

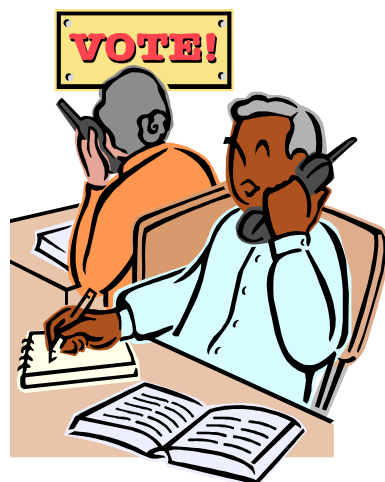
ACE Calendar November 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Precinct Walk
2	3 Exec. Board	4 Vote	5 Ballots Due	6 Counting	7 Results Announced	8 Community Picnic
9	10	11 Holiday	12	13	14	15
16	17 Rep Council	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27 Holiday	28 Holiday	29
30						

School Board Election

Once again I want to remind everybody that they need to vote in the November election. Also, if you did not get a chance to read the last newsletter, the Association is recommending Patricia Haro and Todd Housley for the School Board. The candidates are canvassing the community door to door to become elected. They are also attending school and community events. On October 11, we had a group walk with the candidates in the community. We went door to door to speak to the voters. We had some very positive responses from the community. I would like to say THANK YOU to those certificated and classified school employees who participated.

The Association will need volunteers to help get Patricia and Todd elected. We are conducting phone banking from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM Monday through Thursday from now until November 3. We need all of the schools to sign-up and do their part to help. We will provide food and anything else needed to make it a positive experience. We are doing another group walk on November 1, as well. Walking the neighborhoods is a great experience as it allows for some exercise and provides some insight into the areas in which our students live. We need all the volunteers we can get so if you are interested in volunteering, please call the ACE office, or email me at, DavJ1427@cs.com. Remember to VOTE in November.



Special Events

October 21-November 5: ACE Election
 October 24-26: Fall Leadership
 November 1: Group Walk for Candidates
 November 4: National Election Day
 November 5: ACE Ballots Due (5pm)
 November 7: ACE Results Announced
 November 8: Community Picnic



ACE ON TASK

President's Message by Karen Houck

My first few days as your President have been rather intense. I have been trying to get up to speed quickly on all of the current grievances and issues affecting our membership. So far, I have been introduced to the Cabinet, been asked for the name of someone to help interview for the Assistant Supt. of Business and presented at a School Board meeting, all in my first week!

An interesting observation has occurred to me. District time has no real bearing on actual time. As educators, we learned that the school clock is never in sync with real time and have had to adjust accordingly. Now I am learning a similar correlation in dealing with District Personnel. Here is what I have figured out: "I'll get back to

you" really means "I will get back to you at some point in your life, but not today, or even next week. Maybe in several weeks if you keep asking." "That is a very good question" really means "This will have to go to someone above me and probably to the lawyers and then to Cabinet and after all of that, I will get back to you (see above)." "We will get that to you" really means "Keep asking for it because we don't have it and are stalling for more time in the hopes that you forget about it" and finally, "We need to schedule a meeting and talk about it" really means "I'll get back to you".

I am starting to understand Ken's frustration with the speed at which things happen at the District Level. When our members call or e-mail about an issue, it is time sen-

sitive and causing a great deal of personal stress. Some issues need to be taken care of immediately and can't be put off until later. In trying to resolve your issues quickly, I have found that quickly is a word that has two meanings. At the site it means within the day or by the end of the week and at the district it means within the year. I hope to get things moving a little faster with the help of those District Administrators who understand what quickly really means and are helpful in resolving issues in a timely manner. Be patient, I am working on getting District time closer to real time with the help of these administrators.

Association of Colton Educators ACE/CTA/NEA

Volume 3
October 2008

ACE Executive Board

President	Karen Houck
Vice President	Vacant
Secretary	Rebekah Acord
Treasurer	Robert Lemoine
Elem Dir	Bernadette Pedroza
Elem Dir	Arlene Roper
Elem Dir	Steve Villa
Elem Dir	Linda Placencia
Mid. Sch Dir	LynnMary Toscano
Mid. Sch Dir	David Johnson
Sr, High Dir	Erwin Schaefer
Sr, High Dir	Marcella Cook
PPS Dir	Vacant
State Council	Paul Lucero
State Council	Rebekah Acord
State Council	Vacant

We need a new name for our newsletter. If you have a suggestion, submit it to aceteach@aol.com. The winning entry will receive a pair of movie tickets.

