

From: [Liz Bettencourt](#)
Subject: President's Message: our evening with the Board - April 23, 2014
Date: Wednesday, April 23, 2014 6:05:49 PM
Attachments: [image003.png](#)

Members: ****Look for the first bargaining survey to come out in the next day or two!****

Thanks and 'great job' to all who turned out to the board meeting last night. The boardroom was a packed house in a sea of green and blue signs held up by members from EA, ES and PMA. Our Trust, Respect and One District message was strong. Our Business Agent, **John Tucker**, and the Business Agent for ES and PMA, **Stanley Young**, each took the mic. The message was clear—the board must step up and direct its staff to mend the relationship with labor. In our discussions with individual board members, they have supported our desire to reestablish a collaborative work culture. Last night John told them, "(Becoming a world class organization) ends with those of us on the front lines, but it begins with you." I encourage each of you to go to the link below and listen to the messages from both Stan and John (approximately 18 minutes into the meeting).

http://scvwd.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=3&clip_id=1123

One of the most egregious issues we have faced lately is the District seeking to overturn a binding arbitration decision (which was in our favor) over the implementation of the Public Employees Pension Reform Act (PEPRA). On Monday, the judge issued a tentative decision in our favor—again. Yet, we still had to go to court on Tuesday to argue our side when the District requested to oppose that tentative decision. The judge heard both sides and will render a final decision within a couple of weeks. The question is, if the judge decides in our favor (again), will the district spend even more money to appeal (*again*)?

ES and PMA each grieved the PEPRA implementation as well. Today they received their arbitrator's decision, and guess what? The arbitrator ruled in their favor—congratulations to them! This additional decision reinforces our collective belief that we did the right thing. What is unfortunate, however, is that in both the EA and ES/PMA cases, all this time and expense could have been avoided had Labor Relations or Legal reached out to us before hand to express their intentions or to ask us to sit down with them.

Please check out the board meeting link; and then sometime tomorrow we will post pictures from the board meeting on the EA website.

In closing, thank you all for your support of the EA Board and our Bargaining Team. We will be stronger with you all behind us.

In solidarity,

Liz Bettencourt

President, Employees Association

408-630-2821

www.valleywaterea.com

Respect - Trust

