



# ACE ON TASK

January 2008

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

**ACE Executive Board**

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Elem Dir	Melinda Yslava-
Elem Dir	Steve Villa
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Mid. Sch Dir	David Johnson
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Sr, High Dir	Marcella Cook
PPS Dir	Becci Conrad
State Council	Paul Lucero
State Council	Rebekah Acord
State Council	Ken Johnson

**DUES AMOUNTS FOR  
IRS:**

\$953.72 Dues to  
ACE/CTA/NEA

\$17.24 was designated to po-  
litical activities and is not  
deductible.

**Total Deductible \$936.48**

## President's Message by Ken Johnson

As you know, the Governor has proposed across the board cuts to education. A 10.8 % reduction in categorical programs has been proposed. Ironically, the Governor previously proclaimed that this is the "year of education." Are students a priority in the proposed budget? Statewide, our schools have made progress over the last four years, with 25% increase in reading scores and 17% in math scores. How can the progress continue if funding to our public schools is cut? Why are we punishing students for something they didn't create?

We certainly realize the impact that the Governor's budget proposal may have on programs, but we are also keenly aware of CJUSD's history and budgeting priorities. Historically, the trend has been to overestimate expenditures and underestimate revenue. We still have a 5% reserve for economic uncertainties when the state only requires 3%. The district appears to be open to our suggestion to be sensible in refraining from implementing any drastic cuts,

before realizing the final impact of the budget proposals. Plans are under way here in Colton to have regular meetings to determine how we can best absorb possible cuts. Our intent is to keep cuts as far away from the classroom as possible. I am confident that we will work collaboratively with the district to get through what may be a difficult time. We will continue to monitor the budget reports and we will work diligently in the next round of negotiations to protect our members and our students.

The Presidential primary election for California will be held on Tuesday February 5, 2008. The next President of the United States will play a pivotal role in the flawed, so called No Child Left Behind Act. If change is to occur, your voice must be heard. The recommendation of candidates for public office and participation in the political process are essential parts of what we do as a state organization. CTA maintains a fair and open process as established by the CTA State Council of Education. ACE has three representatives who will be your voice at the state level. Please contact your Site Rep for additional information.

As of today, the remaining six multi-track year-round schools will be changing to a 4M schedule. There are still issues that must be resolved. If you have concerns or would like to provide input into the process, please contact us.

School Board elections will take place in the fall. Board members Kent Taylor, Frank Ibarra, and Mark Hoover are up for reelection. The ACE Political Action Committee (ACE-PAC) will play a crucial role in the recommendation of candidates. We know who has consistently shown support for our members and our issues, and we certainly know who has the best interest of students at heart. Of course we remember the events that led us to crisis a year ago. I'm sure that the ACEPAC will be exercise prudence in the recommendation process.

Dan Bartlett has been hired as our new CTA Executive Director. Dan comes to us from the Citrus Belt Uniserv. His experience and expertise will be beneficial to us all.

Let us remain united as we continue to protect and defend public education.

## Veteran teacher argues that bonuses will not attract teachers to underperforming schools.

From NEA's online publication: [The Opening Bell](#) (1/4/08)

In an op-ed for the [San Francisco Chronicle](#) (1/3), Veteran educator Walt Gardner wrote that paying teachers bonuses for working in historically underperforming schools, which he terms "combat pay," will not "produce the 700,000 teachers [such schools] need in the next decade." As evidence for his position, he cites

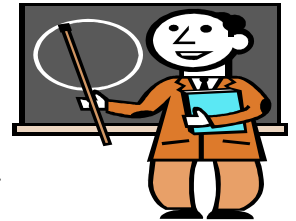
recent data from Dallas, where only 65 teachers accepted a \$6,000 annual bonus "to lure teachers to the city's hard-to-staff schools." University of Texas at Dallas researchers,



Gardner writes, "estimated that bonuses would have to equal 45 percent of base pay to attract the number of

teachers required," or "an average of \$20,000 for mid-career teachers."

While he believes that "better salaries matter," Gardner concludes that "a classroom and school environment that is conducive to effective instruction is far more important" in teachers' career decisions.



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## We need more time to TEACH! by Linda Placencia

As the ACE Executive Board Members continue to visit the elementary sites various needs and concerns are being expressed. For instance, free printing continues to be an issue because many receive their materials after the date needed. Also, the time and energy spent on updating focus walls to meet specific demands continues to rob teachers of precious

time. At some sites there are problems related to the physical conditions, and maintenance of classrooms while others 24 hour security is an issue. The amount of time spent on testing procedures and data analysis/protocol, etc. is a constant frustration. The requirements placed on teachers due to the fact that we are a PI district and NCLB continues to

take its toll on teachers as the accountability and resulting responsibilities are endless. The districts use and monies spent on outside consultants and their true effectiveness is an ongoing concern. As ACE continues to address these concerns we, as your Elementary Directors invite all our teachers to communicate what the association can do for you.

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## Government tells schools that students with learning disabilities cannot be barred from advanced classes.

