



ACE Newsletter: May 18, 2023

Psych Bargaining - Mediation Begins May 22

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. This topic holds particular importance for students as it shines a spotlight on the vital importance of emotional well-being within educational environments.

Navigating the pressures of academics, social relationships, and personal development can be overwhelming, making it crucial to prioritize students' mental well-being.

Clovis School Psychologists and MHSPs have been bargaining a contract that calls for the resources needed to ensure that students have the necessary tools and support to thrive academically and personally.

As we discussed last week, the Bargaining team and the district declared an impasse and have been granted mediation by the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB). The first day of mediation is next Monday, May 22nd.

Wear green to show your support and sign [this letter!](#)

May Budget Revise

Every January the Governor's office releases a budget proposal for the following fiscal year. For the next several months the proposal will be examined by lawmakers, governmental agencies, non-profits, business groups, and other organizations. Then in May, the entire Budget is revised to reflect updated economic forecasts and things that organizations have successfully lobbied for/against. The revised budget is then debated by the Legislature and passed at the end of June.

School districts watch the May Revise closely because it provides a closer estimation to what funding will be available for the following year, which will impact their revenue. With fully unionized districts, this is an opportunity for the union and the administration to take a look together at the financial future and begin to have a conversation about priorities. In Clovis,

the district has historically made unilateral decisions about what to do with the funding, without informed input from educators. This is changing with the creation of the Psychs/MHSPs bargaining unit, but all Clovis educators need the power of a Union to have a true seat at the table.

The California Teachers Association (CTA) is deeply involved in the process of making sure that educators' voices are heard by the Governor when determining budget priorities. **Overall, the 2023 May Revision maintains a commitment to improving funding for California public schools - including the Governor's proposal that the 8.22% COLA be fully funded for the 2023-2024 school year.**

We will be examining the details more closely as it relates to the funding for CUSD and will keep you updated, but here are the basics:

The Governor is proposing a historically-high and **fully-funded COLA* of 8.22%** for next year. This means that the ongoing, locally controlled monies (hence the Local Control Funding Formula or LCFF) going to all school districts would be permanently increased by that amount, but it doesn't say where that funding will be spent within each district. Given the overall state budget deficit, it is reassuring to see the commitment to California students. The budget is not finalized and will need to be negotiated with the state legislature before it is finalized in June/July.

**Don't forget that a state budget Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for LCFF funding isn't the same as a salary COLA. The state budget assumes that educators in each district will come together to bargain for appropriate compensation based on their local needs. The goal with ACE, of course, is to empower Clovis educators to have a meaningful voice in the local budgeting process – just like our unionized peers around the state.*

READ MORE:

[CTA's press release](#)

[Governor's K-12 Budget Summary](#)

IAs and Para-Professionals

Under a long-standing practice in CUSD, SPED teachers (and some Gen Ed teachers) have been tasked with conducting performance evaluations for IA's assigned to their classrooms.

This issue was discussed and addressed recently at our ACE Special Education "Know Your Rights" training held in February. CTA Special Education Specialist Karen Taylor stated, "Teachers are not authorized to evaluate staff. The answer lies in the credentials of the classification. An administrative credential authorization is required to conduct an employee

performance evaluation officially. Teachers are not authorized to conduct performance evaluations under their credentials."

Although Education Specialists serve as leads over IA's in the classroom and are a valuable resource in providing the necessary feedback to support a thorough evaluation of their assigned IA, this by no means officially bestows upon them the role of supervisor.

Administering discipline or conducting performance evaluations are all duties of an administrative-level position. It is important to note that having Education Specialists conduct the performance evaluation of their assigned IA is a practice only found in Clovis Unified.

WE RAISED THE CONCERN WITH THE DISTRICT

On May 1st, as part of our regular meeting with CUSD's Executive Cabinet team, ACE leaders brought forward this concern. As a result, we are learning that many administrators have been informed that moving forward, all IA evals will be conducted by the administration with input from the supervising teacher, and the administrator will hold the meeting to review with the IA.

We emailed Barry Jager to confirm that the change would be implemented, and he responded:

Our expectation is that IAs are evaluated by an Administrative Credentialed site leader. We certainly do want the teacher to be a part of the process and provide insight, input, and comments related to their work performance positively as well as areas of improvement since they work with them daily in many cases. We are aware that evaluating an IA is not a part of their workload or their primary function as a teacher.





We appreciate the district's willingness to listen to the concerns of educators. **However, an email from an administrator does not carry the binding terms of a union contract!** In fact, this specific topic is considered important enough that unionized districts can include it in their collectively bargained agreements. [Here's an example](#) (page 25, "ARTICLE XX: PARAPROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES"):

Evaluation of paraprofessional employees shall be conducted by administrative employees and shall not be the responsibility of the unit member. Unit members may provide input to the appropriate administrator concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the performance of the paraprofessional employee.

Once again, we see that a strong, independent union allows us to access resources and information important to our work and gives us the ability to stand up for what's right.

Reach out to the ACE Organizer at your site if this is an issue for you, and, as always, feel free to email us at ACE@cloviseducators.org if you have questions or comments. Your communications are held confidential within our ACE Organizing Committee.

Calendar

May - June 2023 (May is Mental Health Awareness Month)						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
14 Mother's Day 	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22 Bargaining Mediation	23	24	25	26	27  Memorial Day Weekend
28  Memorial Day Weekend	29  Memorial Day	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9 LAST DAY OF INSTRUCTION	10

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