

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

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Approval of Minutes Susan Solomon

M/S/C

Reports

1. COPE Report..... Ken Tray

The COPE recommendation meeting was held last week. COPE members voted to recommend that the Assembly endorse Tom Ammiano for Mayor and Kamala Harris for District Attorney. **M/S/C** to separate the two recommendations and vote separately on each. **M/S/C** to endorse Ammiano. There was a discussion regarding the strength of COPE's endorsement of Harris, as the first ballot was 20-15 in favor of endorsing Harris, short of the two-thirds majority required for a COPE endorsement, and the second ballot was 20-7 in favor of endorsing Harris. **M/S/F** to accept COPE's endorsement of Harris (21-14). **M/S/C** to endorse Terrence Hallinan. (20-14, with 3 abstentions.)

Resolutions

1. Proposition A (referred without action)..... UESF E-Board

Whereas Proposition A on the San Francisco ballot in November is a bond issue for the physical repair and improvement of San Francisco Unified School District schools, and

Whereas this Proposition has put in place safeguards to prevent the misspending of money as has happened in the past, and

Whereas Proposition A will use the money raised on local bonds to earn over \$48 million in matching funds from the state,

Therefore Be It Resolved that UESF supports the passage of Proposition A, and

Be it further Resolved that UESF urges the membership of the union to study the issue and communicate their feelings to other voters as well as the media.

Board of Education Commissioners Jill Wynns and Eric Mar were invited to speak. Wynns distributed copies of a list of post-proposition 13 local school funding measures in S.F. since 1988. California voters have chosen to have state-funded schools. She believes this is a policy mistake that needs to be changed, but in the meantime, we have to come up with money for our schools. (Ammiano's proposed charter amendment will assist with this.) Polling for parcel tax for schools indicated an approval rating below 40%. The core of this bond is ADA accessibility--\$80 million. This work must be done; if funding isn't raised through a bond measure, it will have to come from general funds. This proposition will also help to renovate all the high schools. Mar encouraged the Assembly to help with phone banking and to post signs supporting Prop A. Novella Smith, the campaign coordinator, can be reached at 841-1942. The website Repairourschools.org also has information regarding Proposition A. Volunteers and coordinators are needed.

A concern was raised about the money raised by the bond going through the District's Buildings and Grounds Department, which has a history of mismanaging funds and projects. Wynns responded that every management person from Building and Grounds is gone since the last work done with bond moneys. (Some are still under indictment and investigation.) Some projects were completed because the Board was allowed to move moneys; the construction of Tenderloin School is an example. Money has been replaced in the appropriate budget sections, and work is getting done. The exception is that there is insufficient money for SOTA's relocation to 135 Van Ness Avenue. There are \$15 million allocated for SOTA that will not be spent unless private funds and FEMA are in place.

This bond will not repair bungalows at Lincoln High School, since repair would have been too costly, but will replace them with a new wing. There is no money allocated for renovating Phoenix High School; rather, the plan is to relocate Phoenix, perhaps to a site on Otis Street. Another plan is to house Phoenix at the CCSF Evans Street campus. This issue is unresolved.

Concerns were raised about holding contractors accountable, which has not happened in the past. The Master Facilities Task Force recommended not only removing the bungalows from Lincoln, but reducing the enrollment, as the school is overcrowded. Adding a new wing at Lincoln will keep Lincoln’s enrollment high, instead of more evenly distributing students. President Dennis Kelly stepped aside as chair, handing it over to Vice President Linda Plack in order to speak. While he agreed that conditions at Balboa and Lincoln High Schools are deplorable, and thanked Brothers Tom Edminster and Stan di Bella for raising concerns about contractor accountability in the presence of the Commissioners, he also stated that improvements should not and cannot be withheld for the other 37 schools slated for improvements because of Lincoln and Balboa. He cautioned that the Board of Education should not assume our vote is there— but the work is greatly needed.

There was further discussion about accountability and quality of work, as well as a discussion about whether we can require that UESF be given oversight rights. It was pointed out that oversight for work is addressed in Proposition 39, and that more money will be available for teachers if money for building improvements comes from somewhere else than the general fund. A substitute motion was **M/S/F**: that UESF take a neutral position on Prop. A. Sister Sandra Mack motivated, stating that we won’t be able to hold School Board members accountable, and make them do what they should do.

