

ACE COMMUNICATOR

May 13, 2009

At the May 12th school board meeting, 2 board members (Albiso and Ibarra) accused ACE of being the reason our colleagues are being laid off. Apparently, CJUSD has returned to business as usual in the way it treats its employees. Not once has the district ever APPROPRIATELY approached ACE to discuss budget cuts or furlough days. Instead the district chooses to use deception, mistruths, and subterfuge to try to achieve their goal. Apparently the Colton Joint Unified Savings Bank is back in business. To review...

At the February 19th school board meeting a resolution was adopted by the school board to reduce certificated positions by 52 FTE to help offset the \$6.5 million in cuts to the budget. 25 certificated employees were given their non-reelect notices and most chose to resign by March 15th. An additional 38 certificated employees were given preliminary lay-off notices prior to the March 15th deadline.

At the RIF hearing on April 28th, the District Representative Jerry Almendarez testified under oath that the decision to reduce the positions by 52 was financial and not a result of overstaffing. In the last few weeks the financial picture for the district has become much clearer. The federal stimulus money allocated to CJUSD is \$6.1 million for general use, with an additional increase to Title I money of \$2.6 million and another \$3.5 million for IDEA. That's over \$12 million in new money AND there is also the flexibility in the categorical program funding that lifts the restrictions on how that money can be spent.

With 32 certificated employees taking advantage of the SERP and the 25 non-reelects, the district has already reduced 57 positions resulting in millions of dollars in on-going SAVINGS. While some of these positions will be backfilled, they will be filled with employees at the same place or lower on the salary schedule.

With the already reduced positions AND with the influx of new money of approximately \$12 million AND with the flexibility in using categorical funds AND with the projected ending balance of at least \$35 million (and growing rapidly), there is NO need to further reduce positions this year. ACE made this position clear at the school board meeting on May 12th and the board voted 4-3 (Haro, Taylor, Armenta) to uphold the judge's decision to issue final layoff notice to 34 certificated unit members.

In the March Communicator, our position on furlough days was shared.

"Some questions have come up in the past few weeks regarding the Association's position on these two choices. With the District sitting on an ending balance in excess of \$35 million dollars, there are a variety of options available to them including but not limited to, spending down the ending balance, using the flexibility in funding the new state adopted budget provides, saving jobs through attrition and retirement, and/or offering a retirement package. There are still plenty of places for the District to make cuts yet they have chosen to eliminate positions. Districts often choose this option when funding is no longer available or they are overstaffed. Furloughs should only be an option when there aren't any more cuts to make."

