

LVEA TODAY



Tom Torlakson for SPI

CTA has endorsed incumbent Tom Torlakson for Superintendent of Public Instruction. Tom has proven himself to be a true friend to public education over the years by authoring the Quality Education Investment Act to help improve low-performing schools and helping implement the Local Control Funding Formula which puts economic issues into the hands of local education agencies. Tom's support of Prop 30 in 2012 helped CA avoid \$6 billion cut to education and he has shown his support of educators' due process rights by supporting an appeal of the *Vergara* ruling.

Tom's opponent, Marshall Tuck, is NOT a friend to public education. Mr Tuck supports the weakening of educators' due process rights, using student test data in teachers' evaluations, eliminating seniority protections, and parent trigger initiatives. As head of Green Dot, and throughout his collaboration on Mayor Villaraigosa's Partnership schools initiative, Mr Tuck proved himself to be a proponent of monetizing education by establishing charter schools that provided no collective bargaining or due process rights for teachers. In fact, it was only *after* Mr Tuck left Green Dot and through the efforts of CTA and NEA, that these schools become unionized and were provided the opportunity to bargain collectively with management and win many rights and protections afforded public school educators across the state. Additionally, his claims that these schools "outperformed" similar schools never include the fact that those schools had the ability to deny admission to particular students. In fact, when looking at student test scores, not only did these schools mirror the peaks and valleys of public schools' scores, many of Green Dot's schools *underperformed* neighborhood schools.

LVEA supports the education of ALL students and works to protect the due process rights of teachers as well as the right to bargain collectively. **We encourage you to support Tom Torlakson in his reelection bid for CA State Superintendent of Public Instruction on November 4.**

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LVEA September Site Visit Schedule (lunch provided!)

9/4 – Willow	9/18 – Bay Laurel
9/8 – Chaparral	9/24 – AE Wright
9/10 – Calabasas	9/30 – Mariposa
9/16 – Lindero Canyon	

Your Weingarten Rights

You have a right to union representation during an investigatory interview. An investigatory interview occurs if: 1) management questions you to obtain information; and 2) you have a reasonable belief that your answers could be used as a basis for discipline or other adverse action.

You must ask for union representation either at the beginning of, or during, the interview. Management does not have to remind you of this right. If your request is refused and management continues asking questions, you may refuse to answer, but you must remain until management terminates the interview. Your employer may be guilty of an unfair labor practice and charges may be filed.

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Salary & Retirement Medical Benefits Update

LVEA members ratified its tentative agreement with LVUSD by a vote of 374 to 1! Members voted to approve a negotiated 4% increase to the salary schedule effective August 1, 2014 and an early retirement pilot program starting January 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2017 for all certificated employees. After years of state budget cuts and furlough days, it's a great accomplishment to obtain a respectable raise for our bargaining unit. Regarding medical benefits upon retirement, members have complained for years that we need to offer some type of coverage to bridge the years between retirement and the age of 65 when Medicare kicks in. With this pilot program, unit members who are at least 60 years of age and have 15 or more years of service in LVUSD are eligible for this program. The retirement incentive amount will be \$4600 each year until the unit member reaches age 65. Unit members retiring at or above the age of 65 will be entitled to a single year payment of \$4600. Additionally, those unit members electing insurance coverage through the PERS Health Benefit Program will receive the statutorily mandated direct contribution to their medical insurance premiums (approximately \$1400 annually). Note that this is a pilot program. LVEA hopes to prove that this pilot provides a cost savings to the district and that it should become permanent after June 2017.

Your Bargaining team worked hard over the summer to collaboratively reach this settlement. Many thanks to our Bargaining Chair Joanne Kress and her team of Darci Miller, Lisa Hatfield, LVEA Co-Presidents Andrew Staiano and Craig Hochhaus as well as our CTA Regional Staff (or Jake's current title) Jake Anderson. Their persistent efforts led to this agreement. We also invited new potential Bargaining Team members to observe this summer, and we're optimistic about adding a few new permanent members this school year!

The August 28 Acorn newspaper reported several comments from our District administration and Board members about our contract settlement:

- Superintendent Dr. Dan Stepenosky said, the "raise was overdue. Before last year, teachers hadn't had a boost in salary for five years."
- School Board member Angela Cutbill said, "teachers are the No. 1 reason students perform well in school. I wish we could do more,"
- School Board member Lesli Stein said, "it was in the best interest of the district to offer the most competitive salaries possible to attract and retain the best teachers."
- School Board member Dallas Lawrence said, "Las Virgenes teachers are paid in the bottom half of compensation statewide even though the students perform in the top 2 percent statewide, according to standardized test scores."

This support is very much appreciated but also validates that we have more work to do. LVEA will remain vigilant in reminding administration and Board members that providing competitive salaries is essential to attracting and retaining a bright, effective, dedicated and compassionate work force. We have to spread this message to community members and help them realize that students, parents and LVUSD employees have a shared interest to maximize the educational experience for all out students.

