



In The Know

CSEA's County Office of Education Committee Newsletter



CHAIR'S COMMENTS

by Katie Andersen

What do you love about your union? Is it the salary and benefits? Is it your pension? Maybe it's the members who you get to meet and greet at chapter meetings. We all have some connection to our union - or we wouldn't be here. This month I challenge you to share with a member or potential member what you love about your union.

I would like to take this month's column to let the COE Committee members know how much I have enjoyed working with them thus far into our terms. We have been collaborating each month on our newsletter as well as working behind the scenes on a project to educate all our COE members on the CSEA Core Values (coming soon to a Zoom near you!) The creativity and diversity of thoughts and talents have really added and strengthened this team- empowering all of us to be better leaders.

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The confidence I have gained as a leader because of the team I work with has empowered me to take a risk, and beginning next month, I will be participating in CSEA's Member Intern Program. While I will be taking a temporary leave of my COE Committee duties, I will remain "In The Know" because of the support of the rest of the committee. See you all in May!

CORE VALUE: EMPOWERMENT

by Katie Andersen

When explaining the core value of Empowerment, CSEA states, “We believe in education, service, and fostering personal and collective growth through the empowerment of members and the power of organized labor.” Empowerment is the basis for all actions and is the driving force behind the subsequent values that the organization holds.

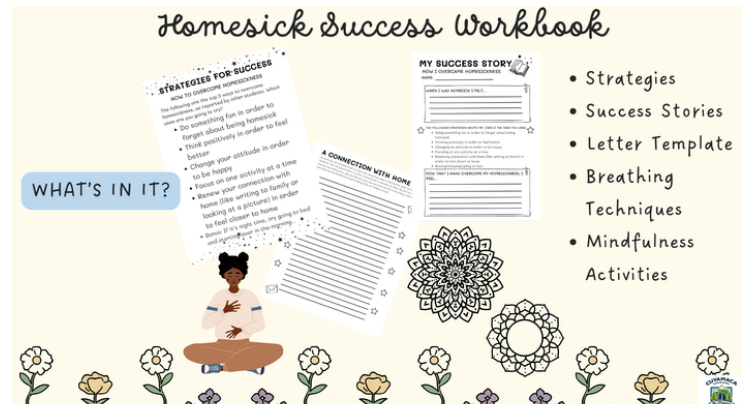
This month, we share with you an example of how the core value of Empowerment drives the team at SDCOE’s Cuyamaca Outdoor School.

Empowering a Team to Do Their Best

Katie Andersen is a Village Leader at Cuyamaca Outdoor School. “To me, empowerment is about giving people tools and teaching them how to use them. It’s also about being a confident leader - confident that you gave your team what they need and they can do the job without you.” Recently, Katie developed a research-based resource notebook to help the overnight staff work with homesick students.



Left: Katie teaches a rock climbing class to 6th graders- teaching them skills and building their confidence so they can tackle more than just the rocks.



Along with the activity book, both daytime and overnight staff participated in a training developed by Katie to build their skills in homesickness treatment. “It was a training we were all wanting. Working with homesick kiddos is tough, but Katie gave us some ideas that were really helpful and easy to use,” stated a participant in the training. “I feel like I can better help our homesick students have a better time at 6th Grade Camp.”

The staff at the outdoor school commit themselves to take every opportunity to build confidence in their students both academically and socially, with the hope that they take these skills back home and build stronger communities.



Above: The staff of Cuyamaca Outdoor School who participated in the training learned how to empower students to work through their homesickness and grow socially and emotionally.



EMPOWERMENT- WORD SEARCH

Have some fun with Empowerment! Hidden below are 13 words related to this CSEA core value. Can you find them all?

