

PAEA BUZZZ

SEP 2009

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PALO ALTO EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

Wellness

Allye Mullins is heading up the new Wellness Program. This program arose from a need to improve our staff health, relieve stress and stem the upward trend of our health premiums. Allye has lots of great ideas and will be sharing them with you through the Buzzz, the CSEA Newsletter and the herald. She needs Wellness reps for this program. If you are interested in serving as a conduit of information for your site please email Allye at amullins@pausd.org

In the meantime here are some individual or site based ideas:

- Fill up a reusable water bottle before school, at recess/brunch and at lunch and keep it on your desk
- Wear sunscreen everyday even if you don't teach outside
- Sign up to bring HEALTHY snacks for the staff room instead of or in addition to treats
- If you do not already have a salad club or HEALTHY potluck club...start one
- Other staff club ideas: Healthy cooking (test and share healthy recipes with other staff members), Walking, Hiking, Running or Biking clubs
- When possible have walk and talk grade level or department meetings
- Find a staff or neighbor workout buddy who would like to workout with you just before or just after work
- Start using a pedometer and try to walk 10,000 steps per day!

NEGOTIATIONS

Negotiations began on Sept. 9th. As usual Article VI - Compensation and Benefits is open. As well as Term, Association Rights, Hours, Class Size and the appendices.

Some rough numbers to keep in mind:

- property tax growth estimated at 2% = -\$2 million
- health premiums increased by 6% to 8% = \$1.2 million
- cuts from the state revenue for 09-10 = -\$4.4 million

The district would like increases to medical co-pays to bring down the increased health benefit costs.

Class Size Reduction Under Attack On All Fronts

The District will go to the voters next spring to renew the parcel tax which expires in 2012. Currently the parcel tax brings in 9.2 million dollars to pay for class size reduction in **grades 4, 5, core at 6, English and math at 7 & 8 and English at 10**. This 9.2 million no longer covers the cost of the program. A renewal and expansion of the parcel tax is necessary to keep the classes below their pre-parcel tax levels of 28 to 30 and higher.

In addition Palo Alto's property tax growth estimates came in very low this August and are in danger of hitting 0% growth for next year. Should that happen the upper grades class size reduction program would be suspended.

State funded class size reduction at **K through 3 and 9th grade English and math** is also under siege due to the woeful state of the California economy. The state eased the penalties for exceeding the 20 to 1 ratio and most districts are taking advantage of the looser rules as they tighten their belts this year and next. Some districts have decided to end CSR entirely.

Palo Alto remains committed to smaller class sizes. We have seen the benefits firsthand of smaller groups for the students during the past ten years.

The U.S. Department of Education web site states: "Results from the Tennessee Project STAR (Student/Teacher Achievement Ratio) study have continually demonstrated that reducing class sizes in grades K-3 to 13-17 students substantially increases children's reading and mathematics scores. These gains are particularly significant among minority and economically disadvantaged students. The Project STAR results have been confirmed by many other researchers, including those studying Wisconsin's SAGE (Student Achievement Guarantee in Education) Program, and in the CSR Research Consortium's early analysis of the California class-size reduction effort. As in Project STAR, students participating in the SAGE and California class-size reduction programs outperformed their counterparts in larger classrooms on standardized tests..."

The page goes on to state that the effects are long lived and can be seen in high school on the SATs.

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/ClassSize/myths.html>



PAEA EXECUTIVE BOARD for 2009-2010

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Vice-President	Dave Tomatis
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MONEY MATTERS

CAL STRS sent out a great member kit this summer. It is loaded with information on your retirement plans. It also has advice on how to augment your retirement income while simultaneously lowering your current tax bill through a 403b plan. It is well worth a look.

Don't forget to sign up for a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) in Human Resources. These are great ways to pay for medical and day care expenses with pre-tax dollars. Employees can put \$2500 for medical and \$5,000 for day care pre-tax dollars per year into these accounts through payroll deductions. You are given a debit card with which to pay for health related expenses such as: office & prescription copays, dental & orthodontia, eyeglasses & exams, contact lenses & solution, laser eye surgery, chiropractic services, over the counter medicines... and of course child care.

Sep. Rep Council Meeting will be held on Thursday 9/17 4:00–6:00 PM at Greendell School. Hosts Triona Gogarty & Marion Krause.

Stop in to the meeting when it is on your site.

Site Reps for 08-09

Addison- Teri Baldwin	Barron Park Rusty Tooley	Briones Mary Goodkind Sue Garadis	Children's Hospital Kevin Danie	Duveneck Mangla Oza	El Carmelo Diane McCoy
Escondido Richard Garcia Amanda Dungan	Fairmeadow Barbara Carlson Valerie Sabbag	Greendell Marion Krause	Hays Rachel Shepherd Kevin Rouse	Hoover Lonnie Spencer Peter Lee	Nixon Beryl Deremigio Janice Mulholland
Ohlone Kim Prescott Ashley McCrea	Palo Verde Matt Lindner Sheri Cundall	Traveling/Music BJ Floersheim	Traveling/PE Karen Dolkas	25 churchill open	
Terman Lynn Repetsky Mark Dungan Martin Vetter Tijen Sambul	JLS Julia Brown Tim Sato Linda Howard	Jordan Millie Balsam	Gunn G. Garger Yukie Hikida Judy Niizawa	PALY Eric Bloom Magdalena Rivera	

If you would like to be a Representative for your site contact Triona Gogarty. There are once a month meetings for which you receive a stipend. Each site can have more than one representative and rep. positions can be shared.

**Please send comments, suggestions or requests for the Buzzz to
Triona Gogarty - trionago@gmail.com**