

THE FONTANAN

Volume 39, Issue 1

AUGUST 2018

WELCOME BACK!

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GRIEVANCE?

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RATIFICATION
VOTE

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TOY
DONATION
DRIVE

GRIEVANCE
HOTLINE



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY:
Curtis Dison

Here it is! The start of a new school year is upon us. I would like to officially welcome all of our members, new and returning, to the 2018-2019 school year. Despite all the years, I still feel a sense of optimism and promise when a new year dawns. Ideally, our summer break refreshed us, gave us some perspective, and made us ready for the rigors of another year in the classroom.

The start of a new year comes with questions. What will my students be like? What new policy will have to implement this year? How will my administrators support me? Some of us get new classrooms, or new sites. Or, we get a new neighbor in the room next to us. How will that go? Some of us change grade levels. How will it be working with my new PLC?

The world isn't sitting still around us, either. If you're anything like me, the news these days is a source of frustration. Education is a very political subject, obviously. We can't afford to ignore current events and our students are going to come to us with questions. Just remember that, as teachers, we don't have freedom of speech within the classroom. We can discuss politics when it intersects naturally with our curriculum. But, otherwise, our politics and personal views ought to be left out of our teaching as much as possible.

To the newest teachers, those who are in the first couple of years, try to take deep breaths often and give yourself some personal time frequently to re-center yourself. The first years of teaching are overwhelming. If you didn't already, grab a copy of "The First Days of School" by Harry Wong and give it a read. And, try to identify a veteran teacher you can pester with questions. You're going to have a lot of them, so make a friend now. Many teachers are easily bribed with a coffee-beverage or similar treat.

To the new-to-us teachers, welcome to FUSD! If you've been doing this for a while but you've just come to our district then I hope your transition is relatively painless.

You may have to deal with a bit of culture-shock so, I suggest taking my advice to the new teachers and buy a veteran a frothy drink of some sort and then get the scoop from them; veteran teachers always have some good stories to tell and they know the ins and outs already.

To the returning vets, thanks for coming back. My advice to you is to find the new teachers and make friends. For some reason they are super motivated to buy you drinks this year. Take advantage and enjoy the hydration. You know how new teachers are, so enthusiastic! Try not to kill their joy just yet. There's an administrator out there waiting to do it for you. Haha! But, seriously, the new teachers may need your advice so get your sage wisdom ready for them.

I'd also like to add a special note of welcome and thanks to all our bargaining unit members who have accepted the role of being union representatives to their sites. Whether you are a new teacher, or returning to another year with us, reps are valuable both because they can help with contractual issues, problem-solving, and, also, instructional issues. If you're new to the site, find the site FTA rep and pick their brain. FTA and CTA have had many professional development opportunities thanks to the ILT and CTA "think tanks" recently and will share if asked. Thank you to all our reps!

Now, on to some housekeeping. Dates. The transfer pool will open on the 6th week of school. That means that you can fill out transfer requests for any and all sites that you might be interested in and submit them. If you think you will want to transfer, even if it's only the inkling of an idea, put

in a transfer request. You don't have to take the transfer if you decide to stay put, but you definitely won't be able to move if you don't apply.

Are you being evaluated this year? Make sure to grab a copy of the contract (which is easy to download from www.fon-tanateachers.org) and look at Article 9 Evaluations for the deadlines for each stage of the evaluation. The first deadline to keep in mind is that all members being evaluated must be notified in writing (memo or email) of that fact by their administrator within the first two weeks of school. Then, within the first four weeks they must hold a meeting with you to discuss the Standards and Key Elements that will be used in your evaluation.

You will recall that we reached a Tentative Agreement with FUSD over our new contract. It has not been ratified yet, so we will vote on it, most likely, in late August. We will be having informational meetings for members that wish to ask questions, as well. If the TA is ratified then bonuses should be distributed by December.

A new school year also means Back to School Night is coming. Just a reminder that this is one of our nights we are contractually obligated to be at work. For elementary, we are required to be at Back to School Night for 1 hour and for Secondary, the requirement is 90 minutes.

I urge all members to find out who your site representatives and alternates are. These people are your "first line of defense" and the ones who can probably answer your questions easiest. If you can't find a rep, then feel free to call the FTA Office and we'll sort it out for you.

Finally, I wish you a wonderful year. May the copier always have paper in it when you go to use it, may it never jam, may your dry erase markers be bold and odorless, may your students follow directions, may your coffee never be cold, and may your heart be full with the smiles and sounds of happy children. Welcome back to school!

CONTRACT RATIFICATION VOTE

Informational Meetings

F.T.A. OFFICE

16850 SEVILLE AVE., FONTANA 92335

8/16/18 4PM-5PM

KAISER HIGH SCHOOL

11155 ALMOND AVE., FONTANA 92337

8/20/18 4PM-5PM (IN THE MPR)

SUMMIT HIGH SCHOOL

15551 SUMMIT AVE., FONTANA 92336

8/21/18 4PM-5PM (IN THE MPR)

If you are unable to attend the informational meetings but would like additional information regarding the contract proposal, please visit the F.T.A. website at fontanateachers.org.

