



# On The Board

**The Salinas Valley Federation of Teachers**  
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## Board Highlights from APRIL 2018

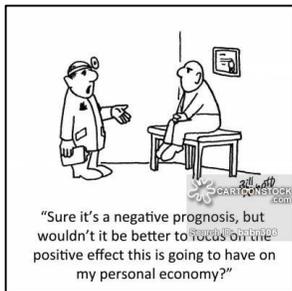
Reported By Juan Jose Campos

### When A Lion's Just A Kitten

So, in an effort to defeat the notion that perception is reality, and in our District's quest to seek out greater transparency, Superintendent Dan Burns gave a presentation about well...a presentation. Double positives, eh? He recently addressed the Salinas Rotary



Clubs of Salinas. In his presentations, he discussed a number of statistics, achievements and projects, including Rancho San Juan High School. Why does this matter? Trust me, it does. Among some significant stats he alluded to a huge percentage of our student population being designated EL learners. A whopping 70% of them to be exact. He made special mention of this because despite the obstacle,



“we have been having significant (positive) results with graduation rates.” He added graduates earned over \$27.6 million in scholarship money last year alone. “We can’t

focus on the 3% the media likes to cover, let’s also focus on all the wonderful work our staff and students achieve.” Burns also noted that

apples to apples, we’re far better when it comes to capital outlay. “We allot 84% to salary and benefits, and 3% to capital outlay. 3% is kept for maintenance and upkeep. We go out for bonds, because we don’t have the money to build schools, compared to the Peninsula, we’re way ahead of the curve.” He also brought up the pressing issue that has yet to be addressed with respect to rising STRS and PERS costs. Ha, you forgot! I won’t let ‘cha. Neither will your wallet. ☹ He then went on to discuss Rancho San Juan High School in detail. While presenting his findings to local Rotarians, he didn’t receive many questions from Rotarians regarding the PLA (Project Labor Agreement). Touting its design, he added, “There won’t be any school like it.” Trustee Tabera commented that a friend of his who happens to be a Rotarian stated he was impressed with Burns’ presentation. “I asked him regarding the negativity surrounding that school and he responded by saying the positives far outweigh the negatives. I don’t understand why it (the delay controversy) happened.” Trustee Ocampo wanted to know if solar panels might be installed at Dolores Huerta Middle School with the 20 million allotted recently District wide specifically for that use. CBO Ana Aguillon said the \$20 million would be used for the existing 13 schools only, but insisted that if money was available in the future, it could be used for that school. Trustee Ramirez liked the presentation, but noted she would have liked to see it include the fact the Rancho San Juan

project was local due to the PLA. “I hope you make sure they understood we are employing from Monterey County...we’re staying local...it increases the viability of our community...I’m proud of things we have done. We should reach out to KSBW and have a better response.” Trustee Rubio commented that during a chance encounter with a builder from Marina, he asked him if they were using any Union tradesmen. The builder answered they had not, but that he wished they had because hiring them actually amounted to savings on his projects. According to Rubio, the builder stated that when we he hired non-labor people they paid whatever that wage is, but when apprentices were brought in, it amounted to a cost savings. “When you have labor unions, you have different strata of wages,” said Rubio. He also reminded Burns that he would like to

see a timetable on the Rancho San Juan Project. Trustee Evamarie Martinez

thanked Burns for his clarity in his presentation, regarding delays and how no one was really at fault. Burns concluded by saying, “We want the community to know how large of a footprint in the sand we are (economically)...There is a lot of misinformation.” What’s a fancy word for misinformation?? Untruths? Fake News? Insert synonym here \_\_\_\_\_. Either way, it’s all wrong.

**Now, Don’t Get Excited...Yet.**

SVFT Prez Steve McDougall addressed the Board specifically with PBIS in mind. He implied that before we start patting ourselves on the back, we had a loooong way to go. “As we think about next year, our takeaways is that we’re in year 5 of PBIS, AND



although we celebrate some aspects, we have some work to do. We need to sit back and look where we’re going. There are inconsistencies, as it is not followed with fidelity throughout the District. With respect to discipline and subgroups, we are in the red. What our members are experiencing in the classroom is not good at all. It may come as a surprise, but we’re willing to sit down and talk about it. What can we do to make year six an upward trend with PBIS?” He took a moment to recognize union representatives Gabby Devilla and Nancy Oliver, and newly appointed District Support Staff representative, Lynn Syndel, who were in attendance. “We’re more than just one person.”