Do You Have Input? by Erwin Schaefer

During September and October, many teachers are out of their classroom for SB472 Training. Since we are members of a Program Improvement District, attending the training is not optional. However, accepting how we as teachers and professionals are perceived is a choice. I made my choice last spring. I felt insulted when someone thought as little of my time as to offer me \$12.50 per hour to do the SB472 Training. Other districts were willing to provide fair compensation to their teachers. So now I will miss 5 days of classroom instruction.

SB472 Training is not the lone issue as to how teachers feel they are perceived by the district. My wife is an elementary teacher in the district; hence, I hear the frustrations she has, and learn more being active in ACE.

There are several things that are mandated; however, the implementation of these mandates may be varied. Where has the teacher's input been? Has there even been teacher input? If there was teacher input was it even considered?

One colleague expressed to me, "The most infuriating this is to be asked your opinion and then ignored. Don't ask me your opinion if you don't want it."

What is your perception of CJUSD? Are you being asked? Are we being asked so as to fulfill the requirement? Are a "select" few or those who volunteer being asked? Hopefully, the district is seeking (not by sending a memo) and asking for your input. More importantly, the district is valuing your input.

ACE ON TASK is a publication of the Association of Colton Educators
 190 W. H St #101 Colton, CA 92324 (909) 825-0332
aceteach@aol.com
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Successes by Rebekah Acord

Recently, I had the privilege of being a member of the district interview team for the position of Assistant Superintendent of Business. I would like to thank the district for including the Association in this process. It is a big step forward! The Association looks forward to being involved in these processes in the future.

Vacancies

The Association will be conducting an election soon to fill the vacancies for the following positions: Vice President, PPS Director and State Council Rep. Additionally, we will have a vacancy on the PAR panel and possibly the Negotiations team this year. If you are interested in any of these positions, please contact the ACE office to submit your name.

Summer Institute by LynnMary Toscano

Each year ACE sends executive board and committee members to attend the Summer Institute (SI) at UCLA. They receive intensive training in many areas vital to an effective Association. This year, five of our members attended the SI sessions that were held from August 3rd - August 8th.

Robert Lemoine, our treasurer and a bargaining team member, thought the School Finance Strand was "very informative and helpful in understanding how our school district spends money by reviewing county financial documents submitted by CJUSD during the last five years." He learned ways to interpret school budgets and about district budgeting practices.

Carmen Vega, a Bloomington High School representative and bargaining team member, completed the Essential Bargaining Strand. She felt that the training helped her to approach bargaining in a professional manner by teaching her to detach her personal interests and emotions from the negotiation process and consider, instead, what benefits would be gained for all unit members. In her training sessions, they practiced listening, repeating and rephrasing during bargaining to clarify what is being proposed.

Steve Villa, an elementary school director, participated in the Emerging Leaders Strand. He described it as "a good overall beginning class that gives an overview of CTA and union history." He expressed that it was a valuable experi-

ence for networking since he met representatives and directors from districts throughout the state. During these training sessions they practiced conducting meetings where he charmed each and every participant with his winning personality. After the mock representative meeting with CTA president David Sanchez, the facilitators were amazed that they couldn't find any errors or offer constructive criticism. They were impressed with the fine job the group had done adhering to the time parameters of successful meetings.

Bernadette Pedroza, an elementary school director and facilitator of the social committee, chose the Legal Track and Community Outreach. She reported that it was the first time the Legal Track had been offered and that the strand covered extensive information about the Education Code, Grievances, and Federal Labor Laws. She had the opportunity to meet CTA lawyers and their support staff while learning many approaches to handling grievances and issues correctly. During the Community Outreach sessions, she was taught ways to organize events within the Association and the community. She observed that our Association excels in commu-



nity outreach and serves as a model for other districts who seek ACE for assistance in their organizing efforts. She believes that the Association will benefit from the knowledge she gained at SI.

