

CODESP NEWS

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FALL TRAINING

The 2002-2003 program year will begin with two presentations in Southern California. Meetings will be added throughout the state as the program year progresses.

The first meeting will be held **October 11, at Long Beach Community College District** (see website).

The topic of the meeting will be **Job Descriptions and the Law**. Many times the importance of a well written job description is ignored and this lack of attention may cause problems if it is used as evidence in court proceedings. During this meeting, participants will receive information regarding what information should be included, and what information should not be included in a job description.

Our speaker will be Jeffrey Malek, a managing partner with the law firm, Malek and Malek in Torrance. Mr. Malek is a well known trial lawyer and speaker in the area of labor and employment practices. He graduated with honors from UCLA and Loyola Law School. Mr. Malek's past presentations have been on many topics of concern to employers, including ADA claims, wrongful termination, discrimination claims, OSHA concerns, drug screen issues, and safety issues that frequently lead to workers' compensation claims. He is currently an adjunct professor at California State University, Dominguez Hills on OSHA and labor issues.

The second meeting of the program year will be **November 15, at Fountain Valley School District** (see website).

The topic of the meeting will be **ED-JOIN** and our speaker will be Joan Beightler, Director of Special Projects. ED-JOIN is the Education Job Opportunities Information Network. It is a free service from the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association. With financial support from the California Teacher Recruitment and Incentive Program, ED-JOIN is an Internet based recruitment tool created exclusively for California's public education system.

ED-JOIN currently serves nearly six hundred school districts and county offices. ED-JOIN.ORG is a public site where job seekers can:

- Register for services from the California Teacher Recruitment and Incentive Program.
- Search for jobs.
- Apply for positions online.

View maps at www.codesp.com/schedule.shtml

CODESP MEMBERSHIP EXCEEDS 200

During our current membership drive, our 200th member was welcomed into the consortium. As of this newsletter's publication date we have 208 members, with many others expressing recent interest in joining.

CODESP staff and Board Members would like to thank all of our current members who have recommended us to others. As a consortium, CODESP member districts share information with each other regarding the recruitment and selection of classified employees. One of the greatest benefits of belonging to a consortium, such as CODESP, is that you are never alone, your likelihood of finding another district experiencing a similar situation and who may have some wonderful ideas or solutions is extremely high.

When a district becomes a CODESP member a security agreement is signed allowing district representatives to share test information **ONLY** with CODESP members. If CODESP staff receives an inquiry for test products, the security agreement is checked to see if the person requesting the materials is listed on the agreement. If a member has a question as to whether they should be releasing information to another district, please contact CODESP staff.

A Members List is maintained on the website. As we receive information regarding staff changes at districts, we update the information on the site. Please check the Members List frequently to ensure we have the most current information on your district and the staff involved in the testing process.

As CODESP grows in Membership we hope to expand our services. Currently we are updating our software and computer systems to handle the increase in business (see article on page 4). Other improvements will be added soon, including additional staff. Our goal is to provide customized test materials to all districts including at elementary, high school, and unified school districts, county offices, and community college districts. CODESP staff is constantly editing and adding new test items to accommodate requests from the variety of districts that make up our membership.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT UPDATE

As with any new legislative act there have been many different interpretations as to how it should be implemented. Unfortunately, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLBA) did not come with an instruction manual regarding the new qualification requirements for paraprofessionals. Districts have had to determine on their own how they will comply with the new requirements.

What we do know is that SB 1405, which has been endorsed by CSEA, cleared by the Assembly and Senate and after being amended was sent to the governor August 28, 2002. This act reiterates much of what was included in the NCLBA. In Article 6.5, Section 45330 it states:

(c) Pursuant to the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 a local education agency that receives funding from Title 1 of that act shall ensure that every paraprofessional hired on or after January 8, 2002, who is supported by those Title 1 funds and who assists in instruction has demonstrated at least one of the following in addition to any other requirements under the act:

(1) Completion of at least two years of study at an institution of higher education

(2) Possession of an associate's degree or higher.

(3) Through a local or state assessment, that is appropriate to the responsibilities to be assigned to the paraprofessional, knowledge of, and ability to assist in, instructing reading, writing, and mathematics.

(d) Except as provided in subdivision (h), a paraprofessional hired prior to January 8, 2002, who is supported by federal funds from title 1 of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 shall meet the requirements of subdivision (c) no later than January 8, 2006.

(e) No person shall be initially assigned to assist in instruction as a paraprofessional in kindergarten and grades 1 to 12 inclusive, unless the person has demonstrated proficiency in reading, writing, and mathematics skills up to or exceeding that required by the employing district for high school seniors, pursuant to subdivisions (a) and (f) of Section 51220 if the employing district educates high school students.

(f) If the employing district is an elementary school district, the paraprofessional shall demonstrate proficiency in reading, writing, and mathematics skills up to or exceeding that required for high school seniors pursuant to subdivisions (a) and (f) of Section 51220 in the high school district that includes all or the largest portion of the elementary district.

(g) In establishing the educational qualifications or in developing a proficiency exam, a school district shall align the qualifications and proficiency exams pursuant to paragraph (3) or subdivision (c).

