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<tr>
<td>S-66</td>
<td>José Banda</td>
<td>Teacher of the Year</td>
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<td>S-67</td>
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<td>Response to Yvette Yepez</td>
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Date: August 21, 2015
As those of you who attended last Friday’s SCOE event already know, Oak Ridge Elementary School teacher Stephanie Smith was one of two area educators named Sacramento County Teachers of the Year. This is a huge honor for our district. Ms. Smith will move on to represent Sacramento County in the state Teacher of the Year competition. In Ms. Smith’s introductory letter to SCOE, she perfectly spelled out her values and our values as a district:

"Every child should feel not just welcomed and valued in my class, but essential. We can only develop the workshop model of writers and readers with every student’s literary opinion shared and can only teach the deep mathematical problems with everyone’s strategies acknowledged. We can only develop our collaborative conversations with every voice being heard. We can only become a community of learners when every member is given a chance to shine. Such a day is the ideal I strive towards.”
On August 14, Board Members and district administrators received an email through our website webform from Yvette Yepez, who asked “Is this where I can get help in regards to harassment from a school?”

Area Assistant Superintendent Olga Simms called Ms. Yepez, who lives in San Bernardino County and has an ongoing issue with San Bernardino school district. To resolve her issue, she is currently working with the Office of Equal Opportunity, which is responsible for enforcing federal laws that make it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or an employee. She is not a parent or employee of our district and requested no assistance from our district in regards to her ongoing issues.
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<th>CONFIDENTIAL ITEM - (Check a Box)</th>
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<td>Approved by: José L. Banda, Superintendent</td>
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<td>To the Members of the Board of Education</td>
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<td>Prepared by: José L. Banda, Superintendent</td>
<td>Contact Email: <a href="mailto:Superintendent@scusd.edu">Superintendent@scusd.edu</a></td>
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<td>Subject: School Services of California’s Sacramento Weekly Update</td>
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Attached is the weekly update from School Services of California for your review.
DATE: August 21, 2015
TO: Jose Banda
Superintendent
AT: Sacramento City Unified School District
FROM: Your SSC Legislative Team
RE: SSC’s Sacramento Weekly Update

On Monday, August 17, 2015, the 120 members of the Legislature returned to the Capitol for a four-week sprint to consider and vote on the hundreds of bills awaiting them before the Legislature adjourns for the year.

Wasting no time, the Assembly took up Senate Bill (SB) 725 (Hancock, D-Berkeley), which would eliminate the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) requirement for 2014-15 senior class.

The bill became necessary when the state cancelled the July administration of the CAHSEE. Without passage of this bill, 5,000 seniors who have completed all the other requirements necessary to receive a high school diploma would be unable to receive their diploma.

SB 725 passed the Assembly with strong bipartisan support and heads back to the Senate for concurrence. The bill is expected to be taken up on Monday, August 24, and could end up in Governor Jerry Brown’s hands soon thereafter. As an urgency bill, it would go into effect immediately after Governor Brown signs the bill.

Next week will be another energetic week for legislators. On Thursday, August 27, legislators will learn the fate of more than 400 bills as the Appropriations Committees in both houses will take up their suspense files in advance of Friday’s deadline for the Committees to approve bills with a fiscal impact.

The suspense file is a holding place for legislative measures that have a significant fiscal impact on state revenues. Typically, the Fiscal Committees hold all of these bills until the legislative deadline so that decisions on these fiscal measures can be considered in total rather than individually. In reality, the suspense file is also used as a place where bills go to die without a vote.

Measures that do make it out of the Committee (and many do) will then be considered by the full house and then, in many cases, go back to the house where the bill was introduced for agreement in any amendments taken.
This Appropriations Committee deadline sets the stage for the final two weeks of the legislative session where the bills that are passed by either Committee are deliberated by the full legislative bodies.

In other Sacramento news, school district reserve policies once again took center stage as a new effort to correct the school district local reserves cap was launched. On Tuesday, a bipartisan group of legislators from both houses, along with local school district leaders, public advocates, parent advocates, and education stakeholders, announced a new school district reserve proposal in the form of SB 799 (Hill, D-San Mateo).

SB 799 would, among other things, set a hard cap for school district reserves (defined as unassigned ending general fund balances plus total ending balances for the Special Reserve Fund for Other than Capital Outlay Projects) at 17%, the minimum recommended amount of reserves that a local government should maintain, according to the Government Finance Officers Association.

The bill’s prospect remains uncertain at this time. The amendments were taken on the Assembly floor on Thursday and the bill was referred to the Assembly Rules Committee.

Nancy LaCasse
Robert Miyashiro
Note: The path to the Governor’s desk is both politically rocky and procedurally challenging.

School Cap Once Again on Agenda

By Dan Walters
The Sacramento Bee
August 18, 2015

There are many other unworthy contenders, but Senate Bill 858 may be the most pointlessly cynical legislative act of this still-young century.

