

United Educators of San Francisco
Assembly Meeting Unofficial Minutes
Wednesday, December 17, 2003, 4:00 p.m.

Minutes (5)

Approval of MinutesSusan Solomon

M/S/C to approve the minutes, with this addition: Teachers James Galgano, Nancy Maxson and Claudia Haas were appointed to the WSF Committee. (See President's Report.)

Financial (5)

Financial Report..... Elaine Merriweather

M/S/C to accept the report.

Special Order of Business

Election CommitteeMike Monley

Brother Monley announced the names of the winners of the election for substitute delegates for the Delegate Assembly. They are: Mary Murphy, Martin Green, Thomas Gallagher, Tay McArthur, Charles Forve, Daniel Markarian, Dante Gutierrez, Marie Schiano and Vince Quackenbush. He is checking on the eligibility of two write-in candidates.

The Election Committee is down to 2 members. Eleanor Gaffney was a member, and the other members have retired. Volunteers are greatly needed to complete the second year of a two-year term. Much of the work can be done by e-mail. Heidi Scott, Liz Conley, Bob Bogiages and Claudia Haas volunteered at the meeting. Other members are encouraged to volunteer. Elections to be held this year are for conventions and State Council.

Announcement: On this Saturday, December 20, 11:00 a.m., there will be a picket and rally at the Safeway at Church and Market Streets in support of the 70,000 striking UFCW workers in southern California. UESF members will meet at 10:30 in front of the old UESF office. Flyers were available.

2004-2005 Calendar: Meetings have begun with the District to set next year's calendar. Local 790, UASF and the PTA, inadvertently left out of the meetings for this year's calendar, are also included in the meetings. Copies of 3 different versions of the calendar were distributed. Delegates should post these at our sites to discuss them and to gather opinions. The calendar will be discussed again and voted on at January's Assembly meeting. It will then be brought back to the District. San Francisco City College wants to know about spring break, most importantly. The intention is to set the calendar as early as possible.

President's Report (10)..... Dennis Kelly

1. Negotiations: Negotiations take place one day/week every other week. UESF has put forward four items around which we want discussions to center: Compensation, including any early retirement packages; CDP revenue enhancement; elementary work day issues; and No Child Left Behind, especially as it affects paraprofessionals. Negotiations on 12/16 included a report on revenue enhancements and enhancement possibilities from CDP director Dr. Mary Marin. UESF was told at 4:00 p.m. on 12/15 that the District's financial officers, whose presence at the 12/16 meeting we were expecting for two weeks, were not available.
2. Building Committee Bidding for the renovation work went to a second set of contractors, but bids, at \$1.3-1.4 million, were just as high as the original bids. UESF has asked the NALC officers if they would be willing to buy out UESF's share per our agreement. They expect to respond by January 9. The Building Corporation Agreement says we have to offer our share to NALC first if we want to remove ourselves. It is an admirable goal to own our own building, but UESF continues to get complaints from members about the building's location and the office space.

Vice- President's Report (10).....Linda Plack

1. Health Benefits: It is possible that members who changed health plans during open enrollment have had too much money deducted from their paychecks or were dropped from all coverage. Members need to make sure they are still covered. The new benefits manager,

Stephanie Caine, at 241-6118, seems very helpful. Members are urged to talk with her or Sister Plack and not to give up.

2. Personnel Committee: The committee meets monthly at Lincoln High School. Next meeting: January 27, at which time there will be a report on staff reviews, which occur every 12 weeks for field representatives. Area representatives will be reviewed in January. The committee supports the resolution for a substitute hotline.
3. Unit Work: There are people who are doing unit work who are not union members, especially wellness coordinators. UESF is looking into the possibility of their joining the union. There are also ongoing discussions with PTAs, some of which have raised funds to fund positions. This year, some PTAs are hiring “on the cheap”—volunteers are paid much less than unit members to open libraries and do counseling, for example. The explanation is that they “are doing it for the kids.” UESF members also want what is best for students, which means having licensed, trained personnel doing the work. The work should be union work and people should be paid a living wage. As a union, we do not want to see school libraries and computer labs closed, but we also are not willing to see them kept open by low-paid workers. It is important that we get the WSF situation under control and share our point of view with the public and parents.
4. Spring Conference: On February 21 at Lincoln High School, there will be an all-day membership conference, expanding on the spring retirement conference that has been held for the past 7 years. A continental breakfast and lunch will be served. Suggestion: With elections approaching, lobbying training should be included.