Q E E B G O L U L L E R C H S I L R N W
 Z T T N N W P C L M E X M T S O R F Q W
 P Z A A K E G B P K O A R I T N I D J C
 K P G E T O C O M F S E D S A P B K S O
 Y Y E Y D I W N W G N L U E H N Z M G O
 T S L M F E L Q E G U R F B R X Y F W P
 O G E P R F S I T D T K S F Y S E N D E
 D E D M O U X H C G I F A I X Q H D A R
 G G E I D B G W T A X F J E N I F I P A
 J N T A J Y G Q Y G F Y N T U O J A P T
 T G A B N N T F I L P U F O Y B L G L I
 F B F W R O R C X T L X K O C L K H X O
 Q B F E E I K Z R C C R J W X T A J H N
 X N I T K T U S Q T E P I R Q N W G J M
 J R L N U A Q Z L C I A E S C N H K J U
 L K N I E C I D I G R O W T H Q P G Q E
 O K X B B U Y V X L E H Y I E N G K C Y
 H Z B F N D R N S C W U V F M J H L A B
 E I D V E E H I K Q C X R D W U D Z I C
 O I T N S H Q H K J N G A T D F T N H E

Confidence
 Cooperation
 CSEA
 Delegate
 Education
 Empowerment
 Facilitate

Growth
 Leadership
 Service
 Strength
 Trust
 Uplift



MEMBERS MATTER

Meet **Stephen Wells** of Westside Chapter #718 of Glenn County Office of Education. He started as a vehicle driver and quickly began the training necessary to become a fully credentialed school bus driver. After losing his son in early 2016, Stephen persevered through his training and was promoted to Bus Driver after he was credentialed. Pictured below.



Originally born in Guam, Stephen moved all over the world, (both parents served in the military), and eventually wound up living in Orland, on a farm for the past six years.

Stephen has generously served our community in many capacities -- having served, behind the scenes, in our Union to make life better for all employees; fighting for our rights, equal pay, and ongoing legislation to ensure good working conditions and fair treatment for all who are represented by our union.

Stephen has served our Union in the position of Treasurer, Vice President, and Negotiating Committee Representative.



Stephen, pictured left, is a prime example of the type of leadership chapters can foster when they empower members to take on different roles and responsibilities.

He has also been on the Legislative Committee for the last three years; attending many out of town trainings and conferences and volunteering his time and energy making our Union better.

We are so grateful to have Stephen on our team and he is currently in the process of becoming a fully Jacketed Steward for our Union -- to be able to better serve and represent our members when they are being treated unfairly or dealing with a disciplinary issue.

His hobbies, when he can, include: building websites, computer programming, video gaming, and building/fixing whatever needs to be done on our little homestead.

Thank you Stephen for what you do for your members and community -- **YOU DO MATTER!**



Stephen is pictured with wife, Cherie, and their children during a trip to Cape Coral, Florida to celebrate their 20th Wedding Anniversary.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR CHAPTERS

by Terri Stone, President, Stanislaus County
Office of Education Chapter #668

Some more good things are happening at the Stanislaus County Office of Education for our Custodial Crew.

Recently, I was approached by the Director of Operations which oversees all our Maintenance, Grounds, and Custodial staff.

With the very competitive field of all these divisions, SCOE felt the custodial staff needed to look at some opportunities for promotional steps; therefore, Chapter #668 was approached. Our Chapter has built a very good, strong working relationship with all Leadership at SCOE, so when I was brought into this decision making, I was very open to see our Classified staff being given these chances of advancement.

The process presented was to bring in several levels of advancement. Currently, all custodians were hired at the same level, "Custodians." We only had that one level with a few "Lead Custodians."

We now have four levels in the Custodian classification.

Prior to these changes, our Custodial staff starting salary was: \$19.77 an hour. The Lead Custodian was starting at \$20.60 an hour.

Editor's note: We share "What's Happening in Your Chapters" so that you may "take away," ideas for your individual chapters.

These promotional opportunities with the new titles have now increased the starting pay in the following levels:

- Custodian I -- \$22.25/hr
- Custodian II -- \$22.98/hr
- Lead Custodian -- \$24.60/hr
- Head Custodian -- \$25.43/hr

This is huge for empowering our Operations Department. All of the men and women in these positions work very hard in doing some of the dirtiest and tedious jobs to keep our offices and schools clean and sanitary for students and staff.

All of the current staff within the Custodial positions were offered these opportunities first. They all were told to apply for all positions they felt they were qualified for; interviews were held and all were placed in the titles that their qualifications lined up with. The changes effected all 19 staff in our custodial department. Any remaining positions not filled by current staff were then placed on EdJoin for qualified outside applicants.

