



# ACE ON TASK

## President's Message by Karen Houck

ACE/PAC is getting ready to start phone banking in earnest to help elect our four endorsed candidates. With only a month to go before the votes are cast, we need your help in changing the direction of CJUSD. All of the school board candidates have competition and are out walking the precincts with our ACE/PAC members to meet the voters in person. We will be doing some walking of our own in the next month. If we want a school board who will listen to us, we need to start by showing the candidates we care about who occupies those seats.

The budget documents are available to the public and CJUSD has managed to hold on to a measly \$29.1 million of last

year's reserves of \$37 million. As you may recall, Mr. Ayala predicted we would end the year with only \$15.7 million. He is off by \$13.4 million. The previous year, we started with \$33.1 million, he predicted we would end with \$27.6 million and actually ended with \$37 million. Another error of \$9.4 million. In two years he has underestimated our reserves by \$22.8 million and NOW he is telling us the \$29.1 million will dwindle all the way to \$12.4 million unless we make some serious cuts to programs and get concessions from employees. How can someone who makes errors totaling almost \$23 million over two years expect us to believe anything he claims about the next two years? These numbers can be verified on the district

webpage under budget then unaudited actuals. Look in Fund 01 and then line F2. A flyer is being prepared to show the total available money in the districts' accounts. We have conference offerings coming up this fall and the deadline is the end of Sept. Contact our office if you are interested in attending. Class size grievances have been filed across the district on the overages. Pay attention to the numbers and notify us if they start to creep up again. Remember it is the average for the grade level in elementary and average per teacher in secondary.

### Association of Colton Educators ACE/CTA/NEA

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#### ACE Executive Board

President	Karen Houck
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Elem Director	Cristina Puraci
Elem Director	Steve Villa
Elem Director	Linda Placencia
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Sr, High Director	Robert Moses
Sr, High Director	Marcella Cook
PPS Director	Georgene Dixon
State Council	Paul Lucero
State Council	Rebekah Acord
State Council	Dona Hines



## A Powerful Vote by Arlene Roper

In the past few years, District administration has seemed to work hard to make every school in this district uniform. Bulletin Boards, Curriculum and even schedules have been dictated or "suggested" by the District office. These "suggestions" have often frustrated schools as they try to adapt them to their culture.

After visiting the elementary schools over the past several years, I have come to realize how different all of our schools are. The combination of administration, teachers, support staff, parents, students and community make each site unique even when they are located in very close proximity. Our PI schools are all different. Our non Title I schools are all different. All schools present their own surprises, challenges and victories. Some schools may find their art or music programs threatened while others may find their science or language programs threatened by increasing demands from the District.

When important programs at our sites are threatened, we need to remember that the power to protect them lies in our own hands. The power is in School Site

Council. School Site Council is the most powerful committee at your site. In fact, Leadership and all other committees are subcommittees of the School Site Council. SSC approves the budget and the School Plan. That means that if the District insists you include something in your school plan that your site doesn't want, SSC can vote it out of the School Plan or refuse to approve it. If the District insists that you must buy a certain curricular program that your site does not want, SSC can refuse to approve the funding for it. The District does not have veto rights either. If the District doesn't like something you've put into your plan, they don't have the right to kick it back to you unless it violates Ed Code or District School Board Policy. So while you wouldn't be able to throw out the adopted Math program, you couldn't be forced to buy a supplemental program.

The question is, how do we exercise this power? Principals tend to guard SSC and reign over it, but in truth the principal has ONE vote and nothing more. The Principal cannot be the Chair of the committee. The number of

staff members should equal the number of parents/community members on SSC; and, the majority of the staff members must be classroom teachers. That means that if we band together we have a POWERFUL VOTE. Principals like to direct the discussion in meetings and keep anything controversial off the table, but this is just the place to bring up the important issues like class size and staffing and the parents will listen to you. There should always be a "Good of the Order" on the agenda where you can make all members aware of concerns about both school and District budgets and other issues.

SSC is under the Brown Act. That means that the SSC agenda must be posted ahead of the meeting and must be at a time when the community and staff can attend the meeting. Representatives on SSC **MUST** be elected by their respective groups—**NOT APPOINTED!** Also anyone can attend and speak at these meetings even if they are not elected.

Do you have questions about SSC? ACE has a handout that includes Ed. Code and general information. Strong leadership begins at your next School Site Council meeting!

## CJUSD... Will History Repeat Itself? by Bernadette Pedroza

Some Teachers have asked ACE why we don't trust CJUSD's financial figures and why have we constantly questioned the accuracy of their numbers? The answer to these questions are simple. Actions speak louder than words and CJUSD's actions don't support their words. Historically, when CJUSD has claimed to be broke, money magically seems to appear or is thrown away.

