

United Educators of San Francisco
Assembly Meeting
Wednesday, October 15, 2003, 4:00 p.m.
Minutes

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Approval of Minutes Susan Solomon
M/S/C to approve minutes as presented.

Staff Reports

1. COPE Report..... Ken Tray

On October 28, 29, and 30, we will be tending the phone banks at Coleman Advocates for Youth, 459 Vienna Street, for Proposition A. We are a significant part of the coalition for Prop. A, because polls show we are the most influential organization when schools and education are the issues. A minimum of 30 volunteers is needed. Ammiano's charter amendment makes it even more important that we participate. A sign-up sheet was circulated.

This coming Saturday is Labor for Ammiano Day. There will be precinct-walking, starting from Ammiano for Mayor Headquarters, 980 Mission, starting at 10:00 a.m.

On Friday, October 24, from 3:00-6:00, at El Valenciano, 1153 Valencia Street, there will be a TGIF fundraiser for Ammiano, sponsored by UESF and Local 2121. Flyers should be distributed and announcements made at our sites. 81% of all school funding comes from the state; Ammiano's charter amendment would tie a significant amount of local funds to our schools.

Campaign literature for Ammiano was available at the meeting and is available at the office.

2. Seven Hour On-Site Report Jocelyn Won

An Unfair Labor Practice was filed simultaneously with a class-action grievance. The Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) will probably kick the ULP back, because there is a grievance procedure in place in the District. We are filing it anyway because the Education Labor Relations Act says that a unilateral move by management is an unfair labor practice. About 14 schools have been affected by the 7-hour on-site workday requirement, where staff must sign in and sign out. In the past, there was some kind of agreement between the District and UESF to have only individual grievances, but Sister Won is moving forward with the class action grievance.

Sister Lisa Gutierrez-Guzman spoke well at the school board meeting on the issue. Brother Kelly reported that Superintendent Arlene Ackerman announced at the Board meeting that the reason for the 7-hour on-site workday requirement is so that parents can know when they can reach teachers. (This is her third interpretation of what she meant.) She will be having another Round Table with representatives from schools where this is issue is a problem. She plans to explain the parents' position to teachers.

3. Superintendent's Decision/President's Report..... Dennis Kelly

Background: There was a Board of Education meeting with orchestrated compliments for Ackerman, followed later in that week by a press conference. There had been speculation that she was leaving, so it was thought she might be announcing her departure from the District at the press conference. Instead, she announced her intentions to stay. Her decision to stay means we know with whom we are working. It is not our role to like or dislike this, but to see that she behaves well.

Negotiations: UESF and the District arrived at a conceptual design on two issues, to be brought to our constituents for input:

1) The District wanted to close the CDP for a week (12/24/03-1/2/04).The centers were closed for 2 days during winter break last year. The conceptual design, for this school year only, is to close the days before and after Christmas and New Year's, when attendance is low. This is down from the 6 days requested by the District to 4.

2) Professional Development days: Two of the three dates are immutable. The Education Code states that Veterans' Day is November 11; there is no way to change it. The other one is Lunar New Year; the moon

is not changing. The one we were able to change, we did change. The Education Code states that Cesar Chavez' birthday can be celebrated on his birthday or on the closest Monday. The conceptual design changes the observation of Chavez' birthday from Tuesday, March 30 to Monday, March 29, and the professional development day from March 29 to March 30, thus providing teachers with a three-day weekend.

Assembly Bill 1207 has not come up in negotiations yet. This CFT-sponsored bill would allow for 2 years of salary credit or 2 years salary credit and two years credit added to a teacher's age as a golden handshake. In order to implement this, the District has to be able to prove that it will save money and that it can repay money that is put out for implementation within 8 years.

Concern re: Ackerman's gag order, as reported in the San Francisco Bay Guardian. The reported type of gag order is along the lines of, "Don't say anything when you leave this room," and goes back to the Rojas days. Ackerman has the ability to repudiate it. She has not said it herself, but her "third floor administrators" have. Brother Kelly and Sister Plack will be meeting with her on 10/16, and the issue will be raised. Democracy, the cornerstone of the union, does not allow for abridgement of free speech, and being an employee of the District does not in any way abridge free speech rights. It is up to Ackerman to deal with administrators who feel they need to control parents, staff and faculty. Administrators are told there are to be no interviews of staff; principals have to call in to the District office to report what is going to be discussed with the media. This order is sent only to administrators, not teachers.

