

# Eye On The Board

The Salinas Valley Federation of Teachers  
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## Board Highlights November 9, 2004 Reported by Mariann Klinger

### Project talks turn to best of options

The Taj Mahal in theaters and pools slipped out of the reach of district planners, but no one wants to write off first class options for the Salinas High Performing Arts Center just yet. If the district can figure out where to get the money, the SHS project could become a tower of theatrical presentation in the community.

And while the best in theater seemed on everyone's mind, downsizing dominated the discussion of the pool complex at Everett Alvarez.

Designer Susan Bailey left trustees nearly breathless with the array of options typical of the "best theaters." Bailey pressed for elements important to good theater, but beyond the scope of the bond monies already financing extensive renovations in the tower building. The extras come with an approximate \$1.3 million price tag, according to Business Manager **James Earhart**.

Because steel construction has begun on the theater renovations it would be cheaper for the board to choose the "best theater" options now, said Bailey. She recommended automated rigging for drapery and scenery, an automated stage lift that would extend the stage and allow a portion of it to move from pit to stage level, and a light bridge that

would focus lighting on the stage for greater depth.

While trustees were left to puzzle theater funding possibilities, Earhart's figures for pool maintenance put a damper on plans for an Olympic quality aquatic center. The business manager said putting in a 50-meter pool could run the district \$4.2 million for the project and \$250,000 for annual upkeep.

The bond money would cover the project, according to Earhart, but the upkeep represents "a huge ongoing commitment. It's a big deal," he said.

Some trustees struggled with the idea that the complex might have to be reduced to a 33-meter pool, while others worried over upkeep costs. "I would enjoy something like this and my children would too," said Trustee **Kathryn Ramirez**. "The north side deserves something like this," she added.

But board President **Rich Foster** said the issue wasn't one of south versus north, but about what the district can afford to maintain for the students. "There'll be no Taj Mahal at the Salinas High theater, nor the aquatic center."

Earhart reminded trustees that the city is planning a \$10 million upgrade to the community center swimming facilities at Sherwood Park.

Everett Alvarez Principal Joe Rice put the issue in perspective. "Do I want a 50-meter pool? Certainly. But I would be happy with a 33-meter pool. He listed a good teaching area,

space for student activities and community access as issues important to him.

The project plan must win trustees approval soon, if it is to move forward. Earhart said the downsized pool would not create a problem for the plan.

Trustee **Art Gilbert** asked Earhart to present the cost for a downsized project at the next meeting.

## Math numbers don't add up for teachers

Math is not always about numbers, but about teachers making change. The change, according to Curriculum Director **John Favarro**, could mean students come to the district well-versed in elementary math.

In a report to the board, Favarro said the district's high school teachers often must teach fourth and fifth grade work before going on to algebra. He said efforts by the district, along with a variety of programs and grants, could bring about the needed change.

The district's ability to articulate with local feeder elementary schools may help the lower grade teachers to support high school math needs, he said.

District teachers involved in collaboratives that share lessons and classroom practices expect to work with the feeder-school teachers in January, according to math resource teacher **Vicki Lauderbach**.

Grant monies already support math collaboratives at the high school level. Many of the elementary schools expect to get grants that allow for similar teacher collaboration in the near future.

Lauderbach and **Cindy Cardinelli**, also a math resource teacher in the district, told the board that the grants allowed district teachers to get special training, participate in retreats to share teaching strategies and get important curriculum support materials.

About 100 math teachers attended a math collaboration institute last summer at California State University, Monterey Bay. Teachers developed curriculum and testing materials at the institute and throughout the year in the collaboratives, according to Cardinelli.

She said a steering committee of teachers is working to revise the curriculum guide in algebra and create curriculum for new math courses.

The grants allow for the development of the collaboratives – a time set aside for teachers to work together, said Lauderbach.

The report indicated that since benchmark tests and collaboratives have been in place, CAHSEE math pass rates and proficiency levels have increased. In 2002 about 22 percent passed the state test, by 2004 nearly 68 percent of the students taking the test passed it. In addition, math proficiency levels have increased, though not as dramatically as the CAHSEE pass rate. In 2002, slightly more than 15 percent of the district's math students registered proficient or advanced. By 2004, that number increased to slightly more than 26 percent at proficient or advanced levels in math.

## Numbers crunch indicate slowed student increase

By 2012 as many as 900 students may be looking for a desk at one of the district's four high schools. But although Salinas and Alisal high schools are already bursting at the seams, the district may not have to discuss a new high school for at least a decade.