Examples:

1. During our time of crisis where we had to take a strike vote, CJUSD claimed to be broke. Yet, they agreed to a multi year salary increase which was extended to include classified employees as well. **That year, CJUSD was still able to bank a surplus.**
2. Asst Supt of Business advised the school board that offering an early retirement incentive

(SERP) would offer the most savings to CJUSD if it was only offered to certificated staff. **The school board voted to offer it to all employees (classified and management) resulting in less savings for CJUSD.**

3. 2009 SERP: **Teachers saved CJUSD at least \$3.5 million over five years.** It has taken almost a year for the district to be near agreement on this figure (they started out with a smaller amount).
4. Last year, CJUSD sent out 154 layoff notices to teachers (30 more teachers are still temporary from the prior year's layoffs and were not rescinded) and all management positions. **The school board voted to rescind all current year layoffs and hire a few new teachers.**
5. A few years ago, CJUSD cabinet members visited school sites

to share information about "declining enrollment". Yet, CJUSD keeps trying to negotiate bigger class sizes.

6. In past years, ACE has agreed to 0% and 1% pay increases. **It was during these years that CJUSD built their reserves.**
7. CJUSD has spent thousands if not millions of dollars in legal fees. Most of which is on unnecessary litigation.
8. CJUSD's FUND 67 (unspecified money) has a balance of \$17 million.

This week San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools will release CJUSD's "Unaudited Actuals Report". At this time we will have a much better picture of CJUSD's financial status and ACE can better assess the school board's unanimous decision to cut programs.

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## Stress Busters—Relax and Unwind by Steve Villa

There is a common malady affecting all the school sites in the Colton Joint Unified School District. It's called stress and if left unchecked it can have dire consequences on our health and morale. With that in mind, CTA offers the following tips to help us relax and unwind...

**Make Your Commute More Enjoyable.** Listen to a favorite book on tape or C D.

**Clear Your Mind.** Take 3 to 5 minutes to close your eyes and breath deeply. This helps you to clear your mind and eliminate stress.

**Write It Down.** If a life situation is making it difficult for you to relax, write about the incident. When you're done venting on paper, tear up the sheet and throw it away.

**Establish A Ritual.** Having a special routine that you follow every day can help you switch your mind-set from work to home.

**Exercise.** Studies have shown that regular physical exercise helps reduce stress, anxiety and depression, and increases a person's general feelings of well-being.

**Reduce Clutter.** Take five minutes before you go to bed each night to tidy up your home or work space.

**Listen To Music.** Listening to your favorite music will calm nerves and reduce stress.

**Avoid Over Scheduling.** Schedule chores and errands for different nights, or save them for the weekend.

# ACE Calendar October 2010

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4 Exec Board	5	6	7 School Board	8	9 San G SSC
10	11	12	13	14	15 Fall Leadership	16 Fall Leadership
17 Fall Leadership	18 Rep Council	19	20	21 School Board	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29 GLBT	30 GLBT
31 GLBT						

## Special Events

September 29th: Canvass cards due to avoid robocalls.

September 30: deadline for fall conference requests.

October 4: Exec board meeting

October 9: San Gorgonio Service Center Council meeting

October 15-17: Fall Leadership

October 18-31: Phone Banking

October 18: Rep council

October 22-24: State Council

October 29-31: GLBT



Rex was thrilled at the success of NDLB.

## Member Benefits

Your membership in CTA entitles you to a number of additional benefits. TSA, a subsidiary of First Financial Credit Union, offers discounted tickets to a variety of savings for Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, Legoland, Medieval Times Dinner and Tournament, Pirates Dinner Adventure, Movie Tickets (AMC Cinemas, Regal, Edwards, United Artist and Pacific Theaters), SeaWorld, Universal Studios Hollywood, San Diego Wild Animal Park and San Diego Zoo. Also available are See's Candy Gift Certificates. For a complete list of availability, prices, and service charges, call (800) 537-8491 or visit their website at [www.tsaspecialservices.com](http://www.tsaspecialservices.com)

## School Board

At last Thursday's school board meeting, some decisions were made. The new Middle School located in the Rialto area near Grimes Elementary will be name Joe Baca Middle School. A teacher and a community member emailed the board in advance challenging the process in selecting the name. This was not mentioned by any of the board members. The question raised in the emails was how did the community know to submit names for the committee to review. Patt Haro had the minutes corrected from the previous meeting to reflect that she voted "NO" on the proposed cuts (agenda item B-9). Angie Dischinger was named the new Principal for Grand Terrace High School and Pete Tasaka will take her place but no starting date was announced.

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