**From:** Merklein, Trip [CO]
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 16, 2011 10:11 AM
**Cc:** Burkett, Kay [CO]; Docherty, Fran [CO]
**Subject:** Member Update 11/16/11
**Importance:** High

**Proposition 103**   In the past couple of weeks, no matter how busy you’ve been, you’ve certainly reflected on the failure of Proposition 103. Though discouraging at the very least, we shall not back down from the challenges ahead. While School Board President Creighton thanked all St. Vrain teachers for their support, in actuality it was SVVEA members who shouldered local teachers’ campaign efforts. We made a difference – Boulder County was only one of three counties statewide to pass Proposition 103 – and we can do so again in the future. Creighton also communicated the impact funding cuts have had “at a time the District is moving forward with a number of significant initiatives,” as well as that Superintendent Haddad is making sure the Board has a full appreciation of employees’ needs and interests. To this end, we as SVVEA members must ensure that there is more than just appreciation; there must be action.

            The failure of Proposition 103 forces us to continue to confront the difficult realities of an eroding budget. Time is not an infinite resource, so SVVEA must reexamine District priorities in relation to the workload created by programs and initiatives, both new and old. SVVEA must be more proactive in identifying what is non-essential in our day, and removing it. Teachers have clearly articulated that current expectations cannot be maintained. As the District is moving toward self-funded health insurance in 2013, employee wellness will be a key factor to maintaining lower costs. Ironically, mental health issues are the largest expense for one of our two current providers. That is not a spurious connection to workload expectations.

            Key questions I have: In a time of reduced state funding, is SVVSD going beyond what is required by the state, or meeting state requirements in the most efficient ways? Does data about programs and initiatives support a correlation to improved student achievement?  What is non-essential?  Your questions or suggestions are valued as well.

**Member Survey**   Past and future input gathered from your ARs, during school visits, and through member advocacy is essential to shaping bargaining strategy, but the survey data you provide is also vital because it quantifiable and can be broken down for interpretation and analysis by teacher demographics. As an SVVEA member, your voice is the one that is heard and acted upon. The information you provide is critical to the decisions your Bargaining Team makes. Presently, about a third of members have responded to the first in a series of surveys. Its link below will remain open after the Thanksgiving Break, to be followed by a survey more specific to compensation issues as the budget, and the possibility of a mill levy override, become more clear. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey if you haven’t already.  <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/72FDZS8>

Check out the link for information about [Hickenlooper's Proposed 2012-13 Education Budget](http://svvea.org/?page_id=2) on the News tab of our SVVEA website.

**Negotiations**   Your Bargaining Team will be in Denver this Thursday through Saturday at the Metro Regional Bargaining Council’s annual conference to collaborate with our counterparts along the Front Range in preparation for negotiations that will begin after Thanksgiving Break.

Enjoy your Thanksgiving Break – you have more than earned it.

Trip Merklein

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