



# On The Board

THE SALINAS VALLEY FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

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## BOARD HIGHLIGHTS FROM AUGUST 2016

Reported By J.J. Campos

### Spreadin' The Love

If you hadn't noticed, we recently received an allotment of Chromebooks throughout the District that aims to give each and every student a computer that they can take home and work on. Not only is that a good thing, but it's a free thing for the students, which makes it even better.

Additionally, students could have free Internet access at home and the SUHSD Board couldn't be happier, albeit with a few questions regarding the rollout. Trustee Martinez wanted to know if teachers, who also received new computers, could opt-out of taking one, and Steven Peters, Director of IT, replied that, although all teachers would be trained, they wouldn't be forced to take one. With respect to privacy, Trustee Ramirez wanted to know if students would get the same Chromebook every year, to which Peters replied that privacy was not an issue because old accounts would be removed each year. Ramirez also inquired as to insurance and Mr. Peters stated it wasn't cost efficient, but rather would charge students an \$80 replacement cost if needed. What a deal!

☺ Ramirez opined that the District might use the forum of parent informational meetings regarding Chromebook distribution, to train parents on Home Access Center, and asked if



it could be done in Spanish. The answer was quite succinct...Si señor! In short, over 10,500 Chromebooks are infestat...I mean incorporating themselves throughout our campuses, and although we're a little late to the digital party, better late than never. Kudos to all of those involved in the Chromebook implementation!

### Smoothin' Out The Lines

SVFT President Kati Bassler thanked Board members for serving their community and their dedication to the District and although there were still rough patches, as she put it, she was confident they we could all move forward in a positive direction. Moreover, her concern lay in "the challenges education presents us." She added that teachers were pleased with how school started, especially with respect to tech training and lauded District Tech Coaches for their efforts. "We're starting something really powerful with the Educator Effectiveness Funds...and I invite the Board to strategize and systematize how new teachers are supported." Speaking of invites, apparently the District Board didn't get the RSVP to assist the moderate to severely

handicapped program and SPED programs. "They really need help....students are underserved."

According to Bassler, it's gotten so bad that many teachers and instructional aides are



cuttin' out before they can say teacher shortage. "Many staff have resigned and that should be an indication that we have a problem and furthermore, there are legalities involved." Alarmingly, she pointed out that the Speech Pathologists' pay is frozen from year 5 to year 16 on the salary schedule! Say what!/? Pardon the pun....but I'm SPEECHless. And at the rate we're going, our



District will be too, if they don't address this soon. Bassler continued, "What incentive would they have?...we

have to do something about it." As always, she ended on a hopeful note, saying, "I have a weird relationship, the SVFT President is typically adversarial, but I want to build a culture of cooperation and collaboration. This is our community and these are our students. I want to focus on what was gained and sitting down with Tim Vanoli and Randy Bangs was one of the most satisfying experiences I've ever had. We are all humans, and we need to focus on what we need." Like money and chocolate. Just kidding.....we can do without the chocolate. ☺

### Board Reports

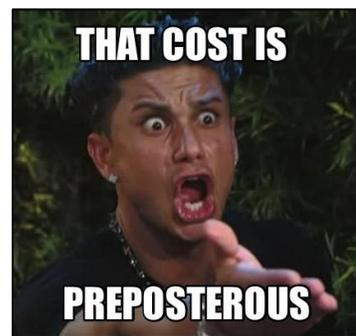
During Board Reports, Trustee Lila Cann called on the District to order cameras and fencing "for the safety of our students." Apparently, a small fire broke out at ROP, but luckily, no one was hurt. She asked Business Services Manager, Ana Aguillon, to get back to the Board with a status report on those items.



