Welcome New Members!
Jonathan Durley—Blair Middle School
Larry Bider-Altadena Elementary
Jennifer Pekrul—Rose City
Connie Parker—Willard Elementary
Eryn School—Washington Middle
Sharon Taich—Wilson Middle
Le Xu Shen—Field Elementary

CTA Teachers’ Rights Mini-Guide

With administrators, teachers have the right to:

- Ask the purpose of a meeting before attending.
- Be represented in meetings that might lead to discipline.
- Request unusual directives in writing before complying.
- Give no explanations until after consulting with a staff representative.
- Refuse to submit a written statement until after consulting with a staff representative.
- Remain silent and consult a lawyer if accused of conduct that could lead to criminal prosecution.

Union Code of Conduct

- I will not criticize any union member except to the individual directly.
- If any member is being criticized in my presence, I will confront the criticism and ask that it stop.
- I will not participate in any conversations with management that criticizes or negatively speculates about any union member.
- I will settle my differences with members within my union.
- I will engage in debate, offer others every opportunity for debate, and respect minority viewpoints. I will, however, observe and support the majority mandate of my union.

Organizing Our Collective Voices

On January 17, 2012, members of United Teachers of Pasadena attended the Board meeting to express our concerns over the current Health and Welfare standoff (see Bargaining article on page 3). Our members came out in a show of force, carrying signs and cheerfully chanting to Allen Nash, President, and other members who spoke up. In addition, they represented the over 400 members who signed letters to the Board of Education expressing support for our Bargaining Team.

One member, Dave Berk, addressed the Board during public comment. Following is an abridged recap of Dave’s editorial. (The full version can be found at utofp.org)

UTP is asking for clarification, reason, and for focus on closing the achievement gap on individual students’ learning and on our district’s financial and human resources.

We recently learned that our district had a budget surplus of $5.8 million dollars, but should also expect mid-year cuts. We learned that state budget triggers cost our district $1 million dollars. Now it is said that we need to cut $11.7 million dollars from our district’s budget.

To achieve our district’s goals, the question becomes, what are the best financial choices for our district?

The most comprehensive research on class size—the Tennessee STAR report overwhelmingly demonstrated that small class sizes matter.

Neighboring districts realize the value of small class sizes and have maintained lower class sizes while spending less.

The question becomes, do we “need” a director of secondary instruction? Do we “need” two directors of our personnel department? Why do these “needs” supersede our students’ need for a healthy classroom environment that ensures academic achievement and growth?

Do students “need” any of these additional administrative positions? You may “need” to lay off some of us off. You may “need” to cut teacher compensation further, but should be doing is using the budget not to hire more administrators but instead using it to reduce class sizes and to make compensation more competitive. Instead of being in September and October we’ll get our pick of the best and the brightest teachers in order to deliver the highest quality instruction possible.

The good news is, there is still time to do the right thing for our district’s classrooms, teachers, and students. Well said, Dave! Thank you to the Organizing Team and all who attended the meeting.

UTP Mission

The United Teachers of Pasadena (UTP) strives to empower its members so that they may provide the best conducive educational environment for the students of the Pasadena Unified School District. This UTP endeavors to raise the standards of the teaching profession, secure competitive values and benefits, better the working environment, strengthen the contract, and improve communications between unit members and the PUSD administration.

UTP’s Voice is a monthly publication created by UTP’s Communications Team. We welcome your input!
Budget Crisis 2012: The Emergency Continues

President’s Message — by Alvin Nash

The Governor’s tax initiative is the best way to quickly address the goal of avoiding cuts to education and other essential services. It is clear that California (and Pasadena Unified) cannot cut our way out of this budget problem. It is a way past time for a tax increase, and we must help lead the movement to get a revenue package approved, in the end, none of the funding proposals out there solve all of our long-term funding needs, but UTPCA believes we must come together with the broadest coalition possible to have a chance at passing any funding initiative. If we are not united and have multiple proposals on the ballot, we all lose.

For UTP and our members, this is going to be a very tough and very demanding year. There are many complex issues and there are no easy solutions. The political context of this election is equally important.

A paycheck deduction initiative (the Paycheck Protection) has qualified for the ballot, and defeating this initiative must be the top priority for the entire labor community, including us. If this initiative passes, we will not be able to effectively advocate for our students, our members, our colleagues and our families. There is no way to win this fight, without making sure our members understand what is at really at stake, and that it is going to take a lot of education and organizing for everyone. This initiative, by itself is going to be very costly to defeat and will take significant UTP CTA resources. The good news is we are not doing it alone. A coalition of labor partners has already come together to plan for battle.

