



# ACE ON TASK

## President's Message by Karen Houck

As we go to press, there is no news from the state on the budget crisis, yet the school districts are expected to build next year's budget based on current projections. ACE is preparing for the possibility of layoffs and packets have been sent to each campus for the site reps to hold a 10 minute meeting. Even though most of our unit will not actually face a layoff, it is important for each of us to understand the process so we can support our colleagues. Many of us will have to adjust to new duties or sites as personnel shifting occurs as a result of the seniority list. It is important to understand that if a position is eliminated, the person who holds the job may still be employed if they have seniority over someone else in another position for which they are qualified. In turn, that person may "bump" someone else they have seniority over and so on. This is why we traditionally see more layoff notices given than actual positions lost to make sure that there is flexibility in the bumping process. This is a very complicated process and ACE will be moni-

toring it carefully to make sure that all of Ed. Codes and the transfer language in the contract are followed. It is critical that every member is aware of their rights regarding involuntary transfers and RIF (reduction in force). Don't hesitate to ask your site reps and Exec board members questions. We are here to serve you.

**W**ednesday, 2/11/09, Dr. Gary Thomas (County Superintendent) and Jack O'Connell (State Superintendent) gave a speech at Sturgis Auditorium on the State of Education. Dr. Thomas spoke of the achievements our students have made throughout the county and how the budget crisis is impacting the quality of our programs. It is interesting to note that California has now fallen to 47th in the nation in per pupil funding. The Governor's proposed budget cuts K12 education the deepest at 15%. No other program in the state budget is cut that much, some even increased by 11%. This is appalling! ACE is working with other partners to get the message out to the community that education needs to be restored to full funding and our students need to be made a priority in this state.

**T**wo ACE groups are working collaboratively on this: the Organizing Committee, chaired by Arlene Roper, and the Outreach Committee, chaired by Rebekah Acord. We will need your help to attend events, pass out flyers, talk to parents, serve hamburgers and hotdogs at BBQs, and help us keep each other informed. This is a crisis our district and school board did not create and we are working with the Board, MAC, and CSEA to educate the public on the devastating effect the budget will have on our classrooms and our students. We have plans to work together at upcoming events to show solidarity to the community and we are working together to put pressure on the state government to adequately fund public education. We can make a difference if we all work together for a common cause:

**Restore Public Education Funding Now!**

## Association of Colton Educators ACE/CTA/NEA

Volume 7  
February 2009

### ACE Executive Board

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**Taxes for 2008:  
\$955.42**

## Constitution by David Johnson

Greetings,

My name is David Johnson and I am the Middle School Director for ACE. I have been in the district for over 16 years and I am happy to be representing the middle schools in our district. I hope everyone has had a great first semester! I know I have had a challenging, but rewarding semester. During that time I had the pleasure of guiding my student's learning about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. We spent some quality time learning about and understanding the simple, yet complex workings of our government. Not a year has gone by that students have expressed an appreciation for the opportunity to learn about their democracy and have thanked me personally for helping them learn about the workings of our democracy. They appreciate learning about how their gov-

ernment works and their fundamental liberties found in the Bill of Rights. One of our many lessons provided the students with a chance to play a simulation on the checks and balances, and separation of powers. It also happened to be a day that our Principal Sandy Torres was present. It was great to have the participation of the Principal in our simulation. I think it added to the students learning and gave the students an opportunity to ask Mr. Torres questions and get a different perspective. Students were genuinely interested in understanding the different branches of government and how they work together while still making sure that one branch does not get too much power. The result was a better understanding of their roles as citizens in making sure to adhere to those checks and balances. The latter makes me proud to be a teacher, because according to research more and more people are

uninformed about how government works and their rights as citizens. Once they understand how government works and their rights, they become better citizens, and our society in general benefits from having informed citizens. I believe it is one of the most important topics or standards we teach in schools today. Can you imagine what would happen if students were not taught the Constitution?! What would be the political consequences if you told the parents that the Constitution was not important enough to teach? If you have had a similar experience and would like to share an important moment or lesson experience let me know and I will try to share it with other teachers in the Middle Schools. Keep up the good work!! If you have any question or concerns you can contact me at ACE or my e-mail, DavJ1427@cs.com

## Vice-President thoughts by Robert Lemoine

Hello everyone. This is the first opportunity I have had to address you as your Vice-President. Thank you to everyone who was involved in any way in the election that took place. Regardless of your role, you played a vital part of our democratic process for our union.

Many of you have been asking why our District is in financial trouble with such a huge pot of money sitting in the bank. Yes, our district has well over thirty million dollars in their "savings" account, otherwise known as the general fund. In addition, they have millions of dollars that are available to them in a few other funds. So why is CJUSD in a financial crisis?

Here is how the "system" works:

Districts are required BY LAW to submit to the County their budget for the cur-

rent year and the next two years. So, this spring, CJUSD will submit a budget to the County of San Bernardino Supervisor's Office that will include a budget for 2009-2010, 2010-2011, and 2011-2012. The budget MUST be balanced AND the budget MUST use the revenue projections that the County gives them. These things are non-negotiable. The District can submit a report saying they will be fiscally sound or they will not be fiscally sound. There are MAJOR repercussions if the District is the latter.

So, Districts have to budget out for three years on wild projections that are never realistic and they have to submit the budget on time. Don't you wish our state legislatures had to do this too? However, it is the requirements and unless or until they are

changed, our District is forced to follow these guidelines.