Trustee Padilla-Salsberg thanked District staff for setting up the first days of school and having them running smoothly while Trustee

Ramirez said "it was nice to see Board members supporting teachers during tech training." Ramirez echoed Martinez' sentiment about the ROP incident. "We can't expect the city to solve this. WE have to do it." She asked that Props 55, 56 and 58 to be drafted as Resolutions in support of. In other news, Trustee Cann strongly objected to what, in her view, is the over-contracting out of work to third parties for menial tasks such as painting and small upgrades. She firmly believes those jobs should be offered to in-house staff. She implied that perhaps, more positions need to be created if the cost to hire contractors far exceeds that of creating said positions. Can you say...cost analysis? Cann added, "That was not the conversation any of us remember. Contracting out concerns me. It's necessary,

but some of these things used to have personnel that did these things. It concerns me our staff is smaller and not getting the



work. We need to start thinking more about our employees." Cann also reiterated her support for having more students and parents involved in addressing cafeteria food issues and specifically stated, "I'd like to see a timeline and action." Whoa....she said....**timeline** Aaaaand **action**. I 'ain't sayin' she's mad, but I 'ain't saying she isn't. Here's to a "**time**"-ly response. ☺

### New Blood

Let's take a moment to welcome a few recruits in their new positions. First up, Ethelvina Sanchez who was recently appointed AP at EAHS. Sanchez took a moment to thank the Board for the opportunity to provide her expertise while newly appointed Director of Human Resources, Alberto Verduzco thanked the Board for approving his position. He noted he



was enjoying his new position and made special mention of Associate Superintendent Randy Bangs for welcoming him and making his transition easy. HMS has a new Principal, Kim Mcollough, who also graciously took a moment to thank the Board for their support. Blanca Baltazar recently replaced Associate Superintendent Dan Burns, while Laurel Guest has been selected as the newest AP at SHS. Guest deemed this year's start as the "smoothest start in 10 years." Finally, Manuel Lopez is the new AP at HMS, while Mark Tejada will take the reigns as AP at EAHS. Congratulations to them all!

### Someone To Waaatch.....Over Kids

The Monterey County Probations Department, otherwise known as the **THANK GOD YOU'RE HERE ON CAMPUS WITH US-** partnership ☺, gave a wonderful overview of the services they provide. Officer William Sims and Leo Sala spoke to the Board and explained that their functions are wide and far reaching. They serve as counselors, law enforcement officers, as a referral service, mediators etc...etc... In short, the only thing they don't do is change diapers. Interestingly, the Board was very active with probing questions. Trustee Padilla-Salsberg asked if Probation monitors and ensures school attendance. Sims answered in the affirmative, but that they assist mostly with truancy issues, and from time to time with special cases. She further inquired if it was, "fair to say you will assist with all students?" Again, he said, "we work hand-in-hand with the attendance office." Trustee Ocampo wanted them to give the Board "a model of how specifically you work." Sims explained that address verifications are common, home checks, and reaching out with truancy cases. Ocampo then asked if they take time to play with the students they're assigned to. I'm not kidding. I love my job. "Do you create activities during recreational times?" Sims simply replied that although they loved playing Parcheesi, they basically just let the students enjoy their high school day. I was

lying about Parcheesi but I'm gettin' nostalgic over here. Aaaaanyway, Ocampo pressed the officers for statistics regarding the percentage of students who were on probation at each



site. Good question, but they didn't have an answer because quite simply, they didn't have the figures. Trustee Ramirez asked if they streamlined kids who needed the most attention. "You are a presence, some kids trust you." Officer Sims stated that Probation would "work with anyone who asks for our help." Trustee Ramirez added that she L-O-V-E-D having them on campuses, as do we all, but asked what resources they were getting to help. Sims simply responded that addressing trauma was important and that P.O.'s were "conduits to facilitating services...opening doors." Trustee Martinez asked if P.O.s attended District trainings with Officer Sala responding that in fact, they attended over 40 hours of training every year, including P.B.I.S. Finally, Ocampo asked Sims "what would you like to see change in the future in reaching out to students?" Sala, in what was a poignant moment in the meeting, left the Board with these words: **"It's hard to change culture, but I would like a more accepting society, a community that cares about their brothers and sisters."** Don't we all. On behalf of teachers everywhere, we thank them for their hard work and for helping make campuses safer for our students.



