

ABCFT YOUnionews



WOMEN'S
HISTORY
MONTH

**SOMEONE
REMINDE ME
TO TAKE
ATTENDANCE**

FRIENDLY REMINDER:

**NO SCHOOL ON MONDAY FOR TEACHERS AND
STUDENTS.**

**(Classified employees will be working and getting
professional development opportunities)**

HOTLINKS! In this edition of YOUNionews

- [KEEPING YOU INFORMED](#)
- [TEACHER LEADER SHOWCASE](#)
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Previous Editions of YOUNionews

[YOUNionews March 21, 2025](#)

[YOUNionews March 14, 2025](#)

[YOUNionews March 7, 2025](#)

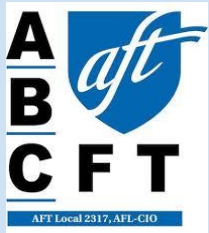
ABCFT Representative Council Notes

[January 9, 2025](#)

ABCFT Resources

[2020-2025 ABCFT Master Contract](#)

[ABCFT Membership Benefits](#)



HOTLINKS- Contact ABCFT at ABC Federation of Teachers abcft@abcusd.us

- For confidential emails - use your non-work email to write to us at: abcft2317@gmail.com
- [ABCFT 2023-2026 Strategic Plan Summary](#) **NEW!**
- [ABCFT 2023-2026 Strategic Plan Details](#) **NEW!**
- [Who are the officers of the ABC Federation of Teachers?](#)

PUBLIC SCHOOLS UNITE US

SUPPORT EDUCATORS

HELP OUR STUDENTS

PROTECT OUR RIGHTS

ADVANCE DEMOCRACY

UNITE OUR NATION

KEEPING YOU INFORMED - Negotiations Update By Ruben Mancillas



Here is a brief recap of some topics we have covered in recent updates. I apologize for a degree of repetition, but sometimes we receive questions that have already been answered previously. This will be a reference resource as we finish the month of March.

Monday, March 31, is a student-free day. Teachers and nurses do not work that day, which has the practical effect of being a local holiday for us but is not a day off for our other unions. Enjoy Cesar Chavez Day. Si se puede!

We have received questions regarding banking minutes. The process for banking minutes was reviewed at this month's rep council meeting, but my suggestion is to have a definite plan for how any proposed minutes will be utilized. Banking minutes can be a tool that a site chooses to use, but I would recommend that a detailed plan be presented so that teachers can make an informed choice about working additional minutes for a targeted purpose. If a site wants to accomplish identified goal X, it should only bank enough minutes for goal X, not for Y and Z as well. And if X truly is the sole need, what other ways besides banking minutes are there to meet that goal?

Banking minutes can lead to a discussion of what collaboration minutes will look like next year. I think it is important to make the distinction between our 40 minutes of elementary planning time, which was increased from 30 minutes during our last master contract, and any additional collaboration minutes, which an administrator can direct. Some sites use different labels (rotations, etc.), but for the sake of consistency, I will use the terms planning time, which is individual, and collaboration time, which is contingent on a number of site-specific factors. The reasonable question is being asked: "how are we supposed to do everything we are asked to do with less collaboration time?" A reasonable reply is, "we are going to have to reexamine our priorities and be prepared to take something off of our plate." It is not a realistic expectation to do more with less. Collaboration time is valuable but not contractual, as opposed to our planning time. This issue will likely be discussed during master contract negotiations. If it is identified as a priority, I am confident that solutions can be found, but these potential fixes should not rely on sites feeling pressure to bank minutes.

A question we often receive is, what comes out of a site's budget compared to what comes out of the district budget? My short answer is that it all comes from the same place. Sites may have specific funding sources, and categorical spending can be limited for specific purposes, but in the end, it is all sourced from the district budget. It feels like a bit of a false choice if a site is told that they have to find the funds or not pay for a resource due to site budget limitations. Again, returning to the concept of priorities, if a program is a priority for the district, the district will often find a way to fund it. Our teachers and nurses are stretched thin as it is; we should focus on serving our students rather than worrying about hunting down a proper budget number. If we need supplies or resources, it is a reasonable expectation that we will have them provided in a timely manner with a minimum of bureaucratic red tape.



Stipends will be discussed at the bargaining table. A goal regarding our extra pay for extra duty schedule is to not only talk about how much stipends are but to ensure that they are accurate. If a listed stipend is actually being used for another purpose, let's clearly define what it is and what it is being used for. By correctly identifying our current practice, we can hopefully make the stipend schedule more responsive to a site's needs. We may need to add new stipends, augment current stipends, and repurpose some currently listed ones.

