

# CODESP NEWS

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## LESSONS FROM THE ROAD

The summer has been flying by as we are extremely busy here at CODESP filling requests, creating new tests items and editing old ones. Summer is also a time for us to travel to new and current districts for training.

This summer, besides visiting several local school districts in Los Angeles and Orange counties, CODESP staff visited districts in the Riverside and San Diego area. During the month of July, Executive Director Marianne Tonjes logged over 1,200 miles in five days. She visited with representatives from 16 districts in the following cities: Santa Paula, San Luis Obispo (where she met with five Central Coast districts), Santa Clara, San Mateo, Daly City, San Rafael, Martinez, Oakley, Fairfield, Sacramento (two districts), and Yuba City.

Although the purpose of this trip was training, it also proved to be valuable in learning what services CODESP members want and need.

On **August 27**, Marianne will return again to the **Sacramento** area to conduct training. If your district is located in the northern central valley, east bay, or Sierra foothills and would like a visit during this time, contact us to set up an appointment.

Although CODESP provides members with a choice of test items that should be reviewed by subject matter experts, it appears that in many districts it is difficult to get qualified individuals to review test materials. Hopefully, since CODESP membership has increased help can possibly be received from fellow members in nearby districts. If that is not possible, we will provide you with some samples to help you choose test items. Customized tests are still necessary because we have found that positions in various districts may have similar titles but require different minimum qualifications. A job-related question in one district, may not be job-related in another. (See sample test article).

## SAMPLE TESTS

If you are having difficulty choosing items for your test due to a lack of subject matter expert availability or cooperation from department supervisors, we can now provide you with sample tests in some of the classifications which include:

Food Service Worker 1  
Food Service Cashier  
Custodian 1  
Instructional Aide  
Office Clerk

The sample tests are composed of some of the most popular items recently chosen for tests by CODESP members. You will still need to read the items carefully to ensure that each of them match the minimum qualifications for the position. The final choice of items on tests produced by CODESP is the district's responsibility. Content validity is established when a district selects items for an examination which they believe are job-related based upon a job analysis.

After reviewing the sample tests, and the additional items we send, you can add to or delete items based upon your district's need. Complete a Test Request Form and fax it to our office. A printer-ready test will be sent as soon as we receive the request.



## SEPTEMBER MEETING

We are still completing the meeting schedule for the fall. A **September 21** meeting in Orange County on **AB 2222** (see the June newsletter) and **Cut-Off Scores** (Lanning case) is scheduled.

Our speakers will be attorneys from the law firm of Latham and Watkins.

Check the website soon for more details at:  
[www.codesp.com](http://www.codesp.com)

# PREVENTING VIOLENCE

This past year CODESP has offered three different workshops throughout California on the subject of Preventing Violence in the Workplace with the assistance of Kristine Kwong of Leibert, Cassidy and Whitmore, and Mike Dolidia from Best, Best and Krieger.

According to the California Constitution, Article 1, Section 28: *All students and staff of public primary, elementary, junior high and senior high schools have the inalienable right to attend campuses which are safe, secure and peaceful.*

According to the US Department of Justice the workplace is the scene of almost one million violent crimes per year and in 1995, homicide was the second leading cause of job-related deaths.

According to experts in the field some of the preventive measures that can be taken to ensure school safety are to:

Develop safety plans; provide employee training on workplace security programs and warning signs; protect employees who report threats of violence; restrict access to school premises; monitor public meetings; recognize warning signs; develop conflict resolution plans; know which searches are legal; perform drug tests; remove injurious objects; and monitor dress codes.

The School District Safety Plan has to not only be developed, but periodic training is also very important. Employers are required under Cal/OSHA, to implement and maintain a Workplace Security Plan focused on preventing workplace violence which should include methods of communication, hazard assessment, incident investigation, hazard correction, and training and instruction. Various guidelines have been offered by Cal/OSHA and are available through several websites.

According to Penal Code 626.2 restricted access applies to suspended or dismissed students and employees and prohibits unauthorized entry upon campus after suspension or dismissal. The penalty is a misdemeanor and the procedure requires written notice denying access on a campus by the student/employee. Other Penal Codes which relate to restricted access, etc., are Penal Code's 626.4; 626.7; 626.8; and 627.7.

Preventative measures to use to look for potentially violent employee/students include: job performance evaluations, complaints by co-employees, personal observations by management and co-employees, student discipline and parent contacts. Other warning signs in employees include decrease in productivity; lack of motivation; unusual, irrational and/or bizarre thoughts or behaviors; restlessness, agitation, or withdrawn behavior; drug and/or alcohol abuse; disheveled or unkempt appearance; excessive absenteeism or tardiness; obsessions; threats; not getting along with others; argumentative; short-tempered; fascination with guns; evidence of particular stress in individual's life; continual excuses or blame; inconsistent work/study pattern—"roller coaster"; concentration problems; confusion; and safety issues.

Indicators of persons with higher risk for violence are individuals who are psychotic, drug and/or alcohol dependent, have a violent history, have strong external "locus of control" -"blamer", have poor on-the-job relationships, and have severe depression.