An Early Retirement Program "Frequently Asked Questions" is available on our website (www.lveateachers.com) and from your site rep.

The District will host a STRS forum on Oct 13 following the All-Come Day at Calabasas HS to help you navigate your options and answer your questions.

Workers' Comp

Over the last few years, LVEA leaders have had to represent several teachers with workers' comp (WC) issues. Most of the time we are getting called in after the situation has gotten so bad the LVEA member can't stand it anymore. Please use the following tips to ensure your rights are being protected:

1. You can get YOUR doctor to be your WC doctor. There is a form he/she needs to fill out (available from the district office) that allows him/her to be your primary care giver through the WC process. If you do not have this form filled out PRIOR to your injury, you will be assigned a doctor.
2. Fill out an incident report when you are injured at work. If you don't do this, you will not be covered by the WC system. Be sure to fill out a report even if you believe the injury is relatively minor. Even seemingly minor injuries can result in major issues down the road.
3. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE overly communicate about what is going on with your treatment, concerns, or questions. Make sure you contact Lori Fitzpatrick in the district office. She is LVUSD's point person for WC issues. Also, contact LVEA so we know what is going on.
4. When you get a doctor's note, give it to your principal, give it to the DO, and CHECK to see that they got it. Let LVEA know what is happening as well.
5. When you are taken out of work by a doctor (for an injury, illness, pregnancy, ANYTHING), you must have an "accommodations meeting" upon your return. This meeting MUST occur before you step foot back into work. It is a meeting to discuss the recommendations your doctor has made for you to come back to work. PLEASE contact LVEA when you are about to have one of these meetings.

New laws have been passed for the WC system to benefit the WC insurers- NOT YOU. If you aren't vocal and aren't reaching out to LVEA, you will likely fall through the cracks. If you have any WC questions please contact Lori Fitzpatrick in the DO or LVEA.

LVEA Long-Term Strategic Plan

In 2014, CTA adopted a Long-Term Strategic Plan (LTSP) in order to "bring to life the visionary aspirations embodied in CTA's mission statement". This LTSP depends on strong local chapters that engage its members at the local, regional, and state levels in order to effect the changes necessary to better serve our members and our students.

In 2013, LVEA leadership began working on a skeleton plan in order to address the eight goals identified in the LTSP. Much progress has been made in many of these areas over the last year. However, in order to make our local as effective as possible, it is imperative that we not become complacent with our accomplishments. Constant organization and mobilization is required to build and maintain a strong local.

While actualization of these goals will take time, we can begin to work now on identifying our strengths and weaknesses in each of these areas. LVEA leadership is asking our members to complete a very brief survey which will help us to formulate a more concrete plan moving forward. This is the most important step in this process. Remember, OUR MEMBERS are what make LVEA as strong and as effective as it is, and YOUR individual and collective voices are crucial in helping LVEA continue to be an advocate for our members and our students.

The survey is available online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/KHL6Q9Z> or you can access it using this QR code:



- follow LVEA on twitter – twitter.com/LVEA
- like LVEA on facebook – facebook.com

Rep Council:

LVEA's Decision-Making Body

The decision making body for LVEA is your Rep Council – made up of reps from all sites and some special groups in the district. Reps for most sites were elected last May for the 2014-15 school year. LVEA leadership gets its direction from this council. No one member can dictate the efforts and focus of LVEA leadership. Members are encouraged to voice their suggestions and concerns to their site rep(s) who then forward this information to our monthly Rep Council meetings. These issues are thoroughly discussed with all site reps, and if action is needed, motions can be made, seconded and approved by democratic vote...this is how your LVEA leadership gets its marching orders! It's therefore critical that we have active reps that listen to your concerns and advocate on your behalf. All Rep Council meetings are open to members. Rep Council typically meets in room D4 at Agoura High School on the third Monday of the month. Some sites are entitled to more than one rep and we do have some sites that are not fully represented. If your site has an opening, and are interested in running, please contact your other site rep for information.

Here are your site reps for the 2014-15 school year:

AC STELLE

Brett Godwin
Jody Hepps

AE WRIGHT

Darci Miller
Vacant

AGOURA

Steve Bacharach
Nicholas Hardy
Chelsea Rundle
Todd Shipley

BAY LAUREL

Nicky Hansen
Vacant

BUTTERCUP

Pam Thomas

CALABASAS

Andi Camacho
Catherine Foley
Linda Hull

CHAPARRAL

Sue Levy
Vacant

LINDERO CANYON

Chris Sale
Vacant

LUPIN HILL

Sherri Reynolds
Vacant

MARIPOSA

Vacant

ROUND MEADOW

Joan Woods

SPECIAL SERVICES

Maryann Bonthius (Speech)
Barbara Starr (Psych)
Christine Zahka (Psych)

SUMAC

Robin Frank

WHITE OAK

Vacant

WILLOW

Brittany Stone
Jody Larkin

YERBA BUENA

Gayle Macnish

Rep Council Meeting Dates:

September 22

October 20

November 3

December 15

January 12

February 9

March 16

April 20

May 18