

Eye On The Board

The Salinas Valley Federation of Teachers

21 West Laurel Drive Suite 61, Salinas, CA 93926-3434

Telephone: 831 -442-8234 ~ Fax: 831 -442-8563 ~ E-mail: president@svft.net

Board Highlights October 23, 2007 by Mariann Klinger

New sub system wins praise, fills absences easily

So far the new substitute management system gets high marks for efficiency and accessibility, despite the higher initial cost. It's even getting credit for curing a long-time substitute shortage.

Aesop online cost the district \$10,000 to subscribe to the online service, twice the annual cost of last year's company managed system.

But, Associate Superintendent **Alejandro Hogan** said the system represents a cost saver in the long run. Right away school secretaries report much early morning time saved and teacher absences readily filled.

Furthermore, no additional equipment is needed, he said. The previous system required eight phone lines and a designated computer.

Substitutes even seem willing to take jobs for part of the day when posted online, said SVFT Co-President **Peggy Carroll**.

Hogan said the phone and web-based service allows substitutes to choose their own jobs, leave notes to teachers and keep track of their calendars all on line. Teachers, he said, can leave lesson plans and notes for substitutes.

Terri Riggs, SHS secretary, praised the system, saying there's no longer a need for school secretaries to listen to a 15-minute report each morning and begin to make calls to fill in remaining absences.

Substitutes say they like it too, she added.

Carroll said teachers have only one question – How do they request a particular substitute. Currently, secretaries can make the request for a particular substitute for a teacher.

Training for use of the system is minimal.

Substitutes phone number represents an individual's account. The system keeps track of individual substitute assignments and allows substitute to

peruse a list of dates and times of absences in advance.

In addition, a phone service begins calling for daily substitutes the night before an assignment and early morning prior to an assignment.

Summer session tests show student gains

A summer time extension of the benchmarks shows student growth during the intersession, according to a report.

Most students in English, geometry, and seventh and tenth grades science demonstrated greater subject matter proficiency at the end of summer courses, than at the beginning of the class.

The data stems from pretests and post tests given for the first time in the 2007 summer session. The tests match the school year pattern of benchmarks, testing students on knowledge acquired in the class. More students demonstrated advanced or proficient knowledge in the post test, said Director of Curriculum **John Favero**.

Most of the students attending summer session had already failed the class. The focus of summer session is remediation, according to the report.

All of the district schools offered summer classes to 3611 high school students and 1128 middle school students. High schools increased enrollment by 614 students and middle schools decreased by 304 students compared to the previous year.

At the close of the session a joint graduation was held for 53 students at AHS.

The YES program at MTHS provided job training for 100 students and more than 360 students attended classes with the Migrant Program. More than 500 high school students earned credits at the district's ROP this summer.

Trustees call for plan to alter service hours for expelled students

Trustees directed administrators to develop a plan for community service hours for expelled students. Trustees called on Director of Pupil Personnel Services **Scott McColgan** to return with a recommendation with reduced hours of community service as well as alternatives for expelled students. Currently, the district imposes a requirement of 150 community service hours on expelled high school students and 75 hours on middle school students as part of a rehabilitation plan. But, trustees say that in some cases the hours become an obstacle to returning to class.

The district is the harshest in terms of community service hours, said Trustee **Kathryn Ramirez**. She suggested making a distinction between violent and non-violent offenses, giving more community service hours to students expelled for violence. Superintendent **Roger Anton** said the district would review the requirement and assign students with less time off campus to fewer community service hours.

McColgan noted that many times non-profit organizations decline to accept student volunteers who have been expelled from school. "The problem is finding placement for expelled students, immature students. . . . We have to tell the non-profit when we are placing a student that committed a crime," he said.

McColgan said that many districts keep community service hours down to about 25 for expelled students.

Trustee **Lila Cann** expressed concern about students having time on their hands while out of classes. "I don't want to be too lenient," she added.

Trustee **Phillip Tabera** agreed, calling for alternatives to service hours.

Board briefs

Call for fiscal report policy

Trustee **Anne Brown** called on the district to establish a written policy calling for the chief business officer to report directly to the board about financial matters.

Brown spoke of troubled fiscal times in the past and the importance of keeping the board informed of finances.

Currently, CBO James Earhart makes frequent reports of the district's financial status to the board, but no formal policy exists requiring the reports.

