Sometimes people look at the FTA budget and see a large expenditure for “Uniserv” which is our CTA staff person or Executive Director. There are often questions from members about our relationship to the California Teachers Association and what we get out of it. Officially, FTA is a local chapter of CTA. One big part of our relationship to CTA is the Executive Director, a staff person from CTA who is assigned to our chapter and has the primary responsibility to develop and evaluate training programs in order to create effective local chapters. This includes identifying new leaders, building communications systems, achieving and maintaining parity, evolving programs and objectives, and developing alliances. These responsibilities have seven main categories: Chapter Organizing, Chapter Bargaining, Contract Administration, Membership Promotion and Recruitment, Political Action, Professional Issues, and Community Relations.

The Executive Director is an important part of our organization. That’s why the first responsibility is to Chapter Organizing. This means identifying and developing chapter leadership, by examining existing leadership patterns, plus organizing training programs to help foster effective Association leadership. They work closely with the chapter leadership that is already in place as well as encouraging members to participate. They develop and implement effective communication systems so that members and leadership keep the information flowing. They also help identify and develop issues as priorities, helping us to produce recognizable achievements for our Association. This also helps us create a strategic base for our Negotiations program.

Speaking of which, Bargaining (a.k.a. Negotiations) is one of the most important things the Association does. It might be THE most important thing we do. The Executive Director is tasked with helping us to develop our contract proposals, or our positions and priorities. They should help us develop effective procedures for bargaining, like training our Negotiations Team members and consulting with us on creating tactics and strategies that will help us successfully negotiate for our Association. They can bring in resource programs and they can help us if we end up in impasse. This is a huge component because, let’s face it, we are just teachers, not professional union leaders. The CTA staff person can offer a wealth of assistance that can make sure we do the best we can at the bargaining table.

Now, Contract Administration refers to Grievance because this is the enforcement and maintenance process. Keeping an eye on administrators to make sure the contract is followed is a lot of work but the Executive Director is here to help with that. They can help us develop, for example, a system of communication and reporting from the sites to the Association regarding contract compliance. This would go hand in hand with organizing ways for the Grievance Team to respond to instances of contract misinterpretation or misapplication (the basis for a grievance). They also should be helping the team by training the Grievance Reps, representing us at hearings, and by consulting and assisting us in grievance processing. Even more important, the Executive Director is the one who assists us if the district engages in unfair labor practices and helps us file charges if it comes to that.

We need to make sure we are getting all the members we can, since the our strength is in our solidarity. So, recruiting and promoting membership is important, too. Our relationship with CTA means their staff person can help develop campaigns to recruit members, training us to be effective at recruiting and so on. They help us participate in CTA and NEA membership projects as well. And, they can coordinate with us on effective and timely recording, monitoring, and reporting of chapter membership, including dealing with dues.

Political action calls for the Executive Director to help us integrate with local political programs and organizing around political priorities. They organize our participation with CTA/NEA political action programs, too. It might be impolite to bring up politics at times, but our Association can’t afford to be shy, so it’s good that our CTA staff person is able to help us develop and maintain an effective local political action team.

There are professional issues to think about as well. Charter schools continue to be a thorn in our side, siphoning away money from public schools and playing by different rules that allow them to look like they are better than us. Well, the Executive Director is specifically tasked with monitoring the charter school operations. Ideally, charter schools would join us and play by our rules, so the staff person can help make this happen. They also can help with the development and implementation of effective site based training programs regarding things like conflict resolution, mediation, and budget development and administration.

Of course, we have to reach out to the Community so the Executive Director plays a role there, as well. They can help us develop and implement school-parent community partnerships. They also can reach out to local businesses to develop relationships between us and those that would like to help improve schools.

Taken as a whole, that is a tremendous amount of assistance to FTA! The Executive Director has a lot of irons in the fire, as they saying goes. It costs a lot of money, but the benefit is that we have a person who can turn our members into well-trained representatives who can do the work that needs to be done. The Executive Director is a very important part of our local chapter’s business and their value to us cannot be underestimated.
As your retirement plan, we've committed to your secure financial future and helping you get there. Our three-part My Retirement workshop series takes an in-depth look at your CalSTRS membership—how your monthly retirement benefit is calculated, the gap between your CalSTRS benefit and your retirement income goal and ways you can bridge it, your option choices at retirement, and more.

