

March 2003

## **THE OEA *ADVOCATE* RETURNS**

Tony Miele, Editor

### **!OUTRAGEAOUS!**

#### **Board of Education Votes to Send 1,056 Pink Slips**

Continuing its cynical and deceptive attacks on our dedicated teachers, counselors, psychologists, nurses, and librarians, the OUSD Board of Education held an emergency meeting on Monday, March 10, with a single agenda - lay off over one-third of the contracted OEA bargaining unit. This event was characterized by some shocking moments:

#### **?? NO CAMERAS ROLLING AT A PUBLIC MEETING**

Greg Hodge, School Board President, claimed it was in the interest of saving money.

#### **?? THREE (3) BOARD MEMBERS NOT PRESENT FOR THE FATEFUL VOTE**

Needing a six-vote majority, Director Kerry Hamill battled sickness to make it to the table just in time for the sixth and deciding vote. On a night when the Latino Community and ACORN came out strong, Director Noel Gallo dissented.

Was the OUSD Board of Education too embarrassed to publicly televise this important meeting on the night when they would vote on whether or not to send over 1,000 RIF notices to teachers?

Where were Directors Dan Siegel, Gary Yee, and Harold Pendergrass? Was Dan Siegel too afraid to vote yes in public? Without having the true numbers, which David Kakashiba said the Board didn't have the week before, why did he vote yes?

#### **OUSD CO-SPONSORS CREDENTIAL FAIR ON MARCH 15TH**

A Credential Fair, for individuals considering a career in teaching, took place March 15 at the Waterfront Hotel in Jack London Square. The District promoted this fair among substitutes, in the press, and through the local colleges of education. A Truth Squad, including Ben Visnick, OEA First VP, Tony Miele, OEA Secretary, and Doug Provencio, OEA Substitute Caucus Chair, talked to over 50 attendees and the press (Channel 2 and KCBS Radio) to explain that the only possible positions for next year were in Special Education, Bilingual Education, Math and Science. For the District to imply that other new teaching positions will exist in 2003/2004 is a lie. Shouldn't we be having a Fair for teachers interested in holding onto their careers? Can't the District help its devoted employees who received a March 15th Letter add a credential in order to remain employed in Oakland? The irony of holding such an event on RIF Day is apparent to the OEA membership.

## **PROPAGANDA**

In the Wednesday, March 12, 2003, edition of the Oakland Post, OUSD BOE President, Gregory Hodge explained how "School Money Was Spent." The headline read - **25% Teachers Raise, 3,265 Student Decrease, Student Absences and Mismanagement Cited.**

Notice that the 25% Teachers' Raise headline is printed first while the Mismanagement headline comes last. It is an insult for teachers to always hear that the main reason for OUSD's financial crisis is due in great part to a pay raise. It implies that teachers didn't deserve that much of a raise. Isn't it a District's job to pay its teachers a professional salary? It's not as though we're overpaid. It's not spent money, it's money invested! Besides, the raise was implemented over a three-year period. The District should have budgeted for it by cutting Consultants and Administrative overhead. Finally, what the article doesn't say was that the 3,265 drop in ADA was mainly due to unregulated Charter Schools!

## **OEA CRISIS TIMELINE MARCH/APRIL 2003**

Saturday, March 15 - 1,056 "Reduction in Force" (RIF) Letters sent to OEA Unit Members. ("Beware the Ides of March!")

Monday, March 17 - Emergency OEA Rep Council at Bret Harte Middle, 4 PM. Happy St. Patrick's Day!

Friday, March 21 - OEA Information Meeting at Oakland Tech (at 4351 Broadway) for all "RIF'ed" members, 3:45 PM in main auditorium. Please Carpool and/or park behind school.

Monday, March 24 OEA/CTA/NEA Elections begin at school sites.

Wednesday, March 26 1025 Second Ave. OUSD School Board Meeting and OEA Rally to Oppose Layoffs, 5:30 PM,

Friday, March 28 - OEA/CTA/NEA Elections end. Ballots due at OEA Center by 6:30 PM sharp.

Tuesday, April 1 - April Fools Day

Friday, April 4 -OEA/CTA night at the Warriors. Cheer for the home team with your union. Tickets reserved at \$ 12 per member. . See your Rep for details.

Monday, April 7 - OEA Rep Council at Bret Harte Middle, 4 PM.

Wednesday, April 9 OUSD School Board Meeting. April 14- 18 - Spring Break (Rest up for the months ahead!)

Tuesday, April 15 RIF letters sent to Early Childhood Educators? April 21 - 25 - RIF hearings (site TBA). Administrative Law Judge to consider challenges from RIF recipients and CTA attorneys.