

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: presidents@svft.net ~ www.svft.net

Board Highlights February 10, 2009

Reported by Mariann Klinger

Settled dispute Could bring \$1.1 million

Trustees agreed to a settlement of a 14-year dispute with the state that could bring the district more than \$1.1 million over the next seven years.

If other school boards follow suit, "it could mean a big win for us," said Trustee **Kathryn Ramirez**. "We'll see some money soon," she predicted.

Eighty-five percent of all districts, county offices of education and special education local plan areas must agree to the resolution.

The settlement would provide the district with about \$189,853 (\$14.85 ADA) annually for a six-year period beginning in 2011. The money serves as a reimbursement for behavioral intervention programs over federal mandates provided by school districts.

The settlement includes \$520 million in reimbursement and \$65 million for ongoing costs to be shared by all state districts. In return districts agree to waive rights to file further claims.

Trustees say No more cuts in education

"We're solvent. No lay offs this year," Superintendent **Roger Anton** told trustees.

Nevertheless, the board proceeded to pass a resolution opposing further education cuts at the state level. The resolution is to be sent to the legislature and the governor.

Other boards are taking similar steps, according to Anton.

There is a major concern that the state could attempt to balance its budget on the backs of students, said the administration.

California already ranks 47th out of 50 states in per pupil spending and stands at \$2,400 per pupil spending below the national average.

Administrators said further cuts could jeopardize quality education. District school programs reflect continuous student improvement, they said, adding the budget should not be balanced at the expense of students.

After-school programs face funding cuts

New guidelines from the city could cut after-school program currently funded by Measure V.

The Measure V committee voted to cut the schools share of the funds by half, said Trustee **Margaret Serna-Bonetti**. “They can do anything they want,” she said of the committee members.

The new guidelines “are making it harder to use the money for kids,” said Serna-Bonetti. The city wants to use V funds to pay for police officers, she added.

Ramirez said the city and committee members were not paying enough attention to the schools.

“We need to let them know, we don’t like what they’re doing,” said Trustee **Phillip Tabera**.

Since 2006, the district has used Measure V funds to offer fine arts programs, particularly at its middle schools.

Measure V funds go to the city, which in the past agreed to partner the after-school programs with the district.

District facilities, transportation and staff are used to operate the programs. “We are the recreation department for people over 12,” said Chief Business Officer **James Earhart**.

“The city is grabbing for what it can. It’s in survival mode, too,” said Anton.

The city’s new proposals call for the use of city staff—a change that could eliminate professional teachers. Funding would also be used for community-wide camps and vacation period programs.

Last year’s Measure V allocation of \$115, 520 provided music, dance, guitar and visual arts at ESMS; choir, drama and Balle Folklorico at HMS; art, music, dance and intramurals at WMS. In addition, the district used the funds to offer a knitting class at the community school; an African drumming and dance classes at AHS; Balle Folklorico at EAHS and NSHS.

Board Policies

(First reading)

BP 3100 – Budget

BP 3460 – Financial Reports and Accountability

Consent Agenda

The board passed the following by a vote of 7-0:

- Increase the amount of the HMS gym repair project by \$172,936. The additional funds will pay for the replacement of rotting roof ducts.
- Pay Kasavan Architects \$27,000 for the continued renovation at AHS. The funds are to renovate a classroom, making it useable for eight counseling offices. The Kasavan firm did the modernization project at AHS.