Return to main motion: **M/S/C** to close debate. **M/S/C** (4 abstentions) to support Proposition A.

2. No on the Recall (referred for support) UESF E-Board

Whereas the initiative to recall Governor Gray Davis is motivated by partisan politics, not malfeasance in office, and

Whereas many of the people who put themselves forward to replace Governor Gray Davis offer programs that are intended to remove the hard-won rights of workers and to compromise social programs that serve the people of California, and

Whereas the organized labor movement in California and the teacher unions have taken a position opposed to the recall,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the United Educators of San Francisco opposes the recall of Governor Gray Davis, and

Be It Further Resolved, if the voters of California do vote to recall the Governor, the United Educators of San Francisco supports the candidacy of the elected Lieutenant Governor, Cruz Bustamante, to succeed to the governorship.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the issue of the recall and the support of Bustamante, with many members speaking to the issues. **M/S/C** to call the question. **M/S/C** (2 abstentions) to support the resolution.

3. No on 54 (referred for support) UESF E-Board

Whereas Proposition 54, the racial privacy initiative, will have the effect of hampering the acquisition of data to determine programs and efforts to assist in the reduction and elimination of racially biased situations and conditions in California, and

Whereas Proposition 54 will not create a state that is color blind by blinding the data collection of the state, and

Whereas this simplistic device does not and will not achieve racial harmony or eliminate racism,

Therefore Be It Resolved that the United Educators of San Francisco joins with the California Federation of Labor, the California Teachers' Association , and the California Federation of Teachers in opposing Proposition 54, and

UESF urges the membership of the union to study the issue and communicate their feelings to other voters as well as the media.

M/S/C unanimously.

4. Recommendation on Form of Bargaining (referred for support)UESF E-Board
UESF maintains advocacy of members' interests as a paramount concern and function, therefore UESF will engage in a problem-solving bargaining relationship that reflects mutual interests with the SFUSD, but one that is without prior agreement to use a Living Contract Committee or a process of communication solely through joint communiqués.

Concerns that were raised included the possibility of erosion of the Interest-Based Bargaining (IBB) approach, which could limit UESF's access to the District's financial information; that IBB causes us to give up democratic input from members, and prevents us from focusing on our main interests, which are money, benefits, and attracting qualified people to the District; and that the Living Contract Committee will be undermined. Statements in favor of the resolution included pointing out that it is important to make the distinction between *problem-solving* and *interest-based* and that it should be considered that the results of the last UESF elections were a reflection of members' displeasure with IBB.

Concerns were raised about the language "mutual interest"; several members questioned whether there are mutual interests between the District and UESF.

Points of information: This resolution need not affect our current contract. The District has told us they can walk away from IBPS anytime, and UESF has the option to walk away from IBPS (interest-based problem-solving) and still has the option to strike. UESF and the District will be coming to the bargaining table with their own interests.

Friendly amendment: strike "...that reflects mutual interests with the SFUSD, but one..." **M/S/C** to close debate. **M/S/C** amended motion: UESF maintains advocacy of members' interests as a paramount concern and function, therefore UESF will engage in a problem-solving bargaining relationship that is without prior agreement to use a Living Contract Committee or a process of communication solely through joint communiqués.

5. Delegation Responsibility (1st reading of By-Law 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.

6. Teachers 4 Social Justice Study GroupKaren Zapata

Whereas Teachers 4 Social Justice is a non-profit organization, formed in 2000 by SFUSD classroom teachers working in coalition with young people and community activists against proposition 21 and

Whereas Teachers 4 Social Justice has, since its inception, presented workshops, conferences and study groups to promote its mission of providing opportunities for self-transformation, leadership, and community building to educators in order to affect meaningful change in the classroom, school, community and society and

Whereas these events have been well attended and positively assessed, particularly the "Teaching for Social Justice" conference that has taken place annually since 2000 with an attendance of over 350 educators each time, a majority of which are SFUSD teachers and

Whereas the yearly Study Groups, which are smaller and more intensive gatherings than the conference, are also well attended and positively assessed and

Whereas Teachers 4 Social Justice will be presenting 5 Study Groups this year, centered around the topics of racism in our classrooms, schools and society; discipline and social justice; violence and wellness in our classrooms and communities; and high stakes testing, assessment and curriculum and

Whereas these Study Groups will begin in October of 2003 and end in May of 2004 and will be supported by a grant from the San Francisco Foundation

Therefore let it be resolved that United Educators of San Francisco endorses and will publicize these Study Groups as an opportunity for teachers to find community, grow professionally and investigate ways to take leadership on the issues presented in each group.

