

*"It's only free  
speech when  
you use it."*

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## **The President's View**

**By Marisa Hanson**

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Marisa Hanson, your new ESTA president. As most of you know, former president Don McKell retired over the summer and since I was the Vice President, I was given the opportunity to finish his term as president according to the ESTA bylaws. Now I know I have some pretty big shoes to fill because Don McKell was a dedicated union president for nine years, but I am positive that I can be just as dedicated and work just hard for each and every member of our union.

When I was growing up, from as far back as I can remember, I always wanted to be a teacher. In fact, I still have my 7<sup>th</sup> grade term paper explaining why I wanted to teach. As I grew older I found myself enjoying the subject of Math, and when I asked my high school counselor; "What do I need to do to teach high school Math?" she told me I needed to go to college and get a degree. So that is exactly what I did—mostly because I have always been the type of person to do whatever it takes to accomplish my goals. I must admit however, that I didn't have a strong aspiration to go to college. But I realized that it was a necessary route that I needed to take to get to where I am today, and of course I have no regrets.

## Hanson, continued

I started my career in the Evergreen School District teaching at LeyVa Middle School because the pay back in 1995 was so much more there than at East Side Union High School District. I stayed in the district for six years because I enjoyed working with the LeyVa Middle School students and staff. As I finished my 6<sup>th</sup> year of teaching, I was prepared to take a \$4,000 pay cut because I wanted to fulfill my dream of teaching at the high school level. As it turned out, East Side Union High School District received a 12% COLA raise that same year, so I only ended up taking a \$300 pay cut when I started working in East Side Union. Imagine back then, it took over 13% to have a salary higher than our neighboring district. Today, our salary schedules are much closer aligned and both districts maintain full benefits coverage. This is why new teachers are so attracted to our district.

As the spring approaches, a new collective bargaining agreement will be proposed. Beginning in October, bargaining unit members will be approached at all sites to give their input and suggestions. Also, special interest groups, such as bargaining unit members who are non-classroom teachers, will be given the opportunity to meet as a group and offer their ideas. It is expected that we will regain FULL COLA while maintaining our health benefits and I will strive diligently to accomplish such. We also plan to improve and clarify the language in the contract so as to help eliminate the various conflicts we have had in the past.

In conclusion, I have immensely enjoyed the opportunity to take my previous dreams to the next level by serving as your union president. The upcoming school year is sure to hold many twists and turns as always, but I expect for all things to be straightened out in a timely manner due to the strong leadership in and around our union. It is my sincere hope that by working together within our union we can accomplish many great things.

## PANORAMA

MARTIN BRANDT, IHS

EDITOR

*Panorama* is a monthly publication of the East Side Teachers' Association, 888 S. Capitol Ave. San Jose, CA.

*Panorama* is a forum for ESTA members, and welcomes all member contributions. Submissions must include author's name, position, and school site. Those with fewer than 250 words will be printed in the "Letters" section. All submissions may be edited for length or clarity.

Letters, articles, columns, queries, or classified ads (for ESTA members only) should be emailed as **Microsoft Word Attachments** to [brandtm@esuhsd.org](mailto:brandtm@esuhsd.org). Deadline for all October submissions is **Friday, October 12, 2007**.

### Disclaimer:

The views expressed in *Panorama* are those of individual members and may not represent the official views of the East Side Teachers Association, California Teachers Association, or National Educators Association. *Panorama* will not publish ad hominem attacks, personal insults, or racially provocative imagery.

HHH 1910-1993

## GRATITUDE TO ESTA

*Director of Community Service  
Delta Sigma Pi  
International Business Fraternity*

Dear ESTA Members,

I would like to thank you for honoring me with your scholarship for the 2007-2008 academic year. San Diego State University provides many intriguing academic opportunities and this scholarship may help me realize my dream of studying abroad in Europe. Again, thank you for your generous award; it will be put to productive use.