SB 1405 has included a "grandfathering" element to the proposed bill under sections (i and j) which states:

(i) A paraprofessional who was hired on or before January 1, 2003, and who has previously demonstrated through a local assessment, knowledge of, and the ability to assist in, instructing reading, writing, and mathematics, is deemed to have met the proficiency exam requirements of paragraph (3) of subdivision (c).

(j) A school district may use an existing proficiency assessment or may develop a new proficiency assessment to meet the requirements of paragraph (3) of subdivision (c).

Now the question is, "What does this all mean?" The Tri-Counties consortium, which includes members from Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego counties, has met on several occasions to discuss the level of testing standards that are required to meet the qualifications. Many of the participants believe the test should be equivalent to tests required for high school seniors. That is why we chose the new California High School Exit Exam (CHSEE) as a basis to develop testing standards. Currently the State of California requires a 55% pass rate for the Mathematics section and 60% for the English-Language Arts section. For those who believe that the NCLBA requires that the test include materials at a higher level than the CHSEE, the pass rate can be adjusted upward.

Many rumors have floated around about the NCLBA and CODESP's involvement. To set the record straight, CODESP is NOT developing a statewide test. We are developing test materials for our members to choose from so that each district will have options depending on which level test they adopt. Also, we do NOT have any opinions as to the outcome of SB 1405. CODESP's main concern is with providing test materials that meet the requirement for a proficiency test that would assist a district in determining whether a paraprofessional is proficient in reading, writing, and mathematics skills up to or exceeding that required for high school seniors. This also includes the ability to assist in instructing in these areas per the NCLBA (included in our Sample Instructional Aide test). Many districts are using outdated proficiency examinations and need to review them to see if they meet current high school standards.

UPCOMING CONFERENCE

Northern California School Personnel Commissioner's Association

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 25 - 27 in MONTEREY**

CODESP Presentation-October 26, 3:00

Tips to Increase Test Scores

Many times applicants need assistance developing their test taking skills. On our website, under Member's Only (password protected), we have posted a guide to assist prospective and current employees. Human resource staff members can use this information to tutor individuals regarding their special needs.

The tips include suggestions on completing applications, and sample test questions. Subjects include English-language arts, reading comprehension, and mathematics including exponentials, fractions, algebra and basic geometry. Interview and performance examination test taking tips are also included.

This document is 23 pages long and it is not recommended that it be distributed in its entirety. It is suggested that only the pages corresponding to the needs of the individual be distributed or discussed with them. The tips are extremely important for adult test takers who have not taken a test in several years. Most of the sample questions also correlate with test questions on the Sample Instructional Aide test.



**MEMBERS:
TO ORDER TEST MATERIALS
COMPLETE A C-CIB REQUEST
FORM ON OUR WEBSITE:
WWW.CODESP.COM**

INTERESTED IN CODESP MEMBERSHIP?

Go to the website at www.codesp.com and under Membership, print out a copy of the Invoice. The Membership and Security Agreements require signatures and need to be returned with a purchase order. Services will begin as soon as these three items are received.

NORTHERN TRAVELS

Executive Director Marianne Tonjes visited several districts in August and plans to return to Northern California on October 24th for a presentation regarding CODESP services at the Mendocino County Office of Education.

She will also be presenting on October 26th at the California School Personnel Commissioner's Association/Northern California conference in Monterey.

NEW MEMBERS

**Beaumont USD
Butte COE
Dinuba USD
Escondido Union SD
King City Union SD
Kings County COE
Laguna Salada Union SD
Manteca USD
Menifee USD
Mira Costa CCD
Oceanside USD
Orland USD
Palo Verde USD
San Jacinto USD
San Joaquin COE
Upland USD
Ventura USD**

CODESP ITEM BANK UPGRADES

In effort to improve our services we recently purchased Adobe Acrobat Writer. The original reason for purchasing the software was to aid staff in creating email-ready test items more efficiently and with better security. Acrobat Writer will do that and more! If you use our scoring services you may have found that your exam results are being emailed in a PDF file. The ability to create PDF files greatly speeds up turnaround time and helps keep your selection process moving at light speed. Because Adobe Writer worked so well with ParScore we decided to try it with ParTest. After some fiddling and tweaking we made a major breakthrough. In the next few weeks we will start emailing final tests to all members who wish to receive them in electronic format. In order for your district to participate in this service you will need to have Adobe Acrobat Reader 5.0 installed on your computer. If you do not have Acrobat Reader 5.0 you can get a free copy by using the link on our website at www.codesp.com. The link is located just above the newsletter in the lower left hand column of the page.

For those of you concerned with security, Adobe Acrobat Writer uses a 128 bit advanced encryption security system to keep our PDF's locked. In addition to this CODESP uses an internal as well as external password. You will receive the external password to open the PDF. For added security we will not give any two exams the same password. This is a lot of passwords to track but it will prevent all of your exams from being compromised should a password fall into the wrong hands. If you forget or lose a password we will keep a log in our office. Should you have any questions on this new service please contact Charles Viramontes via email at charles@codesp.com.

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