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2013-14

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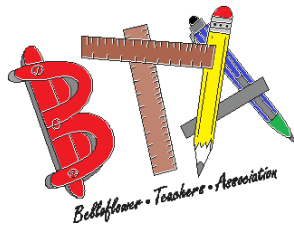
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The VOICE

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Rhythm

Wow! It's been a busy start to another year. We're finally starting to feel the rhythm that signifies real learning in our classrooms, at least I am! We have had a lot on our plates this year: DII, CCSS implementation, Smarter Balance, Sync Solutions, Course Planners, Advanced Thinking Maps, K-2 (New report cards with Aeries), FOL, PLC's, Nancy Fetzer...on and on. As professionals we take it in stride and continue to work that extra 'mile' to ensure that our students succeed. As the President it is my job to support the District with the best teachers possible. In return I ask that the District provide our teachers with the best working environment possible. Your Union has been diligently working to that end. However, we need your help. If you find an 'obstacle' that makes your working environment challenging or a concern that prevents students from learning, please contact your site representative. Too often we make do with a problem that makes our learning environment trying. The only way to improve is to voice your concerns.

Colin Davis

Bargaining

We've made good progress with the District during our last bargaining meeting. Our team will be meeting with the District on December 3rd. Keep your eyes posted for an email from me asking you to vote on whatever salary and contract language is presented. **PLEASE VOTE!** If you have not given me your non-district email, you can email me at voiceofbta@gmail.com to have me add you.

Common Core Corner

As we transition to CCSS I find it helpful to beg, borrow and steal ideas from others. If you have some good sites, please email them so I can share. Here are two that I've used a lot.

<http://www.readworks.org/> and <http://www.ereadingworksheets.com/>



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California Education Coalition for Health Care Reform



The severity of the health care crisis combined with escalating costs is having a devastating effect on public education. In response, public education leaders—representing both management and labor organizations—have joined together in their commitment to reduce costs and ensure quality, affordable health care for all public school employees. From offering free trainings that empower school districts and unions to make better health care decisions to exploring alternative, cost effective methods of providing coverage, CECHCR is leveraging its combined power and resources to find solutions to this crisis in public education. CECHCR has introduced a design for a [statewide school pool](#) that promises a new direction in health care purchasing for the public education community by increasing control over health care decisions, lowering costs, improving services and making collective bargaining much easier. The passage of federal health care reform, the [Affordable Care Act](#), supports the important role CECHCR plays in helping California's school districts and unions come together to work towards health care solutions that serve the entire education community. VISIT their website...<http://www.ccscenter.org>

CECHCR Success Stories

Montebello Unified School District

When the Montebello Unified School District was faced with a 30 percent increase to their health insurance plan, CECHCR Consultants John Glynn and Mark Lowenthal of J. Glynn & Co. assisted their insurance committee through a “second opinion” process—funded by CTA and CSEA—that helped avert the crisis and move members to a new plan. Described as a “tide turn” for the District, this joint effort between management and labor—promoted by CECHCR—resulted in a combined savings of approximately \$11.5 million for 2010, now up to \$14 million in 2011. Implementing the change for 3,000 employees quickly due to an approaching member renewal deadline presented a challenge that required a true team effort.

CECHER PRESENTATION

As many of you know, our costs for health-care went up again this year. We have been asking the District to work with us to try and alleviate this problem. We have been collaborating with the other labor organization in BUSD, CSEA, to help us as well. We were fired up to have another rally at the November 14th School Board Meeting over our dissatisfaction with the current situation.



SUCCESS!



BUSD has agreed to attend the CECHER presentation on December 4th. Members of your Executive Board, Bargaining Team and Insurance Committee will attend. Members of CSEA, the District and our School Board will also be in attendance. We hope to be able to improve the quality and reduce the cost of our health care.

Special Education Services in Bellflower Unified School District

by Terri Taylor

Part 1 of 3

As teachers here in BUSD, I am pretty sure that the majority of us are familiar with the term "Special Education." At some point in time, many general education teachers will have a "special education" student in their class. But how many of us really understand the complex and wide ranged workings of special education? Some teachers may work at a school site with minimal special ed. services (Baxter), while others may work at a site that has many special education classes (Foster, Washington and Lindstrom). Depending on where you work, one's views and experiences regarding special education can be totally different. A student may be receiving only one special ed. service such as speech, perhaps being pulled out of their general ed. class for 30 minutes, 2 days per week, while another student might be in a special ed. classroom for the majority of their day, interacting with their general education peers mostly during lunch and recess. In an attempt to clarify what special education services are available here in BUSD, the following will provide an overview of all of the the programs that our district offers.

Disclaimer: I apologize for the use of acronyms and confusing terminology associated with special education. There will not be a test at the end. All of the special education services provided in our district are mandated by Federal Law, stemming from PL-94-142, enacted in 1975. There are 13 qualifying conditions for special education services. The term Mental Retardation has been replaced with Intellectual Disability (ID.)