From NEA's online publication: [The Opening Bell](#) (1/7/08)

[Education Week](#) (1/4, Samuels) reported that the U.S. Department of Education's (DOE) Office of Civil Rights has sent a "Dear Colleague" letter to U.S. school districts "reminding them that students with [learning] disabilities are eligible to take part in advanced academic programs and do not forfeit their right to special education services by en-

rolling in such classes." The office "says that some schools and districts have refused to allow qualified students with disabilities to enroll in advanced classes," or required that students "give up services designed to meet their needs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act" in order to participate in Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate classes or other honors programs. DOE Assistant Secre-

tary for Civil Rights Stephanie J. Monroe stresses that any such policy "could violate federal law." The letter, however, does not offer any specific examples of districts preventing students with learning disabilities from taking part in advanced programs, and DOE spokesman Jim Bradshaw said the letter was a response to "informal technical-assistance requests and complaints."

## Mathketball Motivates Students to Learn by LynnMary Toscano

Throughout the district, the importance of student math skills is on everyone's mind. The task is to find ways that will get the kids as interested in math as we are. There is a game called Mathketball that has succeeded in motivating many students to learn math. The idea for the game was brainstormed more than fifteen years ago when a math teacher had a discussion with a keyboarding teacher about how he could get his students involved in learning math. The keyboarding teacher shared that he had observed a type of basketball game played during a math class. The math teacher liked this idea and put his own "spin" on the contest. Since then, his class has played the game to review lessons on

an average of once every three weeks throughout the school year. The general rules begin by dividing the class into two teams. The teacher presents two questions and allows team members to help each other solve them. When time is called, the teacher randomly selects a student to give the answer to one of the questions. If the question is answered correctly, the student is awarded two points for their team and a chance to earn more points by choosing a teammate to sink a basketball through a basketball hoop. If the student's answer is incorrect, their team loses one point. This process continues until the end of the period when points are tallied and the winning team is recognized. Among the

prizes for the winners are "Mathketball" T-shirts, puzzles, pens and mystery prizes. This same math teacher offers web sites to his students that challenge them in math concepts. A visit to the computer lab is scheduled where students solve math brain teasers online. Students earn extra credit when they successfully answer selected questions. As a witness to these math practices, I can verify that such methods address a student's preference for learning through games that test skills in addition to being interactive and fun. For more information and/or questions about Mathketball or the math web sites, contact [lynnmary\\_toscano@cjusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:lynnmary_toscano@cjusd.k12.ca.us).

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## School Board Update: Meeting with Mr. Armenta

Lynn Mary Toscano and Linda Placencia were pleased to note that Robert Armenta is willing to meet with them on a continuing base. He expressed his desire to listen to teachers concerns. Several topics were discussed including the importance of teacher support that involves many aspects including respect, the availability of supplies, well running equipment,

printed materials, etc., and principal support for teachers at each site. At the end of the meeting Mr. Armenta asked what was positive. Both teachers express their appreciation that the board members are willing to meet with ACE representatives and see the use of technology throughout the district at various levels as a move in the positive direc-

tion. We trust ongoing discussions will continue to be productive.

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## Meet our new State Council Representative ... Paul Lucero

I entered the district during the 2003-2004 school year as a 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade history teacher for Bloomington Middle School. I switched things up during the 2005-2006 school year, teaching one AVID elective class while spending the rest of my time as an 8<sup>th</sup> grade history teacher. Currently, I am teaching 8<sup>th</sup> grade history and performing duties as

a Curriculum Program Specialist with the High Priority Schools Grant, at Bloomington Middle School. I serve in many ways at my school site, including membership in: School Site Council, ELAC, AVID Site Team, and the Leadership Team. As a site rep I have been busy supporting the Bloomington Middle School staff. As a state council repre-

sentative I have been watching many of the state and national issues with increased interest. At the state council meetings I serve on the Teacher Evaluation and Academic Freedom Committee. I am committed to bringing concerns from our district to the table each time we meet and look forward to representing you.

# ACE Calendar February 2008

# Special Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4 Exec Board	5 Election Day	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 SSC Training	13	14 Ballots Due	15 Holiday	16
17	18 Holiday	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 Rep. Council	26	27	28	29 Urban Issues	Conference

Bring your entire School Site Council to the training on February 12th from 4-6:30 pm. Dinner will be provided. Contact the ACE office to sign up by Feb. 7th.

Turn in your contract ratification ballots by Feb. 14th so your site can be counted!

Upcoming conferences:

Urban Issues Feb. 29-Mar. 2

Good Teaching March 7-8

Equity and Human Rights March 28-30

## ACE High



Kudos to the following school board members for taking the time to meet with the Association to hear our concerns: Mel Albiso, Robert Armenta, Jr., Marge Mendoza-Ware, Kent Taylor, and David Zamora. We have had several

meetings with them so far this year and will continue to meet throughout the year. They have listened and in some cases, responded favorably to our positions. We may not always agree on the key issues facing the district or on the solutions, but it is refreshing to have a board that is paying attention to the concerns of our unit. We look forward to more meetings.

## Photo Caption Contest

ACE is starting a new feature for our newsletter. We will print a photo from around the district and invite you to submit a caption for that photo. The winner will be chosen by the newsletter staff and announced next month.

Submit entries to [aceteach@aol.com](mailto:aceteach@aol.com) by Feb. 14th.



## 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)

## What's new in ACE/CTA/NEA

Congratulations to Dana Dillon and Harry Keiley for being elected to the STRS Board of Directors for the next term. With your support and your votes these two will be able to represent our interests for the coming years. Your votes do matter. Congratulations also to our Secretary, Rebekah Acord, for being appointed to represent CTA at the California Association of Resource Specialists Convention.

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