The new positions for current staff took effect on January 8, 2024.

However, the changes within the Operations Department does not stop here. We will now be looking at "promotional opportunities" for our Maintenance and Grounds Staff in the upcoming months.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR CHAPTERS



By Irenea Herrera, COE Committee Member

The North Bay Field Office held a Political Kick Off on January 10, 2024. The event was hosted by Stacy Galaviz, CSEA Field Director, and there were 31 participants on Zoom.

Jackie Elward, a CSEA member of Santa Rosa Chapter 75, is a candidate for State Senate in the 3rd District, which includes all or portions of Contra Costa, Napa, Sacramento, Solano, Sonoma, and Yolo counties. There are three Democrats and two Republicans running to replace Bill Dodd of Napa who will be termed out at the end of 2024. Elward would not be deterred by the negative campaigning brought on by her opponents but will focus on her campaign as she truly understands the struggles of classified workers. She is proud to have earned endorsements from national and statewide organizations, including CSEA, and also legislative endorsements having no political connection in Sacramento. Get to know more about Jackie Elward by visiting her campaign website at www.jackie4senate.com.

Stacy Galaviz, continued the presentation with the 2024 CSEA Political Plan covering campaign priorities and legislative targets. It is time to also start preparing for County Boards and County Superintendent races in the primary campaign. CSEA members elect their own bosses. Those local elected officials make decisions on wages, healthcare, collective bargaining agreements, charter schools and more.

CSEA members were also encouraged to join [The Victory Club](#) to help raise vital funds to support classified-friendly, pro-education candidates. Phone banking and precinct walks begin next week!

A copy of the presentation including the PRIMARY and GENERAL Campaign Timelines can be found here: [NBFO Political Kick Off 2024](#).



Jackie Elward for State Senate



Election Voter Guide

★ 2024

2024 is one of the most significant election years in recent memory with school board seats, every congressional seat, every Assembly seat, half the state Senate seats, a U.S. Senate seat and the presidency on the ballot.

To help you stay informed and learn about CSEA's endorsed candidates, we have created a comprehensive voter guide with links to each endorsed candidate's website.

CSEA has endorsed primary candidates who will stand up for workers' rights and the progress we've fought for together. To earn our endorsement, these candidates passed a thorough vetting procedure including research, interviews and assessments to ensure they will be focused on defending classified employees.

Ballots will begin arriving in mailboxes on February 5, and the CSEA voter guide is the perfect reference to have when filling out your ballot.

This year, the rights of every member – active and retired – are at stake. Don't hold your ballot until Primary Election Day on March 5 - be sure to fill out your ballot and send it back right away!

If you want to do more than just vote for these candidates that will stand up for us in elected office, please volunteer to campaign for them in your area. Sign up at csea.com/volunteer2024.

How CSEA's endorsement process works

Candidates are selected by CSEA's [Political Action for Classified Employees \(PACE\) Committee](#) for recommendation to the [CSEA Board of Directors](#), with CSEA Board Members making the official endorsement. The PACE recommendations are based on candidates' voting records, answers to CSEA's questionnaires and candidate interviews or some combination. Candidates are rated for such recommendation based on issues of importance to CSEA, including school and community college funding, retirement benefit protections, healthcare reform, workers' rights and other issues impacting CSEA members in their workplace.

We Need Your Help!

Join us as we work the phone banks and knock on doors in your community for pro-labor candidates who will stand up for the rights and needs of hard-working Californians like us. School board seats, every Congressional seat, every Assembly seat, half the state Senate seats, a U.S. Senate seat and the presidency are on the ballot, which means so is the future of our members – both active and retired.

[VOLUNTEER](#)

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CALPERS: SERVING MEMBERS SINCE 1932

How much do you really know about CalPERS?

CalPERS is about the dedicated individuals who serve, or have served, the State of California through a career in public service. But how much do you really know about CalPERS? Let's take a closer look about how it came to be.

Establishment and Early Years

Sweeping national reforms from the 1920s — along with lack of public assistance for those who were beyond their working years — led to the establishment of the State Employees' Retirement System (SERS) on [January 1, 1932](#).

