

**CALENDAR OF  
EVENTS**

**June 2011**

**Friday, June 17-The last day of the school year!**

**Thursday, June 23rd-School Board Meeting-Serna Center**

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## Thank You

By Linda Tuttle, SCTA President

It has been quite a ride from my first step of getting active in SCTA during my second year in the district. Yes, I was still on probation. This was 1983 and back then (pre-1985) we had to be probationary for 3 years. The call went out to picket a school board member's house. I was the first one there! So then SCTA asked me to do more and I did!

I have served on every committee and the bargaining team. I served on the board for many years as well. The measure of commitment can be seen by how much you are willing to do without being on the board.

THANK YOU to all that have given of your time and effort to serve SCTA members as a site rep, SCTA committee member/chair, and all of you that are willing to come to SCTA events as asked. You are the true leaders. You ask for nothing and give to others. Remember YOU have what "you have" because of these people. If you have not stepped-up to volunteer – WHY NOT? If you don't "stand together" then your rights, benefits, and compensation will little by little be taken away. You can't be silent.

I started my career in Massachusetts (my home state) then went to Washington DC and taught in Fairfax County Virginia for 2 years, went back to MA and then to SCUSD. I never moved to pursue teaching but always found a job and had wonderful experiences. I have taught with a LOT OF WONDERFUL Teachers, Librarians, Counselors, Psychologists, Nurses, Social Workers, Ad Ed teachers, Child Development teachers, and Substitutes. I learned from all of you and appreciate all of the help you gave me for my students over the years. BUT you all need to look out for yourselves and protect what you have. Look out for each other, hold hands, look in both directions, and cross the road together. This truth came from the book All We Need to Know We Learned in Kindergarten. Simple Truths!

I am grateful for all of those that were role models to me and helped me be a strong VOICE FOR TEACHERS. I will continue the fight wherever I am as our profession is under attack. I will have the

luxury of time to keep the fight up for teacher's right's as a citizen and not a union goon, although, I wore the mantle proudly.

I will share my time between my home here and in MA. I will be happy to be back "home" on my 25 acres in the country to see the foliage at its most brilliant and to spend more time with my family and long-time friends. Yes, I am still friends with my first friend from first grade and with whom I hope to do some kayaking. I also want to climb Mt. Monadnock in NH again. I want to spend time at my husband's house in Mexico and travel extensively down there. I only have Alaska and ND left to have seen all 50 states! And there are so many places to see and enjoy in the world!!

A huge "THANK YOU" to my wonderful husband, Paramo, and our wonderful son, Clark. I could not have put in the long hours and time commitment this job takes without their constant support and encouragement

I will be in Sacramento in 2012 to help in the school board race. It is critical to have school board members that listen and we may need to make some changes! They seem to have taken for granted the teachers that got them elected. Maybe it's time to make "new friends".

Be strong! AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL!



SCTA Picnic-June 3rd 2011. Marcie Launey, Cris Johnson, Linda Tuttle, and Nikki Milevsky. I think by the time we left at 6:30 it was 50 degrees. Thankfully, the rain held off until 8:00.

## A Conversation with Richard Mullins, SCTA's new Executive Director

By Richard Mullins, Executive Director, and Scott Smith, President-Elect

Richard Mullins has joined the team at SCTA as the new Executive Director. Richard is replacing Manuel Villarreal who has retired after many years in the same position. He comes to SCTA from the Kentucky Education Association (KEA) where he worked for many years as an organizer, field representative and lobbyist.

Richard was born in a little rural Kentucky coal mining town called Pikeville (for comparison think a smaller Yuba City). He played football and basketball (because there really wasn't much else to do!) and received a scholarship for his efforts that allowed him to play football in college. His father was a mediator for the Kentucky Dept. of Labor, which sparked the interest to pursue a Business Administration Degree in Economics. It was the closest he could come to furthering his opportunities to launching a career in labor relations.

Most recently he held the position of statewide political organizer, and was a chief negotiator for bargaining across the state. Mr. Mullins has trained and worked with the National Education Association (NEA) in many states on organizing and political action and has a background in bargaining. Prior to his work with KEA and NEA, Mr. Mullins worked as an investigator with the Kentucky Department of Labor enforcing employer violations of state and federal wage and hour laws. When asked about his work experience Mr. Mullins said "I have always worked as an advocate for employees and their rights. He and his two children, Sam and Ellie, look forward to making Sacramento their new home. Rich has a warm and outgoing personality that instantly puts people at ease, but has no difficulty standing his ground when called to do so, He is forever throwing in to conversations little stories from his Kentucky upbringing, which makes for a much more lively conversation.