As a middle school director, I attended the Communications Strand which included website design, public speaking and media relations. In the campus computer lab, we studied the CTA website as a model to "organize online." We worked with text editors and Photoshop to build our own websites and blogs. Next, in the public speaking segment, I practiced the "elements of an effective speech" by writing and presenting a speech about NCLB which was recorded and critiqued. A similar session followed where I learned news conference preparation and media advisory writing. As a culminating activity, a panel of speakers, that included reporters from KNBC Channel 4 news, KNX1070 radio and the editor of the Los Angeles Times, gave tips on capturing media attention to publicize our issues.

At the SI, CTA members gathered together to support UCLA's AFSCME Local 3299 on Thursday, August 7 during a lunchtime rally to take "back UC for Patients, Students and Our Families." To view the video of our march and read an article that I wrote about the event, visit

www.ctasummerinstitute.org and <http://ctasummerinstitute.org/cta-supports-afscme-3299/>.

Communication is the Key to Success Part II by Robert Lemoine

Over the past few months, DAIT has been constructing a plan to help Colton exit from Program Improvement status. A few weeks ago, the District invited numerous teachers and ACE representatives to attend a meeting where the DAIT provider presented an in-depth look at the exact strategies that will

help us exit from being PI. This is the type of communication that we have been looking to get from the District. DAIT is state-mandated and neither the District nor ACE have a voice in whether or not a team intervenes, BUT we can work together in trying to move forward. Communication is the key and

the District did take a huge step forward by involving ACE in this presentation. I want to thank the District for their communication and involving ACE from the beginning. I sincerely hope that the District continues this path of open communication and involving the union in District-wide actions.

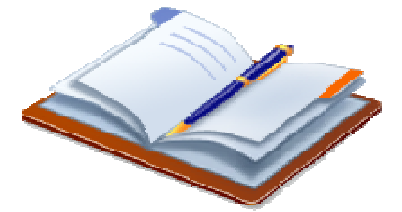
A Glimmer of Hope by Arlene Roper

For those of you that don't know me, I have been a K-4 teacher in the Colton District for 25 years. I have always believed that a strong Association is built on strong advocacy and frequent communication between its members and the leadership. As an Elementary Director, it is my goal to visit each of the elementary school sites this year and hear from you what is going on and what your needs are. But let's not wait until I make it to your school.

At a recent meeting, the ACE Board and Reps met with the District Administration and the DAIT provider Dr. Linda Gonzales where Dr. Gonzales presented the plan for the District.

One of our Reps pointed out how much we all have to do and that we all feel as if we're drowning. Dr. Gonzales pointed out that we could actually have less work to do; but, that we would and should give up some things that aren't working. Mr. Downs also stated that he would be discussing "Organized Abandonment" with his Cabinet. Now I agree that there are some things we need to give up. It's just that what the District thinks we should give up and what we want to give up may be different things. So let's help them out a little. At your next site ACE meeting, make a list of things that you

would like to give up. Be reasonable, we can't "abandon" 1212 Valencia. However, I know that there are a lot of things that have come down in the last few years that we all find pretty useless. Make that list and have your Rep get it to me or send it directly to the ACE office. We'll make sure the District hears what you think we should "abandon."



State Council by Rebekah Acord

The first State Council meeting of the school year took place October 3-5 at the Westin Bonaventure in downtown Los Angeles. It was an eventful weekend. All State Council members were assigned to a focus group on Saturday which took place before we all went to our respective committees. We discussed the recent budget impasse in Sacramento and brainstormed solutions. There were several new business items that were dealt with in Sunday's session. Some of these in-

cluded asking CTA to get involved in the initiative process to change the



2/3's majority it takes in the California legislature to pass a budget to a simple 50% majority. Another new business item dealt with CTA submitting an initiative to raise taxes in the state to benefit schools and colleges. As always, if you would like to be a guest to observe the workings of State Council please call the ACE office. The next State Council meeting will be in January at the same location.

Audit Coming Soon by Arlene Roper

The Colton District will be participating in a Benefits Audit in the next few months. An audit of this sort is being done in a lot of public and private business in order to clean up records and make sure everyone that is supposed to be covered is. In a District with over 2000 employees, mistakes happen. An audit is a thorough way of finding

those mistakes. It can also help us when our renewals come up. However, it may be a little inconvenient for each of us. We'll all be asked to bring in records of dependents in order to confirm eligibility and we may be asked to confirm such things as addresses, birthdates, etc. Representatives from ACE,

CSEA, and Management will be meeting with the Benefits office to make sure confidentiality and all concerns are addressed. You will be getting more information in the coming months about the Audit. If you have any concerns please let us know.