

ACE Calendar February 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4 State Council	5 State Council
6 State Council	7 Exec Board	8 ALCO	9 Declaration of candidacy due	10	11	12
13	14 Holiday	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 Holiday	22	23	24	25 Pacific Region	26 Pacific Region
27 Pacific Region	28 Rep Council					

Special Events

February 4-6: State Council
 February 7: Exec Board
 February 8: ALCO Uniserv
 February 9: Declaration of Candidacy forms due
 February 14: Holiday
 February 21: Holiday
 February 25-27: Pacific Region Meeting in Oregon
 Feb 28: Rep Council with Jerry Almendarez and Candidates Forum

School Board

At last Thursday's board meeting several critical items were under discussion and vote. The board approved eliminating or reducing programs to save \$3 million and also approved 14 furlough days for management. All this is geared to reduce \$10.5 million from the budget Mr. Ayala is projecting we need.

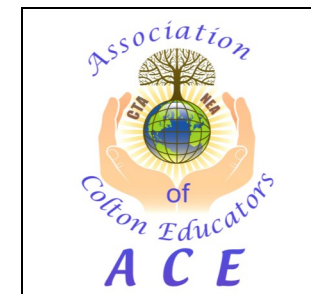
Member Benefits

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

Elections

ACE elections are coming! This year you will be electing a Secretary, Treasurer, High School Director, Middle School Director, 3 Elementary Directors, PPS Director, State Council Representative, an At-Large Director and 5 NEA/RA Delegates. Declaration of candidacy forms are available in the office and the elections will take place this spring. We have added 2 new positions to the board of directors; a 5th Elementary Director and an At-Large Director. The At-large position is a one year term to have the opportunity to serve the Association in a new capacity. You can be involved and see if leadership is right for you without the two year commitment. The offices take effect July 1, 2011. Get involved and run for office!

ACE ON TASK is a publication of the Association of Colton Educators
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ACE ON TASK

President's Message by Karen Houck

Despite what the District may imply, I am not delusional! While the State is in a severe crisis, keep in mind that the district had been stockpiling funds over the years for just such an emergency. While those funds are starting to dwindle away now, the district still has a respectable cushion to sustain us for a couple of more years without cuts being necessary.

We recognize that these surplus funds won't last forever and we are interested in having rational discussions with the district. Unfortunately, that is not happening. The Business Services Division is creating an artificial crisis in the district with unrealistic projections and trying to force us to accept their solution rather than trying to work together to get through these difficult times.

The last several meetings with Mr. Ayala have not gone well, similar to what some of you have experienced at your sites. I have asked for a transparent and accurate budget and a number of documents that we have yet to receive. Chief

among them are the accountings for the millions of dollars in ARRA and Edu-Jobs funds. All I'm told is they were used to offset the deficit, but not how. We will continue to push for transparency and try to get the district to see that the crisis hasn't hit Colton yet. NEA is on the forefront of protecting teachers and the latest attack is coming in the form of Mandatory Social Security. This would hurt public schools, students and teachers in California. Mandatory Social Security has been discussed at the federal level as a quick fix to eliminate the effects of non participation in Social Security. However, the new cumulative contributions to the Social Security Program could reach 12.5 percent. These contributions would be in addition to the contributions teachers, school districts and the California General Fund make toward CalSTRS. Mandatory Social Security would harm the State's fragile economy in a slow recovery. Should California's teachers be forced to contribute an additional 6 percent of their salaries to Social Security, they would not be guaranteed the same

kind of return on investment they are currently earning in the CalSTRS system. California is struggling through the worst fiscal recession it has seen in generations. Forcing California teachers and school districts to contribute to Social Security would also force additional cuts to the classroom, further harming the educational system in the state. While NEA supports the elimination of Social Security offsets, it does not support Mandatory Social Security. Watch for information in the NEA Today. During the recent rainstorms, our colleagues in Redlands were particularly hard hit. In Highland, 4 of the 5 homes that were red tagged were owned by Redlands ESP members. These are the classified employees who work for RUSD but are also part of CTA. They are asking for assistance to help with the damage. Contributions can be sent to: Redlands ESP, 410 Alabama St. Suite 102, Redlands, CA 92373

Association of Colton Educators ACE/CTA/NEA

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ACE Executive Board

President	Karen Houck
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State Council	Rebekah Acord
State Council	Dona Hines



Everyone Is Involved in a Child's Education by Marcella Cook

In the past few months a couple of articles have come to my attention. The first is *Bad Schools? Blame the kids' parents* by Donna Gordon Blankinship. The article gives us much to think about. One survey in the article found that 72% of mothers and 61% of fathers thought that parents are to blame for what is wrong with education in the United States. Joyce Epstein, a research professor of sociology at John Hopkins University stated, "Without programs to educate parents, everyone is working in some stage of ignorance." A parent advocacy group in Chicago stated, "Children are tired, they're hungry and they need someone to help with their homework. Some kids face violence at home or in their neighborhood. Some parents are trying so hard to keep a roof over their family that they can't help with school." The study found that one out of ten kindergarteners and first graders miss a month of school every

year, which can put them behind their classmates for years, according to the advocacy group Attendance Counts. By the ninth grade, missing twenty percent of school becomes a better indicator of a student dropping out than test scores.

