



# SUBSTANCE

**Providing Answers and Unity for the Substitute Teachers of LAUSD**

[www.utla.net/subs](http://www.utla.net/subs) [www.ihelpmyschool.com](http://www.ihelpmyschool.com)

**Winter Edition**

**2011**

## **Special Points of Interest:**

- Message from Substitute Chairman
- Unemployment Rights
- Subfinder Audit
- Health Resources

## **MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

### **Get Involved!**

These are the times that try men's souls.

With the economy in a tailspin, the deluge of Riffed Teachers, the threat of the Charter School Movement, the lack of job offerings, the arbitrary removals of STs from Preferred Lists, and the increased write-ups, our very livelihoods are threatened. If we do not hang together in these perilous times, we will all surely hang separately.

Currently the District is writing up subs at an alarming rate and firing many for picayune offenses. Last year they fired 500 Substitutes for discipline or lack of availability. An estimated 1,000 subs lost their health benefits by missing the mandatory 100 days of work. Those subs



### **Take Action!**

Our substitute teacher activists, Virgie Sajor, and Kit Mc Cormack joined the California Dreaming March for Education at the culminating day in Sacramento.

cannot even grieve a write-up, so you must contact me if you hope to have any chance of fighting an Inadequate Service Report (ISR). These ISRs are what will get you fired. If you receive a write-up or smell one coming, email me, Karen Morgan, at [ProfessorMorgan@msn.com](mailto:ProfessorMorgan@msn.com) so that we can fend off the inevitable. Doing nothing is a recipe for disaster. Since the District does not notify the Sub Committee of your situation, you must get in touch as soon as possible to reach an agreement on these poison pills before they can

scuttle your career as a Sub. Those who do not will fall by the wayside. If we do not come together as a group to fight the current injustice and malaise, you will end up another whiny casualty of this rotten time for LAUSD Subs. It is a critical juncture in our survival. If we don't organize and coalesce, we will surely go the way of the dinosaur. So remember to join UTLA if you are not a member, register for our email newsletters, and attend as many

meetings as you can. We can say, in all honesty, that ignorance is not bliss if you wish to continue on in the profession of substitute teaching at LAUSD.

You need to get involved in the Substitute Teacher Movement, if you wish to survive the current catastrophe!!!

One way is to join our discussion group called LASUBS. At this time, we have almost 6,000 members. Here is what we posted in the UTLA Substance Handbook: (available at [utla.net/subs](http://utla.net/subs))

- Do you have a question about substitute teaching?
- Do you want to voice an opinion?
- Do you need to debrief from a hard day at work?

Join our online forum by contacting Committee Chair, Karen Morgan, at [ProfessorMorgan@msn.com](mailto:ProfessorMorgan@msn.com) or sign up for LASUBS at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/UTLASUBS/> or contact Leonard Segal at [leonard@ihelpmyschool.com](mailto:leonard@ihelpmyschool.com) to sign up.



## Timely Knowledge is your Best Security



During these turbulent times, you need to stay informed. With a UTLA Strike on the horizon and more layoffs projected by LAUSD you must stay informed. Here is how you get the latest information that can save your job, make it work better, answer your questions and help you make more money.

It is vital that you sign up for one or both of the Substitute email groups. There are many things which come up between the publication of the United Teacher Newspaper and the Substitute Newsletter. It is time-consuming and costly to distribute them. There are many important issues affecting Substitutes including budget cuts, attacks on our benefits, computer/payroll problems, School Board elections, and the possible UTLA Strike.

One recent example of how your job may depend on getting the Substitute Committee emails is the new rule that you must take the online Child Abuse Reporting test once a year or you will be terminated from LAUSD. Some people didn't receive the calls from LAUSD and rarely check their District emails addresses. The only way some people found out was from one of the Substitute email notices.

### How to Subscribe to the Latest Info

The two email lists are LASubs and UTLASubs. Make sure you are signed up for both email yahoo groups. Sign up for LASubs to get your questions answered and be involved in a daily active discussion with other Substitutes. Sign up by sending an email to: [LASUBS-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:LASUBS-subscribe@yahoo.com)

After you send the registration email you will receive a confirmation email from Yahoo Groups. Click on the link in the email confirmation you receive from LASubs. This will take you to the LASubs website so you can set the preferences. Go to the bottom of the page where it says "Step 2. Message Delivery" on the settings page and choose "Daily Digest." This way you will only receive one email a day with a condensed version of the day's discussion in one easy to follow email. Otherwise you will receive a dozen or more emails sent individually to you.