Sincerely,  
*William Stegeman*

## NO CHILD “A” LEFT BEHIND

*Weekend Update News Desk  
New York, New York*

Okay, Here’s the thing. I understand the U.S. is currently experiencing an epidemic of childhood obesity, but honestly, this No Child Left A Behind thing is going too far! Sure we want to encourage young people to pursue fitness in order to live healthier, happier and more productive lives, but we simply MUST leave them something to sit on. How can students be expected to sit at their desks and learn if nothing is left for them to sit upon?

I think it is rude, not to mention, rather personal, for the government to even try to legislate the size of someone’s behind to begin with, but to insist that schools do away with students’ behinds altogether just seems so WRONG. As far as I know, no law has called for the elimination of any other part of a student’s anatomy, but maybe I’m just not aware of it. I don’t hear so well sometimes, but that’s another story altogether.

And what about those students who can only carry on a conversation that begins, “Does this make my butt look too big?” What will those students now use for an ice-breaker? Maybe, “Do these pants make my elbow

look too fat?” See what I mean? Doesn’t work! What about those poor students? Is the government thinking about them? I think not!

And then what about those states where teachers still like the idea of disciplining with a quick swat on the behind? What’ll they swat if this No Child Left A Behind thing is allowed to continue? What are our elected officials *thinking* when they come up with this stuff? *They* should be forced to walk around town for a few weeks without a behind. *That* would teach ‘em.

And what about those student athletes who take a tumble and have always depended on the kindness of a big bottom to cushion their fall? What are they supposed to do, wear a butt cushion? Oh, I’m sorry. I almost forgot! They’d have no butt to cushion if No Child Left A Behind is left unchallenged. These poor kids might have to rule out sports altogether. *Tragic* is what that would be. We all know only competitive sports promote confidence and build character.

And...wait a minute...What about those students who use their behinds to entice, as it were, other students? The loss of their behinds would put them at a definite disadvantage. And I won’t even go into the possible physiological consequences of losing one’s butt where the digestive process is concerned.

Anyway, No Child Left A Behind is outrageous and it HAS TO GO! It’s an evil idea anyway you slice it. And furthermore...

Sincerely,  
*Miss Emily Litella*

Uh, Miss Litella? That’s “No Child *Left* Behind,” not No Child Left A Behind. *Ed.*

## RESPONSE OF MISS LITELLA

*Weekend Update News Desk  
New York, New York*

Oh...never mind.

Sincerely,  
*Emily Litella*

*Channeled by Marie Milner, Andrew Hill High School  
(with respect and apologies to the late, great Gilda Radner.)*

*Editor's note: Until recently, the crack staff of Panorama has been reluctant to publish anonymous forwarded messages from the Internet. Most of them are worth a chuckle, but the preference at the Panorama editorial office has been to offer a forum for home-grown talent.*

*However, a change in editorial policy appears to be in order, as the following anonymous parody, submitted by former president Don McKell, suggests. In short, it was just too good to pass up. Therefore, the editors of Panorama are proud to present its newest feature: "Reply All," a forum for internet pith and vinegar.*

## 2008 SEASON ON "SURVIVOR"

Have you heard about the next planned "Survivor" season?

Three businessmen and three businesswomen will be marooned in a high school classroom for one school year. Each business person will be provided with a copy of his/her school district's curriculum, and five classes of 30 or more students. During the year, at least a quarter of their students will leave – taking their textbooks with them – and be replaced by different pupils.

Each class will have a minimum of five learning-disabled children, three with ADD, one gifted child, and ten who speak limited English. Three students will be labeled with severe behavior problems. Two will have arrest records for violent offenses, and a variable number will be abused in their home setting.

Each business person must complete lesson plans at least 3 days in advance, with annotations for curriculum objectives and modify, organize, or create their materials accordingly. They will be required to teach students, handle misconduct, implement technology, document attendance, write referrals, correct homework, decorate their classrooms, compute grades, complete report cards, document benchmarks, communicate with parents, arrange parent conferences, attend IEP meetings, and modify their instruction to suit the Special Needs of about one-sixth of their students. They must also stand in their doorway between class changes to monitor the campus.

