

VEA Voice

Volume 3, Issue 8

March 2012

President's Message

RIFs

It is, unfortunately, that time of year again when many of our colleagues are faced with an uncertain future. This is part of the job that I don't like much at all. It is a difficult process & one that I have been privy to for the past three years as President of VEA. The numbers released by Human Resources in the VCUSD Board Packet that went out on Friday, March 2, 2012, were that 115 FTE's are up for reduction in Particular Kinds of Services (PKS). Inside this newsletter, I've posted the positions up for reduction.

For our colleagues receiving RIF notices, our website has been

updated with CTA's 2012 Lay-off Survival Guide. Additionally, David Weintraub, CTA Attorney and I will host an informational meeting on Thursday, May 15, 2012 in the theater at Hogan Middle School. It will run from 4 to 5:30 p.m. Please make sure to bring any paperwork you received from the district to this meeting.

I encourage ALL teachers and VEA members to support each other through this difficult process.

School Site Safety

I want to thank everyone who took the time to complete the survey on school safety issues. This information will be shared at an upcoming board meeting and with VEA membership.

Please remember that you have contractual rights and rights under the California Education Code in regards to your safety on campus. It is upsetting that as our teachers and students are faced with more & more safety issues, that some in the District would state that perhaps teachers should

leave if they are that unhappy with their working conditions. This lack of empathy for employees who are on the front-lines is outrageous.

I am finalizing the details for our final safety forum. VEA has invited CTA's Vice President Eric Heins to participate in this Forum. Additionally, I'm finalizing commitments from our State Electeds. This last Forum will be open to the public as a means to open the dialogue between teachers, students, parents & the Vallejo Community.

I hope that everyone is able to enjoy their Spring Break. Take this time to rejuvenate for the final push to end of the school year.

Regards,

Christal Watts, President

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The Cat in the Hat (aka Kevin Steele) made a special appearance at Highland Elementary

Meeting for RIF'd Members

Where: Hogan Middle School Theater

When: Thursday, March 15, 2012

Time: 4:00 to 5:30

Presented by

David Weintraub, CTA Attorney & Christal Watts, VEA President

Bring your RIF documents & your questions!

Call Stephanie Wilt at 707-864-6193 to check your membership status.

Evaluations

Article 11.2.2 states that under Process A, the second observation shall occur no later than March 1st.

If you are under Process A or B and your manager wants to schedule additional observations that were not part of the original mutually agreed upon plan, you do not have to agree to it.

Article 11.2.4 describes the process of being moved from Process B to A by your site manager. Your site administrator must notify you in writing prior to your last work day and cite specific concerns from the California Standards for the Teaching Profession.

Article 11.9 states that your evaluation report shall be completed no later than 30 calendar days prior to the end of the school year. The exception to this is if both parties agree to extend to June 30th of that school year.

Certificated RIFs

Below are the Certification Reduction in Force (RIF) notices that the Board is expected to approve on March 7th. The District is planning on "skipping" some positions. As more information becomes available, it will be posted on our website at myvea.org.

Elementary Reductions - Multiple Subject	
Categorically funded teachers QEIA	4.00
Categorically funded Teacher Leaders	17.80
Categorically funded Support Teachers	14.00

Secondary Reductions	
Categorically Funded Teacher - QEIA	
Science	6.00
Math	2.00
Social Science	2.00
English	8.00
Counselors	2.00
Categorically Funded Counselors	
QEIA 9-12	2.00

Declining Enrollment (K-6)	11.00
Child Development Prog Teachers	31.00
Categorically Funded	
Academic Coaches	2.30
(K-3)	13.00

Total FTE Reductions	115.10
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Info for “Almost” Retirees—CalSTRS

Working After Retirement: Exemptions End June 30

All exemptions to the annual postretirement earnings limit will end June 30. Under state law, if you work in any CalSTRS-covered employment on or after July 1, you will be subject to all applicable earnings limits and will no longer be able to apply for any exemptions, which include:

- Direct classroom and Remedial Exemption
- Emergency Exemption
- Limited-Term Appointment or Assignment Exemption
- 12-Month Break Exemption

In past years the California Education Code provided exemptions to the annual postretirement earnings limit. By law, these exemptions are set to end June 30, 2012.

The following limits apply whether you perform creditable service as an employee of the public school system, an independent contractor or an employee of the a third party.

Annual Postretirement Earning Limit

The annual postretirement earnings limit for the 2011-12 fiscal year is \$31,020. If you return to work and exceed the earnings limit, CalSTRS must withhold all of your gross monthly retirement benefit until the excess earnings are collected in full, up to the amount of your annual retirement benefit.

Separation from Service Requirement

If you retired before age 60, federal law requires you to wait six months or until your 60th birthday, whichever is sooner, before returning to CalSTRS-covered employment in order to avoid significant benefit reduction. If you return to CalSTRS-covered employment during this period, CalSTRS must reduce your retirement benefit by the amount you earn, up to your annual retirement benefit.

