

A NEW STATUS QUO...ARE WE MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION?

America is slipping and many politicians find it easy to blame education, but let's look at some trends. Technology has made our lives better in so many ways...but it has also been part of the problem. Human beings like convenience and cheaper prices. It started with gas stations...automated gas pumps meant less employee costs...which meant putting people out of work. Automated factories with robotic arms brought down the price of cars...and put people out of work. Automated banking machines and check-out registers were supposedly going to reduce costs...but for sure, put people out of work. Banking by phone and other online services are putting the U.S. Postal Service at risk, which threatens to put thousands of more people out of work. So it comes as no surprise when we are now "thankful to have a job." We are so thankful, that the new "status quo" for teachers is accepting class sizes of over 35, never talking about salary increases, accepting split classes and co-seating several subjects in one class at the high school level, paying for benefits out of our pocket, and joining millions of Americans who are losing their passion and energy to the creeping depression of an economic crisis in America. So...what can YOU do about it? Well, you can't look to the state or federal government to bail us out anymore. Much of the focus of our government funding has been toward "low performing schools". Since our test scores are so high, we may not get our "fair share" of new money. We have been forsaken. The only hope we have to keep teachers, which means lower class sizes and more academic opportunities for our students, is to convince this community that they must take care of their own. Two ways that community members can protect the quality of education for our students is to pass a parcel tax (Measure K) and donate to THE Foundation fundraisers. Money that would be provided through a parcel tax is MONEY THAT STAYS IN LAS VIRGENES. People who oppose new taxes oppose taxes that they have absolutely no control over. A parcel tax STAYS IN LAS VIRGENES, HAS EXPLICIT LANGUAGE REGARDING WHAT IT CAN BE USED FOR, AND IS HELD ACCOUNTABLE BY A COMMUNITY MEMBER OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE. The advantage of a parcel tax over voluntary fundraisers is that the money from a parcel tax is guaranteed every year. Measure K would bring in 2.2 million dollars a year for 8 years, and with luck, our state and federal budgets will improve by then! Parcel tax money can be used to hire teachers...which is something that PFCs/ PFAs legally cannot do, no matter how much money they raise. This coming Monday, September 26, we will be training all of our LVEA reps on how to conduct a 10 minute faculty meeting that will give you more specific information, and will provide you with multiple ways to become involved. We have about 7 weeks before the upcoming election to educate our community. You can join the apathy that is slowly creeping through America...apathy borne from crisis fatigue and frustration...or you can put some energy into making a difference for our students in our district right now. Please plan on attending the faculty meeting and find a way to make that difference that is right for you.

NEXT WEEK...WHY DO COMMON ASSESSMENTS AND WHAT IS ALL THIS TALK ABOUT 21st CENTURY LEARNING?

Let us leave you with this to think about. Much of the work that was done in America is now done by technology or outsourcing. The amount of cheap labor in other countries is staggering. What do WE need to do to ensure that our students can put America back on its feet?

Technology Update:

In last week's edition of LVEA Today, we advised you of our plans to distribute a new survey that would identify current technology concerns. We spoke to our district's Chief Instructional Technology Office, Phil Scrivano, and he suggests that all concerns be forwarded online to the district's Web Help Desk. Each recorded concern with the Web Help Desk generates a job order that is tracked by LVUSD tech personnel until the problem is fixed.

You can use this valuable tool by first going to the following web address from your computer's browser: <http://whd.lvusd.org> and entering your district's email and password. Once at the Help Request page, you need to identify the type of request based on how soon you "really" need resolution to your problem:

- Level 1: Within 4 hours (*Note that levels 1 & 2 require LVUSD Tech Authorization*)
- Level 2: Within 1 business day
- Level 3: Within 5 business days
- Level 4: Within 14 business days
- Level 5: Within 35 business days

These "levels" may be revised to words like urgent and critical in the near future.

You then identify the type of problem, like Aeries, hardware, software, printer, elmo etc. To the right of this window, you then need to select the specific type of equipment/software that needs fixing. In the Request Detail box, you should provide a written explanation of the help needed. Go down a few boxes and then select the appropriate school and classroom. Below Select Asset, you need to select the appropriate Type and Model information. Click on save and receive a ticket number. You will then receive updates via email on the status of your request.

