

UPDATE

Week of December 12, 2011

www.aalausd.com

AS GOES NEW YORK. . . SO GOES L.A.?

You may have read a *New York Times* article last week by **Michael Winerip** (November 27, 2011) entitled “Principals Protest Role of Testing in Evaluations.” Cited as the “first principals’ revolt in history,” as of December 4, 2011, 756 New York principals have signed an open letter expressing concerns about New York State legislation linking the evaluation of teachers and administrators to student test scores. Since the *Times* broke the story nationally, much has been written in the press about the principals’ “protest,” including a great deal of hyperbole. We urge AALA members to make up your own minds about the issues and start by reading the full text of the open letter which may be accessed at www.newyorkprincipals.org.

While the New York situation appears to be somewhat different from ours in California, we do share some common concerns. Following is a summary of the New York principals’ open letter:

Background: In May 2010, the New York State Legislature amended its law regarding evaluation of teachers and principals. The goal was to secure federal "Race to the Top" funds, and the State was successful. The New York law now requires individual teachers and principals to receive a score from 0-100 to rate their performance. Twenty to forty percent of the score will be based on students’ achievement on standardized tests.

New York Principals’ Concerns and Recommendations:

1. Educational research and researchers strongly caution against the use of student test data for evaluation because value-added models of teacher effectiveness do not produce stable ratings from year to year, class-to-class, or test-to-test. There is no evidence that the use of students’ standardized test scores in evaluation improves student achievement. Such tests are designed to evaluate student performance, not teacher or principal effectiveness.
2. Students will be adversely affected because the nurturing relationship between teacher and student will be damaged.
3. Tax dollars are being redirected from schools to testing companies, trainers and outside vendors.

The principals recommend the use of schoolwide achievement data for evaluation, completion of a pilot program prior to full-scale implementation and elimination of number ratings for evaluation. They conclude their letter with the following statement, with which AALA concurs:

We welcome accountability and continually strive to meet high standards. We want what is best for our students. We believe, however, that an unproven, expensive and potentially harmful evaluation system is not the path to lasting school improvement. We must not lose sight of what matters the most—the academic, social and emotional growth of our students.

AALA urges LAUSD leadership to work with us and UTLA to avoid the potential pitfalls of a poorly designed evaluation system for teachers and administrators. After all, we do have a common goal—improved student performance—don’t we?

JERRY BROWN'S OPEN LETTER TO THE PEOPLE OF CALIFORNIA

*In last week's Update (December 5, 2011), we published an article about Our Children, Our Future: Local Schools and Early Education Investment Act (Page 6), an initiative proposed by the Advancement Project's **Molly Munger** to provide additional funding for education beginning in 2013. Following is a letter to supporters prepared by **Governor Jerry Brown** which announces the initiative he plans to place on the November 2012 ballot. As we mentioned last week, the Governor is expected to try to consolidate the competing initiatives.*

When I became Governor again—28 years after my last term ended in 1983—California was facing a \$26.6 billion budget deficit. It was the result of years of failing to match spending with tax revenues as budget gimmicks instead of honest budgeting became the norm.

In January, I proposed a budget that combined deep cuts with a temporary extension of some existing taxes. It was a balanced approach that would have finally closed our budget gap. I asked the legislature to enact this plan and to allow you, the people of California, to vote on it.

I believed that you had the right to weigh in on this important choice: should we decently fund our schools or lower our taxes? I don't know how you would have voted, but we will never know. The Republicans refused to provide the four votes needed to put this measure on the ballot.

Forced to act alone, Democrats went ahead and enacted massive cuts and the first honest on-time budget in a decade. But without the tax extensions, it was simply not possible to eliminate the state's structural deficit.

The good news is that our financial condition is much better than a year ago. We cut the ongoing budget deficit by more than half, reduced the state's workforce by about 5,500 positions and cut unnecessary expenses like cell phones and state cars. We actually cut state expenses by over \$10 billion. Spending is now at levels not seen since the seventies. Our state's credit rating has moved from "negative" to "stable," laying the foundation for job creation and a stronger economic recovery.

