

October 12, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

As you may have heard, Special Education SDC teachers at CUSD's Adult Transition Program (ATP) recently won a stipend for working through their prep period. This is an important victory. The extra period stipend we won provides great additional support to our colleagues and will help us reduce teacher turnover. This in turn will help us better support our young adult students who are 18-22 years old and in need of our critical special education services.

Unfortunately, last Friday, Faculty Senate's "Weekly Wrap Up" listed a group of individuals they claimed "advocated diligently" for this stipend. To our knowledge, these people were not involved at all in advocating for our stipend. At no point did we receive any communication from any of them regarding our concerns about our stipend. ***As educators, it is important we are factual, transparent, and correct blatant dishonesty when it occurs.***

In mid-September, ATP teachers met together, discussed the stipend issue, and collectively decided we would bring up the lack of prep period and stipend with our program administration. Following that process, on October 1st we were notified that as secondary SDC teachers with no opportunity for prep time to be built into the school day, we met the criteria for the stipend. ***We were relieved to be compensated fairly, but also felt empowered that as teachers, our collective efforts elicited positive results.***

ATP teachers have been meeting the stipend criteria since the 2016-2017 school year, when for funding purposes, our program minutes were changed to reflect high school minutes. The correct thing to do at that point would have been to evaluate whether we would have a prep period or receive a stipend. This did not occur. If individuals in upper administration did advocate diligently for our stipend, we are unaware of their efforts.

The Faculty Senate never attempted to verify the information on their "Weekly Wrap Up" with the teachers at ATP. It should be of great concern to Clovis educators that Friday's email shared inaccurate information. We did not receive any advocacy from the Faculty Senate regarding this matter. In fact, Faculty Senate had been missing in action on this issue for years. ***If the Faculty Senate is dishonest about something like this, what else might they be dishonest about?*** This win was the result of teachers organizing around an issue and working for change. When teachers work together, great things can happen. Change can happen that benefits not only educators but also students.

Teachers not receiving a stipend they clearly meet the criteria for (for 5 years) is a huge problem. CUSD can [afford](#) to make needed improvements. This is why educators need to work together *with integrity* to advocate for one another. That is what we are doing in the Association of Clovis Educators (ACE). In addition to our victory at ATP, we recently gathered input from our needs assessment and identified [6 key issues](#) that affect students, and educators (coincidentally one of the main concerns educators cited was a desire for competitive stipends and more transparency regarding our stipends). We look forward to working together with colleagues across ATP and CUSD to fix these issues. [Learn more about how you can help here.](#)

We look forward to working with the rest of you on our ACE Fall Forward Campaign.



Sincerely,
ATP Teachers

Eric Estrellado
Tanika Mason
Stacie Mueller
Nicole Olivarez
Nancy Welch