Sign up for UTLASubs to receive weekly updates or urgent and vital notices affecting your Guest Teacher job. This way you won't miss an important announcement on those days you don't have time to read the daily discussion on LASubs. Sign up by sending an email to: [UTLASUBS-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:UTLASUBS-subscribe@yahoo.com)

When you get the confirmation email from UTLASubs all you need to do is click "reply" and "send" to the confirmation email. UTLASubs only sends notices about once a week unless there is something urgent that also needs to be sent to you. You don't need to set this email notification system to Daily Digest because that means you will get the urgent notices a day later.

If you don't have access to the Internet and you don't know anyone who can sign

up for the updates to keep you informed then call us and we will find someone to call you with important updates. Call (800) 871-9012 Extension: 878052# and clearly leave your name, telephone number and the best times to call you.

### Important Benefits of the Email Newsletters

Here are additional reasons why it is critical that you sign-up, get a friend or family member to sign-up for you or ask a fellow Substitute Teacher or volunteer from the Substitute Committee to call you when urgent emails are sent. You will get advanced digital copies of the Substance Substitute Newsletters, get notifications when Subfinder is down along with instructions about how to get jobs at schools in your neighborhood on your own, and get info about forms that make it easier to track your pay and about a spreadsheet program coming soon that will automatically calculate everything for you. We have started the one year reopener negotiations and soon will begin negotiations for what we want in the next 3 year contract with LAUSD. We are surveying Substitutes about what they want us to ask for in the negotiation package.

The emails are a way to reach out for advice/opinions or a heads-up on different problems and how best to protect yourself and others from Inadequate Service Reports that can lead to being fired, or get info about available health resources for those who didn't work 100 days, how to apply for unemployment insurance benefits including

info about when you are eligible and how to get help if you are denied. Have you signed up for the email newsletter yet? The best time to do something is when you are thinking about it. Sign up now even before finishing reading this article or call us for help to get signed up or to get someone to call you with urgent messages. You may not get another newsletter until it is too late.

Here are more reasons you should sign-up now even before you finish reading this article. You can get fast, easy answers to those questions that you have wondered about ever since your first day like: Can Substitute Teachers use the bathroom during class? If you get a late call, can the school require you to park on the street? What are your protections if your car is vandalized on school property?

Your colleagues are your best resource. We are here to help make this a better union one answer at a time. And the email lists are free, the advice is free but the cost of not subscribing may be very high. Your colleagues at LASubs could help you save your job when you run across an Administrator who wants to use you as a scapegoat to protect their job because of a problem or complaint. Being an at-will employee is more risky when you don't know your rights. Signing up is as easy as sending an email.

By the time you get this newsletter the UTLA election will already be over. Had you already subscribed you'd know how you could have run for Office at UTLA and you'd know that more Substitute Teachers ran for UTLA Offices than anytime before. We also have LAUSD School Board elections. Many of the things we want as Substitutes or as UTLA Members in general will depend on who gets elected. You will be left out of the loop if you do not sign up for LaSubs or UTLASubs.  
(continued on page 6)

**Substance**

**SUBFINDER AUDIT**

**Report from Fredrick Bertz**

There are in fact two separate types of audits that have been performed on Subfinder. Both of these audits were done manually as the system is not set up to run reports for this type of work. Therefore, they are time consuming and are not likely to be repeated unless there is another situation like the one we had last fall.

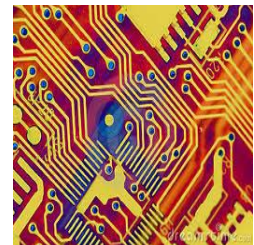
The first audit was a manual audit of seniority. Each substitute teacher had her or his seniority date manually checked and corrected. At the previous Article 30 meeting, Sub Unit Director Regina Echols had promised to get the list of those whose seniority placement had been changed to UTLA Representative Lydia Laurens. Ms. Echols had not recalled that but she promised to have the data to Ms. Laurans by September 30, 2010.

The second Subfinder audit was done on three different dates in the Spring. They chose one date in each month of March, April and May. Next they randomly chose six job numbers, an elementary and a secondary for each of the three calling regions. After determining the seniority status of the substitute teacher assigned to that job number, they verified that all substitute teachers with higher seniority had either gotten work or were unavailable. They found no errors in the system from these audits.