SERS was responsible for investing its member contributions in sound financial instruments — a difficult task while the country was in the throes of the Great Depression. SERS originally had 13,652 eligible members. It doubled in 1939 when membership expanded to include cities, counties, school districts, and special districts. Today we have over 2 million members — over 750,000 are retirees and beneficiaries receiving a monthly allowance.

Building a Solid Foundation

In 1940, the Department of Finance hired Rene L. Rothschild as an investment adviser. During his two decades of service, he built up the Fund investment portfolio from \$22 million to \$1.2 billion, in addition to conducting extensive community outreach and engagement. These successes were vital in shaping what would become the nation's largest public pension system.

During World War II, staff who left public service to join the armed forces could return to their former positions at the end of the war. Today we continue to recognize our veterans by offering the purchase of [military service credit](#) to eligible members.

Growth and Expansion

With the State Employees' Medical and Hospital Care Act of 1962, SERS was given the responsibility of providing health benefits to eligible state employees; local public agencies would be allowed to contract for healthcare starting in 1967. Today we provide health benefits to over [1.5 million members \(PDF\)](#).



CalPERS members in the 60s.

BRIEF HISTORY OF CALPERS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

In 1967, SERS became the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS), reflecting the new broad reach and membership. During 1968, California Governor Ronald Reagan signed legislation that added annual cost-of-living increases to the System's retirement allowances. Today our retirees typically receive an annual cost-of-living increase on the May 1 benefit payment in their second calendar year of retirement.

As investments grew, so did the organization. In 1986, PERS' Sacramento headquarters moved into Lincoln Plaza, a six-story irregular pyramid designed for the future, with raised floors for wiring and extensive outdoor terracing that brought in natural light. The site was originally occupied by Lincoln School, and we sought to preserve and reflect the history of the neighborhood. In 2001 construction of Lincoln Plaza East and West began. The buildings were completed in 2005 and were built with sustainability in mind.



Image of Lincoln School built during the 1860s. Image Courtesy Sacramento Archives and Museum Collection Center.

Present Day

During the 1990s we sought to improve the financial performance of the firms in which we invested, increasing our holdings in certain firms to impact corporate responsiveness. The [corporate governance](#) program would continue to expand into what it is today.

In 1992, to distinguish ourselves from retirement systems in other states that went by the same acronym, PERS changed its name to "CalPERS." We expanded our customer service efforts, reaching out to members through [retirement planning fairs](#), counseling appointments, and education programs. In 1995, the [CalPERS 457 Plan](#) was launched, providing eligible members a way to ensure peace of mind in retirement through a deferred compensation plan. We also began acting as a consultant to employers, helping them with retirement policies and planning. The first [Educational Forum](#), a three-day conference for employers, was held in 2000.

In 2011, we launched [myCalPERS](#), an online platform for members and employers. Members can access a [variety of features](#), from finding their account summary and health benefits to signing up for classes and scheduling appointments.

For the first time in our history, in 2022, three top leadership positions at CalPERS were simultaneously held by women.

Continued on page 10

BRIEF HISTORY OF CALPERS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

Chief Executive Officer [Marcie Frost](#), Chief Investment Officer [Nicole Musicco](#), and Board of Administration President [Theresa Taylor](#) are driven to usher in a new era of leadership.

Proud to Serve

Keeping our promise of a sustainable pension is the cornerstone of our mission. It has been the reason for our existence since 1932. The long-term nature of our benefits reflects our long-term investing horizon and our commitment to generations of public employees. We'll continue to transform health care purchasing and delivery by ensuring our members have access and receive high-quality care while providing value and affordability. We're grateful for our members and are proud to serve those who serve California.

Ref.: CalPers Member News, dated 12/5/23



Photo L-R: Arlene Salcedo, Area E CSEA Pre-retirement Resource Representative; Debbie Erlenbush, President, Retiree Council #5010, Modesto, Chuck Walker, Area E Retiree Director and Ruth Gloria, Retiree of Council #5010. Richard Prestia, President of Chapter 56, Turlock, recently hosted the CalPers Seminar on September 9, 2023, at Sandra T. Medeiros Elementary School. Pictured on the right: CalPers Presenters: Adam Gaither and Thai Nguyen

Reach out to your Area Pre-retirement Resource Person for future webinars or in-person sessions.