**Board Correspondence 4-10**

During Board comments, Trustee Tabera touted just how important our District was in relation to the economics of the Salinas Valley. “This idea of an economic footprint, the bigger issue has to do with our District being more proactive in dealing with people who like to throw rocks and sticks at some of the decisions that we make. It becomes difficult for them to do that when we have accurate information.

We need to keep the pressure on...people need to know about the good work we’re doing regularly.” Trustee Ocampo said she participated in a C.O.P.A. meeting, an organization she described as one that is

comprised of “a strong leadership foundation working to bring organizations and identify how people facing are deportation throughout Monterey County.” Trustee Lila Cann was grateful for the short story written by EAHS student Elias De Leon, who was recently awarded first place in the Central Coast



Writer's Short Story Contest. It hit home with Cann as she explained that her mother had passed away from Alzheimer's and that her sister, was recently hit with the disease. "To read this young man's story, someone so young who understands this is incredible." Trustee Rubio listed a number of accolades our schools had received recently in relation to PBIS. More importantly, he defended PBIS' existence. "I've gone to a PBIS conference in Chicago...It is data driven, metrics...it changes the climate overall..." He disclosed that his wife oversaw the PBIS implementation through MCOE and offered that if anybody had questions, he would facilitate a meeting with his wife to discuss some of the issues and "how this plays into the data behind it and what it's intended to change." Trustee Evamarie Martinez wanted to bring the conversation regarding ROP back to the forefront. She also wanted to see local families take more advantage of CTE/ROP opportunities the District might be able to offer. Burns shared he recently met with

Congressman Jimmy Panetta and despite being "herded in and out like cattle", as he put it, took a moment to discuss workforce housing as it relates to instructors. He also reminded everyone about the Adult School Centennial celebration and invited them out.



### New Blood

By unanimous decision, our good Board approved Lorand Incze as the District's new CTE/ROP Coordinator. Welcome!

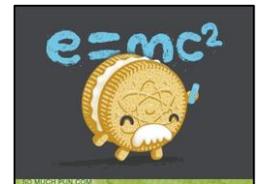
### PBIS Presentation

Associate Superintendent Blanca Baltazar introduced PPS Director Irelia Dominguez and PBIS Specialist Reba Morga, as well as Intervention Specialist Angelica Simons to

provide an update on the progress of PBIS. And if you read earlier, it's a hot ticket item that well, from SVFT's standpoint, needs a little oil in the engine, or depending on where you're from, some WD40. Regardless, there was plenty of support of PBIS in the audience as several parents from the



District addressed the Board in support of PBIS. Dominguez began by emphasizing that PBIS's mission is to ensure students "feel safe...treated with dignity. PBIS is a system where we provide support and social emotional support." As to its history, Dominguez referenced how PBIS stemmed from a UCLA lawsuit that clearly demonstrated how minorities were "disproportionately singled out for discipline referrals. Out of school suspensions had a negative impact." As you might expect, that approach wasn't working (has it ever?). But you knew that. You're a smart cookie.



Dominguez continued by stating that suspensions posed a greater dropout risk and she showered the Board with a plethora of statistics, laws, and interventions, that, in theory, the PBIS system aims to remedy. "Schools must exhaust all other means of correction before issuing a suspension," said Dominguez. "Our District is categorized with high suspension rates compared to other Districts." She referenced SUHSD's Cambio program and Morga stepped in to illustrate that said "interventions are provided to all students." Trustee Padilla-Salsberg wanted to know what a Tier 3 student would get through the PBIS program. Dominguez said that while every site was different, a check-in, check-out system was in place to monitor Tier 3 students. "Personal relationship is what we're starting to build. We're a massive District,

