



Santa Ana Educators' Association Inc. CTA-NEA

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Greetings!

Welcome back! As you might know, during the Winter Break, legislators passed and the Governor signed into law two bills that will affect Public Education in California.

The first one is SBX5 4, also known as the Romero bill; the second bill is SBX5 1, also known as the Steinberg bill. The key points of these bills are:

1. Allow open enrollment for all students in the state's thousand lowest performing schools. The state will print the list of schools and districts will be required to use already scarce funds for student's transportation as the bill does not provide additional funds for transportation.
2. Allow a majority of parents at one school to sign a petition and add their school to the federal sanction list without providing any resources to help the school. The initiative will be limited to 75 schools.
3. Students' academic performance may be used to evaluate teachers and principals. Districts need to bargain this in order to take effect.
4. Districts will be forced to implement a reform plan for failing schools. The reform plan could mean closing the school, firing or reassigning the principal and at least 50% of the teachers, or turning the campus into a charter school.

This new legislation allowed California to apply for a portion of \$4.35 billion in federal **Race to the Top (RTTT)** funding. If selected, California would be awarded up to \$700 million, of which half would stay at the state level and the other half would be divided between the districts that applied for RTTT funds.

Santa Ana Unified applied for RTTT funds on Thursday, January 7, 2010 by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the state. Before applying, Norma Ortiz, CTA staff and I had long discussions with Superintendent Jane Russo, Associate Superintendent Juan Lopez and School Board President Audrey Noji on the impact of RTTT on students and teachers. Before signing the MOU with the state, the district signed an MOU with SAEA stating that all matters that impact teacher's terms and conditions of employment regarding RTTT, such as evaluation procedures, transfer and reassignment policies, salary and other compensation, professional development will be bargained and not imposed on teachers.

It is uncertain how RTTT requirements will affect the students of Santa Ana and how Santa Ana parents will react to the new legislation. But, be assured that SAEA leadership, in collaboration with CTA, is doing everything in its power to ensure that your contractual rights are protected.

If you have questions regarding this issue please email me at saeapresident@hotmail.com or call me at 714-542-6758. For additional information on RTTT you can visit <http://www.caracetothetop.org/cs/rttt/print/htdocs/home.htm>

SAEA will keep you informed as things happen!

Susan Mercer
President, SAEA

PS. Check out SAEA's website www.sateach.org