## What's Another Word For Lost?

Karen Luna gave an overview of the Rancho San Juan High School and repairs made over the summer at our schools. There was an air of discontent from the Board, stemming from several issues. For one, the Board was royally upset that we had to pay \$60,000 for architectural plans that were...um...



misplaced....er...lost, whatever. That's right, \$60,000! Trustee Eva Marie Martinez asked if there might be a "more efficient method to keeping documents." Luna said there was and they were in the process of scanning all current documents. Well that's good to know! SUHSD now has the capability to scan documents! Whoohooo! Anyhow, they were all upset and that's all you need to know. Second, comments came in AGAIN, this time, from nearly all Board members as to why we keep contracting out menial jobs such as painting and minor repairs. Trustee Cann, for instance, wanted to know why our maintenance department couldn't paint the updates at our sites. Rick Alvarez stepped up and explained that special equipment was needed and a dedicated crew was necessary. That wasn't enough for Cann, who insisted that in the past, full time SUHSD employees handled that work. Good point. Martinez insisted that we contract out locally, "we need to figure out how to hire more of our staff." Rubio asked if we could rent the equipment, and if so, "don't we need more staff?" Alvarez stated it was a staffing issue. "Do we hire part time? Full time? Summer is a busy time." Trustee Padilla-Salsberg was more direct and simply asked Alvarez to come up with a plan and share it.....soon, we suppose. Trustee Ocampo implied that "they need to be

fully aware of what is forward coming and become more proactive" in forecasting the needs with respect to staffing when doing upgrades. On a lighter note, Trustee Rubio wanted to know how they were handling gopher control and Alvarez pointed out that Salinas High didn't have too many issues. Ramirez quipped, "The South side doesn't have gophers?! That's it, I'm moving!" Later on that evening former SVFT President Steve McDougall said he had gotten in contact with the Justice Department to inquire about gopher parity throughout our District! It doesn't look good. ☺ Hey, if they have gophers at North Salinas High School, shouldn't they all? I mean, it's only fair.



## An Inconvenient Tooth.

Talk about a toothache, CSEA President Lucy Vega let the Board know that NO, they still hadn't resolved issues at one site with an Administrator. She wouldn't specify who exactly, but it was a "you know who I'm talking about" 'kinda thing. "What are you going to do to resolve issues at that one site? This has gone too far and we need a resolution. If this doesn't get resolved we feel the Board isn't supporting Classified (staff)." Vega also noted that SUHSD Food Services is short-handed. So much so, that it's having an impact on the quality of the food and insisting staff need at least five hours to prepare quality meals. Sheesh.



## **We're Over the Hump...But**

On August 23<sup>rd</sup>, SVFT Bassler acknowledged Vega's concerns and that not only hours, but students' food offerings needed to be addressed. Bassler stated that she and Food Services Manager Christina Varela had formed a Wellness Committee and would be meeting soon to address these issues and to help cafeteria workers pass certification exams as well. Next, Bassler made the Board aware of three major items:

1: A Partnership meeting on August 29th to plan new teacher support groups. Union leadership and site administration will meet to plan how new teachers will be supported on each campus. Teacher retention is a priority for both the Union and the District.

2: The SPED Crisis. She cautioned they "be aware of the SPED crisis. It is critical we address this, NSHD has 1.6, vacancies while HMS has 1 vacancy, which means some student don't have permanent case carriers. It is a violation of edcode as it stands."

3: "The 6.5% salary settlement was fair and we appreciate it, but I want to emphasize that not three weeks before school began, School Services presented a deficit model, that deficit spending was a 6% raise, AB1200 shows that's not the case. This isn't a 🤔 "Let's



work to bring more transparency to the District," she continued. Bassler asked for an honest discussion about budgeting. She added, "the Federation understands District's challenges: you have STRS increases, Prop. 55 uncertainty, changes in LCFF funding, a looming teacher shortage, retaining teachers. 92 teachers left after 2015-16, and that number demonstrates that retention is hard for us here. We are going to have to work together in the coming years. We need to talk

honestly....and how the salary formula can work for a fair share and not decimate the District budget. If we choose to wait till June to talk about this, we are going to end up in the same place." Here here!

**TILL NEXT TIME!!! ☺**