Aeries Gradebook Mandatory? And what about new Printers?

The district has been quite clear that it wants all secondary teachers to use Aeries Gradebook. This would give parents the flexibility of viewing a student's grades for all his/her teachers by logging into one website. Many teachers have complained that Aeries is not reliable, functional or user-friendly. **LVEA is holding firm that a requirement cannot be made until the systems are more reliable, software and hardware are provided, and teachers are provided the training.** LVEA will also continue to encourage the district to develop an electronic transfer between Aeries and some of the popular grade book programs used by our teachers – satisfying the needs of both parents and teachers. While considering this option, the district chose to focus its efforts on improving the quality and stability of Aeries Gradebook. To a large extent, Aeries is much more stable this school year due to massive hardware updates at the district office and school sites. The "features" of Aeries remain limited and security (i.e. unauthorized access) have become a real issue. A newer release of Aeries Gradebook is coming soon, and Phil's group is exploring several new security measures. Between now and Winter Break, Phil plans to visit all schools and visit staff meetings to discuss these issues and solicit your input.

The district is also exploring the lease of new printers for all school sites – hopefully to be installed by December. Different options are being considered to maximize user performance. We all anxiously await new copying and printing capability that is available when needed! Feel free to ask Phil questions about the new copiers/printers when he visits your school.

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DON'T SIGN PETITIONS!

On September 7, the Secretary of State of CA sent out a press release announcing three new "labor-related" initiatives that are gathering signatures in the state. Below are the titles she has given them:

-ELIMINATES COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS FOR TEACHERS, NURSES, POLICE OFFICERS, FIREFIGHTERS, AND OTHER PUBLIC EMPLOYEES. INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.

-INCREASES INCOME TAXES ON TEACHERS, NURSES, POLICE OFFICERS, FIREFIGHTERS, AND OTHER PUBLIC EMPLOYEES FOR PENSION INCOME. INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.

-INCREASES RETIREMENT AGE FOR TEACHERS, PEACE OFFICERS, AND OTHER PUBLIC EMPLOYEES. INITIATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.

If any of these make it to the ballot we'll be in the newest fight of our careers. Let's not be Wisconsin! Please let us know if you see any of these in the community. PLEASE DON'T SIGN THE PETITIONS!

Rep Council and Executive Board Nominations

Because of all of the changes going on in the district, at the end of last year the Rep Council voted to extend the nominating and voting process for Executive Board until this fall. If you would like to run for an Executive Board position, please let LVEA know by September 9. We strongly encourage you to get involved in the Executive Board and Rep Council.

We still have a chance to stop Diastat!

People frequently ask, "Why is CTA involved in politics?!" There used to be a lengthy answer involving Ed Code, Board Policy, and Federal Laws. Since this summer there is a one-word answer for that question- "Diastat".

We are encouraging you to call the Governor's office to urge him to veto the SB161, the Diastat Bill. You will recall that Diastat is a drug administered rectally to people in the midst of a seizure.

The Governor promised "Veto Blues" for many legislators as he is set to sign over 600 bills this month- let's make sure the author of SB161 is doing his best BB King impression over the veto of his bill.
(916) 445-2841

Parcel Tax (Measure K):

This summer the LVUSD School Board voted to put a parcel tax on the November 8, 2011 ballot. They did this in response to the dramatic cuts that have been coming from the state. LVUSD has been cut over \$10 million since 2008 and we're all living the impact as a result- larger class sizes and caseloads, budget-cut days, fewer support staff, and fewer supplies. As one teacher put it, it's our "new normal."

The tax, if passed by a 2/3 majority of the community, will be \$95 per parcel. This will raise roughly 2.2 million dollars per year. The money will be used to prevent lay-offs, restore class size, restore programs, and maintain materials. On September 19 LVEA will vote on what our level of support will be for the campaign. Stay tuned for more info!

CTA History

1911- CTA wins continuing contract law (precursor to permanency)

1911- With CTA backing, community colleges established

1911- CTA successfully advocates for free textbooks for students

1913- STRS established

1915- CTA takes stand against child labor