

How do you feel about *Janus*? CSO WANTS TO KNOW!!

PLEASE DO THE CSO SURVEY!

CSO is conducting a survey of CTA leaders and members — Share your thoughts about preparations for the possible Janus aftermath, and we'll show you the results at the next State Council.



You can:

1. Use this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CSOJanus1>

Or:

2. Use this QR code:



Post-*Janus*: High-participation collective action is key

(Continued from Page 1) were others, all with different agendas,” he says. “Of course, the school district knew the union was weak, making it impossible to achieve substantial gains for teachers and students.

“The steps locals take now [to prepare for a possible loss of fair share dues] will either make or break them in a few years,” Partida says. “Leaders and staff must remember that there are no shortcuts in organizing.”

While working as staff in Colorado, Larry Spotts, PCS Region I, confronted right to work (for less) issues by building union power through engaging members

in high participation collective action. Spotts stresses that the most challenging aspect of this work, for both staff and

“Leaders and staff must remember there are no shortcuts in organizing.”

locals, was always acting as an organizer, in all aspects of the work. He empha-

sized the importance of finding, nurturing, and mentoring future organizers to develop deep organizing principles and methods. When developing an organizing culture is the priority, unions will thrive and win campaigns that are transformative for public education.

We have an opportunity moving forward to strengthen our work, our locals, CTA, and the labor movement by adopting proven organizing strategies. The future of unions depends on our ability to adapt to this changing environment, and we must all prepare now to be ready for the fight ahead.

Advocacy Appeal

Spring 2018

INSIDE

Attrition2
Janus survey4



A CSO publication

Life, post-*Janus*

To look at how the work may change, look at how CSO have done it without fair share

With the Janus decision and possible loss of fair share dues imminent, staff and leaders are wondering how union work may change. Experienced CSO members provided valuable insight into what our future may be:

CSO Treasurer Alva Rivera, C4OB

“I took membership applications everywhere I went...”

Region IV, was a site representative with San Diego Education Association before agency fee. She recalls her priority as site rep was recruiting members.

“I took membership applications with me everywhere I went, and I always asked people to join, even if they said no the first time. I assumed that they would sign up,” she says.

According to Rivera, SDEA made site rep training a priority, providing full day recruitment training focusing on simulations and messaging. Recruitment was a line item in SDEA’s budget, and reps were sometimes provided incentives based on recruitment numbers. Rivera explains that the incentives were always secondary.

“The most important thing was having strong, committed site reps who were respected by their staff because of their ability to solve problems at the school site,” she says.

Georgine Tomasi, PCS, San Marcos RRC, worked for the Texas State Teachers Association in the 1990s. She describes spending weeks on the road visiting school sites to sign up members. She likens the job to selling insurance, as she

was often competing with organizations who were providing professional liability insurance, or legal services as an alternative to membership.

“Often the conversations were based on services, and not on values or using our collective voice,” Tomasi says. She recalls that the competition, as well as drop campaigns, left the TSTA hemorrhaging members.

“At its peak, TSTA was a 300,000 member organization. Over the course of 25 years, membership declined to between 50,000-90,000,” she explains. Of course, you need only look at the working conditions of educators in Texas to understand the impact of a weak TSTA.

Regional IV Organizer, David Partida,

“The most important thing was having strong, committed site reps who were respected by their staff...”

recently worked in Tennessee for an NEA campaign organizing Memphis City educators. He also expressed concerns over the impact competing organizations had on the Memphis City Education Association. With no exclusive representation rights, the local was forced to bargain with the competing organizations at the table.

“The biggest competition was the Christian Educators Association, but there (See Post-*Janus*, Page 4)

— **Partners in Advocacy** —
CTA staff and members working for California's students

Janus fears lead to proposed cuts

While the *Janus v. AFSCME* lawsuit is not yet decided, its impact on the work of local CTA leaders and CSO staff is already being felt.

Chapters are being asked to assess their readiness, treasurers are asked to prepare to cut chapter budgets, and a joint committee of CTA managers and CSO members are deciding how to implement contract language that will let CTA cut staff jobs.

As part of the CTA-CSO Collective Bargaining Agreement ratified this past Fall, CTA is allowed to eliminate up to eight CSO positions through a process of attrition. Positions may only be eliminated if they are vacant, yet existing employees may be moved into other open positions to create a vacancy to be eliminated, with some restrictions.

In the first seven months of the attrition agreement, no positions have been eliminated. CSO Bargaining Chair Rosemary Louissaint, who also leads the CSO side of the attrition committee, says that the ultimate decision to eliminate positions comes solely from CTA management.

"Managers are being very reluctant to say, 'Yes, I can do without,'" Louissaint says.

