



## Tilden Prep joins CFT!

In the later months of 2018, several teachers at Tilden Preparatory School began to explore the idea of union representation. Given the unique structure of one-on-one private schools like Tilden, which are new educational businesses developing across the country, teachers felt it was essential that schools put education, students and communities first. As our school has three campuses, none of which communicated much with the others, the planning process required a great deal of teamwork, ingenuity and luck. Serendipitously, two teachers from different campuses contacted the CFT separately, and CFT Organizing Director Sandra Weese brought us together. Our dedicated team of orga-



Teachers at Tilden Preparatory School celebrate their successful organizing effort and the formation of their union.

nizers spent the next few months surveying teachers, gathering cards and working creatively with each other to make our idea a reality. By early May, we had garnered the support of over 70% of teachers across all three campuses, and on June 3, 2019 that supermajority voted to join the CFT.

For our unique school, it was an exciting moment. We pride ourselves on the excellent education our students receive from our passionate and skilled group of teachers. Partnering with the CFT means that the teachers who are working directly with students and curriculum can voice what matters most in

the classroom, and ensure these new educational models properly support a new generation of students and teachers.

In the days following our successful union effort, we in the organizing committee have reflected on all that this process has brought us. Not only has it allowed us to advocate for our own collective voice as teachers, but it has also allowed us to come together as friends united in a common goal. The three Tilden campuses, which were once separate, are now closer than ever. Within each campus, teachers who previously had little chance to talk to each other are now forging close bonds. I am proud of how we in the organizing committee conducted our effort--with kindness,

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## PFT and AFT 2121 Joint House Visit Drive



Members join a morning training on organizing conversations at the AFT 2121 office.

Member leaders from community colleges across the San Francisco Bay Area, represented by San Francisco Community College District Federation of Teachers, Local 2121 (AFT 2121) and the Peralta Federation of Teachers, Local 1603 (PFT) kept their organizing momentum going into the first weekend of summer with a house visit drive. Over the three-day drive, AFT 2121 and PFT worked together with CFT organizers to visit unit-members in the East Bay and San Francisco. Together they trained 22 members on house visits, knocked on 99 doors and collected eight new membership forms! The locals will continue this great work in August, visiting more AFT 2121 and PFT unit-members in their push for 90% membership.

-By CFT Project Organizer Audrie Francis

# ERFT Plans to Elect Student Focused School Board Members

After years of allegations of corruption in the El Rancho Unified School District School Board, El Rancho Federation of Teachers, Local 3467 (ERFT) is fired up and ready to fight to re-shape the school board so that it focuses on improving students' learning conditions. Since 2015, members of the school board have allegedly engaged in financial cover-ups, conflicts of interest and pay-to-play politics. This included preferential selection of personal friends to win construction bids.

Additionally, this Spring the school board gave pink slips to over twenty beloved school administrators. Hundreds of ERFT members, joined by parents, attended the school board meeting on May 7 to speak out about this decision. ERFT President Lilia Carreon describes the event, "It has been an amazing experience to see the unity between our parents, teachers and staff.



Members of ERFT, CSEA and parents go Red For Ed and rally together against school board decisions.

We have been wearing red to show our unity as one group which represents our love for our students,

decision.

Knowing that these issues will continue to occur unless the community

*"We have been wearing red to show our unity as one group..."*

our school district and our community." However, even after hundreds of teachers and parents explained why the district should keep the administrators, the school board wouldn't change their

does something about it, ERFT set up a strategy session in May with the goal of changing the makeup of the school board. In November 2020, there will be two open school board seats, and ERFT in coali-

tion with parents, students and community members plans to fill those seats with union endorsed candidates that keep students as the number one priority. Leaders from both ERFT and the California School Employees Association (CSEA), led by Tony Hernandez, came together and developed a long-term strategic plan to increase COPE contributions, volunteer for candidates and host candidate forums. In order to change the school board, ERFT needs to financially support the candidates they want elected; to that end, the union will be kicking off a COPE campaign to increase members' COPE contributions and be sure that teachers' voices are heard on the school board.

Not only are the teachers working with the classified employees, there is an outpouring of parent support to get rid of these corrupt school board administrators. ERFT has a great opportunity to strengthen the

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## May 22 Day of Action for Public Education



Audrie Francis

Jefferson AFT Federation of Teachers, Local 1481 members and students arrive in Sacramento.



Valerie Bachelor

CFT community college faculty at May 22 #RedforEd Action.

# UC Berkeley Lecturers' Rally for Fair Pay on May Day

May Day sees workers across the globe take to the streets in the struggle and celebration of the workers' movement. The non-senate faculty at the University of California at Berkeley, members of UC-AFT Berkeley, Local 1474 joined UC unions, student and community allies in celebration of May Day. While the day was an expression of labor solidarity broadly, it marked the start of the lecturers' contract fight at UC Berkeley.

