



ASTA Action

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Dean Elder, President



President's Report

On Saturday, March 5, I attended the "Walk to Celebrate Our Schools" rally at Ball JHS. Dozens of teachers, administrators, parents, students, and community members turned out to walk through the neighborhoods around Ball and talk to parents about the great opportunities that our public schools offer their students. Over time, as the demographics of our community have changed, parents have become less and less likely to come to our school sites to communicate with teachers. The support of our community, however, is so important to the well-being of our profession and the sustainability of public schools, that if parents do not seek us out, we must seek them out. Reaching out to our community has become especially important with the negative media blitz aimed at our schools and funded by the anti-public education machine. If we are not out in our neighborhoods speaking on

behalf of public education, the agenda-driven anti-public education crowd may be the only voice that our parents and community members hear.

Community engagement can take on many forms. Several junior high schools have provided time for teachers to make positive phone calls home during late start time. Board President Anne-Marie Randle-Trejo related to me how enthusiastically one of the elementary parents at her school site was speaking to some of the other elementary parents after receiving a call from one of our teachers during a phone bank. During our recent contract negotiations, we agreed to re-focus supervision duties toward activities where teachers will interact with parents and students such as track meets and band concerts and away from isolating and interaction-poor activities such as detention hall and bike rack duty. Every pos-

itive personal contact teachers make with parents improves our standing in the community and sheds a positive light on our schools and our district.

I am looking forward to the next rally and I am hoping that you will join us. Strong community engagement on the part of teachers will lead to better student discipline, better student engagement, and the election of Board members who value and respect what we do in the classroom. But most of all, a community that believes in its teachers will stand together and support its public schools against all attacks. We have enjoyed the support of our community here in AUHSD for many years. Let's reach out and renew those ties and ensure that we maintain the support of our community for the years to come.

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by James Goran,
Vice-President (Dale)

Bargaining Update

I would like to thank all of you for your support this year in regard to the bargaining process. It was very slow and tedious, but at the end, ASTA did quite well. If it wasn't for your support in attending school board meetings, signing the petition, and wearing the buttons, things could have gone differently. A common bargaining phrase is that you don't gain power at the bargaining table, but rather you bring power to the table with membership support.

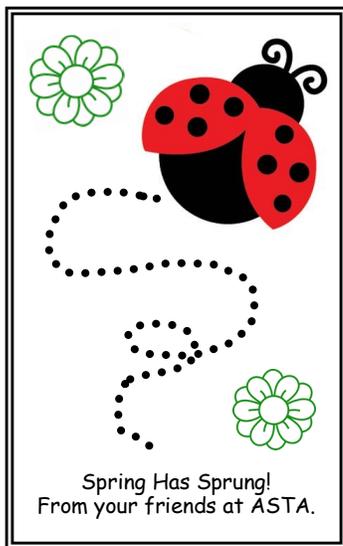
I'd like to thank the dedicated people on the bargaining team

and those who helped in the process: Ken Kanouse (BR), Grant Schuster (DA), Teresa Shimogawa (CY), Cindy Brazda (AN), Dean Elder, and Lisa Eck. The sheer amount of time and concentration showed the dedication of our team.

There was an informational meeting at the ASTA office on March 21st. Some had the opportunity to meet the team and ask for clarification. Voting for the agreement began that day as well. If you have any further questions about the tentative agreement, please don't hesitate to email Dean Elder or

myself at jamesgoran@rocketmail.com. Exercise your right to vote for the contract—many workers across the nation and even teachers in other states do not have the ability to participate in collective bargaining. The ASTA bargaining team urges you to vote to accept the agreement; we would not settle at the table if we didn't feel it was the best we could get for our members.

Keep on the alert for the bargaining survey that will take place this spring.



All Students Should Feel Safe On Campus (Part 2)

by Karen Reta,
Contributor (Western)

CTA Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, & Transgender Issues Conference Educators from throughout the state, including CTA president Eric Heins, gathered in San Jose in November to discuss current GLBT issues. Many informative sessions were offered. Interesting and important points included:

Relevant laws whose main intention is to promote an atmosphere of safety and respect for all students:

- The FAIR Education Act (SB48) amends the Education Code to include instruction on the contributions of

LGBT Americans in the social sciences.

- Seth's Law AB 9: strengthens existing anti-bullying laws; adds protection to LGBT students. Districts must have policies in place. All personnel are required to intervene if they witness bullying.

- AB 537 California Student Safety and Violence Prevention Act. (anti-discrimination and bullying law.) Adds "Actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity to the nondiscrimination policy.

- Student Privacy rights: School personnel cannot disclose a student's sexual orientation.

- AB 329: California Healthy Youth Act: updates health education to include HIV and LGBT. Ultimately the laws set the ground work for educators' best practices, which lead to improved attendance, performance, sense of well-being, and graduation rates.

