



ASTA Action

Volume 56, Issue 2

October 2015

Dean Elder, President



President's Report

One of the most perplexing challenges the AUHSD faces is how to address the many needs of our students, who often come from families that are still learning how to fully access the education system. Our current administration recognizes the classroom as the solution focusing on curriculum and instruction through initiatives such as project-based learning, learning with purpose, student-centered instruction, restorative justice, and 21st Century learning.

But classrooms have been slow to recover from the financial crisis. While all district employees experienced pay cuts, furlough days, and unfilled vacancies, teachers were bur-

dened with an additional hardship. The district raised the staffing ratio by 1.5 during the first years of the budget crisis. In June, the Board of Trustees began alleviating that extra workload by approving a budget that lowered the staffing ratio by 0.5, which led to hiring 16 new teachers at a cost of \$1.7 million. With the publication of the cost by the district, we can now see that the district saved \$5.1 million each year by increasing the work of teachers. We can also see that in the last 5 years, there has been a net loss of 48 teaching positions that resulted in a savings of \$25.5 million to the district – at the expense of the classroom. Further, economic recovery has not pro-

gressed evenly across the district. In 2010 the district had 2,368 full time employees and 1,356 teachers. Teachers represented 57% of the employees in the district. Currently, the district has 2,603 full time employees and 1,264 teachers. Teachers now represent 48% of the employees in the district.

It is not entirely clear *what* should be done to resolve our educational issues - but it is clear *where* they will be resolved and *who* is going to do it. Our students spend 92% of the daily time on our campuses *in the classroom* with a *classroom teacher*. Let's focus our resources where they are most effective – in the classroom.

by James Goran,
Bargaining Chair

Inside this issue:

PLCs	2
L.E.E.	2
Legal-ese	2
Know Your Contract	3
Council Showdown	3
Ring My Bell!	3
The NEA and You	4

Bargaining Update

The ASTA bargaining team and the District team met for the second day of negotiations on Thursday, October 8th. The ASTA team met at 7 am and negotiations concluded for the day just after 4 pm. The District team consists of Jaron Fried (Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources), Manuel Colon (Assistant Superintendent, Education), Dianne Poore (Assistant Superintendent, Business), Diane Donnelly-

Toscano (Director of Curriculum and Instruction), and Carlos Hernandez (Principal, Savanna).

Some progress was made in regard to non-monetary issues. Financial issues will come to the forefront in the two future meetings on October 26th and the 30th. Under the Local Control Funding Formula, the District received a large amount of new money from the state. In fact, the in-

crease of funding for education was the biggest in the state's history. The Association will do our best to negotiate a compensation and benefits package that mirrors surrounding districts in our area.

Bargaining communiques will be sent out after each negotiation session. Keep a lookout for these messages and other updates in your mailbox.



The Art of Collaboration in PLCs

by Karen Ridley,
Contributor (Loara)

It is an innovative time in education, as we move toward project-based models and teacher as learning-facilitator ideologies. As educators continue to allow more choice to students in the classroom, we continue to learn that this allows them to operate more effectively both individually and collaboratively. Choice provides students more meaningful learning experience—the same is true for educators as members of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).

A PLC should be focused on the discussion of and intentional practice of first best instruction, authentic student achievement and how to best implement best practices to meet the needs of the students. Although many believe there

must be structure and teacher accountability school-wide in a PLC, we must embrace the ideology that these elements may reveal themselves in a variety of legitimate methods. The content, structure, and course of a PLC must be initiated and created by the members if we, in fact, believe in teacher-led professional development. Just as we do daily in our classrooms, we must also foster and encourage honest, periodic reflection to evaluate and assess the effectiveness and sustainability of our current PLCs.

Collaboration is an art with both students and teachers. There is much research to confirm that individuals work better collaboratively when there is an

element of choice in membership and elements of homogeneity in work ethic, motivation and ability. As is the case in our classrooms, when highly motivated students are paired or grouped with highly unmotivated students, we see the resentment that inevitably plagues the former and the inadequacy that plagues the latter, creating an ineffective learning environment.

With this in mind, I believe each school must revisit and examine the PLCs. Our goal should be clear: As educators, we must maximize effective professional growth and collaboration to best meet the learning needs of our students.

Community Engagement Through Operation L.E.E.

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

I am excited to announce that community members and Anaheim teachers have banded together through Facebook and are partnering with ASTA and Los Amigos of Orange County on a project called Operation L.E.E. (Literacy Engaging Everyone). Within the next few months we will collectively pull resources together to build book stations that will be placed in Anaheim neighborhoods. We are looking to spread literacy and the

love of reading around the city of Anaheim by providing families immediate access to free books. The goal is to build book stations and install them in the areas of Anaheim that are the most marginalized. Eventually, we aspire to empower community members to run and restock their own stations with our support and guidance. There are plans to host an initial building day on a Saturday in November to jump start the

program but have yet to confirm a date or location. If you can host a building day at your home or shop, if you have any connections to building materials, or if you know of programs that donate books, please let me know by contacting me at alvarez81@gmail.com. We welcome any ideas and look forward to seeing these books stations up and running soon!

