

UPDATE

Week of November 2, 2009

PAY TO WORK?

Superintendent **Cortines** e-mailed a memo last week to all District employees which stated that starting on July 1, 2010, all employees who work in the Beaudry Bldg. will be required to pay for parking. During the 2010-2011 school year, fees will range from \$8/month at the World Trade Center to \$35/month at the Beaudry Bldg. garage. Fees will be doubled, in many cases, in 2011-2012. As a result, some District employees will have to pay \$420 next year and \$840 the following year for the privilege of working at Beaudry.

Within one day, AALA was inundated by e-mail and phone messages from our members, who were understandably angered by the Superintendent's memo. After all, the net impact of imposed parking fees is equivalent to a salary cut for the affected employees. Furthermore, other employees with similar job classifications and descriptions, who happen to be located elsewhere in the District, are not subject to such parking fees. Finally, no mention was made in the memo about special arrangements for employees with disabilities, those earning lower than average salaries or people housed elsewhere with legitimate business to conduct at Beaudry.

Our attorneys immediately prepared a letter that was sent to Mr. Cortines on behalf of AALA members demanding that he rescind his new parking policy. We contend that the District may not unilaterally impose such fees. These fees must be negotiated through good-faith collective bargaining.

The Superintendent made no effort to contact AALA to discuss the imposition of parking fees prior to issuing his memo. Nobody from Staff Relations invited us to the negotiating table to address this issue. We believe that it is unfair to balance the District's budget on the backs of the faithful employees who struggle daily to keep this District afloat, even though they have more job responsibilities and less support than ever before.

Should Mr. Cortines refuse to rescind the paid parking policy, AALA is prepared to take the appropriate legal steps. He is traveling in China this week, so we assume that is why he has not yet replied to our letter. We eagerly await his response and will keep you informed.

HEALTH BENEFITS FAQ

Topic: LAUSD 2010 Annual Benefits and Enrollment Guide

My open enrollment booklet just arrived this week. What are some tips for navigating the plans?

Key pages to view -

1. Overview of all medical plans, by employment status - page 9.
2. Comparisons of benefits, copays, deductibles, and out-of-pocket maximum amounts for each plan - pages 10 - 15.
3. Plan prescription co-payments costs - page 5.
4. Tax-free Flexible Savings Accounts (FSA) to cover out-of-pocket medical expenses - page 31.
5. \$3,000 opt-out plan for active employees with dual coverage. The entire \$3,000 or part of the amount can be redirected to a tax-free flexible spending account - page 4.
6. Medicare enrollment - pages 27 - 29.
7. FAQs - pages 37 - 41. You may find your questions or concerns answered here.

I currently have Anthem Blue Cross PPO and must move to Anthem EPO. Will I have to change physicians?

An overwhelming number of PPO subscribers use in-network physicians. Check with either Anthem (800) 700-3739 or your physicians to learn whether they are part of the Blue Cross network.

Where can I get more information about plan options?

A television program titled *LAUSD Memo: Health Benefits* has been produced to address the changes in the health benefits plans being offered to District employees and retirees. The next airings will be:

Saturday	November 7	9:00 a.m.
Sunday	November 8	7:00 a.m.
Tuesday	November 10	12:30 p.m.
Sunday	November 15	3:00 p.m.
Sunday	November 22	3:00 p.m.

How do I change plans or make new elections?

You can make changes online by going to the website www.benefits.lausd.net. In the middle of the page, you will see the words CLICK HERE. After clicking, you'll be directed to a login page. Read the *Sign On Tips* on how to fill in the fields.

IN MEMORIAM

JOYCE PARKINSON – Former Principal of Oso Avenue, Calvert Street, Chase Street, and Woodlake Avenue schools. She retired in 1998 and passed away on September 2, 2009.

SHOULD TEACHER EVALUATION DEPEND ON STUDENT TEST SCORES?