In addition, they will complete fire drills, earthquake drills, and Code Red drills for shooting

attacks each month. They will also be required to work the equivalent of an extra week during their year for no pay, monitoring athletic events, dances, and other student activities.

They must attend workshops, faculty meetings, and attend curriculum development meetings. They must also tutor students who are behind and strive to get their non-English speaking children proficient enough to take the STAR and CAHSEE tests. If they are sick or having a bad day they must not let it show.

They must be vigilant for bullying and other forms of harassment by students against other students. If their belongings or automobiles are vandalized or stolen while at work, it'll be their tough luck. In many cases, their managerial supervisors will be younger than they are and will have limited time and experience in the educational field.

Each week they must incorporate reading, writing, math, science, and social studies into their differentiated instruction program, all as the result of a once-monthly inter-departmental collaboration meeting that will be randomly hijacked for other routine school business. They must maintain discipline and provide an educationally stimulating environment to motivate students at all times. If all students do not wish to cooperate, work, or learn, the teacher will be held responsible.

The business people will only have access to the public golf course on the weekends, but with their new salaries they may not be able to afford it. There will be no access to vendors who want to take them out to lunch, and lunch will be limited to thirty minutes, which is not counted as part of their work day. The business people will be permitted to use a student restroom, as long as another survival candidate can supervise their class.

If the copier is operable, they may reproduce necessary materials before, or after, school. However, they cannot surpass their monthly limit of copies. The business people must continually advance their education, at their expense, and on their own time.

The winners of this season of *Survivor* will be allowed to return to their regular jobs. But they may not want to.

VACATION EDITION

Or

“It’s not WHAT they say. It’s the context in which you misinterpret it”

(from “Non Sequitur,” by Wiley)

Jump into your WayBack machine and join me in a retrospective look at what the Board did while you frolicked on the beach with umbrella drinks last summer.

It all began in June of 2007...

The days got longer, but the meetings got shorter.

One could eagerly anticipate getting home in plenty of time for *Are You Smarter Than A Fifth Grader?* on Fox. Items of major importance appeared on the agenda, looks were exchanged, item numbers announced, a vote and a pass. Then on to the next item. Any question was met with a dismissive attitude, or humor, or assurances that it is just a routine item. There is a meeting scheduled for September 20, 2007 at 6pm at the DO. Come see if the patterns repeat or if there is a bit more discussion so it doesn’t sound like the decisions were all made *before* the meeting.

**June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007**

Carol Evans (OG) was recognized for being named California State Science Faire Teacher of the Year (high school division). Way to go, Carol!

In the public address item, 6.0, several moms angrily explained summer school registration nightmares – in several languages. One mom said she had pictures of about 1,000 kids waiting in line to sign up at OG. Another mom was sent from campus to campus. Certainly gives the folks who run summer school some ideas about problems to work out ahead of time!

More budget presentations. Few questions. It is

amazing to hear that all of these departments are making big money and doing amazing things.

Readings of attendance and conduct and ISP policies.

Presentation by CA Conservation Corps – whatever gets ‘em trained, educated and becoming taxpaying citizens. (ed note: I have the students working around their Berger Dr. campus, and they seem pretty hard working!).

More actually routine stuff passed. Lots of change orders accepted without question.

Closed Session: Seven expulsions approved, 1 suspended, and a settlement on 11.4 CDE case.

NOTE: I lost track of at which meeting (21<sup>st</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup>) a summary of the Master Plan Process was handed out. It is everything we have ever said in any school meeting on planning in any district in any decade. I see nothing new or innovative. But we are paying consultants to pass out cute papers with logos, and somehow this makes it exciting. Time will tell if this is just the same old hamburger disguised as Salisbury Steak.

**June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

Girls Track Team from Mt. Pleasant honored – State Champs! Way to go, Ladies!

No public speakers.

Budget passed with only a few questions from Biehl and Herrera about future implications (remember, it is always projected out for *three* years, requiring a very good crystal ball. I think with your school finance degree you get an 8-Ball that says Yes, No, or Maybe.)