This could also lead to a productive discussion of what is currently an adjunct duty and what would be helpful to move to a stipend position. Adjunct duties will need to be examined with precision. How do they effectively meet a site's needs within a reasonable time expectation? If a duty is added, what will be removed

from the list? Should a distinction be made between a district-sponsored event and something more site-specific? Again, many of these issues are linked, such as how to identify priorities and then target our limited resources to better support our teachers and nurses so that they can help our students achieve their best.

While Monday, March 31, is a day to honor the civil rights activist and labor leader Cesar Chavez, the entire month of March is Women's History Month. This month is an opportunity to commemorate and encourage the study, observance, and celebration of the vital role of women in American history. (I was so tempted to write herstory...that I just did!). I often reflect on my personal relationships and my pride in the strength and accomplishments of my mother, wife, and daughter. I do not have a biological sister, but Tanya Golden is my union sister, my friend, and absolutely one of my heroes. Ray commented at a recent site visit that it takes both he and I to equal one Tanya. It got a laugh, but there is truth in the joke.



Another icon I think deserves to be more of a household name is Frances Perkins, FDR's Secretary of Labor and the first woman to serve as a cabinet secretary. Secretary Perkins was a driving force behind the New Deal, and her policies following the Great Depression helped to create the modern middle class. March 25 is also the anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire of 1911. Perkins was an actual eyewitness to the tragedy that day when 146 workers, mostly young women, were killed after it was found that the employees had been locked into their sweatshop. Perkins served on the Committee on Safety of the City of New York and was an expert witness and primary investigator for the state's Factory Investigating Commission, which resulted in the nation's most comprehensive set of laws governing workplace health and safety in the nation. As she later commented, she saw the fire and its response as "the day the New Deal was born." Some significant accomplishments of her 12-year tenure as Secretary of Labor include: the Social Security Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Bureau of Labor Standards, the National Labor Relations Act, and her work to save thousands of refugees by limiting deportations to Nazi Germany. At a time when government agencies and services are under threat, the words of Frances Perkins are more relevant than ever: "The people are what matter to government, and a government should aim to give all the people under its jurisdiction

the best possible life."

That's a lot of business. I will close with some not-quite-cutting-edge pop culture. I was fortunate to talk with fellow ABCFT delegate Nate Rogers-Madsen about movies at the convention. It was a fun discovery that we both shared an appreciation for Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon* (!) and my favorite film, *Apocalypse Now*. Coppola's 1979 movie works on many levels, but the incredible blending of images with the soundtrack stood out on my first viewing. So I am excited to see Robby Krieger at the Whisky a Go Go tomorrow night. I am trying to keep my expectations realistic, as the sole remaining member of The Doors is almost an octogenarian. But the venue is noteworthy, given the artist, and the format is that he will be performing their debut album in its

entirety. When he plays those introductory notes of The End, it will be a special moment for this music fan and film nerd.

In Unity,

TEACHER LEADER SHOWCASE

ABCFT Teacher Leaders Program Invite!



ABCFT cordially invites you to attend the Teacher Leaders Showcase on:

Date: Wednesday April 16, 2025

Time: 4-5 pm

Location: Cabrillo Lane Adult School, 20122 Cabrillo Lane, Cerritos, CA 90703

Topics include: play based learning in early education, transforming the school system in the wake of AI, and post pandemic's impact on academic/personal growth (HS Level).

During this event, our Teacher Leaders will proudly present the results and recommendations of their action research projects. This showcase celebrates their hard work, dedication, and commitment to enhancing teaching practices and student learning.

[Please RSVP by clicking the link here.](#) We look forward to seeing you there!

ABCFT PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Ray Gaer



Consistent and regular communication is a union's most important tool for advocating for its members at the bargaining table. Every conversation with members is focused on the result of negotiating for the future prosperity and well-being of ALL ABCFT members. This weekly report informs members about issues impacting their working/learning conditions and mental well-being. Our work as a Union is a larger conversation and united, we make the YOUNion.

I will need some serious sit-down time to read Ruben's piece this week. I think that March Madness (and I ain't talking about basketball) is upon us. Three weeks is a long time to wait for Spring Break to come around. I don't know about you, but I'm feeling the burn. I told Ruben this is the time of year when I think every educator is on the borderline of inspired genius and over-stressed conductor. This is the time of year when teachers are going above and beyond.

