Teacher evaluation and academic freedom committee

Alexandra Condon, Chairperson

Lisa Hickman, Vice Chairperson

Alicia Salgado Melero, Recorder

Shelly Gupton, Board Liaison

Katie Hardeman, Legislative Advocate

Brian Stafford, Consultant

Daniel Bartlett, Consultant

# **major policY for immediate action** (requires a 2/3 vote)

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**Evaluations and Due Process**

These principles apply to all bargaining unit members, whether full-time or part-time, regardless of the age of their students. Their implementation should be bargained by the appropriate bargaining unit and should apply uniformly within the employing unit.

3.  The California Teachers Association recognizes:

* 1. Bargaining unit members are professionally competent and can be counted upon to initiate self-discipline within their own ranks.
  2. That when an abrupt systemic change occurs, evaluations should be suspended until the bargaining unit is given the opportunity to negotiate sufficient time, training, and resources for the bargaining unit members to perform their professional duties.
  3. An adequate probationary period is necessary and that non dismissal action should be initiated unless the bargaining unit member has been informed of their alleged deficiencies and given time and assistance for their correction.

Rationale: In order to address this current situation of distance learning (or “hybrid” for next year) and any future unforeseen circumstances, language is necessary that addresses how evaluations should be considered. Such language will also be helpful in catastrophic events such as fires or if a district suddenly transitions to new standards without any training for teachers. This is not intended for events such as a new textbook adoption or a short-term weather-related incident.

# **major policy** -First Readings

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**Dismissal Procedures**

5. Dismissal proceedings, regardless of status, must be based upon informed procedures, which would include:

A. Clear definition of standards of performance and of criteria upon which those standards will be judged. Student performance on standardized tests shall not be considered valid criteria. These standards and criteria shall be mutually agreed upon by the ~~evaluatee~~ educator being evaluated and the evaluator.

B. Early notification to the bargaining unit member of alleged deficiencies.

~~C. Opportunity including time and assistance from district sources, to correct alleged deficiencies before dismissal action is taken.~~ Allotment of an appropriate amount of time and assistance from district sources and peer support to remedy alleged deficiencies before dismissal action is taken.

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**Academic Freedom**

CTA believes academic freedom is fundamental and essential to the teaching profession:

1. Educators must be free to think and to express ideas, free to select and employ materials and methods of instruction, free to choose the delivery of instruction (whether in a classroom, digitally, or distance learning), free from undue pressures of authority, and free to act within their professional groups, including appropriate methods of student evaluation. Such freedom should be used judiciously and prudently so that it promotes learning, pupils’ exercise of free thought and critical thinking.
2. Academic freedom is essential to high-quality education and carries with it professional responsibilities. Educators have the freedom within the law, while observing the basic ethical responsibilities of the teaching profession, to exercise their rights as citizens and responsibilities as teachers. Those responsibilities include:
3. Understanding of our democratic tradition and its methods.
4. Concern for the welfare, growth, maturity and development of all students.
5. Application of sound professional judgment in selecting and employing materials and methods of instruction.
6. Defense of the profession and its members from any abridgment of academic freedom.
7. Classroom teachers and other educators must have the responsibility for developing curriculum and selecting instructional materials, ~~and~~ methods, and delivery to meet the goals of that curriculum. They shall be involved in all aspects of adoption and implementation of curricula and materials. The adoption and implementation processes must recognize that individual teachers have different teaching styles and bring unique attributes to their classrooms. Curricula that limit the ability of educators to incorporate teachers’ own styles, attributes, and materials infringe upon academic freedom. The professional judgment of classroom teachers and other educators to determine appropriate and aligned curricula is key to student achievement and growth. Local associations and governing boards must adopt/negotiate procedures to be followed when there are criticisms/objections to methods or materials. The content of instruction must be judged and controlled by skilled professionals without undue interference by any individual or group. Any individual or group which seeks to inhibit academic freedom must not have influence over the hiring, firing, promotion or due process rights of bargaining unit members.

# **major policy** -Second Reading

None

# **Other items for immediate action**

None

**referrals to the board of directors**

# None

# **matters pending**

None

# **informational items**

1. Academic Freedom Subcommittee worked with PR&R on policy language on grading and intellectual property which PR&R will bring forth.
2. TEAF Elections held:
   1. Chairperson - Alexandra Condon
   2. Vice Chairperson - Lisa Hickman
   3. Recorder - Alicia Salgado Melero
3. The Committee congratulated Susan Reece and Nannette Reeves on their retirement and thanked them for their dedication and service to TEAF and to education.