More readings of Board Policies.

More of the lightning round move/approve items.

**PAY ATTENTION HERE:** At the end,

## Stegeman, continued

suddenly we are watching a club-like atmosphere as people on the dais wink and joke and the reorganization is said to have gleaned \$487,712 for the general fund. That sounds good. BUT, the [now] three ass't supes are given raises to \$178,018 annually on three-year contracts. And five newly elevated Director III's also got "substantial" raises – quotes used by an un-named inside source. I am assuming that the district will have no problem leaving our benefits alone and restoring COLA since the district is doing this well thanks to sacrifices by ESTA and CSEA members.

Another concern is that this admin will spend the reorganization savings more than once – as they did with the savings from bringing children back from outside placements (but they forgot to consider the cost of transportation) and the other programs that were to save money. In fact, thinking back to the 2005 Pink Slip Fiasco, didn't that cost a huge amount that the district forgot to consider? We need to be vigilant *every time* this admin says it is saving money.

Resolution to support Columbian Peace Movement children at an August 12<sup>th</sup> event passed. (Google "Mayerly Sanchez of Columbia" for an inspiring story!)

Closed Session: One expulsion from April rescinded.

### August 23, 2007

Measure G Oversight report (almost final) due in November '07, but final final due 2/08.

Worrisome talk of an irrevocable trust made of a bond that will assure retiree benefits into the future. Sounds goods, but the word irrevocable makes me nervous.

Obsolete stuff being listed and sold off regularly. Some grants accepted.

Here is my interpretation of a fast event that seems to have huge implications: again I am feeling

like the little boy at the parade who is unable to see the emperor's splendid raiment. Shirakawa suggested a committee to explore land at the north and south ends of the valley, pending approval and opening of new housing developments if they are approved by the City Council. He suggested himself and Eddie Garcia for the committee. The superintendent was added to that eventually, I believe.

Originally it was being referred to as "exploratory"– the demographer has made several comments about this in the past, but then it started to sound like land acquisition and development was the goal. George seemed more deferential to one of the assistant supes than to the superintendent himself. Interesting. The measure of a man in this district used to be his accomplishments, not the size of his tassels.

Speaking of accomplishments AND tassels, a resolution nominating Joe Coto and Elaine Alquist as Legislator of the Year for their respective houses was proposed and passed.

At the meeting on September 20, a Bond will be considered, rather than parcel tax. This could be a big deal and bears watching.

Closed Session: a claim accepted, a claim rejected.

**Notes:** Please try to attend at 6pm on September 20. At the DO. They need to know that we are holding them accountable – as are the citizens who voted them in.

And, depending on your views, make phone calls to Nancy Pelosi and your legislators to decry the deal made a few days ago to include merit pay in NCLB. If that passes, we should all be applying to Los Gatos where grad requirements are not as strict as ESUHSD – or weren't a couple of years ago – and kids emerge able to read from the feeder schools .

I think it's fitting that as I begin the third year of my tenure as editor of *Panorama*, I take this opportunity to welcome our newest members to the East Side Union High School District, and to their union, ESTA—that body of professionals which is most directly responsible for the positive things that happen in the lives and education of our students. I feel the urge to tell the new teachers among you that you have chosen a wonderful career which will reward you for your commitment to your students—not in material wealth (as we all know) but with the knowledge that as some of this country's last true republicans and few remaining democrats, you have sacrificed wealth, respect and in some cases even fame in order to see that a certain set of ideals—equality, justice, and self-government chief among them—will live on. Your students will most certainly appreciate your sacrifice, even if no one else does. And if that sounds like I'm laying it on a bit thick for September, I don't really care.

