

# Eye On The Board

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## Board Highlights November 8, 2005

Reported by Mariann Klinger

### Budget committee set to begin work

The Performance Based Budget process is underway, according to **James Earhart**, the district's chief business officer.

Earhart said developers and accountants are meeting and making presentations. In addition, the calendar is set and committee members, including several replacements, are in place. El Sausal Teacher **Jennifer Galeria**, El Sausal Principal **Sylvia Echeverri** and SVFT President **John Nolan** are to replace HMS Teacher **Chuck Geiger**, La Paz Principal **Steve Oliver** and SHS Teacher **Phil Moore** respectively.

### Fund-raising arm needs new members

The district's fund-raising arm is looking for new recruits from among the ranks of staff and parents, according to **Kalah Bumba**, foundation president.

Bumba said the group is working on short-term and long-term goals and is currently reviewing the process of awarding min-grants. She said scholarships for SAT training and enrichment are under consideration.

### Consent Agenda

The following was passed by a vote of 6-0: (**Sandra Villarreal-OCampo** was out of the room for the vote)  
a surplus vehicle sale of items either in poor condition or deemed obsolete by the Transportation Department. Shop Supervisor **Terry Milleman** offered a list of vehicles.

### Lack of subs is site topic

*(Reporter's Note: The impetus for this article came from a public comment during open board meeting times. Interviews were conducted separate from board meetings.)*

In-lieus have reached crisis proportions, said Nolan at an earlier meeting, firing what may well be an opening salvo to contract talks.

Nolan was responding to reaction from teachers across the district regarding what they say is a barrage of in-lieus.

The call for in-lieus "got a lot worse a lot faster than any other year," said HMS Teacher, **Michael Carothers**.

The district lists about 150 substitutes, but the need may be close to one-third that amount on a daily basis. While sub calls are done as an automatic service, **Jazmin Martinez** kicks it into place again when an absence goes unfilled. Martinez said on a recent day 46 teachers were out and eight posts went unfilled. Subs on the list were called, but she said they would be called

again. She recycles the process twice during the morning of the unfilled absence, beginning at 5:30 a.m.

In the past, the pressure for teachers to use their prep period to in-lieu (substitute) for absent teachers came later in the school year, with an increase in teacher absence, Carothers said.

The pressure seemed to come early this year and teachers across the district admit to hiding out and ignoring the phone in an effort to preserve a prep period.

“I need the prep. I can’t function without it,” said EAHS teacher **John Williamson-Page**.

At EAHS the principal is on the intercom every morning calling for in-lieus, he said, adding teachers are complaining. “It becomes very stressful.”

Teachers’ prep period offers time to plan lessons, grade student work, call parents and make copies. Many guard the time jealously and most say they feel it’s in jeopardy.

Any many express concern for taking the time of their colleagues as a fill in for an absence. “I don’t expect my colleagues to come in,” said Williamson-Page, adding that he takes special pains to “minimize the amount of stress” a colleague might experience as an in-lieu.

Some teachers blame a lack of substitute teachers for the problem. “Obviously there’s a sub shortage,” said Williamson-Page.

Teachers point the finger at low pay, poor recruiting, loose contract language and possibly a reluctance on the part of some teachers to take on the older students.

“Some say we need to pay subs better. I don’t know if that’s the answer,” said Williamson-Page.

Subs can get better money at Salinas City, according to NSHS Teacher **David Doris**. He said the call for in-lieus at his site seems constant.

Moore, now SVFT’s liaison to the substitute union, said he heard that Gonzales and King City districts pay more and offer subs mileage too. “If you can make more money somewhere else and don’t have to deal with the behavior issue, what would you do?” he asked.

Moore, too, worried that a would-be substitute teacher resource – California State University at Monterey Bay – seemed to turn out more elementary teachers, where students are “cute and eager. High school,” he said, “is scary.”

Moore, who served as SVFT president in the recent past, said teachers could turn down the request to in-lieu. “The simplest thing to do is to say no,” he added.

But many teachers believe they must take a turn. “We just do them,” said Doris.

Both Doris and Moore suggested the district hire a full-time substitute for each site and consider paying them more.

**(Associate Superintendent Alejandro Hogan declined to be interviewed in person for this article and did not answer a list of e-mailed questions on the topic.)**