Unfortunately, the deep cuts we made came at a huge cost. Schools have been hurt, and state funding for our universities has been reduced by 25%. Support for the elderly and the disabled has fallen to where it was in 1983. Our courts suffered debilitating reductions.

The stark truth is that without new tax revenues, we will have no other choice but to make deeper and more damaging cuts to schools, universities, public safety and our courts.

That is why I am filing today an initiative with the Attorney General's office that would generate nearly \$7 billion in dedicated funding to protect education and public safety. I am going directly to the voters because I don't want to get bogged down in partisan gridlock as happened this year. The stakes are too high. My proposal is straightforward and fair.

JERRY BROWN'S OPEN LETTER TO THE PEOPLE OF CALIFORNIA (Continued)

It proposes a temporary tax increase on the wealthy, a modest and temporary increase in the sales tax, and guarantees that the new revenues be spent only on education. Here are the details:

- Millionaires and high-income earners will pay up to 2% higher income taxes for five years. No family making less than \$500,000 a year will see their income taxes rise. In fact, fewer than 2% of California taxpayers will be affected by this increase.
- There will be a temporary ½ cent increase in the sales tax. Even with this temporary increase, sales taxes will still be lower than what they were less than six months ago.
- This initiative dedicates funding only to education and public safety--not on other programs that we simply cannot afford.

This initiative will not solve all of our fiscal problems. But it will stop further cuts to education and public safety.

I ask you to join with me to get our state back on track.

Following are brief summaries of additional initiatives being proposed as of this writing:

Restoring California, led by the California Federation of Teachers (filing expected soon)

Tax increases: High-end personal income tax

Revenue: \$6 billion annually

Term: Ongoing

Purpose: Education, senior services, public safety, infrastructure

Tom Steyer: California Clean Energy Jobs Act

Tax increase: Require corporations to use single sales factor (primarily hits out-of-state corporations)

Revenue: \$1.1 billion

Purpose: Proposition 98 education and creation of clean energy jobs fund (for five years at \$550 million)

Think Long Committee

Tax increases: Sales tax on services, middle-income sales taxes

Tax decreases: Corporate taxes

Revenue: \$10 billion annually

Term: Ongoing, beginning in 2013

Purpose: General fund

We will continue to provide information in Update regarding potential measures to raise revenues for California public schools. Stay tuned!

HEALTH BENEFITS FAQ

Topic: CalSTRS Medicare Premium Payment Program Ends June 30, 2012

What is the CalSTRS Medicare Premium Payment Program?

In this program, CalSTRS will pay the Medicare Part A (hospital) premium for:

- An eligible retiree hired prior to April 1, 1986, who does not qualify to receive Medicare Part A premium-free, either through other employment or through the employment of a spouse, and who retired before 2001.
- An eligible retiree, who was an active employee under age 58 as of September 2001, voted “yes” in 2001 to pay the Medicare tax prior to retirement but did not have the full 40 quarters normally required and retired after January 1, 2001.

I was teaching in 1986 and I don’t remember “electing” to have or not have the Medicare tax withheld from my salary. When did LAUSD hold the election on Medicare "division"?

LAUSD Human Resources provided all affected employees in June 2001 with information about the Medicare “division” date for employees to choose to pay or not to pay the federal Medicare tax. The division election was a one-time, irrevocable decision to be made by employees. The election ballot was mailed in September 2001 with September 21 as the official division date and a 10-day election period. October 1 was the due date. Employees had to sign and return the ballot; failure to return a ballot was deemed an election not to be covered by Medicare.

How does the ending date of the CalSTRS Medicare Payment Program affect active employees?

Since the division took place about 10 years ago, most active employees have been paying Medicare taxes for 40 quarters and thus qualify for premium-free Medicare Part A. However, there may be some active employees with a break in service that will fall short of the full 40 quarters required by June 30, 2012. It is this latter group that is affected by the end of the CalSTRS Medicare Payment Program.

What if I am an employee who will fall short of 40 quarters by June 30? What are my options?

Employees who won’t have 40 quarters by June 30, 2012, have the option to consider retirement prior to July 1, 2012, to participate in the program. The Teachers’ Retirement Board has the authority to extend the eligibility date, but whether they will do so remains uncertain.

