

# SEA WAVES

## Welcome Back to a New School Year

Good News! As a result of the negotiated retirement incentive last spring, we were able to bring back to the classroom all of our 40+ permanent and temporary teachers who received lay-off notices last spring. They have been brought back to replace our veteran teachers who retired or resigned last June.

However, student enrollment in Simi has not yet stabilized, and the district staffed schools to match a projection of 500 less students than the prior 2013-14 school year. Less students means less teaching staff and the district only hired employees to replace vacant positions.

Also, in the prior 2013-2014 school year, the district overstaffed our schools by 30+ positions, which resulted in a hit to the district budget by \$2.1 million. This school year, the district did NOT staff schools beyond their projected enrollment to stay on budget.

As a result, many sites are experiencing large class sizes. Also, many elementary sites are starting the school year with multiple combination classes. Until enrollment settles in, which may not be for a week or two, the district continues to monitor enrollment each day and make changes to staffing if student enrollment is actualized at a school. In other words, staffing will continue to be based on verified, real numbers of students showing up for school and not just projections on paper.

The Association will be checking in with the District continually to monitor class sizes and configuration of classes at each site. Be assured, we will advocate for appropriate staffing, with teacher/student needs always leading the discussion.

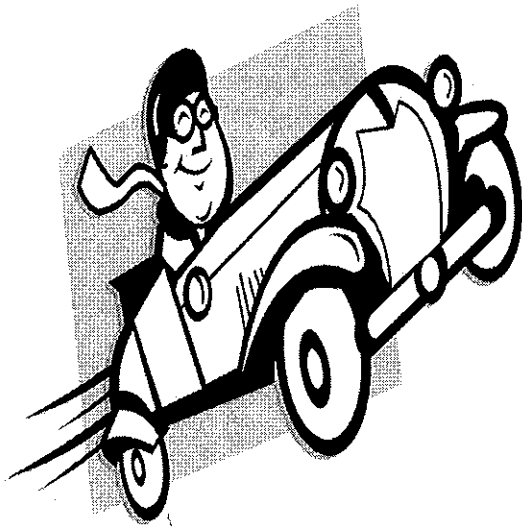
## CalSTRS Pension Reform Takes Effect

There's good news and bad news with the new CalSTRS Pension Reform. The good news is that there is new legislation which backfills the unfunded liability in the teacher's retirement system assuring the well-being of the retirement system now and in the future. The bad news is that certificated employees and the district will see an increase in contributions as part of fully funding STRS. Increases will be phased in over several years.

This year certificated employees who pay into the State Teachers Retirement System, will see a slight increase in your monthly contribution to STRS due to the pension reform legislation which will slightly offset your monthly pay. For many years, employees paid 8% of their gross pay to STRS while school districts paid their contribution of 8.25%. For the 2014-2015 school year, the employee contribution (those hired prior to January 1, 2013) will rise to 8.15% and the district contribution will increase to 9.50%. Those hired after January 1, 2013 fall under a newly developed payment tier as part of the new legislation. Detailed information on the reform legislation has been sent to all SEA Reps to provide to members on the staff room tables.

## New To The District

Welcome all! If you have not already signed up for your employee medical benefits, be sure to do so before September 12th. Email Carla Dickson at [carla.dickson@simivalleyusd.org](mailto:carla.dickson@simivalleyusd.org) immediately to make sure your medical benefits are in place for this year.



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