Staff Reports

Seven Hour On-Site Workday Actions..... Jocelyn Won

UESF just received notification from a PERB attorney that our claim was dismissed. We have to go through the grievance procedure, which leads to binding arbitration. It seems that, since not all grievance possibilities were exhausted, it may be possible to file a grievance at a later date. Now we are waiting for the grievance to be sent to arbitration.

1. Contract Administration..... Mary Anne Ahtye

a) Non-re-election affects probationary 1 and 2 teachers. Human Resources sends out letters to principals in January to ask if they are planning to recommend non re-election for any teachers. Principals must meet with teachers to tell them why they are not being re-elected. Non-re-election is most often based on evaluations, so evaluations should be in place.

b) The deadline for sabbatical application was announced as December 19 in the December 17 WAD. UESF will be asking for a two-week extension following the winter break.

c) Longevity pay for paraprofessionals went into effect in July 1995. Paychecks are finally starting to reflect longevity pay. Delegates should survey paras at our sites to find out whether they are eligible. Criteria for longevity pay: 10 years of employment.

Resolutions: The following 4 resolutions brought forward from Executive Board.

1. March 20th International Day of Protest Tom Edminster, Lita Blanc and Cynthia Lasden
Whereas millions of people took to the streets around the world to oppose the illegal invasion and occupation of Iraq, including on Feb 15 of this year when 10 million people took the streets; and

Whereas such globally-coordinated efforts help to focus unions and progressive social forces on the vision of a world free from war and want; and

Whereas United for Peace and Justice, a U.S. peace coalition has spearheaded domestic and international efforts to focus popular sentiment in world-wide demonstrations of protest to be held on March 20, 2004, the first year anniversary of the US-led invasion of Iraq; and

Whereas other peace forces in the US are joining in this effort, including Military Families Speak Out, Veterans for Peace, US Labor Against the War, Racial Justice 911: People of Color Against the War, and Not In Our Name, and

Whereas this demonstration will also focus political attention on attacks on social spending, the shredding of civil liberties and attacks on immigrants and communities of color;

Therefore be it resolved that the United Educators of San Francisco endorse this action and make efforts to participate in any appropriate local coalition for this mobilization; and

Be it further resolved that UESF encourage the San Francisco Labor Council and UESF state affiliates to endorse and participate in this planned action, by submitting the appropriate resolutions to the CTA State Council and the CFT Convention.

M/S/C

2. Affiliation with USLAW..... Tom Edminster, Lita Blanc and Cynthia Lasden

Whereas, our nation faces a domestic calamity - unemployment, declining wages and benefits, deunionization of the workforce, reduced public services, crumbling health care and educational systems, cuts in veterans benefits, escalating public debt and decreased economic, social and personal security.

Whereas, massive military spending, combined with tax cuts for the rich, is gutting the Federal budget.

Whereas, this crisis is a product of the Bush administration's policies (backed by a Congressional majority) of military intervention abroad and attacks on working peoples' rights at home.

Whereas, only corporations and the wealthy have benefited from these policies.

Whereas, we cannot solve these economic and social problems without addressing U.S. foreign policy and its consequences.

Whereas, Bush's policy of Permanent War has been based on deception, lies and false promises to the American people.

Whereas, the war in Iraq has resulted in the death of thousands of Iraqis and hundreds of US soldiers and is costing our nation's taxpayers tens of billions of dollars.

Whereas, the foreign policy of the Bush administration has weakened rather than strengthened security in the U.S., creating enemies around the world and alienating long-time allies.

Therefore Be it Resolved that the United Educators of San Francisco supports the principles in the Mission Statement adopted at the National Labor Assembly of October 25, 2003, namely:

- a just foreign policy based on International law and global justice that promotes genuine security and prosperity at home and abroad;
- an end to U.S. occupation of foreign countries;
- the redirecting of the nation's resources from inflated military spending to meeting the needs of working families for health care, education, a clean environment, housing and a decent standard of living;
- supporting our troops and their families by bringing the troops home now, by not recklessly putting them in harms way, by providing adequate veterans' benefits and promoting domestic policies that prioritize the needs of working people who make up the bulk of the military;
- protecting workers rights, civil rights, civil liberties and the rights of immigrants by promoting democracy, not subverting it;
- solidarity with workers around the world who are struggling for their own labor and human rights, and with those in the U.S. who want US foreign and domestic policies to reflect our nation's highest ideals.