A strong Gay-Straight Alliance club on campus can aide LGBT students and allies in feeling like part of the school culture.

Your Signature Makes A Difference

by Lisa Eck,
CTA Staffperson

Voters approved Proposition 30 in 2012, which helped put California's public schools back on the road to budget stability by restoring funding to our classrooms, in addition to health care and other vital community services. Prop. 30 helped public education recover funds lost during the recession. We're just now beginning to get our schools and community colleges back on track, while not yet fully restored.

This is why a coalition made up of education, labor, health care and community groups is **gathering signatures to qualify the *Children's Education and Health Care Protection Act* on**

the November ballot. This initiative proposes a temporary extension of the current income tax rates on the wealthiest Californians originally approved in Prop. 30. The extension **only affects the top 2% of earners** (individuals earning \$250,000+ & joint filers earning \$500,000+), will automatically expire after 12 years, and is expected to raise \$8-11 billion a year. **The funds will go directly into a special account that supports K-12 education and community colleges** and is subject to audits. Up to \$2 billion a year will go toward health care for low-income children, seniors and their families.

Governor Brown's 2016-17 budget projections forecast a \$5 billion loss to schools and colleges without passage of this measure, with the AU-HSD projected to lose approximately \$13 million annually. As California continues to rank 46th in per student spending, our schools and classrooms cannot afford another round of drastic cuts. ***Your ASTA site reps. have petitions available for members, family and friends who are registered voters to sign in order to help qualify this initiative for the ballot. Please do your part to help qualify this ballot initiative by signing a petition today.***

Good Teaching Conference: It's Good!

by Gabriela Reyes,
Contributor (Cypress)

Attention all teachers: Have you been teaching less than 5 years, 6 to 10 years, 11 to 15 years, or are you a veteran teacher? It does not matter how long you have been teaching because The Good Teaching Conference applies to every teacher. I attended all three days, went to 5 insightful workshops, and listened to a great bonus session with classroom management guru Rick Morris. It was an unforgettable experience. There were so many "take-aways," useful information and stuff you can use for Monday. It was well organized, over 1500 teachers attended and there were

many opportunities to grow professionally, network and get involved in CTA and/or NEA. Listening to enthusiastic presenters who love the teaching profession made every session intriguing. Several presenters reminded us about the importance of making connections and building relationships with our students. This resonated with me and it is so priceless and imperative to apply not only in our profession but in our everyday lives. The importance of teacher-driven, strength-based change which focuses on students' strengths rather than deficit thinking reminded me of

how important it is to be optimistic, positive and "to focus on what is strong, not on what is wrong."

I highly recommend everyone to attend. I sure hope I can attend again next year and the year after and the year after that and every year. If you missed it, download the app CTAGO. You will find great resources, links, teaching ideas, and much more.

Note: ASTA sponsors 6 teachers to attend the Good Teaching Conference each spring. Watch for notifications in the Weekly Update and the ASTA Action newsletter.

Know Your Contract: Right of Return

by Dean Elder,
President

One article that saw some reconfiguration during our recent contract negotiations was Article 9.10 Rights of First Return. In order to make the surplus process as objective as possible, the teacher in a department who will be transferred because of surplus is determined by a point system that takes into account seniority, credentialing, extra-service pay positions, and department leadership (Article 9.5.2). If a position for which the transferee is qualified opens up on the original campus within a year and a quarter of the surplus, the transferred teacher has the right of first



return to that campus. In a recent scenario, a campus experienced two consecutive years of supplanting from the same department. One teacher was supplanted and then a year later, another teacher from the same department was supplanted. A couple of weeks into the school year after the second surplus, the administration at that site decided that they needed to bring back one of the teachers that had been supplanted from that department. However, both of the supplanted teachers had the contractual right of first return.

Furthermore, because one teacher had been supplanted a year earlier, application of the original point system would no longer be fair. The teacher who was supplanted in the earlier year would have no current points for leadership or extra-service pay on their original campus. To return both teachers to a fair starting position, the new contract language in Article 9.10 states that “should the opening occur after the beginning of the school year, the determination of which teacher gets to return is based on seniority alone” and if both teachers have the same seniority date, the Tie-Breaker language in Article 9.5.3 would apply.

Ball Rally Brings Out Our Best

by Teresa Shimogawa,
Contributor (Cypress)

On Saturday, March 5, ASTA partnered with the District to host the first “Walk to Celebrate” at Ball Junior High. The day began with a rally featuring Ball’s choir, Loara’s jazz band, and Loara cheerleaders. Speakers included District Ambassador Sophia Soliman, Board Member Annemarie Randle-Trejo, PTSA parent Adele Tagaloa, and Superintendent Michael Matsuda. Participants then attended a brief training before spending the rest of the morning walking in surrounding neighborhoods. They went door-to-door and spoke to households with children, sharing the great

work happening across the District. It was a unique opportunity to engage the community and have conversations about our schools. Most participants reported having a positive experience and said it was fun and easy. The day ended with a hotdog lunch and a beautiful Native American tribal dance and ceremony.