Ruben and I have been visiting sites and meeting with members throughout the week as we listen and prepare for Master Contract negotiations. The nice thing about visiting with members face to face is that I can ask questions or float idea balloons about ideas that I would otherwise not be able to put in print in the YOUNIONnews. So as we talk with teachers and nurses face to face, it really is a way to bring everyone into that inside space, that planning hashing it out before it gets to the table moment. Ruben likes to call it "inside baseball" where you see how the intersections of ideas and pressures meet.

There is value in every meeting, every conversation, and every email. As we constantly look for insight into what helps our students, each interaction gives us more of the story. I was speaking with a board member that any leadership job can be a 24-hour, full-day job if we want to make it that way, and who's to say that when we make solo decisions, they will be the right one. Building relationships by building together builds trust in each other, and the decisions we make better solutions and sometimes unique solutions that result from deep conversations and discourse.



This Friday, members of the ABCFT Executive Board and members of the ABCFT Negotiating Team worked collectively to discuss Master Contract language that could be used for the ABCFT Master Contract proposal when we engage the district in negotiations for Master Contract renewal in August. By having these two leadership boards work together, ABCFT continues to expand the number of members who are having direct input into the bargaining process. Soon, I anticipate that ABCFT will have working groups where

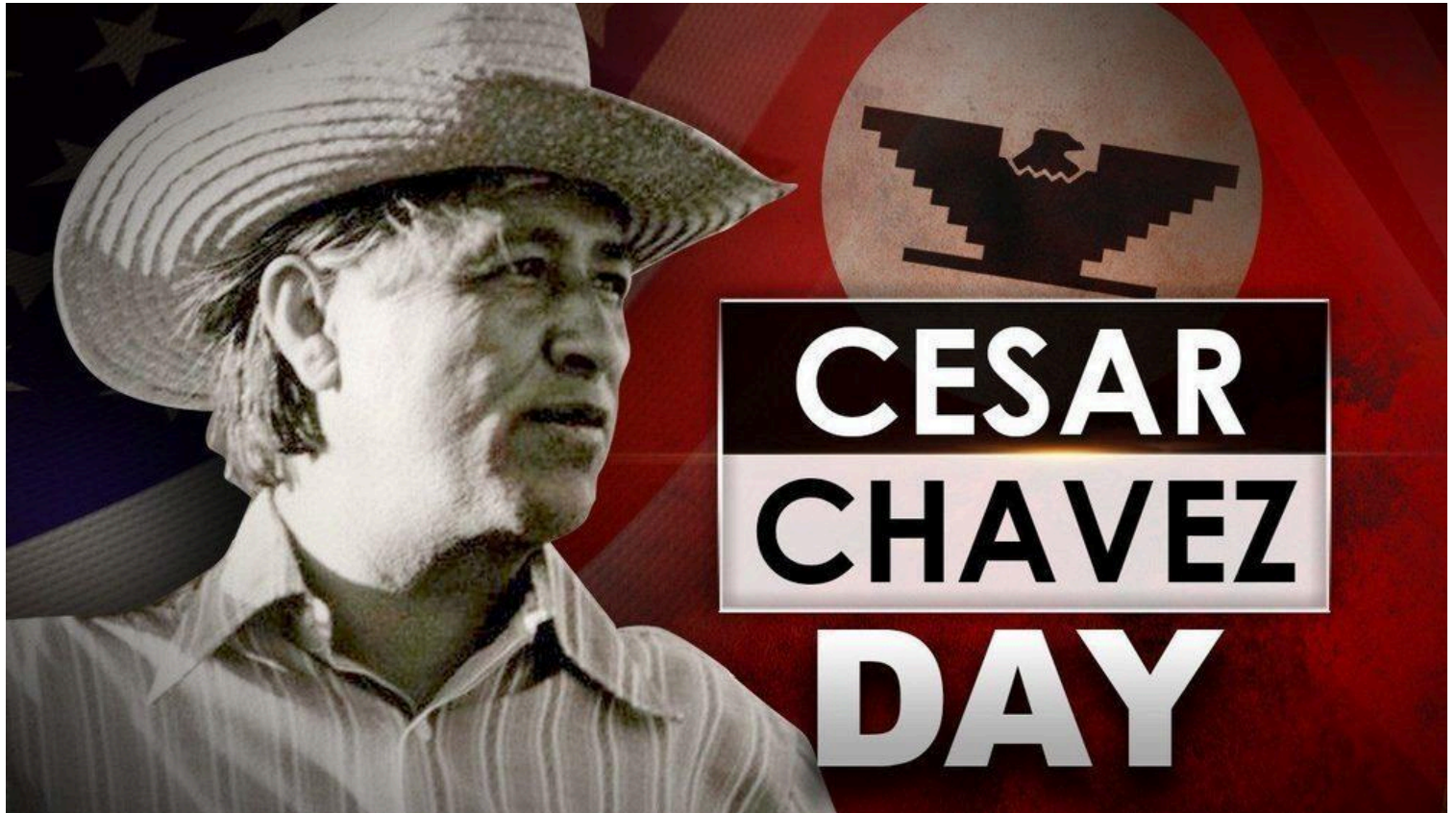
members will be asked to provide insights and help propose job-specific language at the negotiation table.

