

LVEA TODAY



LVEA Alert!

Pink Slips, Early Retirement Incentives and Class Size – How are they all related?

Pink Slip is a street term for the legal process of laying off our newest employees, those who could be the future of our district for the next 30+ years. The district feels it needs to “right-size” our certificated employee numbers due to less anticipated enrollment (based on fewer residents with students and fewer out-of-district student permits). It also perceives changes in student demand for some courses at the secondary level. As a result, 17 of our newest colleagues have been told that they may not have a job in LVUSD next school year. This pink slip process is frustrating, emotionally devastating, dehumanizing and potentially unnecessary.

Why could it be unnecessary in 2018? Well, let’s consider the popular three-year Early Retirement Incentive pilot that the district refused to renew after last June. LVUSD has always prided itself on having a creative vision for all students and employees and we’re now left to wonder what happened to this approach in supporting employees. The incentive was important because it provided a bridge to Medicare for retirees, an ongoing effective benefit/incentive that our neighboring districts, Conejo, Simi Valley and Moorpark, offer on a permanent basis. Our three-year pilot was so successful that 69 employees chose to retire – far more than normal! Without this incentive, the district is projecting that *only two* certificated employees will retire this June! This program gave retirees a sense of security with benefits funding and saved the district a substantial amount of money – a win-win for everyone. Prior to the incentive, our percentage of certificated employees between the ages of 61-64 was much higher than Conejo’s. Now our percentage is actually lower than Conejo’s which means the pilot incentive succeeded by changing behavior and providing medical benefits security to those who wanted to retire but were fearful of how to obtain affordable medical benefits.

It’s The Right Thing To Do: Providing a benefits bridge to Medicare is the right thing to do for our long-term employees who have dedicated their career and life to our students. And it saves the district money! It’s very possible that extending the pilot would have decreased the need for these layoffs.

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How About Lowering Class Sizes Instead? It might be too late to push for a return of the popular retirement benefits incentive for this school year; however, the district has large reserves from one-time money that it has received from the state. Instead of pushing out 17 of our newest colleagues, how about using some of this one-time money to keep them and lower class sizes? This could buy us time to develop a better, more creative plan to “right-size” our numbers. These lower class sizes would enhance the learning environment for our students, especially since we’re right in the middle of implementing new curricula. We need a long-term plan to fix this issue in a compassionate manner over the next few years – not one that simply cuts loose our newest employees! A creative solution with vision is the Las Virgenes way!

Elections for LVEA Executive Board members

This spring, LVEA will hold an election for Vice-President and Treasurer. The nomination period is now open and shall remain open for no less than 14 days. Please let LVEA know if you are interested in running for one of these two offices by sending an email to lasvirgenesea@gmail.com.

“Did You Know” that your federal tax withholdings have decreased and that this could be a problem for you if you itemize your deductions?

You’ve probably heard that the Federal Government passed a tax cut for 2018. As a result, all employers have changed federal withholdings which has probably increased your take-home pay. You may have also heard that tax payers in states with high taxes (like California) may actually experience a tax increase. This is because there is a now a \$10,000 cap on deducting state income and property taxes if you itemize your deductions on your tax return. If you think this could impact you, LVEA advises that you contact your tax advisor a.s.a.p. and see if you need to readjust your federal withholdings for 2018. If you need to increase your federal withholdings, please contact payroll at the district office.

LVEA Membership Activities

Our LVEA Membership Committee has been busy coordinating activities for members. We’re here to listen and advocate on your behalf – we want to hear your concerns and suggestions! It started with a social gathering of SpEd members at Twisted Oak in Agoura Hills on December 1. It was a great turnout for members to share their thoughts and concerns – and have a great time as well! On February 28, elementary members met at Stonehaus in Westlake for a fun afterschool social. Upcoming social functions are March 28 for middle school members and April 25 for high school members. Please check your personal email account for invitations. All members are welcome! We’ve even coordinated a Dodger game with our neighboring associations on April 13 – fifteen of you have signed up. In addition to negotiations and representation for members in need of assistance, we provide a collaborative platform to advance your profession in our district...we are here for you!

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