



## Jefferson Elementary Federation of Teachers Take Steps to Expand Parent Education and Community Organizing

The Jefferson Elementary Federation of Teachers (JEFT) has been on the move organizing on many fronts and achieving success along the way. They obtained two significant raises (6% and 5%) in the last two years, won additional teacher prep time, and held a wildly successful Reclaiming the Promise of Quality Public Education conference earlier this year. This conference saw hundreds turn out for activities promoting collaboration between educators and Daly City area parents deepening their ties with parents and the community.

Recently, the JEFT leadership came together in Brisbane, CA to take some time to reflect on these accomplishments and plan for the future. The CFT Organizing Director, San-



JEFT President Melinda Dart leads a back-to-school strategic planning session with JEFT leaders.

dra Weese attended and shared information about upcoming election work. As did the CFT Training Director, Laura Kurre who led the local in problem solving activities intended to facilitate efforts to encourage more school site involvement in the local's activities.

"We really do need to take time and validate our own hard work with our parent education program

and community organizing work," said JEFT President Melinda Dart. Adding: "I believe we will make even further strides this year."

The local has an ambitious schedule of family education nights coming up where they are partnering with the local PTA to make more connections with parents to support quality public education. In addition, they will be

*"We really do need to take time and validate our own hard work with our parent education program and community organizing work"*

-Melinda Dart, President, Jefferson Elementary Federation of Teachers, Local 3267

joining with sister local 1481, the Jefferson AFT Federation of Teachers, to conduct a workshop for parents and families transitioning from 8th grade to high school.

The JEFT's commitment to working with parents and the community is rooted in the belief that doing so will help the community come to value public education, and thereby also value teachers and teacher's unions!

## CFT Members Get Political Training at AFT Bootcamp in Pittsburgh



In July, three CFT participants attended AFT's annual Political Bootcamp. Attendees this year were Debbie Forward from the Palomar Faculty Federation, Gemma Abels from the Morgan Hill Federation of Teachers, and Suleman Ishaque from Los Angeles Staff Guild. Political Bootcamp is an opportunity for AFT members and staff to experience a campaign training while working on an active campaign. This year, it was held in Pittsburgh, PA, and participants worked with the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers and other AFT-Pennsylvania locals on what is shaping up to a crucial governor's race in that state, as they seek to defeat the union-busting incumbent, Tom Corbett, by electing Tom Wolf.

During the training, participants learned and practiced essential campaign skills like organizing and running a phone bank, canvassing households, recruiting and managing volunteers, and running COPE campaigns to support electoral work. All three CFT participants will be helping with important political races in California this fall and will get a chance to use their new skills back home!

## Peralta Federation of Teachers Fight to Protect Rights of Part-Timers



Full-time and part-time PFT members show solidarity with part-timers who were not rehired this year without reasonable justification or due process.

In a provocative summertime move, administrators at Oakland's Laney College decided not to rehire part-time sociology professor and Peralta Federation of Teachers (PFT) Part-time Faculty Repre-

sentative Cynthia Mahabir and at two other members of the Part-time Faculty Rehire Preference Pool.

The Rehire Pool was designed to offer veteran part-timers who have been favorably evaluated –

like Dr. Mahabir, a 17-year Laney vet – a measure of job security. The move by the administration to strip pool members of their positions and livelihoods without reasonable justification or due process violates the intent of the contract; PFT is fighting to get the part-timers' jobs back and to protect the integrity of its collective bargaining agreement.

Fourteen PFTers, including part-time and full-time faculty members – representing all four colleges of the Peralta Community College District – delivered a petition with over 250 signatures to Laney

President Elnora Webb, demanding that the college honor the contract and reinstate the part-time faculty members. These part-time faculty members spoke out about the unfairness and lack of respect that the administration has shown with these moves against dedicated, positively evaluated non-tenured instructors.

"The courage displayed by the PFT members was remarkable," said PFT President Matt Goldstein. "We must continue to build our solidarity for part-time and all faculty members!"

## Petaluma Teachers Rally to Support Contract Campaign

This summer, teachers in Petaluma decided to take their contract campaign to the next level. They were tired of being disrespected at the negotiating table and were ready to work together to shift the power dynamic in their district.

In an effort to increase transparency of negotiations, the Petaluma Federation of Teachers, Local 1881, decided to exercise their members' rights to observe the process. During one session in July over 50 teachers crammed into a little room so they could see what was happening at the table. The district refused to negotiate with observers present, but Petaluma teachers didn't

budge.

PFT President Kim Sharp explained, "We are not about to give up our members' rights. Our members have the right to observe this process."

The next week, dozens of teachers marched together to the school board meeting to take this action to the next level. "Our members need to be heard. It is time to value our collective voices. It is time for the district to return to the table and negotiate in good faith," says Carrie Caudle, PFT COPE Co-Chair and SCI Organizer.

The situation in Petaluma remains challenging. Although the Public Em-



Petaluma teachers fill negotiations room to send a message to the district that they are supporting their bargaining team in their efforts to negotiate a fair contract.

ployees Relations Board (PERB) has instructed the district to return to the table, they've refused. Local 1881 has filed an Unfair Labor Practice against the district, and its members are currently waiting to see PERB's ruling. In the meantime, Peta-

luma educators are ramping up for extended, continuous action including multiple marches, a rally, leafleting to parents, coordinated speakers at school board meetings, and a business outreach campaign.

