Report of the Zone VI Director
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Got to keep our heads up so we can let our hair down. I know it’s hard, but remember sometimes we got to keep our head up! I know it is a goofy way to start my report with part of a song, but it has run through my head a lot lately. It really fits with what has transpired this year. Let me explain...

Our year started out with trimming the budget and watching our bottom line. With the drops in membership due to the court ruling allowing people to drop membership, but not representation, it was important to do so. I think we rose to the occasion starting with a simple but effective Board retreat. We all began many different campaigns to reach out to members and to enlist new ones all across the state trying to increase our membership. This ultimately helped to slow the decrease.

The school year started with district breakfasts, new employee orientations, and informational booths to engage new and current members in our zone. It was a great start! September brought AACSE board calls, chapter meetings, joint union/management meetings, school board meetings and employee representation. Also in September was the AFL-CIO Convention. We were able to learn a lot and help with the Union Trade Show. We also took home toilet paper which was needed very much around my house these last two months.

October rolled around with AACSE board call, then OSEA Board work session, Board meeting and All Committee Day. I am one of the Board liaisons on the Conference Committee and Dianna Hess is the other one. They began to plan to use the 2020 year to pick their theme. Oct. 19 we had our zone meeting at Crystal Crane Hot Springs. We had a pretty good turn out and plenty of food. We also had extra guests and people seemed to enjoy themselves. It was good to have it there so people could enjoy the hot springs afterward. It always takes a village to put it on. I want to say thank you to everyone who came and helped out. Our zone really has a good time with each other. They are amazing.

November came and went with AACSE conference call, chapter meeting, joint union/management meeting, school board, discipline committee and Thanksgiving.

December AACSE, district meetings and our chapter Christmas party. Then on to Salem for the Board/staff meeting/party. Always fun to spend time together to get to know each other better. We also had a Board meeting.

January brought the usual meetings and the OSEA Leadership Summit. The summit was a great opportunity to connect with my zone members and see their smiling faces! It was so good to connect and learn more about how to energize our membership.

February had the AACSE Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. We still have so much work to do to advocate for our members and students. This was the second year that felt very somber, serious and so important to continue reaching out to legislators about Work Shouldn’t Hurt, Child Nutrition and such fantastic programs like the RISE Award. We had
our chapter Valentine party/meeting and one employee representation. At the end of the month was a Board work session and meeting followed by an All Committee Day. The Conference Committee finalized the theme, colors and so much more. They are hard workers. It has been fun to serve as one of their Board liaisons.

March and April have been a blur of Google meets, Zoom meetings and phone calls because our world was turned upside down. Trying to work at home and learn all this different technology has been good for this old brain of mine. Who said you can’t teach an old dog new tricks! Trying to make sure my coworkers, executive board, members, zone leadership, family and my students all are doing well has been interesting. Keeping up with all the extra meetings, AFT Tuesday calls, updates and changes has been important. Learning how to present on virtual meetings to show how to do math problems and science formulas to my students has been challenging. Learning how to set up meetings and notify members has been satisfying. The OSEA Board has also been productive doing business by Zoom!

May has brought the news of Conference being cancelled. I have started to reach out to my zone leadership to make sure they understand and to let them vent/grieve. I will be having a virtual Zoom zone meeting this month. My county has started opening up today under phase one. At my joint union/management Google meeting, we began the talk of what next year may look like. There are so many unknowns. It has been interesting, and sometimes scary, but still hopeful with some of the information of what is happening all across the state in the school districts. I have not put everything in this report as not enough room, but you get the general idea. Now it is important to continue working hard for our union. We will carry on and take care of each other. That is what unions do, like a family. I am here to weather it with you. Let me know how I can help.