By Diane Ravitch

One of the big-ticket items on the federal education agenda is a proposal to evaluate teachers by looking at changes in their students' test scores. This idea comes out of studies by various economists who say that credentials and experience count for nothing, and that if we value improvements in student performance, we should judge teachers by their students' scores. If the scores go up, the teacher is "effective," and if they don't go up, the teacher is a loser.

This approach has become wildly popular among the chattering classes. They think it is akin to a business that makes a profit (a winner) and one that loses money (a loser). They do not know of the studies by economists demonstrating that this particular measure of effectiveness is highly unstable. A teacher may have a class that gets higher scores one year, but not the next; or lower scores one year, but not the next. And then there is the fundamental problem, as all psychometricians warn us, that tests should be used for the purpose for which they were intended, and not for other purposes. In other words, a test of fifth grade reading tests whether students in the fifth grade are able to read material appropriate for children their age. It cannot then be used to determine whether their teacher was good or bad.

Writers who know nothing about education love the idea, however. For example, *The New York Times* published an editorial on Oct. 29 about the new teachers' contract in New Haven, Conn., which will allow test scores to count when evaluating teachers. The *Times* was happy about that, but disappointed that the contract did not spell out a precise formula "in which the student achievement component carries the preponderance of the weight." Instead, the details will be determined, to the *Times'* chagrin, by a committee that includes teachers and administrators.

By coincidence, the Century Foundation published an issue brief by **Gordon MacInnes** on the same day titled "**Eight Reasons Not to Tie Teacher Pay to Standardized Test Results.**" Among the reasons are these: "Even reliable standardized tests are valid only when they are used for their intended purposes"; students are not randomly assigned to schools or to classes; state data systems are in their infancy, and it is far too soon to produce reliable and accurate longitudinal data; the assumption behind such plans is that teachers are holding back on their efforts because they are not paid enough (when it is far likelier that teachers, schools, and legislators "simply don't know how to improve educational prospects for poor children"); such an approach will inhibit collaboration among teachers; and most teachers don't teach a subject or grade that is subject to regular testing.

I have been trying to figure out how a school would function if the advocates of tying test scores to teacher evaluation prevail. At least three years of data would be needed, though five years would be better. At the end of the three-to-five years, the teachers who did not get gains would be fired and replaced by teachers who have no track record at all. Every year, a new group of teachers who had not produced gains would be fired, and another untested group of teachers would take their place. Most teachers, as MacInnes points out, would be exempt because they don't teach reading or math. But for the unfortunate minority who do teach the tested subjects, there would be an annual game of musical chairs. There would be constant churn, with untried teachers thrown into the trenches. Some might make it (though it will take three years or more to be sure), but many will be ousted.

Does any other profession work this way? Correct me if I am wrong, but I don't think this describes what any of the high-performing nations in the world do.

(SOURCE: Education Week Online, November 3, 2009)

AALA RETIRED ADMINISTRATORS FALL LUNCHEON

The AALA Retired Administrators Fall Luncheon was held on Tuesday, October 27, at The Center at Cathedral Plaza with over 100 people in attendance. Those in attendance enjoyed a delightful buffet lunch while reconnecting with past friends and colleagues and listening to **Larry Aceves**, candidate for State Superintendent of Public Instruction 2010, talk about his goals and direction for education in California. **George Tischler**, Interim Chief Risk Officer for LAUSD, also presented timely information regarding health benefits, a critical topic at this time. Following each presentation, there was a Question & Answer period that generated lots of thoughtful discussion. **Judy Perez**, AALA President, provided an update on AALA activities. Among the attendees at the luncheon were the following former superintendents: **Sid Thompson, Richard Cooper, Sid Brickman, Phil Jordan, Owen Knox, Phil Linscomb, Angie Stockwell, and Carol Truscott**. From the comments heard, it was a successful event! The next luncheon will be in April 2010.