When asked what he likes best about the area he said, "I am really enjoying the weather, and the opportunity to work with a great local made up of great people."

## Charlotte Superintendent Stepping Down

Coverage of Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina, Superintendent Peter Gorman's sudden resignation continued today, focusing largely on what his departure will mean for the district moving forward. The Charlotte (NC) Observer (6/10, Helms) reports Gorman "made Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools a national model for data-driven school reform," and "a deeply divided community must decide whether his vision is right for Charlotte." Noting that few observers expected Gorman to leave, the Observer notes that on the news of his stepping down, "some lamented while others cheered, saying the changes that earned him kudos have driven down teacher morale and burdened kids with too much testing. ... Gorman's departure forces the community to decide whether to continue his vision of school improvement - a vision driven by testing, data and frequent shakeups at schools - or chart a new path." The piece echoes reportage from yesterday indicating that Gorman's views on teacher evaluations are in line with those of Education Secretary Arne Duncan.

WCNC-TV Charlotte, NC (6/10, Campbell) also focuses on the opportunity for local leaders to "rethink the vision and reevaluate the future of North Carolina's largest school district," noting that Gorman is leaving "to become Senior Vice President of the newly-formed Education Division of News Corp." WCNC also presents a reasonably balanced view of the range of opinions about Gorman, adding, "the search for a new superintendent will likely - at least in part - become a referendum on the policies instituted over the last five years."

Reprinted from the NEA website

## Life is Good

By Lynette Tanaka, President  
Sacramento Area CTA/NEA Retired

There are those who have taught for decades and our reward is RETIREMENT. Now we can sleep in and stay up late, eat when we want to; dress in clothes when we want to. We can also volunteer in the community.

We also can become involved in the Sacramento Area CTA/NEA Retired (teachers) local chapter. While most of our retiree members hail from SCTA, we are open to retirees from Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Placer, Tuolumne and Yolo counties as well.

Our little chapter is an advocacy group. We meet 4 times a year and we watchdog what is happening with pensions. There are way toooooo many pension attacks now, brought on by those who don't understand the pension system.

We watch social security and medicare. We are keeping our eye on our benefits all the time. And, we support SCTA activities from sox and undies to school board races.

If you are retiring we would love for you to join us. Send me your email at [orgnizer@aol.com](mailto:orgnizer@aol.com). I share email addresses with no one. I am the keeper of the email distribution list and will send out meeting notices and other relevant issues for your reading pleasure. Hope to hear from you!

### The Direct Line

The Direct Line is a publication of the Sacramento City Teachers Association, which is an affiliate of CTA and NEA.

#### 2010-11 SCTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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# The Surplus Process

By Manuel Villarreal, Executive Director Emeritis

The Union and District policies for surplus are covered in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) under Article 8. A surplus of teachers at a site occurs when there are fewer teachers needed than required by the staffing formulas in the CBA. A surplus also occurs when there is reduced funding in a special program requiring the exiting of a teacher or when a teacher who has been serving in a limited term assignment (LTA) must leave the position. The initial notification of surplus teachers occurs during the first week of April, insofar as they are known. That means that additional surplusings can occur into the following school year as it did this year.

The intricacies can become a bit more complicated depending on the site, type of school, segment and credentialing. A teacher can be declared surplus from an Elementary school when there are too few students. The process starts when the school knows its possible projected enrollment for the following year will be less than the current year. The administrator must survey to see if someone would choose to volunteer out before identifying the least senior teacher with DISTRICT Seniority in the TEACHER Classification identified for reduction at the site for surplus. A teacher classification is different for Special Ed teachers, resource teachers and prep teachers, etc. In general, when two or more teachers volunteer to be surplus, the teacher with the greater seniority gets to jump ship.

At the Elementary segment, the surplus can be applied to Prep teachers, resource, and special ed teachers. These teachers do not have a right to a teacher position at the site because they are in a separate and different job classification. However, it is possible that a teacher in one of these positions may be in a LTA position and still have return rights to a regular teaching position at that site or some other site provided they have been out of the regular position for less than one year.

As a reminder, District seniority means seniority in the SCTA bargaining unit. Service as a former classified or administrator does not count for seniority as a teacher or teacher rights under the CBA.

