



# On The Board

## The Salinas Valley Federation of Teachers

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### Board Highlights from January 2016

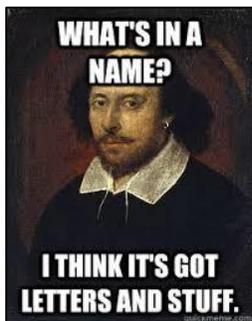
Reported By J.J. Campos

### Didn't I Just See You? This Is Weeeeird

2016! A year as crazy as the Presidential candidates it touts. At least that's what I think it will be. I trust your vacation was restful and full of non-alcoholic beverages. We here at Eye On The Board are locked, loaded and reenergized. As you might expect, there's always something interesting....or weird to report. Let's go!

### What's In A Name?

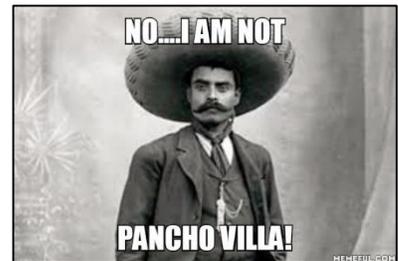
I'll tell you...a headache, that's what. If



you've been keeping up with the news, Alisal Union School District had to rename one of its schools because it was named after a hero or an outlaw and as to avoid naming one of our schools after an assassin

(or hero, whatever), our Board created a committee to tackle choosing a name for our new High School and Middle School. The committee included SUHSD staff, teachers, and community members, so for the most part, it was done democratically. However, Trustees Lila Cann and Eva Marie Martinez disagreed and stated they weren't properly notified. What, they didn't get the memo? The meme? Anything? ☺ Cann noted she was put down as an advisor, and had not, in fact,

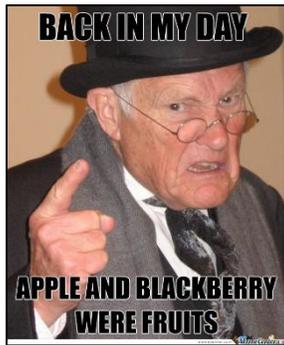
served in any advisory capacity. "I would have liked to have had a discussion on the matter," said Cann. As it turns out, Superintendent Vanoli took responsibility and apologized for not properly informing them about when the committee met. Associate Superintendent Dan Burns presented Board members with the painstaking process in choosing a name and folks, they covered ALL the bases. They sought out important individuals, living or dead (what a statement☺), who have made a contribution to the community. He implied that the process was meticulous, but positive. Yeah, just like taxes. He then thanked the community members who went through the process and interestingly, he "thought there would be fights," regarding the naming process. Alas, that didn't happen. Aw man! There goes my Pancho Villa High suggestion. Burns' presentation went a little too long for Trustee Tabera's taste and at one point he asked, in jest, "are you finished?"



Insert uncomfortable laugh here \_\_\_\_\_. Well, he was and after a 30 minute overview (it's ok Mr. Burns, we DO appreciate ya'!), comments from Board members were mostly positive. Trustees Padilla-Salsberg, Lila Cann, and Kathryn Ramirez thanked the committee for their efforts and after hearing what seemed to be a lukewarm reception to the process from



Trustees Sandra Ocampo and Eva Marie Martinez, they asked that the Board honor the committee's efforts in finding appropriate names for each school. As Padilla-Salsberg put it, "otherwise, why have committees?" Specifically, Martinez wanted to see more participation from Bolsa Knolls community members, to which Burns replied that in fact, they had been invited and many did not participate. Additionally, Ramirez stated that in fact schools were funded by all taxpayers, not just a particular section of town. Trustee Ocampo harkened back to her days as a Board member when there was a push to name what is now La Paz, Dolores Huerta Middle School. "We had campesinos pushing for a name. There were problems, but I'm glad we have a process." Nevertheless, she went on to say she wasn't "impressed with three of those names." Sigh....In conclusion, there is a lot we can all learn from this experience, which is: **a rose by any other name is still a rose, so long as you didn't hang the rose or the rose doesn't sound corny.** ☺ Kudos to our Board for recognizing that a process was needed and for making it as drama-free as possible!