**MY RETIREMENT SYSTEM**
The CalSTRS hybrid system and resources

In this workshop, you’ll learn:
- About your CalSTRS benefits and the resources available to you.
- How we calculate your CalSTRS monthly retirement benefit.
- Why it pays to start a 403(b) or 457(b) savings plan early and the advantages of CalSTRS Pension2’s plans.
- Steps to take now to increase your retirement benefit.
- Important questions to ask before investing.

**MY RETIREMENT BENEFITS**
Your benefits and calculations

In this workshop, you’ll learn:
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- About the gap between your CalSTRS benefit and your retirement income goal and ways you can bridge it.
- About CalSTRS Pension2 403(b) and 457(b) plans.
- Steps to take now to increase your benefit.
- When you’ll be eligible to retire.

**MY RETIREMENT DECISIONS**
Your retirement decisions and timelines

In this workshop, you’ll learn:
- How we calculate your CalSTRS monthly retirement benefit.
- Your option choices if you want to provide a lifetime monthly benefit to your survivors—and how each option would affect your monthly benefit.
- Your choices for receiving the funds in your Defined Benefit Supplement account.
- Ways to submit your Service Retirement Application.
- What you need to know if you return to work in the California public school system in retirement.

**Register today**

Attend one or all three workshops. For dates and locations near you, visit CalSTRS.com/workshops or call 800-228-5453, select option 3.
What kind of person can become a Grievance Representative? What does it take to join the Grievance Team? Maybe you’re wondering because you’ve been reading these articles for a while now and you’re interested. Maybe you know someone who is.

Well, the first step to joining the team is to tell the FTA President that you’d like to help. The President, according to our Rules and Bylaws, appoints members to the standing committees, like Grievance Team, or Negotiations Team, with the approval of the Executive Board. But, should you? It might seem intimidating but it doesn’t need to be. A Grievance Rep is an advocate for our members, of course. Like a Site Rep, we defend and protect members from administrators who don’t follow the contract. Most importantly, we defend the contract itself, enforcing compliance and ensuring that past practice isn’t established.

So, a grievance rep is someone who wants to do that! They should be willing to confront an administrator who is misinterpreting or misapplying the contract. A rep is on par, that is, on equal footing with all administrators. This means we have to assert our rights and privileges as union reps. Management cannot discipline you for your behavior as a representative. Have you ever wanted to put a principal in their place? You might want to be a grievance rep, then. Obviously, it doesn’t happen all of the time, but there are instances where the grievance rep has to keep it real and you might even have to say things to admin that you otherwise wouldn’t. That’s part of the job. A rep is also organized. They can keep track of dates, times, and documents. They can file paperwork and preserve the record of what happened in grievance meetings and interviews with members. They should be able to take notes and keep those notes available for consultation later. Facts win grievances, not emotions. For that reason, it’s important that the rep has the facts at their disposal.

A rep is a listener. The facts must be obtained. You’ve got to listen to the member’s narrative and pick out the pieces you need to make the case. Listen for contract violations as well as important dates to establish timeline. But, also, listen to the member to get an idea of how they feel. This can help you both in advocating to administrators for the member, but it also can assist in coming up with the remedy for the situation, that which will help the member be made whole again. You should summarize what the member says to you, make sure you get it right. Look them in the eye. Listen, be patient, and let them have their say. It might take time, but it also might give you that piece of information you need to win the grievance.

A rep is knowledgeable about the contract. I wouldn’t say you have to memorize the contract, because I sure as heck haven’t. But, I do know most of the Articles and the general topics in each. So, a grievance rep should be familiar with the most important topics, like Workday, Evaluation, Transfers, and Class Size. But, it’s not necessary to memorize anything because you should look at it anyway. Get the contract and read it with the member or administrator. Why not? It ensures you all are on the same page (literally, in this case) and that you are discussing the right things.

