



# Fresno Teachers Association

To: All FTA Members

6/8/09

From: Greg Gadams, FTA President

Re: Everything....

Greg Gadams  
President

\*

Missy Graves  
Treasurer

\*

In a short time you will be able to enjoy a well deserved vacation. In the era of high stakes testing and educators being the piñata for all of society's ills, you do an incredible job. FUSD's avoidance of listening to our members' input compounds the problems and hampers students reaching their full potential.

Directors-at-Large:

David Bradley

Arlene Rowan

\*

Time after time, in the district's zeal to implement organizational processes, they have overlooked the **best practice** that has continuously surfaced in successful schools across the nation: **teacher input on curriculum and school site issues**. Instead, our teachers endlessly look at data under the "Cycle of Continuous Review" and then what? Repeatedly looking at the same things over and over, without changing the curriculum, just yields the same results. Think about it, why has no one developed curriculum/programs that will allow a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher to teach the 6 different reading levels in his/her class? FUSD has a top down format with no real teacher input at many sites. Instead, principals call our teachers in to *chat* about their students' test scores, never considering how the following affects student performance:

Professional Staff:

Gary Alford  
Associate Director

Brenda Emerson  
Associate Director

Ossee Desmangles  
Associate Director

1. The pacing charts are awful, yet teachers must rigidly adhere to them.
2. Teachers are given a one grade level fits all book to teach multiple levels.
3. Teachers follow directives on what/how to teach, so how can they be blamed for the program(s) not succeeding?
4. Most sites' collaboration meetings are scripted by the principal and not derived from the students' needs, as derived from the data.
5. At many sites disruptive students referred to the office go through a revolving door and return with no consequences and disrupt the other students' learning environment.

Your FTA staff and I have been working behind the scenes to implement changes to solve these problems. District officials philosophically appear ready to change practices, but with so many "chieftains" it is hard to make progress. What I have learned in my first year as president is that the many "chiefs" in FUSD all operate very differently. The solution to this problem is to develop **best practices for principals** to follow and for our members to help ensure their implementation. We are starting to collect data on your site administration's tendencies through the recent survey on safety, discipline and teacher input. We will use it to help us focus our resources on the most troubled areas first.

In 2009-10 we will be working with our members on how to enforce their rights on student discipline, SSC's, School Build Committees, and creating a culture where the teachers actually get to collaborate and are listened to. It is time we make a change. It is time to make the teacher the educational leader in Fresno Unified.

Our members are terrific, dedicated professionals who invest themselves 100% in every aspect of their work for the sake of their students. Now, it is important that you take time for yourself!!! Relax and enjoy yourself!!!



# Fresno Teachers Association

Greg Gadams  
President

\*

Missy Graves  
Treasurer

\*

Directors-at-Large:

David Bradley

Arlene Rowan

\*

Professional Staff:

Gary Alford  
Associate Director

Brenda Emerson  
Associate Director

Ossee Desmangles  
Associate Director