Question: Some sites have decided on their own to switch professional development dates. Can that be done? The District has not shown an interest in this approach. The District's concern is that there be district-wide professional development. Another concern may be about liability, if an employee gets hurt at a site on a day schools are supposed to be closed. The date change could offend people who celebrate the holidays. Brother Kelly has no problem with signing off on waivers presented for the purpose of changing the dates.

4. Personnel Actions.....Linda Plack

Ken Grady was interviewed by the Personnel Committee and will be the new area representative, filling a vacancy. The next committee meeting will be October 30. Delegates were asked to take their distributions with them today. UESF is asking activists to take distributions to our own and nearby schools. The less time area representative have to spend doing distributions, the more time they have to spend in schools, talking with members.

5. CLUW Conference.....Mary Anne Ahtye Sister Ahtye was in Seattle for a CLUW (Coalition of Labor Union Women) Conference. 713 women attended. There were many interesting topics, including health issues. AFL-CIO has many constituency groups, such as Pride at Work, LACLA, APRI, APALA, and others. If anyone wants to join a constituency group, Sister Ahtye can provide applications. AFT is part of AFL-CIO, which requires that we affiliate with local Labor Councils.

Resolutions

1. Resolution on the Assembly Agenda.....Lita Blanc

Whereas UESF began the 2003-2004 year by reaching outwards with a well-attended membership conference and;

Whereas increased interest and high expectations were reflected in the large turn-out at the September Assembly meeting;

Whereas it is the Executive Board's responsibility to organize Assembly meetings so that rank and file members feel empowered to defend their interests at their school sites;

Therefore be it resolved that:

1. The President will organize the agenda for each assembly meeting by limiting the number of reports and prioritizing those reports which have an immediate impact on our members or which require immediate action and

Be it further resolved that:

2. The agenda be presented to the Assembly with time limits for each report and its accompanying discussion and that

3. The Executive Board request that the Sergeant-At-Arms serve as time-keeper for Assembly meetings and/or appoint a time-keeper for assembly meetings.

Sister Blanc motivated, saying that the resolution is in response to the frustration with runaway agendas and the inability at times to discuss the most pressing issues at school sites. She recognized that we might not all agree on what is urgent, but officers should prioritize.

Amendment: that committees be allowed to submit written reports in lieu of oral reports. The maker of the motion accepted it.

Points made: The agenda can be amended at a meeting. At the beginning of meetings, the agenda should be presented to the Assembly and be approved.

Resolution with amendment **M/S/C**.

2. Delegation Responsibility (2nd reading of Bylaw change).....Tom Edminster/Ken Tray

c. UESF delegates to affiliated bodies that meet regularly (the San Francisco Labor Council, the CTA State Council, etc.) must notify the chairperson of the delegation or president of the union in advance of their absences from regularly scheduled meetings for which they are elected delegates.

Absences without notification or which do not meet the conditions stipulated below shall not be considered "excused". (Normal communication may include a voicemail to the appropriate person at the UESF office or a similarly directed email.)

d. Reasons which shall constitute good cause for such absences include:

1. Illness or emergency medical appointment
2. Family emergency
3. School crisis or job-necessitated meeting
4. UESF business
5. Non-service vacation period
6. Conflict with school/ work schedule.

e. three or more consecutive absences by a UESF delegate to an affiliated body without good cause shall constitute the basis for removal from the delegated position. Such a removal for cause shall take place by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board. Notice of such a vote, as a special order of business, shall be mailed to the Executive Board and to all members of the delegation in question, no later than two weeks prior to the date of the intended vote.

Summary: Everyone in a delegation representing UESF is responsible for attendance. This resolution provides for removal by the Executive Board for 3 or more consecutive unexcused absences.

Q: If someone is removed, how is s/he replaced? Brother Kelly responded that we will use language that already exists: there will be an appointment by the president, which will have to be approved by the Executive Board.

There was a discussion about what constitutes formal notification about proposed bylaws changes, as required in the bylaws. Faxes were sent to every building representative, and e-mails were also sent out through the list-serve. The bylaws do not specify that a formal notification requires a mailing.