## DELAC PRESENTATION

Migrant Education/ Special Projects Director Chris Cambern presented the Board with its DELAC recommendations. He began by stating that a committee, which included parents of EL students from all sites was formed. A variety of recommendations were given. He went on to explain the inner workings of the meetings and some of the requests from parents. Some of the requests included late buses, Saturday bus service, extended tutorial hours, computer literacy training and more ESL classes. Trustee Tabera asked for clarification with respect to

EL classes. "Would these classes would be taught by certificated employees?" Cambern answered in the affirmative. Interestingly, yet again, parents requested better communication with teachers and supervisors, particularly, in the area of bilingual support. No comprende? Cambern hoped the District would make a greater effort to get more parents out to sites, as well as giving them more advanced notice. Trustee Kathryn Ramirez asked if we knew the reading level of the student handbook. No one seemed to know, but judging by its length and my attention span, it's college level. ☺ Trustee Ocampo stated she'd like to see Board meetings better attended by our parents. So what else is new? Cambern alluded to well attended Bakersfield School District meetings, where, wait 'til ya hear this....they were held on Sunday mornings! Yeah, I thought the same thing. I love our



Board, but I'm not so sure we can get 'em to cancel their brunch appointment to hear little Mikey ask for new textbooks....or A textbook. Plus, I'm too busy praying....that the 49ers have a better season. Sheesh. Trustee Rubio asked if the Migrant program was separate from this committee to which he responded there was, in fact, an overlap between the two. Overall, he stated more workshops were necessary and outreach to help them talk to teenagers. Trustee Padilla-Salsberg thanked him for the presentation and as she pointed out, the Board "heard a presentation last year, but we don't know the results. I'd like to see where these recommendations go. I'd like to see results next year." Cambern agreed and promised results next year. Wrapping up the conversation, Trustee Tabera asked if there was an app to address these concerns. Cue a



blank look here \_\_\_\_\_. Hey, don't laugh, it could happen.



## Just Giving You A Heads Up

“No organization is perfect.” Yeah, that’s a loaded statement. ☺ That’s how CSEA President Lupe Ruiz-Gilpas began her opening remarks to our Board. She first congratulated those who were reelected, but quickly turned their attention to the continuing issues that are marring the Salinas Education Center’s relationship with the District. “This is a Board interested in what happens to students. We were appalled that students are turned away (at the SEC center).” She mentioned that soon CSEA would be sharing some things with Mr. Bangs that needed to be addressed at the SEC center. She capped by stating, “Grievances are coming.” Scary.

## Yay! It’s 2016! Now What?

SVFT President Kati Bassler began the year with an effusive “Yay, it’s 2016!” She extended thanks to all the support the Board had given to El Sausal’s concerns. “A math teacher was hired and they got window coverings.” Well, THAT was random, but we’re happy for them Hooray for window coverings! El Sausal Counselor, Sergio Lopez, also took a moment to thank them for getting that done, but still opined it was clear that the District lacked procedures for ordering equipment. “There’s been a lack of responsibility at the hiring end, a bit of a hot potato. It’s not me saying it. I don’t know what the process is for a facility upgrade request. We hit a wall every time we ask for something.” Shockingly, he stated that someone at the District level had this to say

with respect to his request, “You’re just a middle school. If you get it, other schools are going to ask for it. Why give you ten minutes of my time to for something I’m going to say no to.” OUCH!!! Lopez summed up his remarks by stating, “I can’t accept that as a professional.” Can anyone?

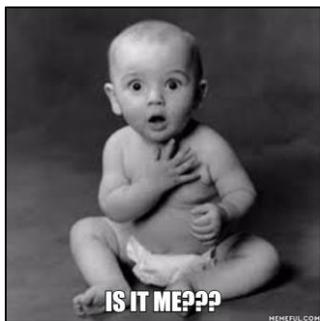
## We Can Work It Out

SVFT President Kati Bassler acknowledged Superintendent Vanoli, Trustee Lila Cann and CSEA Secretary Lucy Vega for a conference they attended in Emeryville, regarding labor management relations. “When labor and management work together, student achievement improves.” She recognized Associate Superintendent Dan Burns, who reached out to SVFT to form a group to discuss funds available for “teacher induction, retention, and to formulate a plan. Those are huge steps.” Bassler added there was great enthusiasm from teachers teaching and willing to share information at the Technology Showcase. She also recognized the work being completed by the District Tech Plan Committee pairing the LCAP Goals with Technology needs. She went on to say that one of the LCAP goals was providing “nurturing a safe learning environment” and that an area to focus on should be parent outreach. “Parents need skills and training to access information.” Finally, she invited all members to the Hartnell track every Friday for a little exercise. “If we are to have a healthier teacher force, I have to model exercise. Be healthy.” Nutrition is a priority and reminded our Board that when nutrition improves, performance improves. Bassler directed their attention to that fact that District was still “feeding students Pop Tarts, Cheetos.” Shhhh! Don’t ruin it for everybody Bassler! What a party pooper! ☺ She insisted that while she respected SUHSD Food Services Manager Christina Varela, we still need to give students “what they need, not what they want. We should have quality produce on campuses and we don’t.” She pointed out that Varela