**BALLOTS DISTRIBUTED: 08/15/18 (REP COUNCIL)
ALL BALLOTS WILL BE DUE TO F.T.A. OFFICE BY
4PM ON 8/30/18.**

IS IT A GRIEVANCE?

GRIEVANCE TEAM CHRONICLES by: Glennon Poirier

As my mother used to remind me far more often than I preferred, "Life isn't fair." In the workplace, especially, things happen that irritate us, hurt us, anger us, or just confuse us. Admittedly, sometimes, that's just the way it is. It's not fair. We just have to live with it. However, as union members, sometimes it is a grievance and we can do something about it.

But, what, exactly, is a grievance?

A grievance is a formal process to petition management (the district) to address and remedy a violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of the collective bargaining agreement.

In plain English: we can file a grievance when an administrator fails to follow the contract either because they disregarded the contract, or because they didn't understand it. It can be an oversight, an accident, a misunderstanding, or, occasionally, malicious intent. But, it helps to assume that it's the former rather than the latter.

Unfortunately, administrators are sometimes just rude or poor at managing people. We need to look at the contract and decide if they are really violating it. Occasionally, they aren't breaking the contract. Sometimes they are breaking the law (Ed. Code or labor regulations) and that's a whole 'nother ball of wax. But, sometimes they're just being annoying.

If you think you have a grievance, get in touch with your site rep, the Grievance Team (there's a "hotline" on the FTA website or you can email), or the FTA Office as soon as you can. If an administrator directs you to do something, you have to do it. Insubordination is grounds for termination. Even if the administration's direction breaks the contract, you should still do the work, then call your rep at your earliest opportunity. If you're wrong about the contract violation, and this happens sometimes, then you have a big problem and will probably be disciplined.

So, repeat after me: work first and grieve later. Work first, grieve later.

Here are some things that might or might not be a grievance.

1. Your department chair sends an email that says everyone needs to meet after school next week to discuss PLC norms and schedules. It will only take 15 minutes. The meeting is NOT on a Wednesday. Grievance or not?

Not a grievance: Department Chairs, ILTs, TOAs, Instructional Leaders, and whatever else you call them are not your supervisors. They are in the same bargaining unit. They are not the boss of you. You can go if you want, and if you do, that's on you. But, since the "direction" came from another "BUM" (bargaining unit member) then you can't file a grievance.

2. The principal asks you to meet with a parent tomorrow but they are only available to meet during your lunch time. You ask to reschedule by email but don't get a reply. Grievance or not?

Grievance. You should attend the meeting. Don't be insubordinate. But, you could ask for a sub to cover your class so you can have lunch. If you get a sub, it's probably not a grievance anymore. You are entitled to a 30 minute duty free lunch, and if they gave you one, then there's nothing to grieve. Call your rep in any case to be sure.

3. Your site is implementing Multi-Tiered Systems of Support. You don't get along very well with your co-teacher who never seems to have time to plan and they just don't have the same teaching style as you. This summer, they didn't reply to your emails and now you're stressed because you feel unprepared. You wrote the lesson plans and they didn't even have anything to add. You feel like you're doing all the work and they undermine your plans. You have to work longer hours just to be ready for the week. You want to file a grievance against your co-teacher. Grievance or not?

This is not a grievance. There's no such thing as a member to member grievance, so, even though that's a bad situation and it needs addressing, it isn't grievance. But... You should talk to an administrator. While they can't discuss personnel decisions, if the member continues to be unhelpful and uncooperative, then we might be able to bring some pressure against the administrator to do something about it. Document your interactions with the co-teacher. This

might take the form of a grievance, or a complaint to a government agency that regulates our work conditions. Call a rep.

4. You get a call from the principal to come to her office. Once there, she begins asking questions about an incident with a student. It sounds disciplinary. You ask to stop the meeting and get a union rep but she won't let you. You try to leave but she stands in the doorway and keeps demanding your answer or she will write you up. Grievance or not?

That's not a grievance. It's worse. That's a violation of the EERA and you should file a complaint with PERB. Your Weingarten rights are federally protected and guarantee that you are entitled to union representation during a disciplinary interview. That principal made a serious mistake.

5. You get called into a meeting with the principal. He gives you a letter of reprimand for "raising your voice" at your class because it is so serious to treat students like that. He heard you as he was walking by the room. He didn't ask your side of the story and didn't observe your class for more than 30 seconds. Grievance or not?

Grievance. At very least, this violates Article 19, Just Cause. It doesn't seem like he did a very good job of investigating and it's not like being loud is automatically some kind of abuse of kids. Perhaps an appraisal would be appropriate, but it's possible that no action needed to be taken at all.

Probably the most confusing aspect of grievances is that it is happening to us. Our emotions get involved. First, call your rep or the FTA Office and get some advice. If you've been given direction by an administrator that isn't illegal or unsafe, work first and then call your rep and grieve later. If your issue is with another member of the union, talk to an administrator and try to get them to help first. Don't be insubordinate and don't wait to contact your rep. Grievances must be filed within 20 days of event/action that violates the contract. Contact the Grievance Team directly at grievance@fontanateachers.org or use the "hotline" on the website.