<https://csea.com/committees/pre-retirement-resource/contacts>.

Understanding CalPERS Webinar

Overview

It is never too early to learn how CalPERS pays you later for a lifetime.

Learn all about:

- What benefits are available to you now and in the future.
- The importance of the CalPERS Power of Attorney form.
- How to purchase substitute time toward your pension.
- What information CalPERS uses to calculate your retirement.

Get your questions answered. Hear from CSEA Member Benefits Coordinator, Debb Jachens, as well as additional speakers.

Note: Pre-registration is required. Two different Webinar time slots are available

February 12, 2024

12:00 pm - 1 pm

Online:

[Register Now](#)

OR

February 12, 2024

5:30 pm - 7 pm

Online:

[Register Now](#)



READ & LEARN



- **[Click here to view 24 new California laws to know in 2024](#)**

Governor Gavin Newsom signed bills impacting employment, public health, public safety, consumers and more into law in 2023.

Ref.: **CSEA home webpage**

- **[General Information Bulletin 6-24; Submission of Chapter Financial Records \(Policy 627\)](#)**

Information regarding the submission of Chapter Financial Records per Policy 627. Deadline is March 1

Ref. **Leadership mail, dated 1/8/24**

- **[2024 In-Person Paraeducator Conference, March 12-14, 2024](#)**

Ontario Convention Center in Southern California. [Watch this video!](#) Save the date and share this exciting news with your districts so they budget for CSEA paraeducators to take advantage of this amazing training and professional development opportunity.

For up to date information regarding this event, go to csea.com/paraconference.

- **[Delegate assistance for Conference 2024 -- deadline is March 1](#)**

<https://csea.com/files/documents/csea-2010.pdf>

- **[General Information Bulletin 49-23; Leadership Academy Training Program Application](#)**

CSEA's Leadership Academy will be held in the South on May 7-8, 2024 and in the North on May 14-15, 2024. If you are interested in running for local public office such as school board, county board of education, or community college board of trustees, **please note the application period for members is now open and closes on Tuesday, April 2, 2024.**

- **[Governor Newsom's 2024-25 Budget Proposal](#)**

Today, Governor Newsom released his highly anticipated 2024-25 budget proposal. While the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) projected a \$68 billion deficit last month, the Governor's budget projects a more optimistic revenue picture with a shortfall of just \$37.8 billion. Although the shortfall is still significant, the budget proposal continues to prioritize and protect education funding. For more information reference the **PAC News Flash - emailed Jan. 10 from CSEA Governmental Relations Office**



AFL-CIO

Know Your Committee



COMMITTEE MEMBERS



Katie Andersen, Chair
San Diego COE Chapter #568
Areas H, I & K
katherinemillerandersen@gmail.com



Araceli Garcia
Glenn COE, Westside #718
Area A
araceli.garcia@glenncoe.org



Ruth Gloria
Retired,
Stanislaus COE Chapter #668
Areas D & E
grandmaruth3@gmail.com



Irena Herrera
Monterey COE Chapter #35
Areas B & C
ibc.herrera29@gmail.com



Catherine Wind-Muro
San Bernardino County
Superintendent of Schools
Chapter #633
Areas F & G
sbcss-csea633@outlook.com



Amy Gonzales
Staff Coordinator
Field Director, Orange Field Office
agonzales@csea.com

COE COMMITTEE'S PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of the County Office of Education Committee is to research, educate, communicate and network regarding the issues and concerns of the county office of education chapters — providing a liaison between members, the board of directors, committees, governmental relations and the Legislature, while acknowledging the differences and similarities of county offices of education, community colleges, and K-12's.

"In The Know"

Monthly Newsletter of the CSEA County Office of Education Committee

Editor: Ruth Gloria

Layout: Katie Andersen & Irena Herrera

Content: Ruth Gloria, Katie Andersen, CSEA Communications

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<https://csea.com/committees/county-office-of-education-coe>

Upcoming Committee Meetings

February 7

March 1-2, Sacramento

May 1

June 5