Therefore Be it Further Resolved that UESF will encourage our state affiliates to join U.S. Labor Against the War (USLAW) to protect our members, their families, communities and jobs, and the lives and livelihoods of working people everywhere---and UESF will undertake such efforts as necessary to fulfill this mandate (i.e. submit resolutions to the CTA State Council and the CFT Convention). **M/S/C**

4. Substitute Hotline Proposal.....Sandra Mack
Whereas, this fall the trial Substitute Hot Line has operated from 3:30 to 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday, and

Whereas, the Hot Line helps answer contractual questions of fact, gives calm, common sense advice based on knowledge of the contract, and

Whereas, the Hot Line refers problems requiring follow-up to a staff representative or, if the problem originates above the building level, to the Vice President, Substitutes, and

Whereas, this service has helped many substitutes while freeing up the time of staff representatives, and

Whereas, the Hot Line has to be cancelled whenever its one staffer has negotiations, grievance hearings or other conflicts,

Therefore be it resolved that the trial Substitute Hot Line be extended through the 2003-2004 school year by the use of volunteers selected by the personnel committee, and

Be it further resolved that the Hot Line be staffed by four volunteers, each of whom commit to the Hot Line two hours daily for five days, and

Be it finally resolved that because these individuals would be limiting themselves to early-closing schools UESF offer a small stipend of up to \$150 per month, based on \$30 per day per person as a gesture of appreciation.

Friendly amendment from Lily Gee Hickman: Change “volunteers” to “individuals” and drop “a small stipend of” to address the concern of whether volunteers are really employees.

No objection to the amendment.

M/S/C on amended motion.

M/S/C to extend time.

Sister Mack is currently the only person staffing the hotline. It has been used and is useful, but she cannot always be in the office.

5. Resolution from the Elementary Schools Committee Regarding the Houghton-Mifflin Reading Series Adoption and Reading First Program

Whereas the questions, concerns and issues cited below have arisen during the fall semester of 2003 as a result of SFUSD’s adoption of the Houghton-Mifflin reading series for elementary schools and of the Reading First program at some schools to oversee the implementation of said adoption,

1. How was the determination made about which schools would become Reading First schools?
2. Can a school opt out of being a Reading First school?
3. How much money did the District receive for the Reading First grant? We want to see a breakdown of how the funds are being allocated so that we know what our resources are.
4. Many teachers who attended the complete training in the summer have not been paid. Compensation should be timely. Specific dates are needed for compensation for the completed summer 2003 training and for the 24 hours of planning time taking place during the school year. How long can compensation legally be withheld?

5. Teachers who were only able to attend 3 days of training should be paid for that time. Currently, the impression is that they will not receive any compensation unless they were in attendance for the entire training and completed all the work required, or until training is completed. Participants were not informed of these conditions prior to the training.
6. It was not clear that the training was voluntary. In many cases, teachers were told it was mandatory. Since payment is in the form of a stipend and is less than extended hours rates of pay, it is now clear that it was voluntary. Clarification is needed before training sessions commence.
7. At some schools, STAR-school-like walkthroughs are occurring, but these sites are not being given STAR support (funding and staff assistance). Schools that are being treated like STAR schools should receive STAR support.
8. The non-STAR walkthroughs have a debriefing session during the instructional day with the District personnel who conduct the walkthroughs, meaning that not all teachers can attend. (Example: At one school, only teachers with student teachers working in their classrooms could attend.) These sessions should occur at a time when all teachers can attend.
9. There are various scheduling issues at Reading First schools. Examples from different Reading First schools:
 - a. Teachers have been told that field trips are not allowed.
 - b. Teachers have been told that field trips will only be allowed after the literacy block is over. [Both a) and b) will negatively impact the Adventures in Music program sponsored free of charge by the San Francisco Symphony.]
 - c. Teachers have been told that the literacy block must be uninterrupted, meaning that students have 2 _ hours of instruction without a recess.
 We believe that items 6a), b) and c) may constitute a violation of Article 25.3.7 regarding the role of UBCs in matters pertaining to school policy and operations.
10. Necessary curriculum materials, especially for assessments, should be received at least 10 days before they are to be used with students so that teachers have an opportunity to become familiar with them. Such was not the case this year.
11. Each site needs adequate curriculum materials for all classroom, RSP and Special Education teachers. (At this time, it appears that only RSP teachers who are at Reading First schools receive Houghton-Mifflin curriculum materials. At non-Reading First schools, sites must use funds from their site budget to obtain materials for RSP teachers. It also appears that materials were not readily available to Special Education teachers at all sites.)