When hiring new employees interview them carefully. Look for warning signs that may appear during the selection process including difficulty concentrating, bitter and resentful feelings, and overly touchy and temperamental reactions. Use the probationary period wisely and train supervisors and managers to recognize potential problems.

# MEETINGS ELSEWHERE

## WRIPAC

September 12—13, Bass Lake

WRIPAC's fall conference will be held at the Pines Resort and Conference Center in Bass Lake (north and east of Fresno, near Yosemite). There is no cost for the conference and the rooms are approximately \$89/night. WRIPAC is a great resource for those involved in public sector testing. There will be guest speakers and the usual roundtable discussion where testing related war stories, advice, etc., are shared. The topic of the pre-conference training will be Performance Testing. To register contact Debra Olvera, County of Tulare 559-651-5715.

## SPCA/NC

October 5 – 7, Reno

The Northern California School Personnel Commissioner's Association annual conference, "A Merit Odyssey" will be held at the Reno Hilton Hotel (800-648-5080). A special room rate of \$79 is available through September 4. The theme represents an effort to recognize the role of the SPCA in labor relations. The information presented at the conference is designed to increase knowledge of collective bargaining in the public sector and to improve understanding of the vital role SPCA plays in this arena. To register contact Elizabeth Rezaee at Fremont USD at 510-659-2546 or email her at [erezaee@fremont.k12.ca.us](mailto:erezaee@fremont.k12.ca.us).

## MERIT ACADEMY

The Merit Academy has completed one successful session and now is planning another group of classes in the southern California area. The classes will be held on the following five Saturdays: September 22nd, October 20, November 17, December 8 and January 26.

The classes will cover topics that have been designed for new and aspiring merit system directors. The cost is \$500 per student, which includes tuition, books, and materials.

Those that should attend include directors, analysts, commissioners, support staff, labor representatives, etc.

The faculty consists of experienced practitioners, merit system directors, and attorneys.

Other sites will be offered as enrollment permits. If you are interested contact Dick Ide at [Ride@HUSD.k12.ca.us](mailto:Ride@HUSD.k12.ca.us).



# JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Please send us updated copies of your job descriptions. If you have them on disk it would be really helpful, especially if they are in WordPerfect or Word format. We are updating our Sample Job Description area on our website (under Member's Only, call for the user name and password if you have forgotten them).

We receive several requests per month from members wanting sample job descriptions to assist them in updates. Remember job descriptions are legal documents that can follow you to court, they should be reviewed often.

## C-CIB ITEMS

This past month CODESP staff added multiple choice test items in the Instructional Aide, Child Care, Animal Care, Math, Personnel, and Custodial item banks.

Staff has also updated items in several other banks. We are still working on adding new figures to the banks.

If you have old Instructional Aide items please request new ones as we have been updating them and have many new items for you to choose from.

## CODESP.COM

New links to human resource related sites have been added to our website. This area will be expanded as we find more resources for you to use. If you have a great site that you have found helpful, send it to us and we will make the addition.

We have also added links under the Members List page to district's websites. At this site you can not only email members directly, you can also link to their websites (if available). Some of the websites contain salary information which can be used when completing salary surveys. Others also have job descriptions posted. Take a look, you may find some great ideas.

# INSTRUCTIONAL AIDES

CODESP staff has recently received many inquiries regarding test materials for Instructional Aides. This is the one classified position that is mentioned in the Education Code specifically.

According to the California Education Code 453454.5:

*Proficiency Testing: Commencing on March 1, 1982, no person shall be initially assigned to assist in instruction as an instructional aide unless the person has demonstrated proficiency in basic reading, writing and mathematics skills up to or exceeding that required by the employing district for high school seniors under Section 51216 if the employing district educates high school students. If the employing district is an elementary district, the aide shall demonstrate proficiency in basic reading, writing and mathematics skills up to or exceeding that required for high school seniors under Section 5126 in the high school district which includes all or the largest portion of the elementary district.*

Instructional Aide tests from many districts were collected and we have been monitoring the changes in the state's standards for high school seniors. Since there has been an increase in the math requirements we now offer pre-Algebra and Algebra questions. Unfortunately even though this is required of high school seniors, many adults have forgotten these skills. Some districts have made the decision not to add these to their tests yet and others are adding them but are going to advise those individuals who apply of the new standards prior to the test date.

If your district has limited success finding individuals who can pass the Instructional Aide test, you may want to try some of our new items and also provide resources for them to study. Job announcements should include a list of the types of questions that will be included on the test. There are sample multiple choice tests in libraries and bookstores, and 6th – 8th grade math books contain pre-algebra and algebra questions. Encourage applicants to study.

## CODESP

17210 Oak Street  
Fountain Valley, CA 92708

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Phone: 714 - 847-8203  
Fax: 714 - 848-2963  
email: [callcodesp@aol.com](mailto:callcodesp@aol.com)  
Internet: [www.codesp.com](http://www.codesp.com)