had recently reinstated the Wellness Committee to address the issues. Next, Bassler thanked Associate Superintendent Randy Bangs for working tirelessly throughout negotiations and appreciated his commitment to the process. Finally, Bassler implied that perhaps the entire approach to the District's Moderate to Severe program needed to be tossed out. "We have got to figure out our moderate to severe program. There are so many variables...is it the money, staff? Allocations?"

She proposed the District look at similar programs throughout the state. "I feel like daily I'm putting out fires in situations



that compromise the safety of students. It's not any one person...It's the whole system." Wow, I feel so much better now.

## Off The Cuff

Trustee Phil Tabera took a moment to clarify that he insisted on the District creating a safety task force. "I guess I wasn't clear. I was asking for a school-wide safety discussion for our students in light of all the shootings." He mentioned he got a generic list and that we needed to be innovative. "Our students need to be prepared. That's what I meant." Trustee Eva Marie Martinez also asked for some kind of a safety plan, ANY safety plan. "We want to be prepared. I want to sit on a committee where our Fire Chief, County Supervisors, for example meet. I'd like to see a plan from the Superintendent." Trustee Sandra Ocampo mentioned the SUHSD had formed an alliance years ago with the city. In other news, Trustee Kathryn Ramirez suggested awards ceremonies be held at each school site, rather than the Board room. If you haven't had the pleasure of seeing how the Board Room gets when there is a big event such as an awards presentation,

then don't worry, if you're partial to oxygen, you're not missing out on much. ☺ Great suggestion!



## Pay The Piper, For Beauty's Sake

During the Consent portion of the meeting, Trustee Eva Marie Martinez had item a2d pulled for discussion because she objected to the District paying for what she saw (and with good reason) as expenses beyond the contract that the District had between ROP and Salinas Beauty College. Basically, back in September, the College lost its accreditation and despite that fact, the District continued to pay for students in that program. That riled the Board right quick as they say but before everyone got bent out of shape, Dan Burns gave them perspective stating that the College had been given formal notification that the District would not pay for students if the college ever fell out of compliance again. OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT. Sheesh. The fact is, there is a bill of well over \$23,000 that needs to get paid and while Trustees like Phil Tabera and Eva Marie Martinez sternly objected, NOT paying the bill could be a bigger headache than simply paying for it and moving forward. Burns implied he agreed that ROP should never had an agreement, verbal or otherwise, if Salinas Beauty College wasn't accredited. Martinez stated, "In September they (Salinas Beauty College) closed and reopened. According to our staff, they were told their contract had expired. Now we have his contract from July to December. I will pay to September when they lost accreditation." Burns added that an audit was done by ROP

Director Sharon Albert. Burns said that in September, “we ceased to send students to the beauty program...we can fight this if we have to do it, but we've been working with this program for over 30 years. He (Salinas Beauty College Director Jim Edwards) was told explicitly there is no more funding for his students until they can come up with a program. Our lawyer stated that if the owner of the Beauty College and ROP assumed a verbal agreement, it is as good as written. This will square it with us and them.” Verbal contracts?! Those still exist?! Martinez disagreed with verbal contracts. Tabera added that “if students enrolled, it is assuming the program was accredited, we should honor that idea. I cannot understand why we would continue relationship with a place that has lost its accreditation.” Tabera was clearly unhappy. Burns insisted on taking the lawyer's direction because if it became a legal issue, it would be more costly to the District. Damned if you do, damned if you don't, I guess. Trustee Padilla-Salsberg was more

Martinez. Cue the lawyers: “Aw man.” Another time friends...another time.



pragmatic. “Do we owe this money? Do we have proof?” Burns replied we, in fact, did. Given the circumstances, Martinez said she would agree to pay (even though she ultimately did not), but wanted to know when the verbal agreement took place. Burns stated ROP Director Sharon Albert and Jim Edwards had met in May, to which Martinez remarked, “I don't understand how an administrator could have approved this.” The Board begrudgingly voted in favor of paying the bill, despite nay votes from Tabera and