The turnout was amazing. We had over 300 students, parents, teachers, administrators, District employees, and community members in attendance. Many student groups also participated, including the school ambassadors, Anaheim

BROs, and the Loara Barks of Love club. Kennedy HS students came out in the early morning with principal Russ Earnest to decorate the quad with balloons. It was truly a group effort, illustrating the importance of fostering a positive relationship between all stakeholders in our District. We’re definitely all in this together.

I would like to personally thank Joanne Fawley, Lisa Eck, Pat Karlak and Devany Dominguez for being a great team to work with in organizing this event.

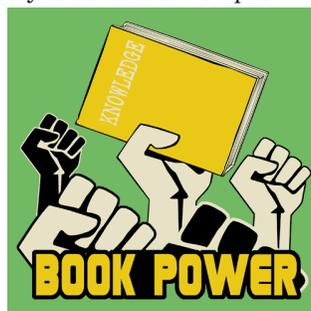
Operation L.E.E.— Join the Readvolution!

by Juan Álvarez,
Director-at-Large (Gilbert)

The purpose of Operation L.E.E. (Literacy Engaging Everyone) to encourage reading through project based learning.

ASTA has partnered with a community based group called Operation L.E.E. to provide families in Anaheim with access to free books. ASTA member Matt Bidwell, a teacher at South Junior High, has been involved with the building aspects of the project and led his advanced woodshop students and other community partners in an effort to build 4 book stations. These book stations will go out into the community this spring. Mr. Bidwell has plans to transform his students’

involvement with Operation L.E.E. into a project based learning activity in his class next year. Students will identify marginalized areas of their neighborhoods that would benefit from the Book Stations, identify homeowners or apartment complex managers that would host a Book Station, hold consultations about the design of the Book



Stations and then custom build the Book Stations. The completed Book Stations will then join the Operation L.E.E. distribution network. We are excited about how this literacy project will engage AUHSD students in community improvement initiatives.

A huge thank you goes out to all of the ASTA members and community partners that have contributed to the project! For more information about Operation L.E.E. visit our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/operationlee>

ASTA/Anaheim Educators

50 South Anaheim Boulevard
Suite 300
Anaheim, California 92805

Phone: 714-399-1882
Fax: 714-635-2603
Email: astapres@gmail.com

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ASTA is an affiliate of CTA/NEA

Mark Your Calendar!

-ASTA Support Your Profession Scholarship Application Deadline, Mar 30

-CTA State Council, April 8 to 10, Los Angeles

-WHO (We Honor Ours) Awards, May 4, in Costa Mesa

-Getty Museum Field Trip from Orange Service Center, May 21, from Orange

-Last Day of School for Teachers, May 27

-CTA State Council, June 3 to 5, Los Angeles

-NEA Representative Assembly, July 2 to 7, in Washington, DC

-CTA Summer Institute, July 31 to August 4, at UCLA in Los Angeles

Meet Matt Bidwell, Teacher of the Year!

by Dean Elder,
President

Congratulations to Matt Bidwell of South JHS – one of our three 2015-2016 AUSHD Teachers of the Year.

Matt is a product of the AUHSD, having attended Sycamore JHS and Katella HS. He was a psychology major at Chapman College, where he also played water polo. Matt didn't set out to become a teacher. While in college Matt found that he enjoyed coaching at his alma mater, Katella HS. He then started his teaching career as a substitute, which soon grew into a long-term substitute position at South. He loved working with junior high students and that inspired him to complete his credential work and do his student teaching in science at South. Matt has now been in the AUHSD for 15 years.

Matt feels his strength as a teacher is his ability to motivate the kids in the middle. He feels he can identify with

his students and is able to get them to be passionate about science. Matt also teaches Industrial Technology and infuses project-based learning into all of his classes. The "Community Service in Action" video on the District web page prominently



features Matt and his students constructing a garden on their campus during last year's Serv-a-Thon. This year's project has been to design and build "Little Libraries" for Operation LEE, which is a local effort to promote reading in the community (and featured on page 3 of this newsletter).

On the day I visited his classroom, Matt's science students were doing a calorimetry experiment where they measured the number of calories in potato chips, which led to Matt recall a story about one of his former students who is now a chemist for Taco Bell. Matt is proud of his former students and he is proud of South for winning a CA Gold Ribbon Award for their STEM program.

Thank you Matt, for inspiring your students and for providing them with a great 21st Century education!