

SEIU Local 790

San Joaquin County Chapter

Mosquito & Vector Control District Update / December

"The first task is to sufficiently weaken the union."

All quotes from "How A School Board Member Can Use a Union Agency Shop Fee to Drive a Wedge Between Teachers and Unions"

On November 16, 1999 SEIU Local 790 - San Joaquin County Chapter staff director Steve Wilensky addressed the District Board of Directors and explained why the Union's proposal on agency shop was so important to our organization. We explained that just as 5000 San Joaquin County employees represented by Local 790 had agency shop language virtually identical to the Union's proposal to the District, the fact that no other Local 790 public sector jurisdictions were without an agency shop provision and on the simple matter of principle the Union felt the need to voice its strong opposition to the District's proposal on agency shop. When District counsel explained that while the District Board may not agree with the Union's position, we should understand that they too were operating from a principled position. Steve Wilensky replied that he always operates under that assumption with any employer until they give him cause to believe otherwise.

"...One of the best and easiest ways to accomplish this is to alienate some portion of the [employees] in your district from the union."

Given this, the Union bargaining team was surprised to learn that its offer to recommend the employer's last contract proposal with the district's language on agency shop was not only rejected, but that the District team came prepared with a Last, Best and Final offer which completely eliminated agency shop and reverted back to the old SJPEA language on maintenance of membership.

"...The agency fee is an excellent tool with which to begin this work."

Why the Sudden Shift to Union Busting Tactics? The District Board had removed the District manager John Stroh from the position of spokesperson for the District bargaining team. Next they hired Chris Voight of Blanning and Baker to represent their position on the issues. Mr. Voight wasted no time in trying to extract his pound of flesh from the Union on the one issue it had so recently and sincerely addressed itself to the Board on - Agency Shop.

Back pay and the bonus were apparently never at issue. The Union would like to thank all members who voted to reject the District's last offer and afforded your bargaining team the opportunity to address the District Board on the agency shop issue. As we indicated to all of you at the time, the Union will not delay negotiations one day longer over this issue and is recommending that all represented members vote to ratify the District's Last, Best and Final offer. Except for the provision dealing with agency shop, the package remains identical to the one already voted on and includes a \$200 lump sum payment to all represented members and full back pay if ratification occurs before the 16th. If anyone needs copies of the settlement, please contact a member of the Union bargaining team. **The ratification vote will be held from 4pm - 5pm in the District conference room on December 15.** Our next major challenge is the ad hoc committee discussions on total compensation. Also, all the discrepancies contained within the recent Blanning and Baker class study as addressed to the District management by the Union must be corrected or accounted for.

Gary Langston - Field Representative SEIU Local 790.