# Palomar Faculty Federation Conducts Successful Membership Drive and Dramatically Increases COPE Donations

At June's Executive Board (EB) retreat, the Palomar Faculty Federation (PFF) launched their efforts to grow their membership and expand their COPE program. They set a number of specific goals including signing up 100 new members and bringing the total number of COPE donators to 100.

They made a plan to focus on the big back-to-school events for teachers in August. The EB turned out in force to help recruit new members staffing tables and answering questions at both the Part-Time and Full-Time

Plenary sessions. With membership and COPE forms on clipboards and an abundant supply of the CFT SWAG on hand including: PFF silly putty stress eggs, AFT first aid kits, and enamel PFF pins, members and staff got busy.

Each person staffing the tables had a detailed list of the bargaining unit, which outlining who was and was not a PFF member and COPE member. In an hour, they signed up about 50 new members including about a dozen new PFF members who thought they had joined the union,



Palomar leaders staff tables at back-to-school events and sign up new members and COPE contributors.

but hadn't. An additional 40 members joined COPE! "The planning and preparation worked and the member response was great," said SCI Organizer,

Debbie Forward. "At this pace we will likely achieve our annual COPE and membership goals in the first six months!"

Debbie Forward

## Strategic Campaign Organizer Training Focused on Increasing Members and Growing COPE

Strategic Campaign Initiative Organizers (SCIO) converged in Oakland on September 5 and 6 for the annual SCIO training.

These organizers are part of the SCI grant program, which allows CFT locals to apply for matching funds to implement organiz-

ing programs that build capacity in their locals. Nineteen locals were awarded SCI grants for this school year and



Jessica Ulsrad



Sandra Weese

SCI Organizers brainstorm and share ideas in small groups as they make plans for their local grant work during this next school year.

many locals sent an additional member organizer to the training so there were 29 total in attendance for the two-day training. This year's training focused on membership outreach drives to increase number of members and monthly COPE contributors and to engage more members in contract activities and other union campaigns.

# Peralta Federation of Teachers Faculty Continue to Demand Justice for Part-timers

On the evening of September 9, 70 part-time and full-time faculty members—along with students, Classified employees, family, & leaders from the California Federation of Teachers—made their collective presence felt at the PCCD Board of Trustees meeting. They came to express concern about recent administrative moves to undercut faculty rights and to circumvent the PFT contract.

Over 25 speakers appealed to the PCCD Board and publicly demanded that Laney’s administration reinstate members of the Part-Time Rehire Pool who were unfairly and



Over 70 PFT part-time and full-time faculty members gather outside the Peralta Community College District office before going into the BOT meeting to demand justice for part-timers who were unjustly not rehired this year.

improperly denied teaching assignments for fall semester. These are faculty with years of experience, outstanding evaluations, and spotless personnel files.

Laney’s administration has given no defensible reason and has used no due process for the part-timers—and PFT, the students, and the community stood strong last night to protect these part-timers and ALL faculty rights.

The members of the Peralta Federation of Teachers, along with their students and other allies, will continue to fight until there is justice for these teachers and quality education for students.



## Fall 2014 Political Work is Underway!

**WE ARE BUILDING A CAMPAIGN TEAM**, including a number of the CFT member organizers who will be working with our own locals and with Central Labor Councils around the state to secure victory for pro-labor and pro-public education candidates and initiatives.

The CFT will be active in a number of key races around the state, the most important of which is the re-election of State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Torlakson who faces a well-financed “reform” candidate, Marshall Tuck. The race is in a dead heat and Torlakson will need the support of educators around the state to win in November. A toolkit of Torlakson materials that you can use at your worksite are available on the CFT website (hyperlink: <http://cft.org/get-involved/be-political/general-election-2014.html>) and will be continually updated throughout our campaign.

For a full list of CFT-endorsed candidates, you can check out our online voter guide (hyperlink: <http://cft.org/get-involved/be-political/general-election-2014.html>). Simply enter your address and you will see a list of state and local candidates and initiatives endorsed by our union.

The California Federation of Teachers is an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO. The CFT represents faculty and classified workers in public and private schools and colleges, from early childhood through higher education. The CFT is committed to raising the standards of the profession and to securing the conditions essential to provide the best service to California’s students.

**PRESIDENT**

Josh Pechthalt

**SECRETARY TREASURER**

Jeff Freitas

**ORGANIZING DIRECTOR**

Sandra Weese

**PROJECT STAFF**

Gregory Lewis  
Evangelina Nevarez  
Jana Rygas  
Alma Soto  
Laura Watson

**LAYOUT**

Taylor Mohel

**EDITORIAL OFFICE**

*Get Organized!*  
1330 Broadway, Suite 1601  
Oakland, CA 94612  
510-523-5238  
510-523-5262 fax  
[www.cft.org](http://www.cft.org)

*Get Organized!* is produced by union workers in the CFT Field Representatives Union and the Office and Professional Employees International Union.

All story ideas and submissions should be emailed to Sandra Weese at [sweese@cft.org](mailto:sweese@cft.org).

