
Oroville Secondary Teachers Association

TEACHER TALK

<http://www.ostahome.org>

All articles are submitted by OSTA unit members. Submit them to
Larry Cobbler at LPHS E-mail lcobbler@ouhsd.org or Linda Draper at LPHS E-mail ldraper@ouhsd.org

November 15, 2007

OSTA - CTA - NEA

Volume 19 Issue 4

Executive Board for 2007-2008

(Meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month at The Depot Restaurant at 3:30 PM)

President	Larry Cobbler (LP)	Vice-President	Steve King (O)	Secretary	Leanna Felardo (O)
Treasurer	Steve Wolf (O)	Policy	Rodger Townsend (O)	Political Action.....	Lisa Avila (LP)
Research.....	Shane Walter (LP)	Publicity.....	Cobbler & Draper (LP)	LPHS Site Rep.....	Vaughn & Bacior (LP)
OHS Site Rep.....	Carol Anderson (O)	PHS Site Rep	Scott Martin (PHS)	Grievance.....	Erika Hughes (LP)
Membership	Nannette Walker (LP)	Adult School Rep.....	Susan Hoopes (OAS)	CCHS Site Rep. Mike	Caratenuto (CCHS)
Board Rep.	Bret Lawson (LP)	Negotiator 07-09.....	Steve King (O)	Negotiator 06-08 (H) ..	Scott Martin (PHS)
Negotiator 07-09	Teisha Hase (O)	Negotiator 06-08.....	Erika Hughes (LP)	Negotiator 06-08.....	Nannette Walker (LP)

INTEREST BASED BARGAINING (I.B.B.) BREAKS DOWN – LARRY COBBLER

Lunchtime site meetings were held at LPHS on Wednesday 11/7 and OHS on Thursday 11/8. Another meeting for all satellite sites was scheduled for Tuesday 11/13 at 7:00 AM at PHS. It was felt by the negotiation team that important information needed to be disseminated to our unit members regarding the breakdown in the IBB negotiation session of Wednesday, Nov. 7. COLA, duty-free preps, unfair labor practices by the district, a total breakdown in the Interest Based Bargaining process, and how to respond to these issues were discussed. Unfortunately, there were a number of unit members that did not attend any of the three meetings that were scheduled, and many of the unit members present wanted more time and more voices to be heard in these discussions. It is very important that all unit members be informed of the current negotiations situation, so please check with your site rep if you were unable to attend any of the meetings. The OSTA bargaining team needs your support and input.

The district has since issued a demand to bargain. We will see what comes from this next session. We will very likely have a general membership meeting very soon. Even though there are many after-school activities, it would be wise to try to schedule these for a later time in the day so you can be informed of the situation and have input about what to do next. Unfortunately, after-school meetings have always proven to be the best way of getting the majority of our unit members together. We held a before school meeting earlier this week for all the satellite sites and nobody attended.

NOVEMBER 2007 TEACHER OF THE MONTH - BY NANNETTE WALKER AND REBECCA HOWARD

- ✓ I would like to nominate Tammy Boehme as Teacher of the Month. Tammy was the teacher who notified authorities that there was a student/person with a gun on campus. She managed to take control of her classroom AND call the report in. She was the only teacher to actually call in the incident. She might very well have saved the lives of many students.

Tammy is also an accomplished teacher. She has one of the highest pass rates for AP Calculus in the district in all AP classes. She also makes math fun for the lower level children.

All things considered, I am proud to nominate Tammy Boehme for TOM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nannette Walker

- ✓ I would like to nominate Tammy Boehme for Teacher of the Month. Tammy has been the math department chair, digital high school coordinator, WASC Committee Chairman, AP Calculus teacher and more. This year however she stepped up to take the lead and be the WASC Coordinator over all the committees. She truly tries to find out what Las Plumas High School needs to complete the report this year. To top it all, she is the Co-Coordinator for the Chico State Math project or NSTIR that many new and veteran math teachers are participants. This is a five year commitment to creating a math community of leaders and support, in which Tammy helps create professional development seminars and discussion meetings, strengthening the math and teaching skills for other teachers. Tammy is also a fountain of ideas for a teacher like myself with a challenging sixth period class. I know she has probably been awarded TOM before, but she continues to be an example and leader at Las Plumas High School. I am proud to be able to work with such a person.