UTLA/AALA PARENT INFORMATION FLYER

AALA has been informed that outside charter operators have approached parents to sign petitions urging a charter take-over of their schools. In some cases, charter representatives have misrepresented the purpose of their petitions. To prevent the spread of misinformation, UTLA and AALA have collaborated on a flyer reminding parents that they need to understand what they are signing before they sign.

UTLA members are distributing these flyers before and after school. Parents may ask you questions about charter school operators and their petitions. AALA's view is that each school's administrators, teachers, parents and community members are those best equipped to improve student achievement. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us.

COALITION PETITION

AALA has joined with other LAUSD unions and community members to distribute a petition in English and Spanish expressing our concerns about the potential impact of the Public Schools Choice Resolution on public education. We are asking you to discuss the petition with and obtain signatures from parents, community members, employees and others who share our concerns. Return the petitions to the AALA office via fax: 213-484-0201, or e-mail: cvacca@aala.us ASAP by **November 13, 2009**. If you did not receive copies of the petition, let us know and we will forward it to you.

HEALTH BENEFITS INFORMATION MEETING

Do you (active or retired) have questions about the 2010 Health Plans? Come to the November 9, 2009, AALA-sponsored Health Benefits Information Meeting for answers.

Date: Monday, November 9, 2009
Time: 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.
Location: Board Room, LAUSD Headquarters, 333 S. Beaudry, Los Angeles

Validated Parking: Visconti Garage (Entrance on Miramar St.)

Handicapped Parking (with valid placard): Beaudry Building parking structure

Policy Experts Say State Lacks Comprehensive Human Resources Policies for Principals

CRISIS IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN CALIFORNIA

By Lesli A. Maxwell

In California, where school budgets are being slashed and achievement remains stubbornly low in many districts, there is mounting concern that the supply of principals is too limited to manage the financial and academic challenges facing public schools. Complicating matters, the state is at the front end of a wave of principal retirements, as some 40 percent of school leaders are expected to leave their jobs over the next decade. Large numbers of principals are also expected to depart the profession well before retirement age, making the recruitment of replacement talent and the retention of existing talent even more crucial. But finding the best people to lead schools with a total of 6 million children—especially those serving large numbers of poor and low-achieving children—and creating the working conditions to keep them there, has not been a top priority for California education policymakers, some scholars and researchers say. When it comes to recruiting, training, compensating, and empowering principals to manage their schools effectively, the state's policies are falling short, they contend.

"I think there are real questions about whether the principal workforce in this state is going to have the capacity to do this increasingly complex job and do it in the kind of budget environment that exists here in California," said **Susanna Loeb**, an education professor at Stanford University, who co-wrote a recent policy brief that warns that school leadership in California needs urgent attention. Over the years, California policymakers have paid sporadic attention to school leaders. In 2003, they created leadership standards meant to guide what is taught in the state's numerous principal-preparation programs. One highly regarded statewide professional-development program established in the 1980s, called the California State Leadership Academy, fell victim to budget cuts in 2003 and has never been fully re-established.

Persuading decision makers to focus on school leadership now may be difficult, as the state's fiscal crisis is consuming most of their attention, and money remains too tight to invest in new programs. But one education expert says the first step is gathering detailed information about who the state's principals are, what kind of training they've had, and how they are distributed across schools.

"We know virtually nothing about this piece of the education workforce," said Ms. **Margaret Gaston**, whose nonprofit Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning is helping to spearhead an effort to put the state's principal workforce in the policy spotlight. "You have to know what you have before you can figure out what needs to be done to improve it." "We know virtually nothing about this piece of the ... workforce. You have to know what you have before you can figure out what needs to be done to improve it."

For example, Ms. Gaston said, no data exist to show whether California's two-tiered system for obtaining an administrator credential makes a difference in the quality and skills of a principal. Under the system, which is somewhat unusual, prospective principals can take a test to earn their credential before they go on to participate in a formal preparation program.

"So we have no idea whether a principal who enters the job this way is doing as well as, better than, or worse than those who've been through a preparation program before they get the job," Ms. Gaston said. "And we have so many administrators who enter the profession this way."