At the Secondary segment the rules are somewhat different because a surplus impacts subject and department areas. Small learning communities and professional learning communities or special named programs have no bearing on secondary surpluses, or at least they are not legally supposed to.

At Secondary, a surplus can occur when fewer Math teachers or History teachers are needed because fewer students are taking the courses. Maybe a number of students took such classes at summer school or earned credits by some other source. Or there could be a surplus of elective teachers because students are taking or being programmed into double classes of the same subject. Secondary teachers are surplus based on their credentials and seniority. If fewer Math teachers are needed, History teachers are not surplus. However, if the least senior Math teacher has a history credential, they can bump out the least senior History teacher who has less seniority. But then again, if the classes being eliminated are regular math and the need is higher math, it may be that a less senior math teacher has the correct certification and a more senior math teacher would be declared surplus.

Surplussing can also occur with counselors, psychologists, social workers and resource teachers. The CBA requires a bumping process that moves out the individuals with the least District seniority. Depending on certification, surplus individuals can choose to bump into certain other jobs by the CBA.

Teachers can request to be surplus from their school based on criteria developed by SCTA and the District and with approval of the District and SCTA. Usually there is no consensus that a teacher should surplus.

A school closure can cause a surplus of an entire faculty. If the school closure is the only surplus occurring, then those teachers can choose from the known openings for the following year. If the closure occurs in the wake of other surpluses, the CBA would treat those teachers as any other school. The SCTA and District could agree to join two schools together; then the schools would be treated as one, though there would be no clarity about the student numbers until the students registered and a new set of surpluses could occur based on District seniority.

Surplus placement usually takes place during the last week of April, but circumstances can cause the SCTA and District to move the process to later and sometimes continuously. Three years ago, four separate placements were made. At the placement process, teachers select positions for which they qualify based on District seniority. If administrators are in the mix, they choose last. The CBA says that a teacher can choose two positions giving their first choice and will be placed in one. Teachers are almost always placed in their first choice. Often there is only one choice. Teachers must qualify for the position they are choosing. Sometimes a position that is chosen is later found out not to exist. That usually means the site administrator does not want the surplus teacher, but once the position is on the list the choosing teacher still gets a job at the site and the administrator must then move someone else at his/her site as result of trying to be clever.

Occasionally, a teacher does not want to choose or refuses to choose. At that point, the district will arbitrarily choose and hold a position for a teacher. Starting August 1, the district can place a teacher based on seniority.

From year to year there are a varying number of available positions for choosing. In some years there are fewer jobs than surplus teachers and other years more. When there is no job for a teacher to choose, the teacher will have continuing rights to choose until August 1. In recent years, golden handshakes have opened more positions than expected.

Lay offs can confound and compound the problems and process as can declining enrollment. In general, lay offs will occur earlier than surplusings and those teachers will have rights to return to their school if their lay off is rescinded before the surplus period. If the lay off is rescinded after, then the teacher will be considered unassigned and surplus and will be covered by the surplus rules.

Hopefully, this description will help teachers understand the rules. There are many nuances that impact the process, as well as grievance findings and true common sense. Through the years SCTA and the District have attempted to build a positive process and relationship over what is a very difficult situation for teachers.

Editors Note: The surplus pool of teachers is large this year, the largest in fact that this editor can remember. If you have been surplus please don't forget to attend the placement.

## You, the District, and Being Subversive

By Scott Smith, President-Elect

Aloha! In Hawaiian, aloha means both hello and goodbye. It seemed an appropriate word to use as we say, “Goodbye” to Linda, who has worked so diligently on behalf of teachers and students all these years, and I say, “Hello.” I want to thank you, teachers, for all of the many ways in which you help your students over the year. I know you put in countless hours preparing lesson plans, grading papers, doing report cards, designing room environments, attending: meetings, games, plays, dances, and on and on. Never let anyone say that you don’t earn every penny you make and every benefit you receive. I will always thank you every chance I get, because in today’s world it would seem you are not valued nearly enough, especially if you believe the media and special interest groups. I remind you of the old adage—don’t believe everything you hear, or read.