M/S/C, with a few abstentions.

3. **M/S/C** Endorsement of the "Bring the Troops Home Now" march and rally on Saturday, October 25. Flyers were distributed.

Divisional Committee Reports

(Maximum of five minutes per report at this meeting)

1. Middle School Committee Merilee Hearn

The committee met on September 24. Eleven people attended. Issues discussed were class size, RSP services, supplies available to sites, the 7-hour on-site workday issue, and who is to meet with Dianne Meltesen.

2. Elementary School Committee.....Susan Solomon

The committee met on September 24. There were 16 sites represented by 20 attendees. Three main issues were discussed: the 7-hour on-site workday; the adjusted Weighted Student Formula budget and the resulting budget deficits in many schools brought about by lower enrollment than projected last spring; and the Reading First program in some of the STAR schools.

3. High School CommitteeKen Tray

The committee met with ISO Frank Tom at Lowell. Issues: a) SSC decision-making. Some decisions are subverted and sabotaged by administrators. Tom said he would talk with principals. b) Workday: beyond the 7-hour day, teachers are asked to supervise school events, attend back-to school events, and tutor. c) Concern with Special Education students who pose a danger. It was suggested that the situation be grieved, but the committee really wants a resolution to the problem. d) Large School Task Force: The District claims to continue to be committed, but that is not evident.

4. Child Development Committee.....Betty Robinson-Harris

The committee met October 6. Issues: a) Calendar. The committee is awaiting resolution re: the winter break calendar. b) Funds are needed up front because the administration doesn't want to deal with petty cash receipts. It is often necessary for CDP personnel to make purchases for the program. c) Consolidations are still a concern. Next meeting: Nov. 10 at William J. Cobb.

5. Counselors' Committee.....Amy Loomis

Problems continue with the new computer system counselors are required to use. There are many new counselors who need to be recruited for the committee. It is important for middle school counselors to have information about high school events on their calendars so it can be shared with students. Paperwork continues to be an issue, especially with tracking truancy, a task that has fallen to counselors.

6. Paraprofessionals Committee.....Bradley Reeves

The District agreed to hold off on consolidations at least for this calendar year, but Special Education was not included in the agreement. Reassignments are still going on. There are no guidelines in the contract for the transfer of one-on-one Special Education paras. Leaves that were approved are now being challenged; dismissals have resulted. Shirley Byrd, who coordinates leaves, is out on a 2 month leave herself. Brother Kelly pointed out that Brother Reeves put a human face on the consolidation issue, resulting in the District's director of labor-management relations advocating for holding off during this calendar year.

7. Substitute Division.....Sandra Mack

Sister Mack was at Unemployment hearings all day. They were continued until October 27 and 28. The attorney who was to have represented UESF members had an accident and a continuation had not been requested. This resulted in some last-minute scrambling and a noon, rather than 9:00 a.m., start.

At the last Assembly meeting, it was suggested that UESF representatives go to the school board on behalf of core substitutes. Sisters Pam Routh and Linda Plack and Brother Vince Quackenbush spoke. Our contract specifies that the District shall identify and establish a list of 20 core substitutes as soon as administratively feasible after the start of the fall semester but in no case later than 25% after the start of the school year. The District's intention was to force consolidated teachers into core sub positions. (Core substitute is a very challenging job, a position that not all teachers would want.) The District agreed to reassign 15 of the 20 core subs; it still wants to hold five positions for consolidated teachers. UESF asked the Board to circumvent a possible grievance. The result is not yet known.

10. Arbitration ReportMary Anne Ahtye

The case that just went to arbitration is on behalf of a teacher with a library media specialist credential and 10 years of experience who was denied a librarian position that instead went to a credentialed teacher who is working as an Emergency Teacher while she works on getting her Librarian Credential.

Comments and Concerns

Congratulations from Sister Gutierrez-Guzman to committee chairs for revitalizing our committees.

There was a problem reported with getting day-today subs at schools. This will be investigated.

Clarification re: truancy policy. Letters are sent to students’ homes after 3 days of unexcused absences. This is a huge burden for counselors because they have to do all the tasks required, including a long list of tasks at each level of truancy. Accountability is being pushed on teachers as well, in terms of keeping attendance records.