Our fiscal problems come into play in 2011-2012. So, basically, we are in a crisis because in two years, using projections that are never true, we will be fiscally insolvent. Therefore, we must take action now to ensure that two years from now we will be able to meet our financial needs. If you are sitting there saying that makes absolutely no sense, I agree. Do the Districts have a choice in the matter? No. Once again, they are required by law to be fiscally solvent for three years. What does this mean? Expect cuts to be big this year to save in three years. Does this mean lay-offs? Probably. Cuts in school site budgets? Yes. Cuts in services? Yes. Cuts everywhere. Expect to perform the same tasks with less money.

## Our great state by Robert Lemoine

Everywhere you turn, there is talk of the budget crisis. The Federal Government just approved almost 800 million dollars in a stimulus package. This is after approving 750 million dollars to "bailout" banks. The state is short 40 plus billion dollars through next year. Our District will be short a projected 60 million dollars over the next 3 years. Is there any hope left? What can we do?

Over the next few months, there will be plenty to do, especially in our state. California legislatures are putting together a package that cuts education by the billions. This cut will be passed on to Districts and school districts will use their discretion to pass the cuts onto their work force and, ultimately, the students. Once the legislation is passed, there is not a whole lot that Districts can do to get that money back. So, now is the time to take action!

Is a phone call or a simple email worth saving a teaching job? Is two minutes

of your time worth keeping class sizes small? Are a few words worth keeping your health benefits or keeping your school site budgets?

We have an organizing committee and outreach committee that are planning many events to help bring about an understanding of this crisis and make it clear exactly how these deep cuts to education will affect our state, our district, you, and our students. It is time to get involved. If you are one of the many people who think that this crisis will be over soon and have little or no effect on you, you are mistaken. The repercussions will be felt far and wide and for a very long time. It is only by educating people (isn't this why you got into education anyway?) on the current situation INCLUDING what can be done. This is a larger issue than our District. In fact, our District is obligated to make a 3 year budget and turn it in on time, despite the fact that the state cannot even accomplish that task.

The deadlines for the District are rapidly approaching and without a State budget, the District is forced to take the Governor's awful proposal of a 15% cut to the education and assume that is the revenue they will be receiving. Therefore, the District has to make cuts to reflect that in their budget. This global issue is so large that the unions in the District CSEA (Classified) and MAC (Management) have teamed with us to help the District in solving this crisis. So, things are not business as usual. We must do something about the lack of foresight of our Governor and the lack of foresight of our congressmen and congresswomen.

Please do not just stand on the sidelines and let the chips fall where they may. Without a say or without a voice, you may be one of the chips that falls.

## Health by Arlene Roper

Too Much and Too Little?

Costs for medical procedures continue to increase from year to year. Some of those costs increase at an outrageous rate! Containing costs has become a major goal of everyone involved in the Health Care industry. It is important for you because the more we can contain costs, the lower our premiums will be. The lower our premiums are, the easier it is to maintain the benefits we have. Does this mean we should never use our Health Care plan? **Absolutely not!!** Doctors and HMO's will tell you that one of the biggest

problems we have is "too little" AND "too much" care. Regular physicals, developing a relationship with your doctor and preventive care will go a long way to contain costs because you are catching problems before they happen. However, too much care can be a problem. Doctors will tell you that you don't need an MRI for every backache or a full body scan just to see if everything is alright. With so many medical advances, some think they need the latest and greatest medications and procedures for

every ache and pain. More expensive doesn't necessarily mean better! In addition, many doctors are ordering far more tests and procedures than necessary to cover themselves if future problems occur. This is why you need to find a doctor you trust and talk to him or her regularly. If you are having a problem, discuss the "best" procedures with your doctor and ask him or her to explain the purpose and why each test is necessary. The "right amount" of care will help us contain costs and make you a healthier person!

# ACE Calendar March 2009

# Special Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 Exec. Board	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13 Good Teaching Conf.	14 Good Teaching Conf.
15 Good Teaching Conf.	16 Rep. Council	17 Saint Patrick's Day	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March 2: Read Across America  
 March 6-8: Equity and Human Right Conference in San Jose  
 March 9 - April 3: 4M off track  
 March 13-15: Good Teaching Conference in Anaheim  
 March 17: St. Patrick's Day  
 March 30 - April 3: Spring Break

## CJUSD Budget Committee

There is a budget committee made up of members from ACE, CSEA, MAC, and District personnel to tackle the task of advising the School Board on the budget. As Ace, our top priorities are:

1. Keep our salary. NO furloughs and NO freeze in step and column.
2. Keep our benefits. NO change in benefits and KEEP Kaiser.
3. Keep our working conditions. NO change in class size reduction.

We will continue to work with the other unions, District personnel, and School Board members to keep cuts as far away from the classroom as possible and still remain fiscally solvent. This is a monumental task and we appreciate actual dialogue and participation in this process.

## 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 Southern California entertainment venues. You can order advance tickets at a 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)

## RIF and Non-reelection

Non-reelection notices have gone out. By the time you receive this, it is more than likely that RIF (reduction in force) notices have been approved or will be approved soon. The District and School Board have until March 15th to notify members whether or not they will have a job next year. There are huge differences between the two "lay-off" processes and it is important to understand the differences.

Non-reelection is a "right" the District has to waive any non-tenured employee. There is virtually nothing that ACE can do to overturn that right. Basically, the District can release any non-tenured teacher for any reason and they do not have to give any specific reason. The RIF process includes this complicated "seniority



list" that you have heard about recently. They must start with the most recent hire in the credentialed area and work their way down. The LOWER your number, the safer you should feel. You have numerous additional rights if you get a RIF notice. We will work diligently

to ensure that all of your rights are protected under our contractual agreement with the District. Please contact the ACE office if you have further questions about the differences between the two lay-off procedures.

ACE ON TASK is a publication of the Association of Colton Educators  
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 Edited by: Robert Lemoine and Rebekah Acord and published once monthly for the Representative Council and its membership.