and we're still building systems. We can't build quick enough." Trustee Tabera, "I believe behavior is a manifestation of the problems in our community. I appreciate your work. You're not gonna' get in two years, in three years, in five years. It will take us longer than 5 or six year." How long, then? Throw us a number. 😊 Trustee Ocampo also complimented them for their work. "It's not easy to raise a baby on your own. You keep talking about healing, how can I get parents more involved?" There was quite a bit of patting on the back as Board members exchanged comments and ideas with the PBIS leadership, but Rubio asked about the PBIS budget, and how there is a direct correlation between these types of investments and student success. "We think of the signs, the cost of an education vs. the cost of imprisonment." Baltazar said they allocated \$4 million dollars for Staff and Community Development, as well as an Alternative Ed Psychologist and a host of other programs. Rubio said he heard comments from the teacher bargaining unit on eliminating program and wanted to know if he could talk about that issue. Burns stepped in to state there would be a chance for that during the Individuals Address The Board portion of the evening. "At completion, you can decide to speak on them them or public comment. Usually it comes after." Again, Rubio highlighted the fact that his wife ran the PBIS program through MCOE, and that the presentation he got today was well done." Trustee Ramirez had this to say. "I have been on the Board for 15 years and we worked hard when our kids were getting expelled and when I say our kids, I mean I am a Latina. We weren't given a seat at the table. We give out High School 100 community hours, keeps them busy. I appreciate the data presented but I didn't see the demographics of kids being suspended. It's important."

### **Talk About 'What's Right!'**

Once again, Salinas Probation Department shone during its presentation to our Board and

you gotta' hand to 'em, they truly excel and it shows. Juvenile Division Director Will Sims once more gave an overview of their services. Trustee Rubio asked about the Department's contacts with the community. Specifically, he wanted to hear some positive examples of their officers in action. Simms was more than willing to oblige and gave him one on the spot. He mentioned a Probation Officer at Mt. Toro High School who recently volunteered to be a coach. All Board members thanked Sims for his and the Department's services. In another show of support, Trustee Ramirez pointed out how SRO's were pulled out during the recent incident at NSHS. In terms of bang for our buck, she had this to say: "You are cheaper and we get more services. More bang for our buck. You are what the community wants. You are looking out for the safety of all children. School runs smoothly." She added how she has witnessed first-hand how students gravitate towards them. "We haven't gotten a single call about students getting mistreated by officers. It's a different way of managing safety in our schools." Trustee Cann said she was proud to know officer Sims and commented on his humility and the great work they do." A great big thanks to Mo. County Probation Department for helping to keep us safe! Thank you!

### **A Change Is A Comin'?**

CSEA President Lucy Vega addressed the Board and referenced the District's positive accomplishments, but felt, "we have not finished what we need to do. There is a new movement with PBIS. We are no longer intimidated." She stated that CSEA had waited patiently to hear from the Board regarding a grievance with an administrator.

"Schools do not belong to administrators. Change is coming. We will take the necessary steps to make change."



## Look Again

Steve McDougall again addressed the Board on April 28th regarding PBIS. And while there was support for PBIS among attendees, he felt the need to clarify a recent message sent District-wide on SVFT's position on the program. "By now, most of you have seen our message regarding PBIS, and perhaps you need to reread it.

It never said to eliminate. This is not a call to end PBIS, not at all." He continued, "It's a call

to make what we have better. The system is not supporting nearly enough Tier 3 students. You could see that in the presentation tonight. Tier 3 are roughly 5% of our students, but they need services, attention, mental health support. They can be a disruption, and they continue to be disruptive on some of our campuses. What services, if any, are we providing Tier 3? Some of the tens of millions of dollars should be used for Tier 3. There is a gap that needs to be filled. We're 5 years in, and we need to make it better. What training do we provide assistant principals? Common sense says that there should be some concentration of special funding. How are we evaluating Assistant Principals who are unwilling to implement PBIS? A consequence on one side of town is not the same as on the other. Right now is the time to allocate the resources to help those students in need of help desperately. Replace Administrators who cannot get on board with PBIS with fidelity."