The lecturers' contract campaign committee met bi-weekly, and joined UC Labor Coalition meetings in preparation for May Day. Lecturers conducted outreach to their col-

leagues, and CFT organizers visited members to inform them of the upcoming rally and the contract fight ahead. The collective organizing efforts of lecturers, organizers, student and community allies culminated in the lecturer's May Day rally for fair pay.

Over 150 attendees, among them 50 Berkeley lecturers, listened to their colleagues speak on the trials of contingent employment in higher education and the message was clear: faculty equity equals student success. A creative show of solidarity came from the UC Berkeley Labor Choir. Members of Local 1474 and the graduate student workers' union



UC Berkeley Labor Choir sings at the May Day for Fair Pay rally.

UAW 2865 lead the crowd in traditional workers songs with an academic twist. It is clear from the strike wave across the University of California, that this employer will put up a nasty fight. Orga-

nizers in UC-AFT locals across the state are showing their employer that they are ready to fight: for their students, for their professions and for dignity for all UC workers.

-By CFT Project Organizer Audrie Francis

## Older Adult Program Faculty Organize!



SRJC Older Adult Program Faculty celebrating their locals 50th anniversary at the May membership meeting.

In May, leaders from the Santa Rosa Junior College Federation of Teachers Unit B, Local 1946 (SRJCF) organized a membership outreach drive to educate members about bargaining and sign up new members. With support from the Northern California Organizing Team Audrie Francis, Dylan Horowitz, Valarie Bachelor and the CFT Organizing Director Sandra Weese, leaders talked to a third of the bargaining unit over the course of a week. They collected bargaining surveys from half of the people they talked to and signed up nine new members over all. Leaders are excited to keep the momentum going and have plans to continue to do member outreach in the months to come to fight back proposed budget cuts from the district.

- By CFT Organizer Valarie Bachelor

## ABCFT Student Debt Clinic

I had the opportunity to attend the student debt clinic that was put on by my union, ABC Federation of Teachers, Local 2317 (ABCFT). I recently graduated from graduate school in June of 2018, and was about to start repaying my student loans after they were deferred during grad school. I was hoping to learn how to navigate student loan lenders and figure out how to make my monthly student loan payment the lowest possible. I was fortunate to find out the answer to both questions at the student debt clinic! I learned about others past mistakes that helped shaped my future decisions, how to qualify for low payments and what kinds of forgiveness programs teachers and public service employees qualified for. The facilitators of the student debt clinic knew the ins and outs of student loans, had a lot of helpful tips and were able to answer various questions that their audience had. Overall, I was very impressed with the student debt clinic and I was able to take a packet back to my school site for other teachers to read and utilize. Thank you to CFT and ABCFT for putting on this great clinic!

-By ABCFT Member Darien McGibbon

# California Democratic Party Convention

CFT member delegates to the California Democratic Party gathered in San Francisco May 31 through June 2 to participate in the party's annual convention. The primary item of business at this year's gathering was to elect a new Chair, and Rusty Hicks, head of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, won handily on Saturday night with 57% of the vote, meaning that no Sunday runoff election was required. CFT was proud to endorse Rusty, and we are looking forward to working with a seasoned labor leader as Chair of the Democratic Party in the years to come.

The Convention was a great opportunity for CFT member delegates to network with other activists and hear from elected



CFT member delegates at the California Democratic Party Convention.

leaders and candidates. Fourteen of the Democratic presidential candidates - including Kamala Harris, Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders, made their way to California for the CDP Convention. Hearing their platform ideas gave delegates a sense of what's to come as we head toward California's Democratic

Primary Election, which will be held on Super Tuesday, March 3, 2020.

The Democratic Party will convene again in November in Long Beach for the pre-primary endorsement convention.

-By CFT Political Director Jessica Ulstad

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teacher-parent relationship and work together to be sure that the students have the best learning conditions possible.

In the meantime, teachers are working in coalition with parents on a recall campaign to remove two school board mem-

bers this November rather than waiting until 2020. ERFT will be supporting this effort as well as planning for the long-term fight through 2020.

As Organizing Director Sandra Weese stated at the ERFT training, "What a lucky profession in which

teachers, through hard work, can choose their own bosses!"

-By CFT Project Organizer Charlotte Bowman

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class and camaraderie - and I am even prouder of the difference I see at Tilden because of it.

We would like to offer our immense gratitude to Sandra, for guiding us through every step of this process with her veteran

wisdom and expertise. Valarie Bachelor and Audrie Francis tirelessly counted cards, masterfully tracked ever-changing faculty lists and offered valuable advice that proved crucial in our success. For that we thank

them mightily. Tilden Prep is excited to continue onward to our first contract, and to a thriving relationship with CFT.

-By Tilden Preparatory Teacher, Walnut Creek Campus Lara Fowler



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.

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