Rebecca Howard

NOVEMBER 2007 FRIEND OF EDUCATION - BY CYNTHIA SLATTERY AND JOHN CUNY

(The executive board felt awarding two FOEs this month would be best)

- ✓ I would like to nominate Pastor Dennis Day of The Church of the Nazarene for the November Friend of Education for housing the parents and students during the Las Plumas lockdown. It was nice to have an emergency placement offered so close to school and on such a short notice. *Cynthia Slattery*
- ✓ My name is John Cuny and I am the ASB Activities Director at Challenge Charter High School. We are a small school of some 140 students. It is often a challenge for us to plan and carry out meaningful activities due to a small pool of students, staff, and parents.

It often falls upon dedicated parents to spend time and resources in order to give the students at Challenge Charter High School some of the opportunities that they would otherwise not have. Such parents should be recognized.

As the Activities Director of the Associated Student Body of Challenge Charter High School, I would like to nominate Joanna Behunin and Alan Jackson for their dedication and service to our school. They have chaperoned numerous dances and helped to decorate as well as staying late to clean up. Most recently they spent a long rainy Sunday selling items to the public at the 1st Challenge Charter High School fund raising yard sale. We here at Challenge Charter High School are indebted to Alan and Joanna and would like to show our thanks by nominating them for "Friend of Education." *Thank you, John Cuny*

WINTER FLING UPDATE – BY ERIKA HUGHES

Our Winter Fling this year will be held at The Graduate in Chico at 6:30 on Thursday, Dec. 20. If members would like to send me suggestions for the HORS D'OEUVRES table, please send them to ehughes@ouhsd.org. I will try to include all suggestions if possible. There will be a set menu like last year, but we may be able to include regular menu items, if particular guests don't want the special menu items. I also will be able to know more as we get closer to the time; invitations will be sent out and RSVP's will be due earlier this year for a more organized plan.

PARTIAL DAY COVERAGE FOR SCHOOL-RELATED BUSINESS – BY LARRY COBBLER

Past practice is what is used in mediation and arbitration settlements when there are contractual disputes. Even though there may be contractual language for a certain procedure, the unit members and the district are to follow the contract. This language could be overruled by a judge if deemed that past practice is different than the language.

This issue has come up since the administration at OHS told its teachers that they were responsible for getting someone to cover their classes to attend an IEP meeting. OSTA brought it to the administrations attention that it is not the teachers' responsibility to get their own class coverage for school-related activities. The OHS administration understood and withdrew that directive.

In an effort to strengthen OSTA's position, all unit members need to understand that by getting coverage yourself for school-related functions, you are in effect weakening the contract language and creating a possible past practice situation. OSTA cannot have some people following the contract and others not. It is not OSTA's position to tell a unit member that he or she can not get their own coverage if they choose to do so, however, all unit members need to understand the ramifications if this becomes or is seen as past practice. It should be done sparingly and not all the time.

The contract says that when partial day coverage is needed, it must be pre-approved by the site administration. The only time it is the teachers' responsibility to get their own coverage is if they are going to be gone for non-emergency personal reasons like a doctor's appoint.

School business and partial day coverage both have to be pre-approved by the site administrator. Send the site administrator your special requests and lesson plans for the partial day sub coverage for all school business, and then let them forward this information to the person in charge of assigning the comp periods to other unit members. If you like you could tell the site administrator that you would be happy to forward this information on to the person responsible for assigning comp period coverage.

Just remember that to a judge, past practice may have more weight than written contract language; we need to be careful about what we do in an effort to be obliging and cooperative. This is not a matter of being a thorn in someone's side, but rather a very important part of following the contract and protecting the rights of all unit members.

CTA MEMBER BENEFITS AT WORK - BY LARRY COBBLER

(The following excerpt was in a CTA communication sent to all CTA Chapter Presidents.)

The Disaster Relief Fund is a special fund designed for members who have experienced significant losses due to disasters in California. Members who have experienced significant losses from these wildfires are eligible to receive up to \$1,500 grants. Applications and brochures are available to download from the CTA website at www.cta.org.

If you or other members would like to help, you may contribute to the Fund by sending a check made out to: CTA Disaster Relief Fund, 1705 Murchison Drive, Burlingame, CA 94010. You can also contribute through CTA's authorized payroll deduction plan. Contact the Membership-Accounting Department at (650) 552,5278 or membership@cta.org to receive a payroll deduction form.

CTA/NEA COMMUNICATIONS- BY LARRY COBBLER

The following CTA/NEA communications were received during the last month. For more information on any of these items, you may access them at www.cta.org.

1. Treasurer's Handbook 2007-2008
2. NEA Local Presidents Release Time Program
3. Strengthening the Bond Between General and Special Education
4. CTA Disaster Relief Fund Assistance for Members Affected by Southern California Fires
5. 2008 Del A. Weber Scholarship for Dependent Children Attending Continuation High School/Alternative Education Programs
6. 2008 L. Gordon Bittle Memorial Scholarship for Student CTA (SCTA)
7. 2008 CTA Scholarship for Dependent Children
8. 2008 CTA Scholarship for Members
9. 2008 CTA César E. Chávez Memorial Education Awards Program--Group Project
10. 2008 CTA César E. Chávez Memorial Education Awards Program--Individual Project
11. CTA Board Briefs September 10-11, 2007
12. Regional UniServ Staff—Option 1, Region 4 San Diego Coastal UniServ Teacher Association
13. Regional UniServ Staff—Option 1, Region 1 Oakland Education Association

TELL IT TO TEACHER TALK

This is your chance to express yourself anonymously. Names will not be published unless requested. Comments can be positive or negative in nature. However, this will require your time to e-mail Larry Cobbler at lcobbler@ouhsd.org or Linda Draper at ldraper@ouhsd.org. Please take the time to send comments about any union topic you wish, or you can share thoughts on any topic of interest to other teachers.

- ✓ Two sections of English at Oroville High didn't have a real teacher this year until seven weeks after school started. This violates the Williams Act which says, "There should be no teacher vacancies or misassignments as defined in Education Code 35186(h)(2) and (3). . . ."

"Teacher vacancy means a position to which a single designated certificated employee has not been assigned at the beginning of the year for an entire year . . ."

Our inexperienced interim superintendent probably made this error without considering how he would have felt had one of his children been stuck in an English class with five different subs and no assignments or standards taught for most of the first quarter. What a waste for these students! One class consisted of eleventh graders, and the other of virtual non-speakers --beginning ELD. Imagine how

confusing this situation must have been for them.

The Williams Act was also violated when sections weren't created until three weeks after school started.

This is especially frustrating when everyone knew last April that the school needed seven to eight sections more than it was given. The interim superintendent withheld them.

For the students' and the district's sakes, I pray that the school board will begin to pay attention to what goes on in the schools and in the classroom. Students don't deserve to be treated like abandoned vehicles in order to save money. The Williams Act was written to protect these kids.

I heard the district lost \$180,000 because it broke the law regarding student numbers in the Independent Study program. Can our district be fined for breaking the Williams Act?

Can't anyone do anything about all of these mistakes? Can the union grieve this? Can't the board members give some guidance to the interim superintendent? *Anonymous*

- ✓ The following link will take you to a free website for grading rubrics that has endless possibilities and can save your rubrics online. It also has Spanish-language rubrics. It can be used for anything from posters or mobiles to short stories, for pairs, groups and individuals.
<http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php> .

Another good rubric website is <http://www.uwstout.edu/soe/profdev/secondaryteamworkrubric.html> . It's got all the key aspects of self and peer evaluation for group work! *Linda Rodgers*

OSTA WEBSITE ADDRESS - BY LARRY COBBLER

You can now find all kinds of OSTA information at the OSTA web site: www.ostahome.org. Larry Cobbler, our OSTA president, is the webmaster.

UNIT MEMBER COMMUNICATION - BY LARRY COBBLER

All unit members need to communicate with each other and follow the contract. Grievances need to be pursued whether you as an individual agree or disagree with the issue. There are also timelines that need to be followed in the grievance process. If we all try to do a better job of communicating, we might resolve issues sooner.

OSTA NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION FOR 2007-2008 – BY LARRY COBBLER

This issue of the OSTA's TEACHER TALK newsletter was distributed by E-mail. If you did not receive it, send me an E-mail (lcobbler@ouhsd.org) with your name, school, and correct E-mail address you wish to use. Past issues of OSTA's TEACHER TALK newsletter may also be viewed at www.ostahome.org .