Let's enjoy this three-day weekend and return for this last three-week push to Spring Break. Keep that fighting spirit as you battle for tomorrow's leaders' hearts and minds. What you model for them now will shape our future world.

In YOUnity,

Ray Gaer

President, ABCFT



*A Union of Educators
& Classified Professionals*

CALIFORNIA FEDERATION OF TEACHERS



Finding unity and building power at the 2025 CFT Convention

The 2025 CFT Convention in San Diego last weekend was an opportunity for hundreds of delegates and guests from across the state to come together, connect, and strategize about how to take on the enormous challenges facing our schools and our country.

The three-day event included a mix of great speakers, thought-provoking workshops, the election for CFT officers, and debate on critical policy issues. CFT members got to hear inspiring words from AFT President Randi Weingarten, California Federation of Labor Unions President Lorena Gonzalez, and nationally-recognized immigration advocate Marielena Hincapié, among others.

At the Convention, delegates re-elected CFT President Jeff Freitas, Secretary Treasurer Lacy Barnes, and Executive Vice President Juan Ramirez to another two-year term. In his [State of the Union address](#), Freitas urged delegates to take the momentum from the Convention to fight back and fight forward towards the schools and country we want to create.

Look for full coverage of the CFT Convention in an upcoming special edition of *CFT United* in the weeks ahead. In the meantime, check out [this awesome video](#) of our Rising Up for Justice rally in front of the San Diego federal building, these wonderful photos in our [Facebook photo albums](#), and more coverage [on Bluesky](#). Thanks again to all who worked so hard to make the 2025 CFT Convention a success!



AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS



[Find the latest AFT news here](#)

Follow AFT President Randi Weingarten: <http://twitter.com/rweingarten>



----- NATIONAL NEWS -----

Trump takes teacher training cuts to Supreme Court

The Trump administration has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to allow it to proceed with cutting over \$600m in federal grants for teacher training programs, arguing that lower court rulings are improperly blocking its budgetary authority. The request follows a temporary restraining order issued by U.S. District Judge Myong Joun in Boston, who sided with eight Democratic-led states challenging the sudden defunding of the Teacher Quality Partnership and Supporting Effective Educator Development programs. These grants support teacher preparation in key fields like math, science, and special education. The administration halted the

programs without notice in February, part of a broader effort to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education and eliminate what it considers “woke” spending. The states argue the cuts are politically motivated and harmful amid a nationwide teacher shortage.

[CNN](#) [Education Week News](#)

----- STATE NEWS -----

California bill targets harmful ingredients in school food

A new California bill aims to ban several food additives linked to health risks from being served in public school meals. The proposed legislation, introduced by State Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel, would prohibit substances such as Red Dye No. 3, titanium dioxide, brominated vegetable oil, and propylparaben—chemicals banned or restricted in other countries due to concerns over their impact on behavior, hormones, and cancer risk. “Our kids deserve food that won’t hurt them,” Gabriel said. Supporters argue the bill will align school nutrition with modern health science and improve student well-being. Critics, including food industry representatives, warn it could complicate procurement and increase costs. The legislation builds on a 2023 state law that banned the sale of some additives in general food products. If passed, the school-focused bill would take effect in 2027, making California the first state to implement such targeted school nutrition restrictions.

[Medical Xpress](#)

Bilingual education faces funding hurdles

California aims to expand bilingual education programs but faces major hurdles due to insufficient funding, according to a report by *AsAmNews*. Despite the state’s goal of enrolling half of all K–12 students in bilingual or dual-language immersion programs by 2030, school districts struggle with staffing shortages and limited state support. Advocates argue that the academic, cultural, and economic benefits of bilingualism are well-documented, yet the resources haven’t followed the rhetoric. Some programs are thriving in districts like **San Francisco** and **Glendale**, but others have waitlists or have stalled expansion efforts due to a lack of qualified bilingual teachers.