A handful of business groups have filed a spending cap initiative. This proposal would cut school funding and limit future state spending. While it would be devastating for our public schools, voters may find the proposal attractive, especially if they are voting for tax increases as well. We need to keep this initiative off the ballot, and use UTP/CTA and other unions will be forced to fight to defeat it.

There are also targeted initiative threats to our secure retirement.

The New Year is a time when we all start thinking about financial resolutions. Make this the year you get your retirement planning house in order.

CTAInvites.org
Visit CTAInvites.org and find out how a 403(b) or 457 plan can help you supplement your CFTRS or CalPERS pension.

Videos
Watch “What Educators Need to Know About Social Security”

You can tell the Governor and lawmakers on all these issues. Please talk to your family members, friends, neighbors, parent groups, and colleagues about the importance of passing the tax initiative and of defeating the deceptive plans of our power. Also, UTP will be asking you to come to actions and events so we can voice our stance and show our solidarity.

General Information

Important Dates

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 9</td>
<td>Executive Board Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 9</td>
<td>Leadership Mid-Year Retreat</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 9</td>
<td>Stressed! Workshop, 6pm-5:30pm, PHS Cafeteria</td>
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<td>February 13</td>
<td>Lincoln’s Birthday! School Holiday</td>
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<td>February 14</td>
<td>PUSD Board of Education, 6:30pm, Board Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 14</td>
<td>Valentine’s Day</td>
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<td>February 20</td>
<td>President’s Day School Holiday</td>
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<td>February 24-26</td>
<td>NEA Pacific Regional Conference, San Diego</td>
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<td>February 27</td>
<td>Representative Council, 4pm, PHS Cafeteria</td>
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<td>February 29</td>
<td>Self-Extrem Workshop, 4pm-5:30pm, PHS Cafeteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 29</td>
<td>PUSD Board of Education Meeting, 6:30pm, Board Room</td>
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<td>February 29</td>
<td>Black History Month</td>
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COTA Member Benefits: Preparing for Retirement: 403b and 457 Plan Essentials

- Your Personalized Financial Checklist
- Complete a personalized financial reminder checklist – this can help you keep financial tasks organized and on track.
- Choosing a Financial Adviser
- Consider hiring a financial advisor, but first watch “Finding a Trustworthy Financial Advisor” and download “Selecting a 403b/457 Advisor & Understanding Plan Fees”
- Videos
  - Watch “What Educators Need to Know About Social Security”

UPT’S Position Regarding Article XV Health and Welfare Benefits

By Rosettie Agaioh, Bargaining Chair

The Association and District Bargaining Teams agreed that on their annual day to negoti- ate Health & Welfare Benefits we have not yet reached an agreement. This unfortu- nately is not by far the only standstill in the way of an agreement.

United Teachers of Pasadena believes in fairness. UTP members have made several concessions during this year’s negotiations to help the District from financial insolvency, and the Association simply believes that our members deserve full restoration of their comprehensive, competitive benefits. In 2011, the UTP and PUSD Bargaining Teams signed a statement of understanding regarding the District’s future health and welfare benefits.

We believe in fairness. What are we asking for?

- Let’s start by listing what we are asking for.
- We’re not asking to be reimbursed for the 2.9% pay cut (3 full months) we took for each of the past 2 years, because we didn’t work those days.
- And we’re not asking to be reimbursed for the increase in monthly out-of-pocket costs that members insured with Blue Shield absorbed.
- We believe in fairness. What do we ask for is as follows:

- That the District pass along to its employees insured with Blue Shield (100% of the Blue Shield Rebate) that it has received from Blue Shield. The employees paid the increase in monthly out-of-pocket costs, so they should get the rebate.
- That the District, however, would like to keep 92% of those rebates and pass on to the employees only 8%.
- We’re also asking that the District add to the “Premium Holiday” given by Blue Shield amounts to 15% of a 10% decrease. This 15% premium reduction should also be passed down to the next highest annual premium.

So what exactly are we asking for?

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Recently Resolved Grievances

- Ill 11201 — Violation of Article XV, Salary and Salary Schedule Rates and Regulations. District paid doctor's increases but failed to retroactive rate. Union will move to refile back to correct retroactive date. (Formal Level 2)
- Ill 11200 — Violation of Article XVI, Child Development Programs. District denied vacation plan, not in accordance with Section 16.10.1. Union member’s vacation plan was approved. (Informal)

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Support your Bargaining Team as they fight for you!