



ACE Newsletter: Dec 22, 2022

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## The ACE 2022 Summary

As we close out our last week before Winter Break, we've been taking stock of what we've accomplished and the work still to be done to make Clovis into the best school district for students and educators. **This newsletter is our summary of the year so far.** Take a browse, and, as always, please reach out to us with any questions.

We hope you have a restful and fun holiday break, and we'll see you next year!

In solidarity,

ACE

[ace@cloviseducators.org](mailto:ace@cloviseducators.org)

## BARGAINING

ACE Psychologists and MHSPs have been hard at work, spending countless hours preparing for and bargaining with the district for what will be their first Collective Bargaining Agreement. **At the heart of these negotiations is the future of special education and mental health services for the students of our district.** ACE Psychologists have developed proposals that provide solutions for dealing with the growing mental health crisis we see in our schools. In order to do this, the district needs to address the ongoing staffing shortage by offering competitive salaries, benefits, and working conditions. The estimated cost of this proposal is between \$3-5 million. With sufficient staffing, School Psychologists and MHSPs can provide the support needed for promoting mental health, addressing behavioral challenges, and supporting students' special needs to ensure the greatest chance for each student's academic success.

## ISSUES & POLICY

ACE has taken a proactive approach to changes and challenges with CUSD's policies. Here are a few that we tackled this semester:

### K-3 Class Sizes and Grade Span Adjustment

Class size is an issue in CUSD and ACE has been talking about solutions since we formed. More recently, we notified CUSD that we are concerned that a 2014 agreement with the Faculty Senate to exceed the 1:24 school ratio required by state law may not be valid and may not protect the district from the consequences of exceeding the state's class size limit. ACE is taking a proactive approach to help avoid negative consequences and CUSD seemed open to meeting with ACE this spring to discuss. Prior to that we will be creating space/time/locations for lots of opportunities to discuss and give input on this extremely important issue.

### Personal Expression Policy

In November, the Board adopted a new policy entitled, "[Personal Items in the Workspace](#)." ACE notified the district about several legal concerns we have, including being a potential violation of the 1st Amendment, and that as school psychologists are officially recognized as a union, a change must be bargained with them (as opposed to the Board taking unilateral action). The District has agreed that the policy needs clarification and has begun bargaining the policy with the school psychologists and MHSPs.

### Peer Assistance and Review Board Policy

The Board also recently changed [Board Policy 4131.1](#), and the changes are of concern to ACE. The original policy read that the PAR panel would consist of 6 administrators and 7 teachers, with the teacher representatives elected by all teachers. The new policy is unclear on both fronts. We asked the District for clarification, and they've asked for time to research it.

### Elementary Prep Time

Protected prep time is an ongoing issue that ACE has long addressed. The current policy is over a decade old, and with site-based discretion, is implemented inconsistently across the district. Prep time is often co-opted for meetings and staff development. Our goal is to restore it to actual prep time, or to find an alternative source of prep time for elementary teachers. **You can see the guaranteed [Prep Time](#) in neighboring districts here.**

### IAs

CUSD continues to have IA staffing issues. ACE is calling for more full-time, benefitted IA positions, especially in our higher need programs.

## PUBLICATIONS

A core tenet of ACE is to keep educators informed by providing thoughtful, well-researched, and relevant information to Clovis educators.

### Newsletters

Each Thursday (except for Thanksgiving) we sent out newsletters. We covered topics ranging from:

- [Class sizes and caseloads](#)
- [The historical increase in LCFF funding](#)
- [Prep time in Clovis v neighboring districts](#)

- [Specific things being bargained](#)
- [The cost of the ACE Psych's proposals](#)
- [Salaries in Clovis](#)
- [Why ACE is The Answer](#)

You can read all of our newsletters [here](#).

## “Why ACE is The Answer”

We invited the Clovis community to take a peek behind the curtain to see what we do on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis to become a union that can best represent and advocate for Clovis educators. It also covers our training opportunities, communication process, dues, partnership with CTA, and our vision for the future.