Demographers predict a slight decrease in student population for the near future. The most significant growth in the number of high school students is more likely to occur after 2012 when planned housing developments could account for as many as 2500 to 3000 additional students. The 900 additional students coming to the district over the next eight years would come from the lower

schools and the Monte Bella development already under construction. Monte Bella, across the street from Alisal High, is expected to add about 200 students, according to **Jeanne Gobalet** of Lapkoff and Gobalet Demographic Research Inc.

Gobalet presented a variety of options and crunched numbers through 2030 in a report to the board, describing two possible scenarios for a new high school.

One scenario would put the new high school south of Salinas, which would put the facility in the area of Washington Union and Speckles.

Both of the south school communities have long sought to develop a high school, either on their own or by unifying with Salinas High.

Scenario two would place the new facility in the northeast beyond Boronda Road, near the area of planned future housing developments.

Despite housing growth expectations, consultants favored the southern site for a fifth high school and recommended the Boronda area for a sixth school. Gobalet said the northern area wasn't the best choice, because student numbers won't increase in the area until construction on the proposed 10,000 housing units is underway. She used ethnic balance as an additional reason for putting the facility in the south of the city.

If the new facility is built in the south, demographics at AHS change little from the current 93 percent Hispanic to 92 percent Hispanic, but other schools would range from 55 percent Hispanic at SHS to 77 percent Hispanic at EAHS. The new high school in this scenario would include a 69 percent Hispanic population.

If the facility were built in the north AHS would remain at 93 percent Hispanic and the new high school would enroll a 95 percent Hispanic student population. Other schools would range from a 38 percent Hispanic

population at SHS to a 71 percent Hispanic group of students at NSHS.

In any case no decisions need be made in the near future, but, said Gobalet, the district should be watching what's happening in the Salinas area elementary schools. What happens there, she added, "foreshadows what will happen at the high schools."

### **Consent Agenda**

Trustees voted 5 to 0 to approve the agreement for inspection of the restrooms and drinking fountains projects at Washington and El Sausal middle schools. REI and Associates is to conduct the inspection.

By a vote of 4 to 1 trustees approved DMC Construction Company bid to remodel the restrooms and drinking fountains at the two middle schools. Ramirez opposed the DMC bid. Sandra Villarreal Ocampo and Phillip Tabera were absent.

### **Board Policies**

#### **(Adopted)**

- BP 4052 – Salary checks and Deductions
- BP 4055 – Tax Sheltered Annuities
- BP 4311.1/4411.1 – Posting of Vacancies
- BP 4331.7 – Administrative Interns
- BP 4344/4444 – Complaints
- BP 4352 – Comp Time/Overtime for Confidential/Supervisory Management Staff
- BP 4354/4454 – Health and Welfare Benefits
- BP 4360/4460 – Leaves and Vacations
- BP 4361.24/4461.24 – Administratively Approved Short Term Leaves
- BP 4361.4/4461.4 – Health and Hardship Leaves
- BP 4361.5/4461.5 – Extended Personal Illness/Injury Leave
- BP 4413 – Assignments
- BP 4413.1 – Hours of Employment

#### **(Rescinded)**

- BP 4412.43 – Annual Physical Exams
- BP 4412.1 – Multi-Year Contracts
- BP 4317.43 – Hearing
- BP 4317.41 – Just Cause

BP 4317.42 – Disciplinary Action  
BP 4317.4 – Reassignment  
BP 4317.3 – Layoff/Rehire  
AR 4354 – Insurance, Health and Welfare Benefits  
BP 4361/4461 – Long Term Leaves  
BP 4361.22/4461.22 – Legal and Civic Duties  
BP 4361.23/4461.23 – Bereavement  
BP 4361.25/4461.25 – Personal Necessity  
BP 4361.3 – Long Term Leaves (First Reading)  
BP 0100 – Philosophy  
BP 0200 – Goals for the School District  
BP 0410 – Non-Discrimination in District  
Programs and Activities  
BP 0420 – School-Plans/Site Councils  
BP 0420.1 – School-Based Program  
Coordination  
BP 0420.3 – Student Motivation and  
Maintenance Program  
BP 0430 – Comprehensive Local Plan for  
Special Education  
BP 0450 – Comprehensive Safety Plan  
BP 0510 – School Accountability Report  
Card  
BP 0520 – Intervention for Under-performing  
Schools  
BP 0520.2 – Title I Program Improvement  
Schools

## Teachers' Letter Forum

Teachers are invited to send letters-to-the-editor style comments or questions about newsletter topics or other concerns of general interest to the SVFT membership.

Letters will be printed on a space available basis. Letter writers should include a name and phone number with any submission.

All letter writers must be identified. Letters may be edited for space considerations.

Letters can be sent through the district mail to M. Klinger at Alisal High School or by email to [mklinger@salinas.k12.ca.us](mailto:mklinger@salinas.k12.ca.us)