I don’t have 40 quarters of paying the Medicare tax and I’m not ready to retire before July 1, 2012. Will I have to pay the Medicare Part A premiums that now cost \$248 per month for those with 30-39 quarters and \$450 per month for those with fewer than 30 quarters?

At the present time, the District policy as established by the Health Benefits Committee provides medical coverage if a retiree has to pay the Part A Medicare premium; however, this is subject to change and is not a guarantee.

For additional information, go to www.calstrs.com and enter *Medicare Premium Payment Program* in the search box for a full listing of related documents.

ADMINISTRATORS' WORKLOAD, Part 11

AALA wishes to thank an Assistant Principal, Elementary Instructional Specialist (APEIS), for writing the following piece. For obvious reasons, the individual wishes to remain anonymous.

I have wanted to respond to the October 24 and November 7 newsletters for a while. It's nice to know the APEIS position isn't being eliminated, but how the position remains seems to be unanswered. I know things are crazy and I'm not asking for sympathy or crying, "Oh, poor me." The entire District has been affected by reassignments and budget cuts. At the same time, our most vulnerable students have once again taken a back seat so that their more able peers can succeed.

Like Mr. Villareal, I am also assigned to two schools, new ones this year as once again we were shuffled around so that any credibility or relationship with parents, students and staff was undermined. Both my schools are staffed by wonderful and caring individuals. The principals are experienced, kind and understanding, but they too are overwhelmed with paperwork and lack of clerical support. Due to reassignments and RIF notices, our office has had five different people in the position of office tech. They have been reassigned from secondary schools, adult schools and other locations with no thought as to length of commute or prior experience.

The principals are aware of the bulletin mentioned by Ms. Howell and would offer clerical assistance if they could. Honestly, our offices are swamped and there isn't one hour a day to assist, much less four! Besides, the office techs assigned are either new to elementary or untrained, or both! Some are more than a little resistant to taking on yet another new task. Using Welligent takes practice and experience, not just an online training.

Currently, I am the only person at both of my schools doing any clerical work for Special Education. This includes all the scheduling, all the assessment plans, assigning of assessments, sending out and keeping track of assessment plans and notifications, scheduling subs and interpreters, making copies, follow up and more. If something comes for Special Education, it sits in my mailbox until I return to that school.

The time I used to spend supporting and working with parents, staff and students is now spent doing clerical duties. Understanding and sympathy are available, but solutions are not. I know that everyone is having the same issue and was wondering what, if anything, can be done. We APEISs are already overwhelmed and concerned about getting everything accomplished once "IEP season" hits in the spring!

To make matters even more difficult, Bulletin 5630.0 was issued on October 24, 2011, requiring that all IEPs be completed by either March 31 or May 1. I realize these deadlines are convenient for all the nonschool site personnel at Beaudry and the Support Units; but for those of us who actually work with children and parents at school sites, this is impossible! I've already scheduled my IEPs through March. I doubt I can fit another 75 or 100 IEPs into two months! Perhaps the Division of Special Education will send us some help.

My priority is getting the kids served, and we're doing what we can. So far as compliance and paperwork are concerned, we have a DVR coming. Both my schools have appointments a week apart. I requested a change of date and was told it was impossible and to get my stuff done way ahead of time.

ADMINISTRATORS' WORKLOAD, Part 11 (Continued)

Is there any possibility of having itinerant clerical personnel, perhaps *trained* Special Education clerks who were displaced and could go to a few schools to assist APEISs with Welligent/IEP planning and preparation? The paperwork is staggering, and timelines and compliance continue to be issues. I'm not afraid of hard work, but the stress is getting to me. I don't take breaks, and I'm writing this during lunch! Thank you for your help.

2012 AALA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM CALENDAR

AALA will award scholarships to graduating high school students, options school students, and adult education students. All 2012 LAUSD graduating students are eligible to apply. We encourage school staff members to publicize this scholarship program. It is an excellent financial aid opportunity for students.