It was drafted in the dead of night and hastily enacted as a budget “trailer bill” last year with no more than a cursory gesture toward public notice.

It stands as a prime example of how trailer bills, which are supposed to enact provisions of the state budget, are misused as stealthy vehicles for decrees that have little or nothing to do with the budget.

SB 858, among other things, places strict limits on local school districts’ financial reserves whenever the state places surplus revenue in a state school aid reserve.

That, unto itself, is bad public policy, discouraging local school boards from preparing for the state’s periodic economic recessions and the revenue losses they bring.

Moreover, in not only signing the bill but asking the Legislature to pass it, Gov. Jerry Brown violated two supposed principles that he’s repeatedly invoked – setting aside money in rainy-day reserves and “subsidiarity,” which he’s defined as leaving local matters in the hands of local officials, especially in education.

Thus, he demonstrated – not for the first time – that he will gladly set aside principle when expedient politics require it.

In this case, as he later acknowledged, albeit indirectly, it was to placate the California Teachers Association, which wants school reserves minimized so that more money remains on the table for contract negotiations.

Brown didn’t want the CTA to oppose his own state rainy-day reserve measure, Proposition 2, on last November’s ballot, and cracking down on school district reserves apparently satisfied the union’s leaders.

That demonstrated another cynical aspect of the measure – the almost total power that the union exerts over the state’s officeholders on education issues, even compelling a popular governor to do something nonsensical.

Local school officials quickly figured out ways to get around the reserve limit, but it still grated on them as a gratuitous slap by the CTA and its compliant politicians.
In January, after Proposition 2 had passed, Brown said he would “engage in a dialogue … to protect the financial security and health of local school districts.”

The reserve limit should be repealed, but that would be an admission that passing it was an error, and it’s not in politicians’ DNA to admit mistakes.

On Tuesday, local school officials and a bipartisan group of legislators announced a bill, Senate Bill 799, to modify the cap, raising it from 6 percent of spending for most districts to 17 percent.

Although short of repeal, the increase would probably make the cap inoperative for virtually all districts.

Whether even that can be enacted, however, is problematic, dependent on whether the union will loosen its grip even a little. Tellingly, a CTA spokeswoman continued to defend the limit, saying, “Those funds are not doing anybody any good sitting in bank accounts.”

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Note: Senator Pavley’s legislation is now a two-year bill and will be considered next year when the Legislature reconvenes.

Efforts to Attract New Teachers Stall in State Legislature

By Sarah Tully
EdSource
August 17, 2015

Efforts to reinstate state support to attract new teachers to the profession have stalled in the state Legislature, despite a shrinking supply of teachers that is spreading beyond traditionally high-needs areas such as special education, math and science, and bilingual education.

To help entice teachers to the profession, Sen. Fran Pavley, D-Agoura Hills (in Los Angeles County), introduced Senate Bill 62 earlier this year, which would have restored funding for a loan program that forgives $11,000 or more in college loans if a new teacher agrees to teach for four years in hard-to-staff schools, such those serving a high proportion of low-income youth, those in rural areas, or those with high numbers of teachers lacking full credentials. Teachers in shortage areas such as math and science would also be eligible.

The bill would have reinstated the Assumption Program of Loans for Educators, or APLE, which Pavley described as “one of California’s most effective and proven recruitment tools” — but which the Legislature stopped funding three years ago. The program was needed to deal with what she warned fellow lawmakers was “a pending teacher shortage crisis.”

Pavley’s bill also called for restoring the Governor’s Teaching Fellowships, a short-lived program phased out more than a decade ago that provided grants of up to $20,000 for a small number of aspiring teachers who agreed to teach for four years in schools serving struggling students. However, this provision was stripped from the bill during the legislative process.
The bill got the thumbs up from the state Senate, and made it partway through the Assembly. But the conference committee that approved the 2015-16 state budget in June never authorized any funds for the loan forgiveness program.

Rather than let the bill die, Pavley has decided to hold the bill until next year — in legislative parlance, converting it into a two-year bill — until a clear funding source for the support programs can be identified.

So Pavley’s bill has yet to make it out of the Legislature, despite being underwritten by almost every major education organization in the state. Writing in support of the legislation, Stanford University professor Linda Darling-Hammond, appointed by Gov. Brown as chair of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, noted that countries where students are outperforming U.S. students on international tests, such as Finland, Singapore and Korea, “are underwriting all the costs of a teacher’s preparation in high quality programs.” “California has no such incentives for entering teaching,” she said.

“Teacher recruitment is a critical issue as entrants into the teacher pipeline have dropped significantly in the last ten years,” State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson, a strong supporter of the bill, wrote to lawmakers last June urging them to approve it.