Therefore, be it resolved that the President and other UESF officers and staff as needed will bring these issues, concerns and questions to a Contract Administration Committee meeting with the District and/or to any other forum deemed necessary to address and respond to said questions and concerns; and

Be it further resolved that protocols be established for:

- District walkthroughs at school sites
- The role of coaches at Reading First schools
- Release time for teachers at Reading First schools so they have input into determining the use of such release time
- Curriculum training, so that participation requirements and amount and dates of compensation are presented in writing prior to the training sessions; and

Be it finally resolved that the District's response will be forwarded to the UESF Elementary Schools Committee before January 28 so that it may be discussed at the Elementary Schools Committee meeting on that date. **M/S/C**

Divisional Committee Reports

1. Paraprofessionals Committee Bradley Reeves

On Dec. 4, there was a paraprofessional meeting at Ida B. Wells High School. Discussion topics included retirement and moves by the District to lay paras off next month. Next meeting: January 15. Yesterday, there was a meeting for security aides (T10s). 30 T10s attended. The School Board and District introduced their plans for security a few weeks ago. Stasha Wiskel is now in charge of security. About 38 T10s signed up for training sessions during winter break. There will be a mandatory training on the professional development day in January. Many surveys sent to T10s were returned; there is valuable information in them. There is no formula for the number of security aides assigned to sites. One of UESF’s concerns is that the District not turn security aides into security guards. The District wants to have them wear uniforms. The District has the right to mandate uniforms, but UESF has the right to bargain effects—such as not making T10s targets by the type of uniforms they must wear.

The District is planning to lay off about 25 paras and to consolidate 5-6. The rationale for layoffs and consolidations is based on lowered enrollment shown by the 10-day count. There will be a demonstration at the next Board meeting, January 13, to try to convince the Board not to approve the layoffs. Brother Reeves urged everyone to come out on January 13 to support the paras.

2. Substitute Division Sandra Mack

- a) The recent election of substitute delegates means that everyone elected will be notified and will be informed of duties. It is hoped that they will also be able to meet sometimes outside of Assembly meetings to address substitutes’ concerns.
- b) There will be a resolution from the committee re: the hiring freeze for substitutes.
- c) The survey about a possible shortage of substitutes was recently completed and is being analyzed. The problem of substitute coverage appears to be more area- specific, and is not District-wide.

Vince Quackenbush congratulated Sister Mack for winning the grievance on a cancelled job. The results were even better than he expected.

3. High School Committee Ken Tray

The union’s message needs to get out to media and public more. Frank Tom suggested that the District is planning on opening another continuation high school in the Bayview- Hunters Point area. UESF has to be there to make sure the District moves in the right direction. Brother Tray urged participation at the next meeting on January 28. The committee asked Dr. Tom to ask Elois Brooks to have another enrollment meeting, with the purpose of decreasing the student population at west side schools.

4. Child Development Program Betty Robinson-Harris

The next meeting will be on January 10 at Cesar Chavez School. The Board of Education approved a health plan for K-12 students, as it is done in CDPs. This means a medication administration schedule is included. CDP is in the process of preparing a grievance re: medication administration. Now the District is trying to get SEIU Local 790 clerks to give medicine to students. The District acknowledges that CDP is a valuable program and yet has said it must stop encroaching on general funds.

5. Counselors’ Committee Amy Loomis

The committee is working with PPS and Truancy Abatement. Attendance clerks of Local 790 are losing their jobs. There is no evidence of onsite truancy monitors. Teachers are subbing for counselors. 8th grade counselors have a lot of additional work with students’ applications to Lowell High School. The committee is in discussion with Susan Wong regarding the need for counselor-specific professional development.

6. Middle School Committee Merilee Hearn

The committee met with Diane Meltesen and voiced concerns about the WSF. For example, what benefits do bilingual and immersion programs derive from WSF? Meltesen responded that the District is working on giving ELLs more weight. Do parents really understand the program when they sign their children up for ELD? If a school does not want a particular program, can it request a change? The answer given was yes; schools can appeal to the Program Placement Committee, which will look at the numbers of students involved and determine whether the program can be relocated.

There are problems with the transition from elementary to middle school. There used to be transmittal cards, listing students' interests, test scores, etc. Meltesen acknowledged this has broken down; she'll talk to the Placement Office. There will be a deadline: by the middle of January, middle schools should know their WSF. In May, enrollment numbers and WSF should be accurate.

There is going to be a scripted math program. Everett, King and two other schools are scheduled to try it out. Q: What if a student can't pass the A level of High Point, the scripted reading program? A: There is support for parents whose children are enrolled in scripted reading programs. Parents have choices about their students' placement.

7. Special Education Committee.....Linda Plack

Next meeting: Wednesday, January 28, 4:00 at Washington High School, Room 136.

8. Academic Freedom Committee.....Kit Bell

The committee discussed the effect of what some teachers call a "scripted" curriculum forced on educators, causing them to abandon successful, best practices. It also discussed the disrespectful manner in which educators have been treated during these past months of these programs' implementation.