The Exciting World of Legal!

by Christie Bettendorf
Contributor (Kennedy)

When given the opportunity to attend the CTA Institute at UCLA in August, I was able to select the track I wanted to attend. Now, I know what you're thinking – you chose the Legal Track? Absolutely! As teachers, we face challenges both in and out of the classroom. Our first line of defense is knowing our rights as a collective unit and as individuals. The time I spent at the Institute was invaluable to representing my colleagues.

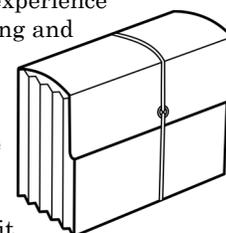
A series of lawyers and legal experts spoke to us about a variety topics, but these were the most important points communicated:

- Don't be alone with a student in a classroom
- Don't allow groups of students to be alone in your classroom without your supervision
- Avoid physical contact with students
- Do not engage in social media interactions with students – Facebook, Instagram, etc.
- Do not text your students.
- Do not give your cell number to students.

While the above sounds like common sense, they are the scenarios that most often lead to discipline and dismissal of teachers.

One of the most important benefits we have as ASTA and CTA members is legal representation provided by CTA. If accused of something, especially criminal, it is key to not say anything other than "I want to speak to my rep/lawyer." Often, teachers try to explain the misunderstanding and this can be used against the teacher later.

I'll admit that my experience was both eye-opening and little frightening, but I also felt secure that as a union member, I have support and resources to help me, should I ever need it.



Know Your Contract: Supervision Duty

by Dean Elder,
President

Article 10.4. Supervision duties are duties that a teacher performs outside of the regular instructional day. These duties may occur during or after school hours and include such activities as campus supervision, performances, school tutoring programs, dances, and detentions. Teachers are required to supervise a maximum of 6 hours per year. A list of preliminary supervision duty categories must be posted at the school site before the end of the previous school year. Sign-ups for supervision duties cannot occur before the beginning of the



teacher work year. For planning purposes, a site administration may assign hours of credit for various supervision duties. However, contractual supervision hours are clock hours and are determined by the number of hours the teacher is actually at the supervision site. A teacher does not have to spend four hours supervising an event for two hours of supervision credit. Sometimes school events must be rescheduled due to unforeseen circumstances. If an event has to be rescheduled, teachers who signed up for that

duty are not automatically required to supervise on the new date. If the teachers who signed up for that duty cannot accommodate the new date, the administration may have to re-open sign-ups for that particular supervision duty. If previous supervision duties require more hours than anticipated and a teacher will reach the 6 hour maximum during a supervision assignment, that teacher may notify the administration before the assignment and allow the administration to determine which part of the assignment is most necessary for the teacher's presence.

ASTA Supports Al Jabbar at City Council

by Dean Elder,
President

On September 15, thirty-five ASTA members, and numerous parents and students joined me at an Anaheim City Council meeting to support AUHSD Trustee Al Jabbar's proposed resolution for the city to create a budget line item to begin a partnership between the city of Anaheim and school districts within the city. In particular this line item would be an opportunity for the city to work with schools to improve education and solve the shortage of parks and recreational space for local sports leagues and other community groups. Trustee Jabbar had introduced the resolution at the previous City Council meeting and received a surprisingly negative response from Councilmembers Kris Mur-

ray and Lucille Kring. Murray introduced her own resolution which essentially said that AUHSD schools are failing and should all be converted to corporate charter schools. Murray and Kring picked up some media support from the Lincoln Club (a super-rich, super-conservative PAC based in Newport Beach) and the Orange County Register (<http://www.ocregister.com/articles/schools-682148-failing-city.html>) in an article that described AUHSD schools as failing and also took a swipe at teachers - "people employed by the government often blame problems on underfunding but almost never accept responsibility for the performance of their agencies". Several ASTA mem-

bers, Trustee Annemarie Randle-Trejo, parents, and students spoke in support of the schools and Trustee Jabbar's resolution. In the end, the Council passed both resolutions with 3-2 votes. Murray's resolution, however, was heavily edited at the time and the City Clerk has yet to post the final version of her resolution. There were over 100 public comments made at the marathon Council meeting (at 3 minutes each) which lasted from 5pm to 1:30am. Kudos to the three ASTA members who made it through the entire meeting: Julie Nielsen (Savanna), Judy Yeaton (Katella), and our CTA staffperson, Lisa Eck.