[AsAmNews](#)

Rural California faces funding crisis

California’s rural counties are facing a severe funding crisis after Congress excluded the Secure Rural Schools Act from the latest budget, resulting in a loss of at least \$33m. Liam Gogan, head of the Trinity County Board of Supervisors, described the situation as “nothing short of catastrophic,” warning that it could lead to irreversible damage to schools and emergency services. The funding, which has supported schools, roads, and emergency services for over a century, is crucial for rural communities with limited revenue options. Patricia Gunderson, superintendent of schools for **Lassen County**, noted that the funding was “budget dust” and not prioritized by Congress.

[Press Democrat](#)

----- DISTRICTS -----

L.A. teachers union demands big pay raise

The Los Angeles Teachers Union is advocating for a progressive agenda while seeking significant salary increases. President Cecily Myart-Cruz emphasized the union’s commitment to social justice, commenting: “Trump’s laser-like focus attacks on immigrant families; LGBTQIA+ community; diversity, equity, inclusion; our kids — is hitting our communities hard.” The union’s proposal includes automatic annual salary increases of 3.25% for the first ten years of an educator’s career, alongside a 3% raise in the second year of a two-year contract. The platform also aims to support diversity initiatives and protect immigrant and LGBTQIA+ rights, directly opposing Trump administration policies. With a record \$6.4bn ending balance, Myart-Cruz insists, “LAUSD has the money to fund these contract proposals, but you will hear that they don’t.” Negotiations are intensifying as the union seeks to address the needs of its 37,000 members.

[Los Angeles Times](#)

----- TECHNOLOGY -----

Supreme Court weighs E-rate program fate

The U.S. Supreme Court is currently deliberating the future of the \$9bn Universal Service Fund (USF), which includes the \$4bn E-rate program offering essential internet services to schools. The case, *Federal Communications Commission v. Consumers’ Research*,

hinges on whether Congress and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) violated the Constitution when giving power to a private nonprofit company following the enactment of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to administer the USF. During the hearing, Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. expressed concerns about the implications of a ruling against the program, commenting: "I am quite concerned about the effects of a decision in your favor on the grounds that you have been pressing." The challengers argue that the funding structure resembles an unconstitutional tax, while supporters emphasize the program's critical role in providing services to rural communities and schools. Justice Elena Kagan highlighted the program's importance, noting it offers "essential" telecommunications services. A second petitioner, the Schools, Health and Libraries Broadband Coalition which had its case consolidated with the FCC's case, said the impact of undoing the fund would be "disastrous." A decision is anticipated by late June or early July.

[Education Week News](#) [K-12 Dive](#) [NBC News](#)

----- CLASSROOM -----

Schools struggle with post-pandemic challenges

A comprehensive report by *LAist* reveals how California schools continue to grapple with chronic absenteeism, student depression, and academic setbacks in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite record education funding, schools like those in **Fresno** and **Oakland** are seeing absentee rates double pre-pandemic levels, with some exceeding 40%. Mental health concerns are also rising, with educators witnessing increased signs of student anxiety, depression, and disengagement. While the state has invested in counselors and wellness centers, staffing shortages and inconsistent implementation have limited impact. The report underscores that money alone isn't solving the crisis, and that students need deeper support, stronger community ties, and consistent adult engagement to recover from pandemic-related trauma. Many school leaders say rebuilding trust and stability will take years.

[LAist](#)



At NTA Life, we're here to provide extra peace of mind with individual supplemental benefits that offer tax-free financial support directly to you or your loved ones. Our benefits are designed to go above and beyond your major medical insurance, helping cover things like deductibles, co-pays, and those unexpected expenses that can come up during an illness or injury. We offer the following programs:



- Cancer Coverage
- Heart Coverage
- Hospital Coverage
- Accident Coverage
- Disability Coverage
- Life Insurance
- Specified Disease Coverage – which even comes with a return of premium after 20 years!

The best part? Most of our benefits are guaranteed renewable for life, meaning you can keep them even if you switch districts or retire.

We're so thankful for the strong partnership we have with ABCFT, and we look forward to continuing to support and serve your incredible educators.

If you'd like to learn more, feel free to reach out anytime:

- Leann Blaisdell: 562-822-5004 | leann.blaisdell@horacemann.com
- Shannon Donovan: 714-727-8261 | shannon.donovan@horacemann.com