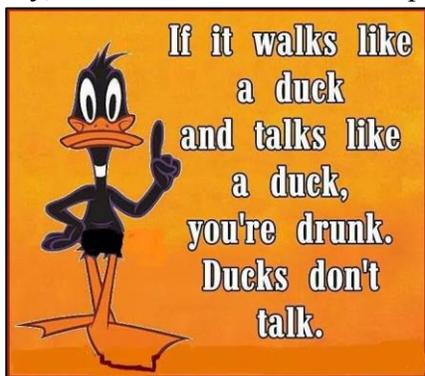
so have I. LCAP..., let me see, it stands for.... Last Call Fo....wait a minute! Sorry, the meeting was a little long and my mind wandered. LCAP ACTUALLY stands for Local Control and Accountability Plan and well, the plan is coming along, inch by inch. Trust me, that inch is a bit of a stretch.

After his update, Trustee Phil Tabera asked Burns if the information (enrollment projections, articulation etc..) provided could be shared with our feeder Districts. Burns stated that would be coming down the road...again. Cue Willie Nelson. He added that 6th grade teachers had been invited to some District trainings to address the achievement gaps listed in the latest report, (you know, the one all over the news). Trustee Kathryn Ramirez wanted to see specifics as opposed to generalities. ”I would like to see the diagnostics that show a breakdown where we have a lot of deficiencies. A sample.” Burns acknowledged the District was in a transition period and that they would be receiving data in the future and added that parents would be offered sessions at every site, where they would learn to read the data. I mean, when stakes are this high, we wouldn’t want to misread the data right?

Trustee Kathryn Ramirez asked that we “be careful what we tell parents referring to college readiness” to which Burns replied, “you’re moving ahead a few meetings.” Again, Ramirez, “Yes, but I had to say it.” No surprise as that’s something she’s prone to. The jury is still out on LCAP and Common Core and we trust the District and Board will do their very best to continue to provide the highest level of education to our students, but as more data rolls out, we can’t help but feel



like we've been here before, hmmm. Can you say, "No Child Left Behind?" Spooooky.



They're Done!

CSEA representative Lucy Vega informed our Board that their negotiations were finished "We are 100% proud we were able to do that." Overall, CSEA was satisfied with how negotiations went and hey, who can blame 'em. With the influx of funding coming in, it's only right that teachers and staff be duly compensated for their tremendous contributions. Despite the good news, as always, there were a few outliers needing to be addressed. Vega stated CSEA had to file a Uniform Complaint on an administrator and secretary for bullying at one District site. Really, we have those? She not-so-subtly slipped in that the secretary in question needed training to deal with people. So much



so, that some staff wanted to work elsewhere to avoid the drama. Finally, she asked the Board if it could implement a bullying act for adults? Now, that would be interesting wouldn't it? A couple Board members need to be nice themselves but that's a whole different can 'o worms. Vega concluded, "We shouldn't have to work in a hostile environment."

SVFT Report

In more recent news, SVFT President Kati Bassler thanked the Board for all the work they do and that "a fair salary formula would ensure competitive salaries." She also thanked them for beginning to address the District's Expansive SPED Program, but cautioned, "we still need to plan strategically" Referring to CSEA President Lucy Vega's earlier comments about how great it was that more positions were being added, that simply, it wasn't enough. On a more positive front, she remarked on how pleased she was with recent partnership meetings held with Associate Superintendent Randy Bangs. "Randy and I have been at every site, working together to address issues. All have shown a commitment to this partnership to solve issues at each site. Thank you for your support." Indeed.

New Blood

Superintendent Tim Vanoli introduced new hires for the District Anthony Saucedo as the new Assistant Principal at North Salinas High School and Ingrid Herman as the new AP for Everett Alvarez High School. Both Saucedo and Herman thanked the Board for the opportunity and looked forward to working at their respective sites. Both alluded to the fact that there was a lot of work to do. Congratulations to them both.



WINTER IS COMING...



I'm not sure that local contractor Dick Johnson is a Game Of Thrones fan, but ya' coulda' fooled me. When he addressed the Board at the September 8th meeting, he remarked, "We're in for a wet winter, time is of the essence. You're attempting for a 2017 opening so I encourage you to go with a resolution for prequalification. You're losing time on this thing." Yup, this THING is quite a THING idn't it? Our Board still has some decisions to make when it comes to the Project Labor Agreement that they thought was a done deal. Not so fast. Devon Lincoln or the Lozano Smith law firm had asked the Board for recommendations on a couple of items such as hiring contractors for modular furniture, soil and material testing. She wanted to know if they would be included as part of the PLA and as you might recall, the Board was frustrated, exasperated and downright annoyed that she was asking this. They assumed EVERYTHING was a part of the PLA, but NSF (not so fast...I hate abbreviations). As you also might recall, District Staff recommended these items be separate from the PLA requirements and for the most part, it seemed the Board agreed but alas, 'twas not to be. This Shakespearean thing's getting out of hand isn't it. Onward, I say! Enter Trustee Patty Padilla-Salsberg with the following comment that sort of summed it up. "I've been thinking this was something a little unclear. I felt we were getting somewhere and we haven't." She added that this had added to her frustration and, "felt uncomfortable and I would like to ask the Superintendent for a special meeting to

review the final PLA recommended by the Trades Council, As-soon-as possible."



However, both Vanoli and Lincoln needed clarification on what the Board wanted to see. Padilla continued by stating that Board members had to do their own research on these items with little support from Administration. This sentiment was echoed from nearly all members of the Board with the exception of Trustee Evamarie Martinez and Lila Cann. As Martinez put it, "I don't think we need another meeting. The Board had stated we've come close. If we can come to a consensus only two items left." Huh? Then, there isn't a consensus right because four other members are asking for clarification, right? Anyhoo, Vanoli asked, "What do you want us to prepare for you?" The Board asked for a special meeting and quite frankly, we're not sure they're going to get what they want. Vanoli stated, "So we're not going to have a termination clause? Or carveouts (in reference to modular furniture and such)? Our plan was originally to get recommendations on these two items." The Board did not reply, they simply wanted a meeting. If you're interested, there's a Special meeting tonight 5:15 p.m., and no, you can't come. Just kidding! Be there or be square. As Trustee Tabera said, "Let's get this over with." Yes, let's.