The psychologist Abraham Maslow argued that human beings are at their best and happiest when they are learning—that learning is indeed the most essentially human of all our deeds, and that we learn best, our curiosity flows most naturally, when we are uninhibited by fear or anxiety. When such optimum conditions exist, declares Maslow in *Toward a Psychology of Being*, and we can enjoy the “sheer delight and primitive satisfaction of knowledge and understanding,” human beings

*then have a parallel to the unobstructed blooming of a flower or to the singing of birds. This is the way in which an apple tree bears apples, without striving or effort, simply as an expression of its own inherent nature.*

I've been thinking about Maslow a lot lately, ever  
*Panorama*

since I discovered that both the school where I teach, Independence High School, and the school my sons attend, Toyon Elementary, have just been designated “Performance Improvement,” for “failing” repeatedly to make “Adequate Yearly Progress” in the annual broadside of norm-referenced, standardized state tests. Thus do all the Brandt boys find themselves ready to commence the journey toward the more sinister depths of No Child Left Behind.

It's significant to note that Toyon is also a feeder school to Independence. Like Independence, Toyon benefits from the work of many truly wonderful teachers. I am quite confident for example that the radiant good humor, kindness, excellence, and professional skills of my younger son's kindergarten teacher may occasionally in his school years be matched, but never surpassed. Yet despite the awesome efforts of teachers like her—efforts which should be plain to anyone with open eyes and functioning ears—the state and the federal government view her and her colleagues as failures.

The same goes for Independence. We barely had time to breathe a sigh of relief and satisfaction for getting a 6/3 accreditation from WASC (this after watching four principals migrate through our front office in the last three years) before we saw our name appear on the blacklist in the Merc. We have failed, the article announced. Between my dear colleagues at Independence and the wonderful teachers at Toyon lies a scant distance of less than two miles—proof positive of the maxim repeated by my friend and mentor Jonathan Lovell: “Don't bother telling me the test scores; tell me the zip codes, and I can tell you the test scores.”

What does this all mean? Well for my kids, no field trips, for starters. The principal has assured my wife and me otherwise, but only after explaining all the suffocating stipulations that must now be met before

*September, 2007*



## Brandt, continued

a field trip is approved. (Car-sickness be damned, the children must use travel time to fulfill state-mandated Language Arts instructional minutes, for example.)

There was also a rumor that there would be no more assemblies, but happily that's already been belied: the school put on a Dickensian extravaganza just last week, in which the principal admonished the children to prove that they are as good and smart as the students in the other schools of their district.

My oldest son, who comes from a family of writers, just brought home a lovely paragraph he'd written in class about his love of yo-yos (doubtless the product of the venerable Yo-yo Assembly, a quaint tradition of happier times which would most certainly *not* pass muster today). His teacher, a conscientious first-year fellow who's doing his best to withstand the hyperbaric environment in which he's found himself, had the boy cross out, Ezra Pound style, a whole chunk of his budding yo-yo *Wasteland*—the clever prepositional phrasing of “When a yo-yo is with out the hitch it will spin and with a tug you can pull it up” did not make the cut—since it didn't follow the exact steps required by “Step Up To Writing,” the popular prescriptive writing program now being sold at a premium price to a P.I. school near you.

How will my son survive this? How will his teacher survive? They both deserve better. It's sad: Abraham Maslow argued that fear and anxiety were the greatest inhibitions to curiosity, and how do we respond? By creating a series of “reforms” that promote fear and anxiety as some kind of sublime classroom motivator.

I'm getting scared. For sixteen years now as a public school teacher, I have been given to making snide remarks about the harmful effects of our media culture on the imagination of children. But maybe I've had it wrong all along. My older son is in the fourth grade. He gets California History this year, but has yet

to come home and play, say, “Sir Francis Drake” with his little brother. But after showing them *Pirates of the Caribbean*, his imagination was on fire. For weeks I could not safely navigate my house for all of the swordplay and swashbuckling around me.

I know this sounds like heresy, but I suddenly fear that I've had it backwards all these years: TV, movies, and video games aren't destroying our children's imagination. School is. Given what's happening in more and more classrooms around the country, all under the banner of “No Child Left Behind,” the old boogey-man media may actually be keeping their imaginations on life support.