- 1) We came up with a working definition of Academic Freedom: Educators having the right to create and implement the best practices, curricula and methods to facilitate the learning needs of all students, while meeting state standards appropriate to their grade level.
- 2) The committee wants more input regarding Academic Freedom and would like more members to know about our meetings. We will all bring this issue to our UBCs and spread the word for our next meeting.
- 3) We looked at our contract language, Article 6.2, relating to Academic Freedom, and we feel there needs to be stronger protections for our members in the contract. We want to be sure that this issue is brought up at the negotiating table next year.
- 4) The committee wants to collect data from the membership. It was suggested we could reach members through e-mail asking questions such as: How effective is our current reading program? Have you been forced to use methods of teaching a curriculum you don't agree with? What are your concerns about the implementation of current programs? What has been useful? Would you make any additions or changes to our definition of Academic Freedom?
- 5) It was suggested that media exposure should be encouraged.
- 6) Some tasks the committee members will undertake are: investigate what is being done about Academic Freedom at the state and federal levels; ask for input from CFT and CTA representatives regarding contract language in other districts; contact members of the board of Education regarding our concerns.

After our first meeting, the committee decided that we could not meet the January 21 deadline outlined in the original resolution passed at the November Delegate assembly meeting. We will need more time to gather the information to complete our task. Next meeting: Wednesday, January 14, 2004, 4:00 p.m., Martin Luther King Middle School library.

Delegation Reports

1. Labor CouncilTom Edminster

The first reading of proposed bylaws revisions was postponed until May to give smaller unions more time to examine the issues. One proposed bylaws revision would change the position of Secretary-Treasurer to appointed, not elected. Another proposal includes language about informing locals if any of their delegates and Executive Board members is absent from three meetings.

The December 8 meeting included a mini COPE convention so that recommendations for candidates for state elections can be made to the California Labor Federation. There was a healthy debate about whether to endorse Tom Lantos for Congress. The compromise motion

which passed was to inform Mr. Lantos that he barely won the endorsement due to his pro-war stance on the war in Iraq. Leland Yee was also endorsed, an endorsement UESF opposed.

Per the change in UESF bylaws regarding attendance at SFLC Delegate and Executive Board meetings, three members have been notified that they are expected to resign. Attendance reports were distributed at the Assembly meeting.

New Business (5)

Draft of Mission Statement for the UESF Affordable Housing Plan Jason Blum and Luisa Ezquerro

The UESF is committed to working with SFUSD and the Mayor of San Francisco to develop a formal program which will encourage home purchasing, as well as affordable rentals for Teachers and Paraprofessionals.

San Francisco Architect Stuart Stoller mentions the following:

Median housing price in San Francisco has been hovering in the \$590,000 to \$600,000 level during the year 2003. Even at the bottom rung of available realty in San Francisco, an experienced teacher making \$45,000 per year cannot afford to purchase a home or condo. With virtually no homes or condominiums under \$350,000 in the city, the monthly mortgage and tax on a \$350,000 purchase (assuming the requirement of a 20% down payment) is approximately \$2,200. This is nearly 60% of a teacher's monthly income, a figure mortgage companies would not permit. (Stuart Stoller, Architect, Creating Housing for Teachers in San Francisco, pp. 6-7, September 2003.)

Without a doubt, in order to develop an effective Home Purchase Program for teachers in the San Francisco Unified School District, there needs to be commitment (buy-in) among the teachers, paraprofessionals, the District, the business community, and of course neighborhoods. It has to be a team effort across the board.

There must be a Task Force, which is made up of all stakeholders. This Task Force will develop a strategy, which will ultimately result in affordable rentals and home ownership for SFUSD Teachers and Paraprofessionals.

Members can get in touch with Brother Blum through Dennis Kelly and Luisa Ezquerro. This mission statement is the policy of this union. There are 16 acres of unused District land that could be used for housing. The language in the statement can be made broader in order to include other certificated members.

Good of the Order

Concerns raised: 1) Substitutes are not trained in new curriculum programs. 2) To negotiating team: If the District wants to give out gift cards again, that should be handled as a wage and hour issue and should be negotiated. 3) Suggestions: that we not vote to extend our meetings if there is not a commitment to stay until the end, and keep announcements short. 4) Senator Diane Feinstein voted to support school vouchers in Washington, D.C. We should communicate our disappointment to her.

Sergeant-at-Arms report: 44 sites represented and 71 members present at this meeting: 21 elementary, 8 middle, and 12 high schools, 1 CDC, School Health Programs, and substitutes.

Adjournment in Honor of Eleanor Gaffney, Bob Donn and Thelma Faltus

Adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Solomon, Secretary