AUHSD Receives A Golden Bell

by Mike Matsuda,
AUHSD Superintendent

The District has been awarded its second Golden Bell award, a prestigious commendation from the California School Boards Association, for our Sustainability Showcase. In partnership with Cal State University Fullerton, the TED Talk-style presentations was created to give students, especially English learners, the opportunity to showcase their oral language skills and development, while highlighting solutions to global issues affecting their local communities and countries of origin.

Indeed, student Julian Rodriguez said distilling his TED talk into the allotted timeframe and mastering its mechanics—cadence, emphasis, etc.—was more challenging than having to withstand public scrutiny. "I learned that I love speaking out for something I'm really passionate about (stopping fracking) and making my voice heard in front of important people who care about issues," Julian said. "I'd like to see school districts put more emphasis into programs like this. I'm pretty sure other

kids would love this kind of opportunity." On behalf of the Board, I am very thankful to all the teachers who contributed to make this annual event a rousing success, teachers like Bev Berekian at Magnolia, Jamie Clapper at South, Phylis Fukumoto and Denise Mann at Dale, and Bill Cavanagh at Sycamore. Also special thanks to Science Curriculum Specialist Clay Elliot. Once again, our teachers are making good things happen in the AUHSD.

ASTA/Anaheim Educators

50 South Anaheim Boulevard
Suite 300
Anaheim, California 92805

Phone: 714-399-1882

Fax: 714-635-2603

Email: astapres@gmail.com

Executive Board

President: Dean Elder

Vice President: James Goran, Dale

Secretary: Judy Yeaton, Katella

Treasurer: Geoff Morganstern, Brookhurst

Director-at-Large: Juan Alvarez, Gilbert

Director-at-Large: Nate Taylor, Oxford

CTA State Council Representatives:

Julie Nielsen, Savanna

Ryan Ruelas, Anaheim

Kenneth Shimogawa, Cypress

CTA Staff Person:

Lisa Eck

Administrative Services Manager:

Debbie Knapp

Newsletter Layout Editor:

Ann Rice, Brookhurst

ASTA is an affiliate of CTA/NEA



Mark Your Calendar!

- ASTA Special Education Committee, Wednesday, October 21, at 3:30 PM
- ASTA Executive Board, Thursday, October 22, at 3:30 PM
- Board of Trustees, Thursday, October 22, at 6:00 PM
- CTA State Council, October 23 through October 25, in Los Angeles
- Anaheim Educators PAC, Tuesday, October 27, at 3:45 PM
- District Budget Committee, Friday, October 30, at 9:00 AM
- District Insurance Committee, Tuesday, November 3, at 2:00 PM
- CTA Fall Leadership Conference, Newport Beach, Saturday, November 7 at 9:00 AM
- Orange County Teacher of the Year Awards, November 10 in Anaheim

NEA News and Why You Should Care

by Meg Elder,
Contributor (Anaheim)

Despite rank and file objection, on October 1, the NEA board and PAC voted to endorse Hilary Clinton for president: 2343 yes, 507 no, 1178 abstaining. California abstained. Concern arose among members of NEA in late September as rumors circulated that NEA leadership was pushing for early endorsement. E-mails, Tweets and FB posts urged NEA to wait until after the field of candidates was established (Biden has still not decided if he will run), and after at least one democratic debate took place. Many NEA delegates were angry that NEA leadership ignored a directive from the July RA. NBI-79 read: "NEA, as an organization, will actively engage in conversation and outreach on the NEA endorsement process with **all** 2016 Presidential campaigns **prior to** the consideration of a primary recommendation." [Note: NEA sent questionnaires to all presidential hopefuls.

No Republican candidates responded.]

While both Clinton and Sanders received "A" rankings on NEA education issues, NEA leadership contends that since Clinton accepts Super PAC money and Sanders refuses on principle--Sanders would not fundraise enough money to defeat the Koch Brothers backed Republican candidate in the general election. Ironically, Sanders fundraising efforts are gaining on Clinton and his popularity in the polls has surpassed Clinton in some early primary states.

Greatest concerns voiced by members were that the endorsement process did not reflect the democratic principles of NEA and that Clinton has not answered educators concerns about her connection to privatizers and charter school advocates such as Eli Broad, who is aggressively working to convert 50% of LAUSD schools to pri-

vate charters. This is a critical issue for California and Orange County as Anaheim City is opening their first charter school next year due to a successful parent trigger campaign and a favorable judicial ruling.

Whatever your political leanings, I urge you to have YOUR voice heard. The October CTA State Council will discuss CTA's position on endorsement of candidates--no PAC funds can be spent without a majority vote. **Your voice counts!** Email your CTA president Eric Heins (eheins@cta.org), and CTA board member Kendall Vaught (kvaught@cta.org), and your ASTA state council representatives (Julie Nielsen, Ryan Ruelas, and Kenneth Shimogawa)--let your representatives know how you wish them to vote on this or any other issue of concern to you!