

Too Extreme for Colorado

Facts about PACE



PACE, a so-called “professional organization,” is distributing its marketing materials in some Colorado school districts. This compels us to point out the undeniable differences between our Association and this new organization.

1. PACE, the Professional Association of Colorado Educators, and its parent organization, the American Association of Educators (AAE), are partners in an agenda to weaken public education, secure school vouchers with taxpayer dollars, and stop our Association. Why? Because we are the strongest public education advocate – not only in our school district and Colorado, but in the nation with our 3.2 million members in NEA.

2. PACE tells everyone it is an “independent” organization. But PACE is the state level of the AAE which has been getting its money since it started in 1996 from foundations that support school vouchers and anti-Association efforts including the Walton Family, Jacquelin Hume, and Bradley Foundations. These well known, long time school voucher backers are supporting AAE and, thus, PACE.*

3. PACE is directly connected to Colorado school voucher funders. Its registered agent is Bob Gardner, House District 21 State Rep from El Paso County. For the last 10 years, Gardner has promoted alternatives to public schools as an advisor to the top four people in Colorado’s anti-public education movement: Colorado Springs developer Steve Schuck, Denver oilman Alex Cranberg, Ed McVaney, and John Saeman. They actively worked to take over the Colorado Springs District 11 School Board by electing pro-voucher candidates in 2003 and 2005. All these voucher supporters are linked to former Congressman Bob Schaffer who ran the Alliance for School Choice (now Schaffer is on the State Board of Education and is a candidate for the U.S. Senate).*

PACE is promoted by the Independence Institute in Golden, a “think tank” that opposes everything our Association does. The II is pro-voucher and anti-CEA/NEA – and it is funded by the same people and groups that support AAE and PACE.*

PACE is NOT the organization ours is – not at all, not in any way. But it is a wolf in sheep’s clothing.

- **We are a huge local-state-national organization with complete services and highly trained staff**, like our UniServ Directors and all the leaders and staff who help us from CEA and NEA. PACE is nothing but one person: school administrator Kris Enright who used to run an online school in southeast Colorado.
- **We are very proud of our successful lobbying program at the State Capitol and in Congress.** Without our CEA-NEA voice, no one would speak up for us, our students, and public schools. We are proud of our success in electing Friends of Public Education who are on our side at the Capitol, in Congress, and on school boards.

PACE and AAE, on the other hand, try to hide their politics. Their funding and support come from very political groups that spend time and money trying to get school vouchers. They are connected to very political organizations like the Independence Institute. Not political, eh?

- **One of the top benefits of belonging to our Association is access to a full array of job protection services**, including our UniServ Directors and CEA attorneys experienced in education and labor law. Our members don't have to find their own attorney, spend their own money, and wait for a reimbursement that might never come (that's what PACE members must do if they want help).

Most of our members never use the liability insurance they have as an automatic benefit of membership. But many members get help through our Legal Services Program: immediate, expert help from local Association leaders and staff who are full time, on the job, trained, and experienced. PACE says it can offer cheap liability insurance. That's exactly what it is.

- **Association members can take advantage of dozens of programs and services** designed to help them advocate for their students, public education, and their own interests as education employees. Not only does belonging give each member a strong, unified voice with education policymakers AND give you peace of mind through quality representation and support where it matters most (on the job, in your work place), but you get resources to help you succeed personally and professionally.
- **What else sets us apart from PACE-AAE? Our Core Values.** We believe public education is the cornerstone of American democracy, providing children with the skills to be informed and engaged in that democracy. We believe public education is the gateway to opportunity for every citizen. We advocate not only for public education, but for education employees' interests. We know that is our job – and that we individual members are strengthened by our collective action, whether at the negotiations table or in the Legislature.

This is not what PACE-AAE are about. They are about diverting precious public education resources and public tax dollars to vouchers for private and religious schools. They are about attacking public education employee organizations and limiting our members' rights. And PACE is very clear – it does not support collective bargaining, one of the foundation programs of our organization for nearly 40 years.

- When you belong to our Association, you join with millions of fellow members who believe in public education and strive to provide a quality public school for every child. When you belong, you work with other members to make important gains for yourself and for all of us.

AAE-PACE want our members so they can weaken us and keep us from being successful public education advocates. But just like the wolf in sheep's clothing, they try to deceive people into thinking they are something other than what they are.

Don't be fooled.

** Documented by public/IRS records*

**Colorado Education Association
August 2008**