Anecdotally, Ms. Gaston said that principals who enter their jobs through the "test-in" route tend to struggle like teachers who enter the profession with little to no training. And though California has created a longitudinal database for teachers, the data it collects for administrators so far is "limping behind," she said.

CRISIS IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN CALIFORNIA (Continued)

And as is often the case with less-experienced teachers, Ms. Gaston expects to find that the least-prepared principals are probably assigned to oversee schools that most need to have accomplished veterans running them. But without even knowing the fine-grained characteristics of the state's principal corps, Ms. Loeb points to several obstacles in California that have impeded the recruitment of top talent to the job and likely will continue to do so.

For starters, she said, school-based administrators in California are overworked compared with their peers nationally. During the 2006-07 school year—before the state's fiscal crisis forced the layoffs of thousands of teachers and other academic support staff in schools—there were 447 students for every principal or assistant principal, compared with roughly 306 nationally. Losing teachers and staff members to tightening budgets has exacerbated that problem. "There are just too few adults to help principals do the demanding work that's required of them," Ms. Loeb said. "When the field is stretched that thinly, it's going to make recruitment of new talent very difficult." Then, when good prospects for the job—many of them members of the state's teacher workforce—see the small pay differential between teachers and administrators, school administration becomes even less appealing, she said. For example, in the 2003-04 school year, principals earned an average of 1.6 times the base salary of teachers.

The state's varied university-based preparation programs also present challenges to grooming the best school leaders, Ms. Loeb said. Too few of them require their participants to have field-based internships, she said. In a national survey of principals conducted two years ago by Stanford University professor **Linda Darling-Hamond**, 63 percent of principals nationwide reported having internships as part of their training, compared with just 27 percent in California.

"That has got to change," Ms. Loeb said. "This is a very demanding job in terms of the diversity of the tasks that principals have to do. How can anyone be expected to walk into the job as an instructional leader, an organizational leader, and a budget manager without first having a chance to experience that in their preservice training?"

Jon Schnur, the chief executive officer of New Leaders for New Schools, a nonprofit group based in New York City that recruits and trains promising school leaders and provides them with one year of a medical-school-like residency, said many of the California candidates for his program are drawn to the rich field experience they will get. New Leaders places its principals in schools in the Oakland Unified School District, as well as in several charter schools in the Bay Area and one in Sacramento. "They come to us because they feel like they are going to get really intensive training for how to achieve breakthrough gains," Mr. Schnur said. "They don't feel like they can really get that in other programs in the state."

Mr. Schnur said aspiring principals in California also express frustration at the lack of pathways into the profession. "You are going to lose out on a lot of the best people for this job if they think the only way they can get there is by going to be an assistant principal for 10 years," he said. Ms. Loeb, who singles out New Leaders as an exemplary program in her policy brief, also points to Long Beach Unified School District, where officials have created a leadership-development program that carefully identifies internal school leadership talent and provides opportunities to groom aspiring principals. "We've got models in California that are working on a local level," she said, "but we need to get serious about creating something on a much larger scale."

(SOURCE: Education Week Online, November 2, 2009)

NOTE: Wednesday, November 11, 2009, is Veterans Day

HONORING SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY

AALA salutes all members, active or retired, living or deceased, who have served their country in a time of need.

Admiral **Mike Mullen**, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated it beautifully. Here is the text of the chairman's message:

"When Armistice was declared on Nov. 11, 1918, effectively ending World War I, over sixty-five million individuals had been mobilized for the 'Great War' that resulted in almost nine million deaths and over twenty-one million wounded. In just a year and a half of operations, 126,000 Americans lost their lives on the muddy landscapes of Europe and in the icy depths of the North Atlantic. Such loss of life and limb is hard to fathom today.

History has debunked the notion of a 'War to End All Wars.' And history has also proven that peace does not preserve itself. It requires millions of dedicated men and women, like you and your families, all working in unison toward what one memorial hails as 'high idealism, courageous sacrifice, and gallant achievement.'