A rep is a reader. There’s a lot of reading in grievances. First, you have to read the contract. There’s no way around it. The contract must be read and understood. Have you tried reading it? It’s a little challenging in places. But, a grievance rep can read the article and discuss what it means and how it would be applied. This will be part of the training, of course, but you should know you’d need to do it.

A rep can travel. You will have to go to different school sites to meet with members and administrators. So, you have to be prepared to drive around this great city, and you may even have to get released from your classroom for a few hours (with a sub, of course) so you can handle Association business.

A rep is a believer. You should believe in our mission, to improve the lives of all our members and improve Fontana’s schools. You should believe you can make a difference. You should believe that the contract deserves defending and that the Association is important and vital to the health and happiness of our members.

Grievance is serious business, for certain. It, along with Negotiations, is one of our most important functions. Our Grievance Team isn’t large, but we do try to have people from elementary, middle school, and high school so that all viewpoints are covered, but also because things are often done very differently at each level. So, if you’re interested, let the President know because it’s possible there will be a need for people to help.
F.T.A. Ratification Vote

Votes for contract ratification are due on:

May 23, 2019 by 4:00 p.m.

They have to be delivered to the F.T.A. office by 4:00 p.m. on May 23rd in order for your vote to count!

During this time of Teacher Appreciation; the members of California Retired Teachers Association, Division 90 (Colton, Fontana and Rialto districts) would like to add their congratulations on a job well done and thank you for your continuing dedication to the children you serve. We honor you, our fellow educators, with appreciation and gratefulness and remind you:

You are a teacher! - Be proud! - You touch the future!

Sincerely,
Mary Bryant, President CalRTA Division 90
momcatmur@gmail.com

Please contact us with any retirement related questions you may have; if we cannot answer them directly, we will find someone who can.

Find us on Facebook: Cal RTA Division 90
Moved Recently? Name Change?

Please email the F.T.A. office at:

ftaoffice@fontanateachers.org

with your updated membership information.

Thank you!
MOVIE TICKETS
Available for purchase at the F.T.A. office during office hours.

$10.50
$9.00
$8.50
$8.00

Cash Only

FTA OFFICE
SUMMER HOURS
MONDAY-FRIDAY
9:00am-3:00pm

Fontana Teachers Association
16850 Seville Ave.
Fontana, CA 92335
ftaoffice@fontanateachers.org
Phone (909) 829-0940
UNION CODE OF CONDUCT

• I will not criticize any union colleague except to the individual directly.
• If any union colleague is being criticized in my presence, I will confront the criticism and ask that it stop.
• I will not participate in any conversations with management that criticize, or negativity speculate about any union colleague.
• I will settle my differences with colleagues within the union.
• I will engage in debate, offer others every opportunity for debate and respect the minority viewpoints, but I will observe and support the majority mandate of the union.

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.
LEARN ABOUT YOUR MEMBER BENEFITS
at www.CTAMemberBenefits.org

ACCESS

Save Money while traveling, dining out, purchasing apparel, or buying school supplies, at over 350,000 discounts nationwide through the Access to Savings Program.

www.CTAMemberBenefits.org/Access

Auto and Home/Renters Insurance
Provided by California Casualty
Preferred Rates, Educator Benefits, Exceptional Service, Generous Discounts
For your quick quote, visit:
www.CTAMemberBenefits.org/calcas

Protect Your Loved Ones and Income With
Life & Disability Insurance From The Standard
www.CTAMemberBenefits.org/Standard

Your Federal Student Loan Forgiveness Resource
www.CTAMemberBenefits.org/studentloans

We want you to have a long and happy retirement
CTA-endorsed 403(b) Retirement Savings Plan:
Low fees and fiduciary standards
650.552.5200
www.CTAMemberBenefits.org/rsp

CTA Credit Union
New $150 Account Bonus & Auto/Home Loan Discounts
www.CTAMemberBenefits.org/Provident

This is a brief description of the CTA and NEA Member Benefit Programs. All benefits and eligibility requirements are subject to the terms of the plan certificates, Summary Plan Descriptions, or custodial account agreement. The benefits described herein may be modified or terminated by CTA and NEA Member Benefits at any time.
Just a reminder to take the

**2019 Negotiations Survey!**

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QLL66QR](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QLL66QR)

Survey will close on 5/15/2019