As stated earlier, each of these audits was done manually as the software is not set up to run these types of reports. We asked Evelyn Lowe, who performed the date check audits, if the system could be upgraded to provide the information in a faster

manner. Her answer is that it is already on their wish list of things to accomplish. Unfortunately, the software upgrades would require about \$100,000 for development of each report we wanted to add to the system because Subfinder is a proprietary system owned by an outside vendor. When they tried to make changes to the system internally with the district's IT department in the past, the system actually had more problems afterward than when they started. Therefore, any changes to the system need to wait until there is money to accommodate them.

**Report from Article 30 Meeting of September 2, 2010**



**The bottom line about the Subfinder audit is that it is inadequate.**

**ADDENDUM**

**By Leonard Segal**

Fredrick Bertz did a great job on the report of the Subfinder Audit. The bottom line about the Subfinder audit is that it is inadequate.

Setting aside the issue of the lost days due to the Seniority MOU, the Sub Unit admits that it wasn't until late in May '11 that they had finished putting everyone in the correct calling order. The seniority was supposed to be restored around the

end of November, 2010.

They must produce a report that shows how many days every Substitute lost due to others being called out of order ahead of them.

Without this type of detailed report the District can not prove which Substitutes didn't work 100 days, causing the loss of their health benefits due to their correct seniority or due to errors by the Sub Unit. That is why there is a law

suit requesting a court injunction to direct LAUSD to restore the health benefits of Substitutes until they prove their case with a proper audit.

It would not take \$100,000 to produce such an audit. The LAUSD Information Technology Division has experts that can extract and sort the data to demonstrate which Substitutes lost days due to incorrect

seniority placement in the SubFinder computer by the Sub Unit. Sign up for the Substitute email lists for updates on this and other issues.

**PACE MEMBERS**

- George George**
- Nora Lohmann**
- Virgie Sajor**
- Hal Wolkovitz**

## **UNEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS Updated by Leonard Segal**



All Substitute Teachers who are available to work 5 days a week are eligible for unemployment benefits. Anytime one school in the whole District is open and you don't get called you are eligible for benefits. The only time that all schools are closed is between December 24 and January 2. The first week you apply is a holding week and they don't pay anything. It is a good idea to apply before the winter break in order to be paid for the winter break.

You are eligible for unemployment benefits if you don't work due to jury duty. However, any fees that you are paid must be reported and will reduce the benefits you may receive.

You may be eligible for unemployment benefits any week that you do not work, or earned less than the amount of money you qualify to receive (as much as \$450/week), as long as you were available to work five days a week, and call the EDD at 800-300-5616 by the Friday of the week you did not work or apply on-line at <https://apply4ui.edd.ca.gov/> before the end of Saturday. It is ok to start your claim earlier in the week. The EDD work week starts on Sunday and ends on Saturday.

You are not eligible for benefits on any day that you turn down one call from Subfinder. There may be penalties from

EDD if you apply for benefits for a day you turned down work for reasons other than illness. Any day you turn down work due to illness reduces the money you qualify for by 1/7. **In initial forms**, make sure that you say that you are a **'year-round substitute teacher'** working for LAUSD. You are only entitled to benefits for those days you are available, schools are open and you don't get ANY calls to work.

**In your interview, make sure you say you are a LAUSD year-round Substitute Teacher and** reasonable assurance has nothing to do with you because LAUSD is in session year round. Reasonable assurance is for those teachers who work for traditional school districts that are closed during the summer and they have reasonable assurance that they will get work when school starts again. LAUSD is open year round.

- Every Substitute has a right to open a claim because we are LAUSD

Substitute Teachers on call. We are not guaranteed full employment.

- Apply now unless you are working everyday.
- You can easily reopen a claim that has not expired within the year.
- Local offices are very helpful if you have any questions and they do have computers available to complete online applications.
- When calling EDD at 1-800-300-5616, after you hear "Hello," input the numbers 1,4,0 or 1,2,1,1,7 to get faster service.
- Retirees are eligible to apply for unemployment .