The 2012 “Greatness by Design” report of the Task Force on Educator Excellence established by Torlakson that was co-chaired by Darling-Hammond and Long Beach Unified Superintendent Chris Steinhauser recommended the following:

To ensure a steady stream of talent into high-need subjects and schools, California should underwrite the training costs of high-ability candidates who will become well-prepared to teach or lead in high-need fields and locations for a minimum of four years — the point at which individuals typically have become skilled and commit to the profession, as repayment for the state investment in their preparation.

But like many of the report’s recommendations, it has gone unheeded.

The latest figures from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing indicate a steady but dramatic decline in enrollments in teacher preparation programs. Enrollment in these programs has dropped from nearly 78,000 a dozen years ago to 19,933 in 2012-13 — a decline of 74 percent. In a parallel development, the number of teaching credentials being issued to California-trained teachers has declined from 16,401 in 2009-10 to 11,497 just four years later.

Supporters are taking heart that Pavley’s bill made significantly more progress in the Legislature than other recent attempts. For each of the past two years, Pavley introduced similar legislation that did not even make it out of the state Senate. This year, her bill was approved in the Senate by a unanimous 40-0 vote. It also passed by a 12-0 vote in the Assembly Higher Education Committee, a key education committee. But as has occurred with similar bills in the past, this one stalled when it came to the issue of how to fund it.

On another less encouraging note, key provisions of the bill were watered down during the legislative process, including removing the Governor’s Teaching Fellowships.

Pavley has introduced similar bills in previous years, which also did not get legislative approval. Two years ago, legislation she authored would have provided support for 7,200 participants in the fellowships, while a bill the introduced last year would have targeted 6,500 teachers.
The latest version of the bill — and the one that will be taken up in the Legislature again next year — reduced the number of would-be teachers who would qualify for loan forgiveness to 1,000.

But even support for this relatively small number of teachers has so far failed to win support from lawmakers.

Note: Legislation is pending in the Assembly Appropriations Committee that would require the pension plans to consider divesting themselves of any coal-related investments.

CalPERS, CalSTRS Took Big Losses on Energy Investments, Report Says

By Dean Starkman
Los Angeles Times
August 13, 2015

California’s two major public pension funds, the biggest in the nation, lost a total of more than $5 billion on energy-related investments for their fiscal years, ended June 30, according to a new report.

The California Public Employees’ Retirement System posted losses on its oil and gas portfolio of about $3 billion, a 28% decline, and similar set of investments at the California State Teachers’ Retirement System was down 27%, or about $2.2 billion, the report said.

Both systems, though, posted overall annual gains for the year. CalPERS, with $300 billion in assets under management, reported an overall gain of 2.4%. CalSTRS, with about $190 billion in assets, had a total return of 4.8%.

The report covering the funds’ largest oil and gas investments was prepared by Trillium Asset Management, a Boston investment firm specializing in what it calls “socially responsible” investments.

Trillium produced the report on behalf of 350.org, an environmental group backing a pending state Assembly bill that calls for California’s big pension funds to divest from coal-related holdings.

“This is a material loss of money, which directly impacts the strength of the pension fund,” said Matthew Patsky, Trillium’s chief executive. “Fossil fuel stocks are volatile investments. Investors and fiduciaries should take this moment to reassess their financial involvement in carbon pollution, climate disruption and the financial risk fossil fuels plays in their portfolio.”

Responding to the report’s data, Joe Deanda, a CalPERS spokesman, said: “We’re a long-term investor and don’t focus too much on any single year’s performance. It won’t change our long-term investment strategy.”

CalSTRS spokesman Roberto Duran said the fund is “researching” its thermal coal holdings in light of a state Senate bill that would require it to divest such holdings.
The funds’ energy losses came during a year in which energy holdings generally fell amid plunging oil prices.

A key crude oil benchmark, West Texas intermediate, fell 43% during the fiscal year ended June 30. An index of publicly traded energy stocks in the Standard & Poor’s 500 fell by 24.3% during the period, according to Factset Research Systems Inc. The index is down an additional 6.7% from July 1 through Wednesday.
Board Communication Form for 2015-16

**Subject:** Highlights of Calendar for the Week of August 24

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<td>• Executive Cabinet Meeting</td>
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<td>• 1:1 Meetings with Cabinet Members</td>
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<td>• Meeting with Labor Partner (UPE)</td>
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<td>• Board Executive Committee Meeting</td>
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<td>• Tier II Interviews</td>
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<td>• School Visit</td>
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<td>• Meeting with Labor Partner (Teamsters)</td>
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<td>• Operations Cabinet Meeting</td>
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<td>• 1:1 Meetings with Cabinet Members</td>
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<td>• Meeting with Labor Partner (SCTA)</td>
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<td>• 1:1 Meetings with Cabinet Members</td>
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<td>• Meeting with City Manager, John Shirey</td>
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<td>• Meeting with City Councilmember, Rick Jennings</td>
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<td>• Meeting with Alex Visaya</td>
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