

The purpose of life is not to be happy, but to matter - to be productive, to be useful, to have it make a difference that you lived at all.

A Message from Your President...

To Thank You for Making a Difference A Golden Handshake

For the past two years, your APLE team has been continually advocating for a viable retirement incentive program, sometimes referred to as a "Golden Handshake". It has been our belief that providing a retirement incentive to reward the years of dedicated service by our veteran teachers would provide them with the financial security to retire from education and move on to the next phase of their lives. This would in turn open up job positions to return our recently RIF'd teachers to the classroom and provide opportunities for the new generation of teachers to begin their careers in education. In these times of economic crisis and cuts to education, a retirement incentive would be a sound financial decision that would save the PYLUSD crucial dollars needed to sustain a well-rounded educational program for our students.

Until this year, the concept of a "Golden Handshake" has met with District resistance. Unfortunately, past retirement incentive programs have not been cost effective. However, with the success of retirement incentives in neighboring districts, along with our continued encouragement to investigate possible programs, this year PYLUSD researched an "Emeritus Employee Program" through the Public Agency Retirement Services (PARS). After serious analysis, the District has decided to move forward with a possible retirement incentive program for the 2009-2010 school year! I emphasize "possible" because the plan must have approximately 63 participants by Dec. 4, 2009 to meet the District's fiscal and operational objectives.

We have been included in the discussions surrounding the proposed incentive program and are excited to inform you that the APLE Executive Board has unanimously approved the PARS Supplementary Retirement Plan for 2009-2010.

PYLUSD and APLE will be offering workshops for potential retirees which will provide you with all pertinent information and allow you an opportunity to ask questions. (The first workshop will be held at the APLE office on Wednesday, Oct 28, 2009 at 4:00 P.M.) In addition, the District will be mailing a packet of information to everyone in the pool of 288 teachers who the District believes would qualify to participate in this program. If you think that you may qualify and you don't receive anything, please contact the District immediately and show them your STRS documentation.

It is too lengthy to include all details in this article, but here are a few guidelines of the "Emeritus Employee Program".

1. Potential retirees would submit a letter of resignation which would be effective as of January 29, 2010.
2. Potential retirees would agree to continue working and finish the school year completing all duties of the regular teacher.
3. Retirees would start receiving STRS retirement paychecks at the end of February.
4. In addition to STRS paycheck, retirees would receive an additional daily rate of \$183.00.
5. Most significantly, retirees would receive 95% of their salaries at the time of retirement to be placed in an annuity and paid out over time. There are several options that may be chosen to direct the disbursement of payments to the retiree.
6. All health benefits would continue as regular employees until August 31, 2009. Then the retirement benefit would begin.

This "Golden Handshake" has been a long time coming. I know that there will be many questions. Retirement counseling will be provided by the District to help you with your decision. In addition, APLE will be posting some frequently asked questions (FAQ's) on our website. Please take advantage of the workshops provided by both APLE and the District. We, at APLE, will always be available to answer questions. Call anytime at 714-970-3700.

We wish you all the best as make these very important life changing decisions!

Sincerely,
Linda