Earhart is expected to retire this year.

"We're a good district," said Brown, "I hate to see (the practice lost)."

Tighten up on all food sales

Trustee **Margaret Serna-Bonetti** suggested an even more comprehensive policy regarding outside food sales on district campuses.

Proposed policy regulates the selling of non-nutritious foods and beverages at school sites. In addition, school parties are limited to no more than one beverage per party or celebration that does not meet nutritional guidelines. Furthermore, policy calls for such parties to be conducted with a two-hour space before lunch and one-hour space after lunch.

But food sales of foods and beverages that fail to meet nutritional guidelines after school hours can be conducted up to a half hour before classes and a half hour after school.

Serna-Bonetti suggested putting nutritional criteria on food sales at after-hours school events.

Employee cell phone use out

According to a proposed policy change, employee use of cell phones or other mobile communications devices for personal use are prohibited during duty hours.

The policy states that use of cell phones is limited to emergency situations or work breaks.

The statement was added to the employee use of technology policy 4040.

Security systems top list of repairs, projects continue

Security systems have been upgraded, or added to all district school sites over the summer, along with continued maintenance and construction projects.

All high schools have multi-camera systems some with desktop monitoring and others with monitoring stations. At Alisal an upgrade put a 64-color camera system in place with a central monitoring station

near the school's library. EAHS now has 41 cameras, including some added to the pool area. The NSHS system includes 51 cameras and desktop monitoring. SHS underwent an upgrade that phased in digital video recorders, and totals 32 cameras, but awaits an entirely new system.

At the middle schools more cameras are being added, black and white cameras are being upgraded to color and VCR-based systems are being replaced by digital systems.

ROP, SAS, and MTHS do not have active security systems.

District staff continues maintenance projects to repair, replace and enhance school sites, while construction projects remodel and modernize campuses.

In a report on summer maintenance, Operations Manager **Jerry Stratton** told trustees that district crews:

AHS – renovated natural turf fields, landscaped the Williams Street area and a walkway between buildings.

EAHS – reconverted portables for use as a professional development center and built batting cages.

NSHS – Fenced staff and handicapped parking lot.

SHS – removed unsafe structures, fenced stadium areas and built theater dressing rooms.

ESMS – installed fencing, converted a storage area to a snack bar and renovated a parking lot

HMS – installed a new greenhouse and a closed circuit TV system in all classrooms.

LPMS – added security fencing and rebuilt a portable.

WMS – repainted playground areas and restored a kiln

ROP – remodeled the kitchen

Planning Manager **Karen Luna** presented a power point update on construction projects carried out over the past year.

ESMS – roofing with non-hazardous, recyclable materials, hall, cafeteria, new kitchen and 1128 plastic lockers in the exterior area (cost \$1,711,594)

WMS – exposed and refinished hardwood floors, replaced 449 exterior lockers and replaced water lines (cost \$535,272)

AHS – Modernization 2, remodeled cafeteria, put in new classrooms, new textbook shelves, parking lot in back, painted lockers, new doors and windows in the 600s building (cost \$7,415,000)

EAHS – multi-use building added, along with locker bay (cost \$2,125,000)

SHS – multi-use building added, new windows in front of the building (cost \$2,395,000)

Maintenance projects were funded by deferred maintenance funds, Special Reserve, Safety Grant, Measure F and the Cafeteria Fund.

Construction projects were funded through Measure F, deferred maintenance fund, developer fees and special reserve fund.

Board policies

(First reading)

BP 4040 – Employee Use of Technology

BP 4019.1 – Civil and Legal Rights

BP 4112.21 – Interns

BP 4117.3 – Personnel Reduction

BP 4131.1 – Beginning Teacher Support/Induction

BP 4301 – Administrative Staff Organization

BP 4315/4415 – Evaluation/Supervision

BP 4412.1 – Contracts

BP 1230 – School-Connected Organizations

BP 3314 – Payment for Goods and Services

BP 3400 – Management of District Accounts

BP 3452 – Student Activity Funds

BP 3511 – Energy and Water Management

BP 3554 – Other Food Sales

BP 5030 – Students Wellness

(Adopted)

BP 0520 – Intervention for Underperforming Schools

BP 1113 – District and School Web Sites

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 by email to mklinger44@Yahoo.com or to president@svft.net