To date, only one position has been identified to be cut, once an appropriate position comes open for the staff person who holds it. That position is the statewide health benefits consultant, who is aware of CTA's plans.

Other positions have been discussed in the joint committee's three meetings so far, yet no other positions have been identified.

"We're just making sure they are following the process and people are being treated fairly," Louissaint says of



Rosemary Louissaint, in the yellow shirt, supports CTA members from Pittsburg.

the CSO role in the meetings. She said the committee meets again May 2 to review current and anticipated vacancies.

Also this spring, CSO is surveying its members on workload issues, and workload will be an issue that becomes more critical as even more staff is cut.

This is the second joint committee on attrition. During the economic downturn, as CTA lost members, CSO agreed to allow CTA to cut 16 CSO positions. Increases in state funding have brought those CTA members back. However, the 16 positions cut during the recession were not restored, and now CTA will cut

up to eight more.

Louissaint says she does not anticipate that CTA Legal positions will be among those lost to attrition, despite the fact that CTA has a difficult time keeping those positions filled.

"There seems to be a bit of a revolving door regarding attorneys," Louissaint says. "They hire some good ones, but they don't stay around very long."

The relationships between staff attorneys and Primary Contact Staff are very important, Louissaint explains, so that revolving door makes it harder to support CTA members.

Janus case weighs free speech rights, all funded by millions from right wing

In facts that are near identical to *Fredrichs*, the Supreme Court heard the *Janus v. AFSCME* case oral arguments on Feb. 26. Since there was no divine intervention this time, it is only a matter of weeks before a decision is rendered.

The forecasters have the *Janus* team prevailing since Gorsuch was seated. During the proceedings, while Gorsuch was silent, more concerning was Justice Kennedy, who clearly sees agency fee as a violation of the First Amendment and union's position maintaining political power; that agency fees subsidize the political views of a private party. This is the argument of *Janus* attorneys who maintain any spending by public employee unions is intrinsically political because their activities affect government spending.

It would nice if reason prevailed as in Justice Kagan's view that *Janus* attorneys can't have it both ways by deeming agency fee as an abridgement of freedom of speech while prohibiting public employees from exercising that new angle on the protected freedom. But not likely.

AFT President Randi Weingarten agreed with Justice Kagen indicating all union organizing is free speech. And that is CTA's expressed view.

But we know that free speech is not free. Center for Responsive Politics reported that AFSCME spent about 26 million on the 2016 election cycle. That amount rises to 166 million when adding in what NEA, AFT and SEIU spent. It is estimated that loss of fair share fees would decrease that spending to 55 million.

Janus is funded by the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation, donating 100 million to national Right to Work Foundation and 150 million to Illinois Policy Institute, representing *Janus* through their law firms Donor Trust and Donor Capital – both linked to Koch brothers.

And *Janus*, himself, simply says, he supports Unions, but takes issue that he doesn't have a choice about it. Apparent-



Mark Janus, the plaintiff in *Janus v. AFSCME*, says he does not want better pay or a more secure pension, and that "the union's voice is not my voice."

ly, *Janus* thought his dues went to back Hillary Clinton, not understanding that unions are barred from using non-member fees for political candidates. That his understanding is cause for this suit speaks volumes about the truck he has been driven on.

We are not confused. We know it is all about political influence. We expect our unions to protect employee rights and political lobbying for better legislation is key – reason why probation stayed at two years this year and not increased to three years. And we know that the loss of fair share fees will decrease our membership. And as that financial impact hits, our work will change.

Currently, CTA spends most of its capital on lobbying and representation. And in anticipation of the dues loss, CTA is beginning to refocus on organizing having retooled NODD to C4OB – Center for Organizing and Bargaining. Staff has been slowly sowing the seeds in chapters by developing member engagement in moral issues, such as confronting bias and inequity in everything, from poor school sites having less recess than the better off school sites to who

has sufficient and proper bathrooms for transitioning students.

Who sees these problems and addresses them more efficiently than educators, living, as it were, in those school sites. Our jobs then, as staff, designed to assist, support, guide and provide resource will become deeper and narrower as members themselves will be exercising their contract authority in site representation. Chapters will be responsible for member to member contacts, maintaining union presence which does translate stronger unionism. There will be a winnowing but as one of our colleagues has said, we will be leaner, more efficient and less AAA and more Union.

Advocacy Appeal is produced by the California Staff Organization, the union for professional departmental and Regional UniServ Staff who work for the 320,000 members of the California Teachers Association. Comments or inquiries may be emailed to csocomcom@gmail.com. Find us online at www.calstaff.org.

Find California Staff Organization on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram