

# IMPROVING ATTENDANCE AT CSEA CHAPTER MEETINGS

CSEA Publication 120



California School Employees Association

## OTHER SUGGESTIONS

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- ▶ Distribute meeting notices and agendas a few days before the chapter meeting. Be sure to post them at each site in a place where they are visible (e.g., CSEA Bulletin Board, beside the sign-out sheets).
- ▶ Use a phone tree to remind people to attend.
- ▶ ONE-ON-ONE CONTACT: Have your site reps personally ask each person at their site to attend; ask each CSEA member to bring a friend/co-worker.
- ▶ Carpools: Offer transportation for those who may need a ride.
- ▶ Recognize those in attendance in the monthly newsletter.
- ▶ Give prizes/certificates to members who attend every meeting for one (1) year (you may want to consider excluding executive board members from this).
- ▶ LOCATION: Be sure that the meeting is centrally located and in a safe, well lighted place.
- ▶ Survey the membership for the best date, time and place for chapter meetings.
- ▶ Provide each classified employee with a yearly calendar listing of all chapter meetings.
- ▶ Have a contest: The site which comes closest to having 100 percent attendance at the chapter meeting will receive a pizza lunch.

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**USE YOUR IMAGINATION! THE SKY IS THE LIMIT!**

**The purpose is to motivate, energize and entertain your members so they look forward to every meeting.**

**GOOD LUCK!**

Dear Member,

How many times have you heard a member of your bargaining unit complain that “CSEA never does anything for me?” How many times is the person that is doing the complaining a non-member, or a member who never attends the chapter meetings?

CSEA leadership and staff are constantly trying to devise ways to increase chapter participation and to motivate classified employees to attend chapter meetings. And for a good reason: Increased participation means more knowledgeable members, more motivation, more appreciation and respect for the chapter’s executive board and bargaining committee, and an overall stronger chapter.

One of the most effective ways to motivate your district’s classified employees to attend the chapter meetings is to tune into the radio station playing in everybody’s head: “**WII-FM.**”

WII-FM is the true motivating force which drives most people. WII-FM stands for “**What’s In It For Me.**” If you can convince your bargaining unit members that participating in CSEA will bring them personal reward and satisfaction, then the battle is over and you will have won the war.

The bottom line is that very few people are motivated by fairness and justice; they want some concrete reward for their time and effort. This booklet will give you and your executive board some suggestions to make the meetings fun, interesting, and personally rewarding for those in attendance.

## TRAINING

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Contact your labor relations representative or the field office organizer to find out what types of training are available and would be appropriate for chapter meetings. Most trainings can be modified to 15–30 minutes in length.



## SERVE FOOD

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Sometimes all it takes is free food to bring people out to a meeting, especially if the meeting is right after work. You don't need to spend a lot of money; hors d'oeuvres, sandwiches, or pizza all work very well. If you have a special occasion (chapter elections, meeting near a holiday), you might want to have a "theme" meeting with food.

### FOR EXAMPLE:

- Memorial Day Ice Cream Social
- Taco Bar for Cinco de Mayo
- Thanksgiving Pot Luck
- Christmas Pie Baking Contest
- Halloween Chili Cook-Off
- Valentine Spaghetti Supper
- End-Of-School Dime-a-Dip Sampler

## EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

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The best way to convince somebody to attend a meeting is to let them know they will be recognized for their efforts.

Take one employee group per month and recognize them at your chapter meeting.

### FOR EXAMPLE:

All food service employees would receive a special invitation to the chapter meeting because your chapter would like to commend them for their hard work.

Invite their supervisor to come and speak on the accomplishments and dedication of the food service employees, decorate tables with kitchen utensils, have executive board members, stewards and site reps wear chef hats or have a hat for each person in attendance, give out certificates and flowers, serve cake and punch, invite students to speak on behalf of the employees or have students write something positive about the employees and create a memory book.

Each month a different employee group (classification) would be recognized at the chapter meeting until all groups were commended.

This approach creates the opportunity to invite all classified employees to your chapter meeting for a positive reason. It encourages participation and develops a sense of belonging.



## HAVE A GUEST SPEAKER

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### SOME IDEAS:

- School Board Member
- City Councilperson
- CSEA Regional Representative
- CSEA State Officer
- CSEA Area Director
- CSEA Field Director
- CA Highway Patrol (on vehicle crime, speeding, etc.)
- Sheriff Department (drugs, crime, safety, etc.)
- Red Cross (earthquake preparedness, first aid, etc.)
- Gas Company (earthquake preparedness)
- Local Police Dept. (gangs, safety, community policing, etc.)

Be courteous by putting your guest speaker first on the agenda.



## CONTRACT REVIEW

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Take one article at a time and discuss it at your chapter meeting. You may want to have members of the bargaining team or your labor relations representative on hand to explain technical terms and the intent of the language. Have a quiz at the end of the article review and the person who gets a perfect score receives a prize.

## HAVE A DRAWING OR RAFFLE

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Participants must be present to win a designated amount of money. You can use numbered tickets or draw names from a hat. If no one wins, the money is added to the prize for next month's meeting. Be sure to establish a cap as to how much can be won at the drawing.

A very effective tool is the 50/50 drawing. Participants buy tickets, and the winner receives 50% of what is collected, with the other 50% going into your chapter's Sunshine Fund or the charity of your chapter's choice.

**DOOR PRIZES:** Contact your field office organizer for nifty CSEA promotional items like key chains, ceramic mugs, and water bottles, *OR* contact local businesses and ask them to donate prizes. Most businesses are more than willing to help out school employees, and be sure to mention that CSEA is a non-profit school employee organization. One aggressive chapter public relations officer (CPRO) was able to get grocery gift certificates, a cordless telephone, a side of beef and a television!