Today, a new generation of veterans carries this torch. Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom have forged the most combat-hardened force in our nation's history. Yet, no war is without its casualties. Whether seen or unseen, the wounds of war last a lifetime, and so should our care.

Our wounded veterans and their families deserve only the best medical care our nation can provide, care on par with the service and sacrifice these patriots have rendered. From the battlefield to regional hospitals, and rehabilitation centers to reintegration programs, our wounded, ill and injured service members and their families, merit a continuum of care that lasts a lifetime.

To all our veterans, past and present, and your families, the Joint Chiefs and I salute you and thank you for your service and your sacrifice. As we remember those who have gone before us, may we honor their service through ours?"

NOTE:

Two books of interest have been written about veterans who were proud of their service in World War II and in the Los Angeles Unified School District. "One Pilot's Story," which was written by Andrew "Andy" Anderson (former secondary principal), tells of his exploits in the 91st and 8th Air Force as a bomber pilot. Paul Possemato, William "Bill" Johnston, and his son D. Michael Johnston wrote "Heroes and Teachers." This book tells stories of many men and women who served in World War II and in LAUSD. If anyone would like information about purchasing either or both of these fine books, call the AALA office at 213.484.2226 or e-mail Cathy Vacca at cvacca@aala.us.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Minimum Qualifications: Candidates are responsible for making sure all the District requirements have been met. Do not contact AALA for information regarding positions. Use the listed contact phone number.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, SECONDARY

White Middle School (8) MST 39, 22102 South Figueroa Street, Carson, CA 90745

White is a B Basis school. For information and application procedures contact **Shannon Lee**, Director, Middle School Services, at 310.354.3400. **Filing deadline is Wednesday, November 18, 2009.**

Millikan Middle School (2) MST 39, 5041 Sunnyslope Avenue, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423

Millikan is a B Basis school. For information and application procedures contact **José Rodriguez**, Director, School Services, at 818.755.5361. **Filing deadline is Wednesday, November 18, 2009.**

Sylmar High School (2) MST 40, 13050 Borden Avenue, Sylmar, CA 91342

Sylmar is a B Basis school. For information and application procedures contact **José Rodriguez**, Director, School Services, at 818.755.5300. **Filing deadline is Wednesday, November 18, 2009.**

THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO VIEW IN THEIR ENTIRETY BY GOING TO THE AALA WEBSITE, <http://www.aalausd.com>. BY CLICKING ON “POSITIONS AVAILABLE” TO THE LEFT OF THE SCREEN, YOU CAN SELECT NONSCHOOL-BASED POSITIONS AND CLICK ON ANY POSITION TO VIEW THE SPECIFIC FLYER.

POSITION	FILING DEADLINE
SUPERVISOR, PROGRAM INFORMATION, COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND GRANTS, Temp. Adv., MST 38, B Basis, Division of Adult and Career Education. For information and application procedures contact Isabel Vazquez , Director, Career Technical Education, at 213.241.3150.	EXTENDED TO – Monday, Nov. 9, 2009
DIRECTOR, SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, Temp. Adv., MST 45, A Basis, Student Health and Human Services. For information and application procedures contact Rene Gonzalez , Assistant Superintendent, at 213.241.3840.	4:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 30, 2009
SPECIALIST, CATEGORICAL PROGRAMS, Temp. Adv., MST 38, B Basis, Local District 3. For information and application procedures contact Teri Landázuri at 310.253.7100.	5:00 p.m. Friday, Nov. 13, 2009
COORDINATOR, TRANSITION SERVICES, Temp. Adv., B Basis, Division of Special Education. For information and application procedures contact Geri Fuchigami , Coordinator, at 213.241.8050.	5:00 p.m. Friday, Nov. 13, 2009

PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED POSITION STILL AVAILABLE

Position	Location	Deadline	Contact
Director of Instructional and Operational Oversight	Charter Schools Division	UNTIL FILLED	213.241.2656