## Board Correspondence

Shortly after SVFT addressed the Board, Trustee Rubio thanked McDougall for his comments. Trustee Ocampo thanked those in attendance for staying late to talk about PBIS, as well as thanked McDougall "You do care for our kids and our schools." Trustee Tabera reiterated the Board's commitment to "keeping our young people safe. I hope everyone will let them know what we're



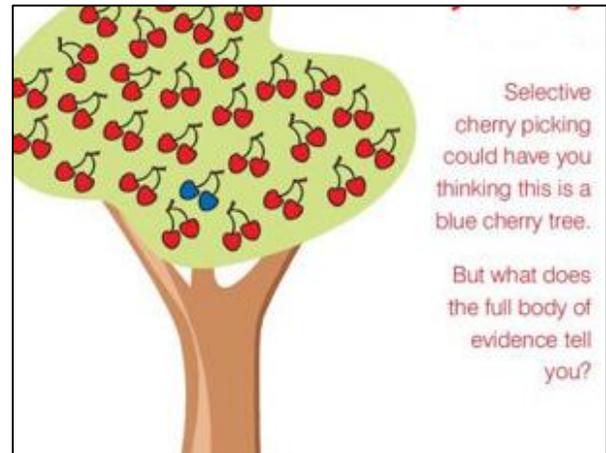
doing." As for them, we can only assume he was referencing the media. He added, "Our District hasn't anticipated a deficit, we've been very solid. We keep an interest in our students with every action we take. We are a family." Trustee Martinez looked forward to actions brought to the table while Trustee Ramirez took a moment to object receiving unwanted emails, specifically the Eye On The Board editions. "I had requested to be taken off a negative newsletter list. I didn't want to get that, you know how when you get negative things in your mailbox, and you say 'I don't want this in my mailbox', but I don't want the positive stuff, the advocacy stuff. I had my daughter read this and she said, 'that's bullying.' I said, 'that's your teachers, that's your teacher's newsletter. So, when you look at your teachers, they're paying for that. Whether they say that they're not writing it, they're paying for it. I ask you teachers here, what if I had my daughter hand out this newsletter to students in your school and tell them, 'this is what your teachers pay \$400 a month for.'" It's actually \$450, but anyway. Although Ramirez used her daughter's name during the meeting, SVFT believes that student names should not be used in our newsletter, with the exception of recognizing them for their accomplishments. She continued, "It's like Hitler when he made fun of Jews, I see my words and the words of other Board members get skewed and taken out of proportion. It's meant to poke fun and it's hurtful. And I don't want that email in my Inbox and I miss when you were President Phil Moore. I miss those days. Me too, that's what this is. Me too....but don't send me your trashy newsletter." Ouch. "Because the next time I get it, I'm going to distribute it to other students and let them know that this is paid for by teachers in your District."

## If It Talks Like A Red Cherry Tree, Then?

During the Individuals' portion of the night, writer Juan Jose Campos, yes, me, addressed the Board in fierce defense of SVFT's



'trashy' newsletter. He had this to say: "In reference to said publication, we report on the meetings, and on their tone. Historically, the publication has lauded Board members for their work, the proof is right there, so when you talk about positives, and negatives, you don't get to pick and choose. It also reports on behavior, on whether there is decorum, respect, tact, manners, basic foundations in any governing body. So, if the publication witnesses any behaviors contrary to what a representative's values should be, the federation reports on it, and pays for it. A whopping \$450 to be exact. Paid by the Federation with the intent of giving its members an "eye" into each meeting, and we are extremely proud of that." Also, during Individuals Address The Board, parents such Israel Villa commented he "wasn't fortunate to receive PBIS" and gave his strong support for the program. "It may not solve all problems, but it is going in right direction. Gabriela Silva, mother of 3 District students also lauded PBIS, as well Noelia Verwoolf, parent to two students at SHS. "I would love to see PBIS implemented at all the schools. I wish I would have been aware PBIS existed. My son was suspended during a time he was going through some trauma." Esther Rubio, who oversees PBIS through MCOE, also addressed the Board "PBIS is one of those things we can do to support students...It is a massive undertaking, a paradigm shift in the way we address discipline. We still have work to do. Mental health has taken a massive change, we have to reach more students." Steve Zenk stated we needed to bring common sense with respect to discipline. "We want kids to do well." Questioning some of the PBIS data presented, Robin Mendenhal from ESMS asked why the referral data presented this month didn't make sense. "400 referrals, down to 130 referrals this year. There's nothing I have seen that has changed. Teachers report students being sent back to class with no consequences. One disruptive student can ruin it. I wonder if admins are



being told to send students back to reduce the number of referrals?" Hmmm, we wonder.