In education the word change pops up more frequently than weeds in a well-watered field. Sometimes change is good, and necessary. Other times the word “change” is used when there is no plan and no direction. I had a principal who would attend a seminar—monthly—then return with a new “change” in plans. You can imagine how well that went over after the third time in three months. Our superintendent is one who seeks change. He has prioritized seven schools that he identified as needing change. Some have been priority schools for a year now, which might lead one to question what the plan is for these schools. Rather than switching the schools over to a plan that lacked specifics, it would have been more prudent to involve the schools in its development, and then switch. However, that would require something that has been lacking at some sites, collaboration. In fact, there are many school sites in the district that have the same problem, they dictate rather than collaborate, and then wonder why there isn’t more buy-in from teachers.

We are under siege in this district. When our rep and a rep from SEIU are administratively transferred from the same school it has the appearance of union busting. This administration would like nothing better than to abrogate our contract altogether—and it is OUR contract that both the District and we negotiated. The almost weekly letters we receive from the superintendent are friendly enough, yet behind the scenes a little is chipped away here, and a little chipped away there—hoping, in my belief, that no one will notice. And, it seems as though the school board walks hand in hand down the primrose path the superintendent builds with his flowery words.

We have said this before, and we will say it yet again, we believe in working together. However, working together requires active listening and working in partnership, not listening coupled with no action. So, we can start anew with each school principal vowing to make their school environment enriching, empowering and pleasant; and each school staff achieving their best because they are valued and supported—and in turn supporting that principal. Or, we can return to the days when our actions were loud enough to be heard throughout the community, much to the detriment of the administration and board. I’d prefer we make new history, not repeat it.

We’re tossing the ball to the other court, let’s see where it lands.

## How can they BEE so blind?

Editor’s Note: An article recently appeared in the Bee about Hiram Johnson. Erik Knudson, our new 2nd VP-Elect responded to the writer in an email.

Melody,

Read your editorial today in the Bee re/ the Hiram Johnson/ Board meeting. I counted 9 quotes. Two relatively neutral from Ms. Miranda, (though I notice you didn’t bother to interview the current Student Body President), one quote (two lines) from Larry Tagg, an “anti-Cedros” teacher and 6 pro Cedros quotes. Cedros was quoted twice and Superintendent Raymond chimed in with another. Teacher Rick Redding, a Cedros supporter, was quoted 3 times.

None of the 100 plus students at the board meeting there to protest the policies of Principal Cedros was included. Nor were any of the frustrated parents, who were in attendance and spoke at the board meeting, given any press. No responses from Board members? Union officials were not included in the article, except for anti-union comments from Cedros himself.

From past experience, I can tell you working under a principal who values autocracy and displays arrogance over collaborative effort is never effective. If for no other reason, sheer manpower to affect change is drastically reduced as you offend the very workers you expect to implement your plan. Morale plummets, everyone suffers. It is a destructive process. Anyone can be a boss. But a leader? That’s another thing altogether. (Want an example? Ask around this district about Greg Purcell.)

I know its in vogue right now to hit back at teachers and the associations that represent them. We’ve seen that constantly with the Bee. (Though it would be nice to confine the editorializing to the proper page) But did you ever consider that the teachers who elected to stay at H.J. have dedicated their careers to serving the kids who need help the most? There is no quick fix for students who are grade levels behind or who come from troubled families and don’t have the support systems in place that other kids do. It takes a constant collaborative, community effort. A dictatorial, corporate approach is wasting everyone’s time, especially the target of our efforts....the students.

Your writing, Melody, missed so many aspects to the crisis at H.J. The fact that your article overshadowed the one anti-Cedros viewpoint by the monopolizing pro-Cedros commentary, is belied by the outpouring of frustration and concern that was readily evident at the Board meeting from students, parents and teachers. The Board meeting wasn’t a show of support for Cedros; it was very clearly a call for a change in administration at Hiram Johnson High School. That should have told you something!?!

As a newly-elected association officer and a 20 year veteran teacher for SCUSD, I encourage you to talk to the many disaffected students, parents and teachers at Hiram Johnson. No one asked Cedros to come to Hiram Johnson and run over people instead of inviting real dialogue and collaboration to solve a problem. I’m attaching a speech by Richard Barrera, a San Diego Unified School District board member and past president who helped institute a collaborative, **community model** of raising student achievement as opposed to the top-down, corporate model they had before, (also, related information I think you’ll find interesting). I’ve always believed that joining forces together as colleagues was a more successful methodology for raising student achievement than by edict and order. I will always support the former and oppose the latter.

Respectfully,

Erik Knudson  
2nd V.P. Elect  
Sacramento City Teachers Association