The 2012 AALA Scholarship Program calendar is as follows:

- Week of January 16, 2012: Applications sent to schools (via e-mail to principals, assistant principals, Secondary Counseling Services and Adult Counseling Services, and college counselors)
- Due date: Wednesday, March 7, 2012 (Mark your calendar!)
- Selection: March/April
- Presented: May 23, 2012, AALA Scholarship/Community Awards Banquet, Millennium Biltmore Hotel

Questions regarding the program may be directed to **Gema Pivaral** in the AALA office at 213.484.2226 or gpivaral@aala.us.

AALA HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The AALA offices will be closed during the District's shutdown period, Monday, December 26, 2011, through Monday, January 2, 2012. We will reopen on Tuesday, January 3, 2012.

The last *Update* for 2011 will be dated December 19. *Update* will not be published the weeks of December 26, 2011, or January 2, 2012. The first issue in January will be dated January 9, 2012.

For information about positions available, go to the AALA website at www.aalausd.com.

LAURA CHARDIET ELECTED TO CULVER CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

AALA congratulates **Laura Chardiet**, Specialist in the Division of Adult and Career Education, for her recent election to the Culver City Board of Education. In addition to overseeing DACE's \$15.8 million WIA grant, Laura serves as a member of the California Department of Education's Field Partnership Team and as a CASAS Summer Institute Presenter. She will be sworn in on December 13, 2011.

IN MEMORIAM

WILLARD "LEFTY" GOODHUE – Former Principal of Carson and Bell high schools. He retired on January 26, 1979, and passed away in August 2011.

LIFE CONNECT ADVANTAGE

With the press of a button, Life Connect Advantage has the affordable solutions to ensure your peace of mind this holiday season! Life Connect Advantage offers the most comprehensive home and personal safety solutions in the industry today, and is committed to providing cutting edge, affordable personal safety solutions for everyone in the family.

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TIER II in THAILAND - For School Administrators

Join the 9th year of this highly praised and well-respected program to earn the California Professional Administrative Services Credential (Tier II), *in collaboration with the University of California, Irvine (UCI)*. The program has over 125 alumni! This program supports completion of ALL Tier II requirements.

Chiang Mai, Thailand: July 18-27, 2012

Cost: \$3,675 (includes international program fee, Tier II tuition, flight & hotel - approx.)

WEBSITE: <http://leadership-innovation.org>

For information contact **Dr. Linda Orozco** at 949.413.5483.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Minimum Qualifications: Candidates are responsible for making sure all the District requirements have been met. Do not contact AALA for information regarding positions. Use the listed contact phone number.

CERTIFICATED POSITIONS

INSTRUCTIONAL SPECIALIST

Hale Charter Academy (1) MST 39 (Temp. Adv.), 23830 Califa Street, Woodland Hills, CA 91367
 Hale Charter is a B Basis Affiliated Charter school. For information and application procedures contact **Juan Flecha**, Principal Leader, at 818.654.3600 or juan.flecha@lausd.net. **Filing deadline is Tuesday, December 20, 2011.**

John Mack ES, MST 37 (Temp. Adv.), 3020 South Catalina Street, Los Angeles, CA 90007
 John Mack is a B Basis school. For information and application procedures contact **Brenda Grady**, Principal, at 323.730.7620. **Filing deadline is Tuesday, December 20, 2011.**

Vista MS (1) MST 39 (Temp. Adv.), 15040 Roscoe Blvd., Panorama City, CA 91402
 Vista is a B Basis school. For information and application procedures contact **Juan Flecha**, Principal Leader, at 818.654.3600 or juan.flecha@lausd.net. **Filing deadline is Friday, December 23, 2011.**

The following positions are available to view in their entirety by going to http://certificated.lausd.k12.ca.us/admin_vacancies. Select School-Based and Non-School-Based positions and click on any position to view the specific flyer.

POSITION	LOCATION	CONTACT	DEADLINE
Instructional Specialist	Manual Arts HS	213.745.4928	Until Filled
Principal, Elementary	Lockhurst Drive	818.654.3600	12/12/11

POSITION	DEADLINE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PUPIL SERVICES AND ATTENDANCE COORDINATOR (Attendance Improvement Pilot Program), MST 39 (Temp. Adv.), E Basis, Division of Student Health and Human Services. Contact Debra Duardo, Director, Pupil Services, at 213.241.3853. 	5:00 p.m. Friday, Dec. 16, 2011