

## **STANDING COMMITTEES**

In talking to various people it has been decided that we need to form some standing committees for our organization.

First we need a Membership Committee that will keep track of our members, send out membership cards, recruit new members at the end of the school year, and welcome new retiring teachers at the annual school district retirement party.

Then we need several people who will form a News-gathering Committee to help the PGTA-R Board collect news of our members such as anniversaries, deaths, births of grandchildren, and general information for our members. We need this data for our newsletters.

Third, we need a Finance Committee to set up a budget for the following year and to oversee the accounting of the finances once a year.

A Nominating Committee will be needed each September in order to present a prospective slate of officers to our membership at the annual luncheon.

Finally, we need to continue having a hospitality committee to plan our annual luncheons and any other social events that we might want.

The PGTA-R board is going to recruit people at the Butterfly Day Lunch for these positions.

- LaRene Kauffman

## **TELL SACRAMENTO TO REPAY YOUR RETIREMENT MONEY**

In May of 2003, the Legislature passed a bill to stop \$500 million from the state going into the special CalSTRS fund, which helps retired educators cope with inflation. Under current law, the state automatically pays into the special CalSTRS account which now supports 80% purchasing power.

Although the Legislature was desperate for money, raiding the pensions of very elderly retirees was not the right way to balance the state's budget. By the time inflation has eroded 20% of the purchasing power of retired educators, the retirees are elderly and living on modest pensions based on modest salaries of decades ago. The current recipients of the 80% purchasing power all retired prior to 1986, most are women, and the average age is 82.

CTA is sponsoring legislation to make the state repay the money. AB 265 by Assemblyman Gene Mullin ( Dem-South San Francisco) passed the state Assembly unanimously, and it also passed the first committee in the Senate. It stalled in the Senate Appropriations Committee, where the Republicans demanded that the bill not come up for a vote.

Why were the senators reluctant to vote? They do not want to be on record as voting against the 62,000 retirees who depend on the purchasing power supplement to their pension. But they also do not want the state to repay the money from CalSTRS. And there the issue rests.

AB 265 is still alive, and if enough pensioners demand it, the bill may have a vote this summer. A two-thirds vote will be required in the Senate for the bill to go to the Governor for approval this Fall.

Write to your own state senator, and ask him/her to co-author AB 265 (Mullin). All state legislators can be contacted in care of the State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 958 14 The Governor and Legislature did not seek to reduce its STRS funding this year.