It appears that I may be in the midst of a schizophrenic crack-up. I began this column by declaring teaching the finest thing a person can do, and have now damned the education system as toxic to the mind. So which is it?

How about this: when we teachers do everything in our power to make our classrooms safe places in which to stimulate the imagination, celebrate the curiosity of the students in front of us (as opposed to the fantasy students for whom the standards seem to have been created) and most importantly, like Socrates himself dare to ask our students *what they think* (instead of telling them what to think), we will present a front far mightier than anything envisioned by the creeps who concocted “Adequate Yearly Progress.” We just might even save this country from itself.

I have gone on too long. Two pages, in fact. Next month, I hope to have these pages filled with more of you, less of me. Letters, essays, reviews, poems. *Panorama* is yours. Hell, I'll even take a few of your email forwards if they're good enough. And there's always my favorite: All is Not Lost, a chance for you to document those moments in your classroom that make it all worth it. You deserve all that and more.

# ESTA Classifieds

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**ATTENTION ESTA MEMBERS:** *unless notified otherwise by the poster, the advertising department of Panorama has stricken any ads from last year involving housing rentals, time-sensitive solicitations, house sales, or rooming, on the possibility that such needs, vacancies, or services may have been fulfilled during the summer. If you wish to resume such an ad for next month, please notify the Panorama advertising staff at brandtm@esuhsd.org. Deadline for October ads is Friday, October 12, 2007.*

**MindsInSight Online Classroom Tools** - MindsInSite is a hosted Moodle solution for teachers and trainers of any kind. Allowing us to host your remote learning solution allows you to spend your time developing content rather than managing software and hardware. Cut your time spent on paperwork in half. 10% discount for all ESUHSD teachers. Take a look at our services at: <http://www.mindsinsight.com> and/or contact Bruce Selzler @ 347-4936

**VACATION RENTAL:** Cozumel houses available by the week. One and a half blocks from ocean. Easy walking distance to shopping & ferry to mainland. Three rental units: 3 bedroom, 2 bath \$950; 2 bedroom, 1 bath \$650; & 2 bedroom, 2 bath \$680. All 3 units combined for \$2,052. Ten percent discount for teachers. Summer rates are lower. All have kitchen, A/C, DSL internet, cable, safes, and phone and access to pool, rinse tank for scuba, courtyard, and sundeck on roof. Contact Mike at 251-1584 or cloughmf@msn.com.

**Wedding/Event DJ.** \$120.00 per hour. We are a husband/wife team that will work very hard to make your special day perfect. Contact Anthony Kudsi (IHS) at (408) 858-4555 for more info or to make an appointment.

**Joe Sousa, handy service:** Remodeling, repair, plumbing, electrical, flooring and tile, drywall. Free estimates. Excellent references. License number 316835. Tel. (408) 234-7428. (Marie Anderson, AH).

**LOS GATOS LATTICE:** fences, decks, gates, pergolas, arbors, patio covers, retaining walls, automated gates, outdoor projects. Also, general construction/remodelling as well: crown molding, baseboards, doors, windows, drywall, finish work, etc. Call DAVE FREDERICKS @ 347-3966 or contact at big57wave@yahoo.com. References from colleagues at all ESUHSD schools.

**CGT Travel,** Contact Marian Dotson, at 831-338-1959 cgtravelpals@yahoo.com CGC Travel cst 2027232-40  
**Mission Style.** CUSTOM MADE CHERRY Entertainment center/cabinet & chest of drawers/cabinet. Matching set made for a large bedroom. Contact Dave Fredericks: email big57wave@yahoo.com or PHHS woodshop#73966.

**Wedding Officiant:** Special offer for ESTA members. Local weddings performed for \$200. Contact griffinje@esuhsd.org for info and details.

**Intero Real Estate Services** Selling or buying a house is very personal.....but you can get two great realtors by calling Sam Alvarado (772-7661) or Sheryl Ruth (348-5449). They are Intero people (a great firm) and through their WREATHS Program are donating \$1000 to your school program, department or team for ANY name that results in a sale. It is a no-brainer and seamless!