- You can read “Why ACE is The Answer” in its entirety: [cloviseducators.org/why-ace-is-the-answer.html](https://cloviseducators.org/why-ace-is-the-answer.html)
- [Top 10 Reasons Why ACE is The Answer](#)
- [ACE is The Answer - ICUE is Not](#)
- [The Benefits of ACE Membership](#)

## SPED Training Opportunities

- [504s](#)
- [IEPs: RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES](#)

## Psychs/MHSPs

- [School Psychologists: What Do They Do?](#)
- [Cost of Proposals in Context](#)
- [School Psych Appreciation Week](#)

## Printables, Logos, and More!

- [Mental Health Matters](#)
- [Logos](#)
- [Parent Teacher Conference Week](#)
- [Prep Time](#)
- [Info Sheets and Fliers](#)

# SOCIAL MEDIA

We've used social media as a way to provide concise information about important topics... also as an outlet to be a little silly. We started off by asking “What do you want for your students this year.” **Over the course of the semester, we posted about prep time, class sizes, the ACE Podcasts, holidays, reminded people to vote, honored International Day of Persons With Disabilities, ACE Thankfulgrams, and more!**

Check out our social media channels here:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Instagram](#)

[YouTube](#)

[Tiktok](#)

# ACE PODCAST

**[The ACE Podcast](#) is a staple in the ACE communication toolkit.** This high-quality production, created by ACE leader Jason Roche, is instrumental in educating our Clovis community on why we decided to pursue

unionization, explaining why ACE Is The Answer, and examining educators' issues, from facilities to school finances.

Our most popular episodes were [Leading A Union As A Conservative](#), [Working In Fresno Unified](#), and [Meet the CTA, Part 3](#).

## TRAINING

We've had numerous opportunities to learn about topics such as how a union functions and how to understand school finances. We have a few upcoming training as well, **RSVP by clicking the links below:**

- [January 12th CTA training on CalSTRS customized for Clovis!](#)
- [February 15th Zoom SPED Training on the rights of SPED teachers in advocating for students](#)

## SURVEYS

**A core value of ACE is to empower the voices of educators, parents, students, and the community.** Only by building consensus around the issues can we work towards solutions.

If you have any questions or ideas, reach out to us at [ace@cloviseducators.org](mailto:ace@cloviseducators.org). You can also take our surveys on specific topics:

<a href="#"><b><u>CLASS SIZE SURVEY</u></b></a>	<a href="#"><b><u>SPED SURVEY</u></b></a>
<a href="#"><b><u>FACILITIES SURVEY</u></b></a>	<a href="#"><b><u>COMMUNITY SUPPORT SURVEY</u></b></a>

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

**At least twice per month, the full ACE Organizing Committee meets.** Once in person and once through Zoom. We discuss issues that educators are facing, report out from our sites, and create goals to help move Clovis forward.

Our Executive Committee and subcommittees (such as SPED, Elementary Teachers, Bylaws, and School Finance) all met on a regular basis.

## CUSD BOARD MEETINGS

**ACE Organizing Committee members made it a regular part of their semester to attend CUSD School Board meetings.** ACE understands that at these meetings, decisions will impact educators' ability to provide students with quality education and support for their well-being. As educators, we are in a position that sees and experiences firsthand the impact of those decisions and the actual needs of our students and school sites.

## CTA LGBTQ+ ISSUES CONFERENCE

**Several ACE members attended the LGBTQ+ Issues Conference.** At this event, educators focus on learning about LGBTQ+ issues involving educators, students and the community. Above all, the focus of this conference is how to best support and create safety for students.

You can see the full lineup of CTA conferences here <https://www.cta.org/conferences>, which includes topics such as [SPED](#), the [Good Teaching Institute](#), and the [Summer Institute](#)

## TESTIFIED IN UNFAIR LABOR PRACTICES COURT CASE

ACE leaders testified at hearings regarding CUSD's continued support and preference for Faculty Senate as an employee representative, as well as the District's anti-union behavior. School districts by law are not allowed to favor or support any employee organization (such as ACE or Faculty Senate). Arguments wrapped up in November, and we expect a ruling sometime in February.

## FULL-TIME RELEASE MEMBER

Thanks to a grant fund from the NEA (National Education Association), a temporary leadership position for an ACE activist to support the ACE campaign as a Release Time Leader was created. Just before the semester began ACE members overwhelmingly elected Amy Kilburn to serve as ACE's temporary Release Time Support Leader.

Over the semester, Amy provided support for the work of the amazing ACE Organizing Committee (OC) to continue building a strong and inclusive union. In addition, Amy worked alongside OC leaders and campaign staff to ensure that the OC is fully enabled and empowered to carry out campaign activities, coordinate OC meetings and site meetings, and conduct one-on-one conversations with other ACE leaders and educators.

Happy holidays! We hope they're filled with love and laughter.