Karen Zapata motivated.

Friendly amendment: to eliminate "endorses and" from the "Therefore" portion of the resolution.
M/S/C to close debate.

M/S/C on the amendment.

M/S/C on the amended motion.

Reports

1. Health and Safety.....Hene Kelly

The AFT has a grant to send delegates to 4 African countries to help teachers learn how to fight AIDS. (One unit member, a nurse, has visited already.) Teachers are dying of AIDS in these nations at an alarming rate. One way we can support this cause is to buy African AIDS ribbon pins, which are sold as fundraisers. Members who are interested in bringing these pins to their schools should contact the UESF office or Sister Kelly.

2. Immigrant Freedom Ride.....Jocelyn Won The kickoff for this cross-country event is on Saturday, September 20, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00p.m., with a rally at Yerba Buena Gardens, a march to Civic Center, and a rally at Civic Center. There will also be voter registration.

Immigrant workers are a crucial element of the backbone of labor in the United States.

Attacks have increased against immigrant workers because they are working class people of

color and they want to unionize. (See distributed leaflet for further information.) There are 20 AFT hats available for members to wear to the event.

M/S: to extend meeting until all items are considered.

Substitute MS: to discuss 7-hr. onsite workday and table remainder of items on the agenda.

M/S/C

Special Order of Business (5 minutes)

1. Labor/Neighbor Action on “No on the Recall/No on 54”... John Kosinski

Brother Kosinski spoke of the need to defeat the governor’s recall, urging the body to oppose the right wing agenda and vote no on the recall, vote for Cruz Bustamante for governor, and vote no on Proposition 54. Volunteers are needed to contact about 30,000 labor households through phone banking, which is going on every day but Fridays until October 7 at 1188 Franklin Street. The plan is to concentrate on precincts that are heavily union.

Site Reports on 7 Hour On-Site Situation (30 Minutes)

The discussion made it clear that the degree and level of compliance with the Superintendent’s memo to principals, requiring school sites to document a schedule for a 7-hour, on-site workday, are extremely varied, from pressure imposed by principals for strict compliance, to principals who are putting a schedule on paper and encouraging business as usual, to principals who are ignoring it completely.

If a school chooses to file a grievance, it is a step one grievance against the principal. A unilateral change in working conditions is an unfair labor practice.

One option we have is to “work to the contract” or “work to the rule,” which means not doing anything that isn’t specified in the contract. This is very serious business.

Suggestions: Speak at a Board of Education meeting on the topic. Use the issue as an organizing tool. (The most recent edition of *The Educator* is a useful tool for this.)

M: to adjourn. No second.

M/S to have a summary from President Kelly of the problem and possible responses. Summary: Superintendent Ackerman chose to put out a memo that only quoted part of the contract. Sister Mack and Brother Kelly met with her and warned her of problems that would ensue, since there is contract language for “an approved schedule which includes time expended outside the assigned site.” Ackerman said her interest is in making everything consistent for everyone in the district.

If the principal at a school site makes a unilateral change in the schedule, and does not have the agreement of the UBC, that is an unfair labor practice.

Information has to be reassessed at sites and throughout the District to determine whether a situation is a grievance or an unfair labor practice. The Superintendent created the problem, and UESF tried to diffuse it. If she decides to go forward with implementation, that will inform negotiations and what happens throughout the year.

Action will be taken by the end of this month by UESF; this is the coordinating phase, not the initiation of action. We needn’t invite a problem at individual sites if none exists. We also needn’t wait at our sites for action by UESF as a whole. If the principal is mandating an order, get it in writing. Specify that the order is a contract violation and that you will grieve.

Report from Sergeant-at-Arms Roberto Michel: 55 sites were represented at this meeting: 2 children’s centers, 31 elementary schools, 7 middle schools, and 12 high schools, and one representative each from health programs, substitute division, and multilingual division.

M/S/C to adjourn at 6:57 p.m. with a moment of silence in memory of Marsha Pannone.