**Problem setting up DSL** or a wireless network at home? Problem with your computer? I can help. Call Kien-Anh (kin-an) at: (408)206-3898. (AH) I'm proficient in both PC's and Macs.

**Danbar Travel.** Spend Christmas in the Caribbean. Contact Danene Leonard Payne at (408) 806-2804, danenleonard@yahoo.com. Barbara Payne (SC)

# The Backside

*Lying to your face since 1964*

## P.I. schools vie for “Extinguished” honor

As more and more schools in California find themselves saddled with the undesirable “Performance Improvement” designation, teachers, administrators, and students have found a new way to redeem their dignity: the honor of being named “A California Extinguished School.”

“After we failed to make Adequate Yearly Progress last year, we knew we couldn’t avoid being named a ‘PI’ school,” said Diana Slodeth, principal of nearby Choakumchild Elementary. “Of course, we immediately began to punish, humiliate, and pressure the children as much as possible.”

“That’s when we discovered,” Slodeth declared, “That we could qualify as a California Extinguished School.”

As it turns out, the Extinguished School honor wasn’t difficult to achieve, once the dictates of No Child Left Behind really kicked in.

“Look around this place,” Slodeth said proudly. “We have extinguished any possible joy associated with schooling: no more field trips, no more assemblies. The kids’ backs are bent from hauling twenty pound textbooks like so many beasts of burden.”

As a reward for its immedi-

ate improvement, Choakumchild elementary received a new flag, with the seal of the “Extinguished School” flying proudly over the students as they trudge to their joyless classrooms.

“We’re ushering in a whole new era in education,” said one state official. “These kids have to learn our new civic virtues: mindless drudgery in the service of entrenched special interests, abject obedience to inscrutable authority.”

“It is our dearest hope that someday soon, all of California’s public schools will proudly fly the Extinguished banner!”

## Ed Department official wins Nigerian Lottery

When State Department of Education official Stu Pigierk checked his email yesterday morning, he had no idea that his life was about to change.

“I was just about to create the essay prompts for this year’s high school exit exam (all rise). I had prepared carefully, remembering even to bring my refrigerator magnet letters so that I could create a real winner.”

“Little did I know,” Pigierk shouted triumphantly, “That *I* was *already* the winner! I had just received email notification by Dr. Benjamin Ibrahim Aminu of my winnings from the Nigerian Lottery, now waiting in a Dutch bank for me to claim them!”

News of Pigierk’s good fortune spread quickly through State Department of Ed offices. By noon, the building was empty, once Pigierk’s colleagues discovered that they had won, too.

## Teacher’s MySpace page like, totally boring

Students at nearby Donald Rumsfeld High School experienced a moment of delight when they discovered the MySpace page of their biology teacher Gladys Friday while surfing on the Internet yesterday. Their delight quickly faded, however, when they discovered that Ms. Friday’s life is “like, totally boring.”

“I mean, really! The stuff on that page made me realize that we students must be the best part of Ms. Friday’s whole, empty existence,” said sophomore Willie Getit. “There’s nothing on there worth seeing at all! Just a bunch of lists of all the different books she’s read and pictures of all the different places she’s traveled. Stupid!”

Classmates Velveeta Loquatia and Lotta Noyes agreed. “There were these pictures she had of her doing some kinda hella wack dance with a tall Argentinian guy,” giggled Noyes. “She had a rose in her mouth, and he was holding her while she leaned back all weird with her leg bent. He was kinda cute, but you could tell they couldn’t dance at all!”

Loquatia was struck by the bizarre nature of the recipes Ms. Friday was sharing over the Internet. “Some of them sounded really weird. There was this one recipe she says she got from Italy, and it wasn’t even pizza. Just a bunch of like olive oil and meat and cheese and peppers and stuff.”

“They ought to make a rule on MySpace that no one can create a page unless they actually have a life,” declared Loquatia—to which her classmates responded in unison: “*Word!*”