### **Ask EDD On-Line**

If you have questions and can't get through to someone at the EDD telephone number then ask you questions at the "ask EDD" link at [www.edd.ca.gov/Unemployment/Contact\\_UI.htm](http://www.edd.ca.gov/Unemployment/Contact_UI.htm) . For "Category" choose "Unemployment Insurance Benefits." For "sub-category" choose "Other." For "Select a topic" choose "Suggestions, Complaints, or Comments." Click the "Continue" button. Then enter your contact information and how to contact you and click the "Continue" button. Then type your question in the text box.

## **SUBSTITUTE TEACHER LEADERSHIP**

**Substitutes Director &  
North Calling Area Chapter Chair:**  
Leonard Segal (818) 998-5888  
email: [leonard@ihelpmyschool.com](mailto:leonard@ihelpmyschool.com)  
website: [www.ihelpmyschool.com](http://www.ihelpmyschool.com)

**Substitute Committee Chairman**  
Karen Morgan  
Email: [ProfessorMorgan@msn.com](mailto:ProfessorMorgan@msn.com)  
website:  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/LASUBS/>

**Central Calling Area Chapter Chair:**  
Audrey Linden  
email: [audrey133@juno.com](mailto:audrey133@juno.com)

**South Calling Area Chapter Chair:**  
Janis Lukstein  
[Calkeypals@aol.com](mailto:Calkeypals@aol.com) (310) 375-8160

**North Calling Area Co-Chapter Chair:**  
Sherry Lincoln  
[threadza2z@aol.com](mailto:threadza2z@aol.com)

**Secretary of Substitute Teachers  
Committee:**  
Kit McCormick  
[kitsonmc@att.net](mailto:kitsonmc@att.net) (323)-226-0205

**Budget Director:**  
Virginia Sajor  
[sajor202@msn.com](mailto:sajor202@msn.com)

## **HOUSE OF REPS MEMBERS**

Leonard Segal  
Karen Morgan  
David Fruit  
Helen Durham  
Rosemary Gonzalez  
Audrey Linden  
David Lyell  
Dan Moran  
Sandy Nevler  
Joseph Johnson (alt.)  
Gary Pearlson (alt.)

**Timely Knowledge** (continued from Page 3)

Instant communications will be vital for our success here. Only by subscribing to the Substitute emails will you be informed about how to support UTLA job actions while at the same time protecting yourself from getting written up at a school because we have less job protections than the Contract Teachers. Signup NOW and tell other Substitutes how important it is to signup. During the previous UTLA Job Action only those subscribed to the email groups received advice about how to honor the Union action and avoid getting in trouble with the school. These two email groups were also the first to get the newly created toll-free number for the Sub Unit (866-934-1260).

We are also working on passing a State Law to get professional Teacher rights for Substitute Teachers. It will be a long hard fight that will need you to contact your local legislators at just the right times to get it passed through various committees. You will only know when to do that if you have signed up for UTLASubs/LASubs or have someone contact you.

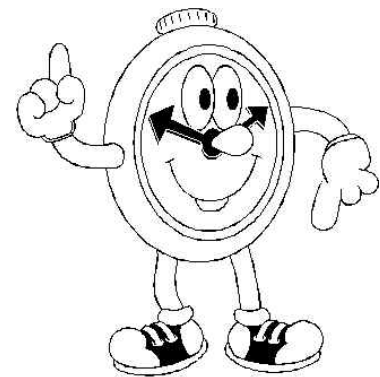
We had to pass a special motion at UTLA to make sure you all got this issue of the newsletter. It could be many months before you will see another newsletter so signup NOW, while supplies last. Just kidding. The emails are free so we won't run out but the cost of not signing up could be VERY high. If you don't have email and need someone to call you with urgent updates then call (800) 871-9012 Extension: 878052# and clearly leave your name, telephone number and the best times to call you.

An other benefit of signing up is gaining access to the UTLA Substitute Teacher Handbook This handbook addresses some of the most common challenges we all experience periodically. Our handbook answers your questions about Substitute rights, health benefits, family medical leave, unemployment insurance, resolving payroll problems, Subfinder FAQs, Sub Unit FAQs, tips for success in the classroom, and how to get help from UTLA and the Substitute Teacher Committee to get better treatment and protect your rights. **Signing up is fast and easy. Do it now.**

**More Reasons to Sign-Up for the Substitute Email Newsletters**

Also sign up to get the latest updates on how to get help from LAUSD with food stamps, reduce utility rates, lower car insurance rates and the state medical insurance programs, free counseling, free financial services, free legal services and more. Subscribe now to get the latest helpful information. Send emails to:

**LASUBS-subscribe@yahoogroups.com**  
**UTLASUBS-subscribe@yahoogroups.com**



**OUR UNION? YES OR NO? Written by Jack Fitzgerald**

It has come to my attention recently, through meetings and the LASubs email list, that many of our members are not very happy with UTLA for varied reasons, and I can understand that to a degree. I refer to the shenanigans of the last 18 months or so.