What This Change Means for You

With exemptions no longer available starting with the 2012-13 fiscal year, you should work closely with your employer to track your earnings reported to CalSTRS. Exceeding the annual post-retirement earnings limit can significantly affect your retirement benefit. Find other information related to working after retirement at CalSTRS.com

Keep in Mind

You can continue to receive your full CalSTRS retirement benefit, with no earnings limitation, if you take a job outside of CalSTRS-covered employment, including work in:

- Private Industry
- Private schools
- Public schools outside of California
- University of California or California State University systems.



Have an upcoming event
for your school site?

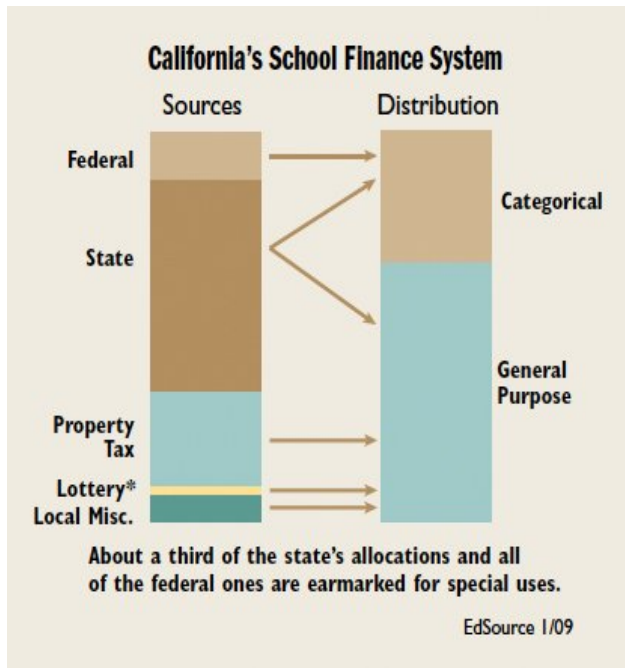
An idea for the newsletter?

Write an article for the
newsletter?

E-mail Christal Watts at
vjoedassn@comcast.net

Funding Our Schools—CTA

Every summer, the California Legislature and governor decide how much money will go to kindergarten through 12th grade (K–12) public education and how it will be divided among school districts, county offices of education, and the California Department of Education. A series of voter-approved initiatives provide significant restraints on both revenue options and how much funding must go to public schools. Although some changes occur each year, the system has looked about the same for more than 25 years.



The column on the left of the diagram below shows the five sources of operating funds for schools in California:

- The federal government contributes about 10% of the education budget.
- About 60% of the funds are from the state—generated by business and personal income taxes, sales taxes, and some special taxes.
- Local property taxes are a little less than 23% of all funds. The Legislature and governor determine what part of these revenues goes to schools.
- The tiny line near the bottom of the column—less than 2% of the total, or about \$150 per student—is from the California Lottery.
- Miscellaneous local revenues are about 6% of the total. These come from a variety of sources, such as special elections for parcel taxes (needs a two-thirds vote for approval); contributions from foundations, businesses, and individuals; food service sales, and interest on investments.

- These simple boxes tell the whole story: there are no other sources of funds to run California's K–12 public schools.

How are the funds distributed to local school districts?

The column on the right shows how the different sources feed into school districts' operating budgets. Currently, about two-thirds of the money is for general purposes and almost one-third is earmarked for special purposes or categories of students. Each district has its own particular combination of federal, state, and local sources.

The amount depends on:

- the average number of students attending school during the school year (average daily attendance or ADA);
- the general purpose money the district receives for each student (its "revenue limit"), and
- the support for specific programs for which it qualifies ("categorical aid").

The miscellaneous and lottery revenues provide less than 8% of funding statewide. But this money is important to school districts because few restrictions are placed on its use. In some districts, this income represents a significant source of discretionary funds.

How is the amount that goes to each school district determined?

The Legislature established revenue limits at roughly what each district spent on general education programs in 1972, and it has adjusted them for inflation since then. The *Serrano v. Priest* court case, decided in 1976, had the net effect of making districts' general purpose money more nearly equal per pupil in each type of district (elementary, unified, high school). Since the late 1990s, revenue limit equalization has been an intermittent issue, and various strategies have been implemented when funding was available. Revenue limits are now within about a \$450 range for school districts.

A district's revenue limit can be increased only by legislation, not by the school board, superintendent, or local voters. When property taxes rise, most schools do not directly benefit. The additional income goes toward the revenue limit, and the state's share is reduced proportionately. In about 60 of the almost 1,000 school districts, however, property taxes fill up or exceed the revenue limit. These districts are allowed to keep their excess property tax revenues.