In *Confronting the Myths About Tenure and Teachers' Unions*, Ellen Dannin explains that all poverty is not alike. She is currently a law professor, but she grew up in an impoverished, single-parent home and attended a low-quality school through the eighth grade. In her case, her mother had a house filled with books and her farmer grandparents made sure she had good-quality food. Dannin believes the best teachers in the world cannot by themselves make up for the profound deficits so many children face today. If the nation is to thrive, we must lift people out of poverty and ensure that the rising generation lives in good housing, has quality food, and strong community and family

support. Teachers obviously cannot do what is required all alone. We don't expect a surgeon to operate on a patient by themselves. Nor do we blame the dentist when a patient's teeth fall out because they didn't brush or floss their teeth.

The current panacea to helping students is "raising" test scores. This is an inadequate indicator of future student success. At this point I am unaware of any research showing that students that are successful on state tests are successful throughout their lifetime. We all need to ask ourselves how we can turn students into lifelong learners. Lifelong learners are more resilient. If their job becomes obsolete, they know how to retrain themselves. They can continue on with their careers and their lives. I hope this serves as a reminder that we are in the classroom to show our students that learning is a lifelong experience that doesn't end when you graduate.

News From Sacramento by David Sanchez, CTA President

It was a quick start to the new year as Governor Jerry Brown took office on January 3. I and the other CTA officers attended the inauguration in Sacramento, where Brown made history as both the youngest and oldest governor to lead California. He talked honestly about the challenges facing the state, the need for everyone to join in the solutions and again recognized the importance of public education in building a better California. Two days later, Gov. Brown proved his commitment to public schools by returning classroom educators to the State Board of Education, including CTA legislative advocate Patricia Rucker. Rucker is a former Sacramento County Teacher of the Year and a respected expert on

Wellness Programs by Arlene Roper

Over the past several years many in the Health Care industry have seen the need for more emphasis in Wellness Programs. Wellness programs emphasis staying fit, eating right, exercising, and regular doctor and dental visits. The new Health Care Reform Act has emphasized wellness, making preventative screening tests free. This is something we already have under our insurance carriers.

Through the High Desert Inland Trust we have three wellness programs. Healthy Rewards is a program sponsored and funded by Blue Shield and available to all Blue Shield enrolled members. It is easy to use and

pays up to \$150. Last year about 100 people received vouchers to help pay for the Weight Watchers program. We heard a lot of positive feedback regarding the successes people achieved. If you can't get a voucher, you can get a discount for Weight Watchers through the Blue Shield website www.blueshieldca.com. Best Doctors is another program the Trust offers as a second opinion option to Blue Shield members to members who want to see a specialist or double check their treatment plan. Kaiser also has many similar wellness programs through online seminars, attending

classes or accessing their website and information at www.kaiserpermanente.org. There are options that include prenatal care, lowering your cholesterol, or smoking cessation. Kaiser is ahead of the Health Care Reform Act in putting their medical records online and letting you have access to them. Electronic record keeping is aiding Kaiser Doctors in making sure their patients are notified if they need screenings and tests. As the New Year begins consider using some of the Trust and Kaiser programs to help you achieve your goals!

News From Sacramento (continued)

pedagogy and education issues. Brown appointed seven new members to the State Board - all of them have ties to public schools and colleges. Stanford Professor Emeritus Michael Kirst will take over as State Board chair. Brown also announced he will not fill the position of Secretary of Education, something CTA has long advocated as the position is unnecessary and wastes taxpayer money on just more administrative bureaucracy. Recognizing that the state's \$28 billion deficit cannot be closed by cuts alone, Brown this week announced a balanced approach to solving our state's budget problems that includes much needed revenues. Brown has proposed a special election in June to simply extend the taxes that were approved in 2008 for five years. Still, the 2011-12 budget proposal includes some very painful cuts. We appreciate the governor's attempt to maintain current funding for K-12 schools, as he recognized that public education has borne the brunt of budget cuts the last three years with a loss of more than \$18 billion. However, there are more than \$2 billion in K-12 education funding deferrals and about \$1.3 billion in cuts to higher education that will directly impact students. CSU and UC enrollment fees have seen triple-digit increases that are pricing many students out of college. And we all know that investing in education is key to improving our economy and creating jobs. CTA legislative and financial experts are reviewing all the budget details and the proposed special election will be discussed at the State Council of Education meeting in February. Without the additional revenues, public schools and colleges are looking at another \$2.3 billion in cuts.