To begin, Bellflower Unified belongs to a Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA). The SELPA is a consortium or group of school districts that get together to pool their Special Ed resources and populations. We are part of the Mid-Cities SELPA, which consists of us, Paramount, Lynwood, and L.A. County Dept. of Ed (LACOE). I mention this because there are certain disabilities considered uncommon (Low Incidence disabilities). Low Incidence students include Deaf/ Hard of Hearing (DHH), or Visually(VI) or Orthopedically Impaired (OI). Usually, because there are not enough of these students in one district to support a full class or caseload, one district in the SELPA will house a class for all of the districts. For example, there is a Visually Handicapped class at Mayfair Middle/High School. Any student from the above mentioned districts, can attend the VH program in BUSD, if they meet the eligibility criteria. BUSD also has our own OI support teacher, who travels around the district to make sure that the OI students have access to all curriculum materials. If an OI student needs a specific device, such as a keyboard, special desk or writing implement, this is provided through OI support.

SDC classes are available in 2 categories, MM mild to moderate and what is commonly referred to as SH or severely handicapped. MM students have difficulty in all academics, in addition to other areas, such as organizational skills. Students with an IQ below 70 are usually in the SH category. The correct term for SH is now MS, moderate to severe. These students tend to have significant global delays. They can also have health and physical issues stemming from their disability. Identified RSP students, tend to only need help in one identified area, such as math or language arts, but can have difficulties in different areas as well. A student with a "learning disability" tends to have average ability, but has difficulty learning via conventional teaching methods in a large classroom setting.

Read the next Voice for Part II of Terri's Article.

Want to know what's going on with BTA? Please like our Facebook Page! It has our Mixer dates, Representative Council, School Board Meetings and more! Search Bellflower Teachers Association Facebook Page or visit <http://bellflowerteachers.com/>.

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California Teachers Association State Council Meeting #1, October 25-27 Delegate Report Linda Arndt

CTA State Council Delegates met Oct. 25-27 at the Bonaventure Hotel in Los Angeles. As the decision making body of CTA, the Council meets 4 times a year in committees, special interest caucuses and full assembly to oversee the organization's business and policies. BTA has 2 representatives, President Colin Davis & me, Linda Adkins-Arndt.

This weekend included an evening celebration of CTA's 150 years of advocacy. CTA President Dean Vogel reminded delegates that the governor recently signed [CTA-backed AB 484](#) to overhaul the state's student assessment system and suspend most standardized testing while the new standards are being put in place. He said this law "means educators and school districts have time to concentrate on implementing the standards without a hammer coming down on their heads" in the form of meaningless test scores.

After the CTA history presentation, Governor Brown took the stage and quipped, "I feel right at home with all those historical artifacts." Governor Brown dropped by to honor CTA's contributions to both the teaching profession and the labor movement. "We stand on the shoulders of a lot of people, that's the whole message today," he said. "I think it's very important that we get that sense of solidarity for those who were there before, those who are there now," and those who will be there in the future. "It's the collective imagination and effort that makes things go forward."

Business included:

- CTA State Council voted unanimously to support the Early Childhood Education Committee's proposal to seek legislation to mandate Kindergarten attendance throughout the state.
- Information on the Pension Reform Act of 2014 – 5 mayors have joined together to propose cutting Pensions not only to new hires, but to include every state employee current AND retired. They will be out there with petitions – DO NOT SIGN!
- Request for data from the Special Education Committee regarding everyone's experience and opinion of services in and outside the classroom. The survey link is www.cta.org/CTASpecEd2013.
- Request for information from the Teacher Evaluation Workgroup regarding your teacher training experiences, suggestions, and opinions. Policy is being developed for CTA on how future teachers should be prepared for their careers. The survey link is www.surveymonkey.com/s/TeacherEvaluationWorkgroupSurvey.com.
- The Teacher Evaluation and Academic Freedom committee discussed the importance of having a teacher representative participate in the proposed dismissal of any educator. Currently, when The Commission on Teacher Credentialing calls a dismissal hearing it includes a judge, one administrator, and a teacher who has at least five years experience in the same position/subject/grade as the teacher defending their credential. Recently legislators have suggested that it is too hard to find the required teacher representative and that is slows the process of dismissing "bad" teachers. CTA's position is that it is the teacher's due process right to have a peer representative involved.

Our next meeting will be held in January of 2014.

Time Is Running (NEW TEACHERS) Out On This Special Enrollment Opportunity

If you're a newly hired CTA member this year, you may be eligible for a special, limited-time opportunity to apply for CTA-endorsed Disability and Life Insurance from Standard Insurance Company (The Standard).

If you apply within your first 120 days of starting your new job, eligible CTA members can get up to **\$200,000 of Life Insurance** coverage without answering any health questions.

You can also apply for **Disability Insurance**, which can help with the everyday bills like your mortgage and utilities, that continue even when you can't work -- expenses that health insurance won't cover. The CTA-endorsed Disability Insurance plan was specially designed to address the gaps in coverage that many California educators face.

Remember, you only have 120 days to apply for this unique opportunity. Don't miss out.

For costs and further details of the coverage and this enrollment opportunity, including exclusions, benefit waiting periods, any reductions or limitations and the terms under which the policy may be continued in force, call The Standard's CTA Customer Service Department at [800.522.0406](tel:800.522.0406), or visit www.standard.com/cta/newhire to apply online.

**Don't forget...combined Rep. & E-Board meeting is:
Monday, December 9th, 2013, 3:30**