However, I would like to remind everyone of the alternative, such as not being in the union. I have attended four different national meetings geared for the likes of our (substitute) membership. I have attended National Substitute Teacher Conferences in Orlando and Fort Meyers, Florida, as well as Las Vegas,

Nevada and San Bernardino, California. Amongst other information that I have found out, is that most of the school districts in the country have no health benefits, no retirement benefits, no unemployment benefits, and no grievance procedures for substitutes. Add to that, the fact that they are poorly paid in comparison to Los Angeles substitutes.

Remember that besides health and retirement benefits, we are among the highest paid substitutes in the nation. That is a fact. So before crying out in despair against the union, and stating that we should form a different one for substitutes,

just remember what has been written here. As an example of the latter, one substitute wrote fervently in a post to our web site that we needed to form a union of our own.

I replied back to that person that he should do two things; first, look in the mirror and second, realize that a not very knowledgeable person was looking back at him. I make my point.

Finally, when all may seem lost, don't forget to add up the scorecard and compare it to the alternative.



# **SUBSTITUTE STEERING COMMITTEE**

Jil Balogh  
 Darryl Bohanan  
 Fredrick Bertz  
 Helen Durham  
 Al D'Sa  
 Linda Everhart  
 Jack Fitzgerald  
 George George  
 Wendy Goldman  
 Pat Hamilton  
 Harriet Hammons  
 Charles Hartnett

Sherry Lincoln  
 Audrey Linden  
 Janis Lukstein  
 David Lyell  
 Francisco Martinez  
 Kit McCormick  
 Brian McEvilly  
 Howie Meibach  
 Vicky Garcia-Murphy  
 Karen Morgan  
 Sandy Nevler  
 Mark Rich

***“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”***  
  
***Martin Luther King, Jr.***



## **UTLA 2011 Calendar**

[www.utla.net/event](http://www.utla.net/event)

### **Substitute Steering Committee Meetings**

**Monday May 23, 2011** from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00p.m

### **Substitute Committee Meetings**

**Wednesday May 4, June 8,** from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00p.m

### **Substitute General Meetings**

**Saturday May 7** from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00p.m

### **Elementary / Secondary Committees/**

### **African-American Education Committee**

**Wednesday April 13, May 25,** 4:00 p.m. to 6:00p.m

### **PACE Committee**

**Wednesday April 13, May 25,** 6:00 p.m. to 8:00p.m

UTLA Substitute Teachers Committee

will meet in room 904 .

*A complimentary dinner is served at 5:00 p.m.*

*Please join us!*

Don't let time fly away from you and miss out on these important union functions! Keep informed about what is going on!





## **SUBSTANCE**

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[www.utla.net/subs](http://www.utla.net/subs)

3303 Wilshire Blvd. 10th Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90010

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ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
LOS ANGELES, CA  
PERMIT NO  
21433

## **SUBSCRIBE**



**Linda Everhart**  
**Editor-in-Chief**

Now more than ever we need to show the Contract Teachers and the rest of the teaching profession that we are an essential part of the classroom scene. Who else has to be flexible like we do, to come prepared into any classroom, with or without lesson plans provided

by the teacher, and within five minutes, scope out the personality of the class and decide what demeanor to project to the students?

Last year when so many Contract Teachers were laid off and forced to step into our shoes, they were confronted with what we willingly put up with each day. It takes a creative mindset and a love of children of many different grade levels. Although we love our freedom, which is one of the attractions of this profession, we do not have the camaraderie of col-

leagues that we communicate with every school day like they do, unless we are in a long term position. That is why we need to stay in touch with each other. This newsletter helps. It also helps to show up for the Substitute meetings where we share our cares and a nice meal provided by UTLA. Look at the Calendar inside on page 7 and you will see all the activities that you can participate in. We look forward to seeing you!

### **Inside this issue:**

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