Concern: extra duties being thrust upon teachers, counselors, school secretaries, and other school staff. How far can the District extend duties? We have to guard our own schedules. Having a strong UBC to stand up to administrators really helps.

UBCs have the right to establish an emergency substitute plan. This applies only if a substitute was called and didn’t show up.

UESF Operational Committee Reports

1. Grievance Committee..... Sandra Mack

The committee met last week and talked through the processing of grievances, with the goal of improving the procedure at the office and at sites. Recommendation from the committee: to offer building representatives training specifically about grievances, and to make this an important part of the spring round of trainings. There are still only teachers on the committee. This matter is being held in abeyance until paraprofessionals on the Executive Board decide whether to make recommendations for changes in the constitution regarding composition of the Grievance Committee. In the meantime, paras are needed on the committee. Please call any recommendations into the office.

2. Building Corporation.....Linda Plack

The current UESF administration is not happy with the building at 2310 Mason. After consulting with an attorney, it was determined that the only way to be released from the Building Corporation agreement is to file bankruptcy, so we must move forward with the renovations. With the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC), we have asked the architects to solicit more bids in the hope that bigger contractors can bring the work in for under \$1 million. The previous bid for renovations on the bathrooms, the fourth floor and the roof, was \$1.3 million. We are responsible for 64% of the cost since we own 64% of the building. We want to proceed as quickly as possible before the rain starts.

3. Communications Committee..... Robin Brasso

The committee NEEDS MEMBERS! The committee’s first job is to staff a UESF table at the School Fair on Saturday, October 25, at Marina Middle School.

4. Health and Safety.....Hene Kelly

Sister Kelly will be running an Indoor Air Quality training on October 30. Twenty-five schools can participate in the training; 15 are signed up so far. There is a \$250 stipend for the year’s training. There is a proposal being put forward that School Site Plans include a plan for improving indoor air quality. If you wish to participate in the training, call Ed Ochi at 241-6234 and tell him Hene sent you, or call Sister Kelly at 533-5244. An informational flyer was distributed.

5. Financial Report.....Elaine

Merriweather Please see attached report. There is going to be an audit in two weeks.

6. Social Activities Committee.....Susan Solomon

Sister Solomon urged members to join the committee, whose purpose is to plan and organize social functions for UESF. A sign-up sheet was circulated.

Delegation Reports

Labor Council.....Tom Edminster

Get Out the Vote has been the big focus. A significant result of these efforts could be seen in San Francisco’s large turnout against the gubernatorial recall. The SFLC COPE dinner on October 17 will

honor Tho Do, of HERE Local 2, Stan Warren of the Building Trades Council and Kristina Zinnen, former secretary of the SFLC.

New Business

Six grievances have been filed on behalf of teachers who lost their health coverage during the summer through no fault of their own. UESF tried everything, including going to the Health Services Board. Now, the District seems to be moving on it. There may have to be another grievance filed, because of expenses incurred while the teachers had no coverage.

Good of the Order

Brother Vince Quackenbush called for UESF to call for a march on Sacramento on the first Saturday after Governor-elect Schwarzenegger announces a repeal of the vehicle license tax, which would result in serious cuts to education and other services.

Sister Routh thanked Sister Mack for her hard work on behalf of substitutes.

Brother Tray announced that 29 people signed up for phone banking for Proposition A.

Announcement: Hallinan for District Attorney window signs were available.

Brother Tray will be visiting schools this Friday in his role as COPE director. Members were asked to tell him if they wanted him to come to their schools.

Announcement: The Peace, Justice and Human Rights Committee will be meeting on Thursday, October 30, and on Thursday, November 20, at 4:00, in Room 208 at Lincoln High School.

Sister Mack asked that substitutes meet with her right after the Assembly meeting adjourned.

Sister Pat Crawford thanked Brother Edminster for helping with distributions.

The Building Representative trainings continue at Castagnola's Restaurant, at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, November 10 for CDP and at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 12 for high school. If you missed the Elementary or Middle School trainings, you may go to one of these. Please contact the office to confirm your attendance. Sergeant-at-Arms Roberto Michel reported that 70 people were present at today's meeting, representing 42 sites and three programs.

***Adjournment in memory of Bob Landis, Carolyn Myszack, Ella Look Wong, and Peter Zasso.
M/S/C to adjourn at 6:14 p.m.***