**6 WAYS
TO
SHOW
YOUR
F.T.A.
PRIDE!**



**SWEATERS \$25
BASEBALL T-SHIRT \$20
T-SHIRT \$6**

**ALL
SHIRTS/SWEATERS
WILL HAVE THE
FONTANA
TEACHERS
ASSOCIATION LOGO.**



PLEASE VISIT THE [FONTANATEACHERS.ORG](http://fontanateachers.org) WEBSITE TO DOWNLOAD AN ORDER FORM.

F.T.A. EMAIL ADDRESSES

FTA Pres, Curtis Dison	ftapres@fontanateachers.org
FTA Vice Pres, Connie Verhulst	ftavp@fontanateachers.org
CTA, Exec. Director, Bubba Smith	BSmith@cta.org
Mandy	apeters@fontanateachers.org
Nathalie	nalvarez@fontanateachers.org
F.T.A. Office	ftaoffice@fontanateachers.org
Negotiations Chair	negotiations@fontanateachers.org
Grievance	grievance@fontanateachers.org
Social/Membership	social@fontanateachers.org

MOVED RECENTLY? NAME CHANGE?



PLEASE EMAIL THE F.T.A. OFFICE AT:

ftaoffice@fontanateachers.org

WITH YOUR UPDATED

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION.

THANK YOU!

FONTANA SANTAS!

The Community Outreach committee has decided to get an early start on our efforts to collect toys and supplies to support the Fontana Santas this year!

Our goal is to collect one inexpensive, or expensive if you are feeling it, toy from each of our members. If we reach our goal, we will be able to give out approximately 2000 toys this holiday season.

If you are willing and able, we are asking that you donate one toy per member. We will gladly accept more if you are feeling generous!

To turn in your donation, you can:

- give it to your site's F.T.A. rep and they can bring it in during rep council
- drop it off at the F.T.A. Office, 16850 Seville Ave., Fontana, CA 92335
- or send it via district mail to the F.T.A. office. Please address the box or envelope as follows:

F.T.A. OFFICE c/o Community Outreach Committee

Last year the children of Fontana who participated were very grateful for your donations!



FYI



SEARCH FOR:
"FTA Members Only Page"

August 10
September 14
October 12
November 9
December 7
January 11
February 8
March 8
April 12
May 3

TGIF DATES
Pancho Villa's

August 15
September 12
October 10
November 14
December 12
January 16
February 13
March 13
April 10
May 8

REP COUNCIL
FTA Office

\$10.50

\$8.50

\$8.00

Cash Only

MOVIE TICKETS
FTA Office - Restrictions Apply

FTA OFFICE HOURS

● ● ● ● ● ● ●

MONDAY-FRIDAY
8:30AM-4:00PM

Fontana Teachers Association

16850 Seville Ave.
Fontana, CA 92335

Phone (909) 829-0940
Fax (909) 829-0466

TGIF CHANGE

Our Union's TGIF get togethers will continue to be held at Pancho Villa's on Juniper and Valley in Fontana from 3pm-5pm. Please see the previous page for dates. Appetizers will continue to be paid for by your F.T.A. and drinks will still be on your own.

The only change we are making this year, is that when you arrive, **you will be asked to check in** to get a voucher for your appetizer and to participate in our raffle. The appetizers and raffles provided are for current active members and we want to make sure that current active members are the ones using the resources provided for these events. For new members, if you signed up to join the union, either when you signed your contract or at the New Teacher Orientation, we hope to see you at our upcoming TGIF on August 10th!



TicketsatWork.com is the leading Corporate Entertainment Benefits provider, offering exclusive discounts, special offers an access to preferred seating and tickets to top attractions, theme parks, shows, sporting events, movie tickets, hotels and much more. TicketsatWork is a unique benefit offered exclusively to companies and organizations and their employees and members.

FTA's Discount Code: KBFFTA

Connie's Corner



It is the beginning of the school year,
I hope it brings nothing but good cheer.
Greet each student with a grin,
do your best to make it genuine.

So much to do it seems unreal,
we all know how that can feel.
But step back and enjoy what you do,
and realize this year is brand new.

You really do make a difference,
with every single one of your students.
Make the most of all that you teach,
the students you will be able to reach.

Enjoy the year and have fun!
Before you know, the year will be done.

One last thing I have to say.
You have 180 chances to make a student's day!

NEW!

GRIEVANCE HOTLINE

THINK YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED A
CONTRACT VIOLATION?
YOU CAN TEXT THE
GRIEVANCE HOTLINE TO
GET MORE
INFORMATION!

**JUST TEXT:
909.278.7130**

WITH YOUR NAME,
SCHOOL SITE, POSITION,
AND YOUR QUESTION. A GRIEVANCE
TEAM MEMBER WILL
RESPOND AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE.



CrossFit Fontana welcomes FUSD employees

Two months of CrossFit for only \$125, savings of 67%!!! You must begin before Sept. 30th and your two months begins on your first workout date.

To sign up, go to crossfitfontana.frontdeskhq.com and select the "Back to School" plan. Classes are subject to size and availability.

