

California EDUCATOR

California Teachers Association April 2010 Volume 14 Issue 7

What makes a **good school?** Page 8

Students and the arts **12**

What the experts have to say **15**

Teachers turn around school **18**

*"The school is that last
expenditure upon which
Americans should be
willing to economize."*

Franklin D. Roosevelt

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APRIL 2010

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On the cover: **Victor Elementary Teachers Association member Dwayne Arvinger with Tamina Barnett and Alex Lozano at West Palms Conservatory Elementary School in Victorville.**
Story on page 8.



¡Sí Se Puede! ¿Por Qué No?

BY CTA PRESIDENT DAVID A. SANCHEZ

So much of the conversation about education reform these days seems to be one-sided, leaving educators completely out of the discussion — the very people most capable of offering real, practical solutions to the problems facing our schools. Since the Obama administration released its guidelines for the Race to the Top competition last summer, the subject of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act — which looks to be even worse than its last reauthorization as No Child Left Behind — has been back in the spotlight. Unfortunately, the administration's top-down ideas and narrow approach are not sound steps toward building a stronger education system.

As educators, we are the ones who see firsthand the struggles happening in the classroom every day and know what works and what doesn't — not politicians dreaming up theories behind closed doors divorced from the classroom. We are the ones who see the light come on in a student's eyes when she understands a difficult problem, when the lesson is delivered in just the right way to reach her. With the creation of a system that labels schools and educators as "failures" and "losers," we limit our students' learning and potential growth before they even have a chance to try to achieve.

CTA believes that if more teachers were asked to contribute to the creation of education policy, there would be much more of a focus on positive methods, and less on the negative ones being employed in our schools. That's why, in this issue of *California Educator*, we've chosen to feature positive stories about what is working in our schools. In it we showcase some methods that schools and teachers are using that work, approaches that often result in success for schools and students. It's only by focusing on methods that are proven to work — instead of labeling students and schools based on test scores — that we can ever hope to make all of our public schools in California great places of learning.

One excellent example is CTA's Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA), a program built on proven reforms like smaller class sizes, quality educator training and collaboration, and more available counseling. Students in the nearly 500 lower-performing schools participating in QEIA across California for the past two years have shown improvement at a greater rate than those in schools outside the program.

Coming up in June is the statewide primary election — an extremely important election that will have a huge impact on how education is funded over the course of the coming years. CTA has recommended candidates (*see page 26*) who understand the need for reform, such as restructuring the tax laws in our state. A new brief from the California Budget Project finds that our state will lose nearly \$2 billion a year due to corporate tax cuts enacted in 2008 and 2009. In June and November we can all push for those reforms by voting for candidates who support adequate funding for education, and passing the Repeal Corporate Tax Loopholes Act. Talk with your friends, family and community about the impact all of our voices will have on the future of our schools.

In April and May, CTA will also be running radio ads, in English and Spanish, illustrating how politicians in Sacramento and Washington spend a lot of time talking about reforming our public schools, but neglect to consult our most important experts: educators.

Education reform shouldn't be a "race." It shouldn't pit states against one another, or pit teacher against teacher. It should be based on proven reforms from practical experience in the classroom. The public needs to see that teachers know education reform works best when parents and educators work together to meet the needs of students in every neighborhood school.

David A. Sanchez

California EDUCATOR

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¡Sí Se Puede! [Yes we can! Why not?], words inspired by César Chávez,
¿Por Qué No? encourage us to remember that, together, we can achieve great things.

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www.cta.org/Issues-and-Action/Health-Care

Election 2010



As the deadline nears for the June Primary election, be sure to check the CTA website for information on all of CTA's recommended candidates, including one-on-one comparisons for two major races: the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Governor's race.

www.cta.org/Issues-and-Action/Election-2010

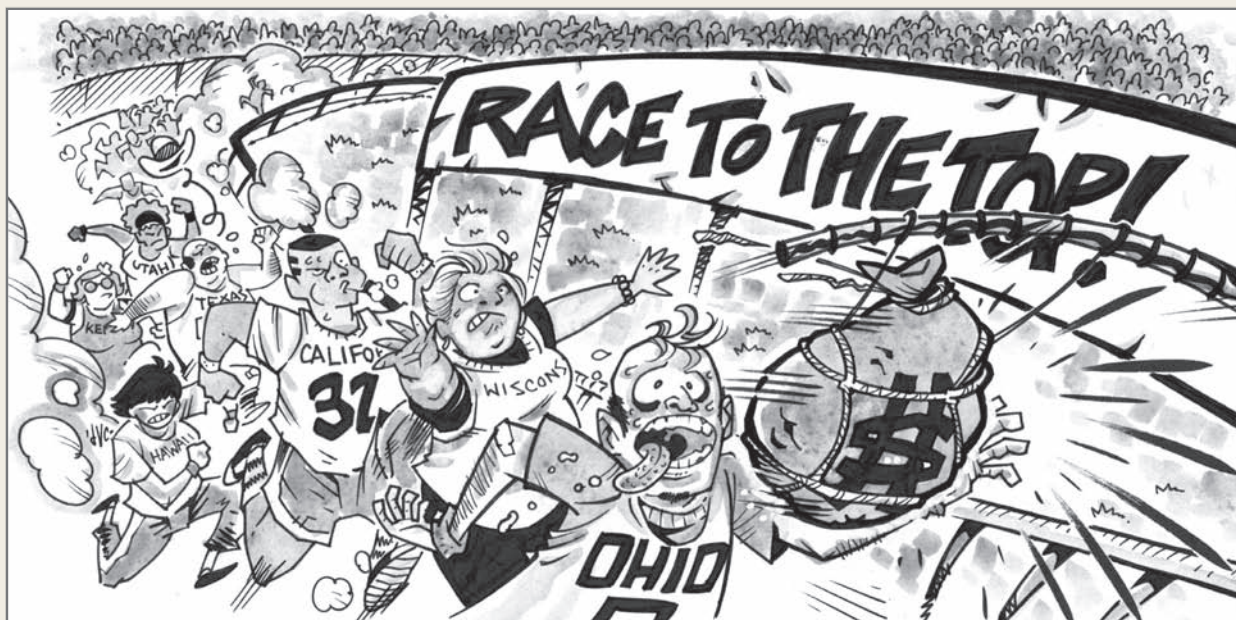
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Create a cartoon concept

We invite members to send in cartoon concepts for future issues of the *Educator*. All we ask is that your ideas deal with current events in education and captions are no longer than one sentence long. Please send your cartoon ideas through mail, fax or e-mail.

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calendar

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may 2010	<input type="checkbox"/> May 2-8 <input type="checkbox"/> May 12 <input type="checkbox"/> May 12 <input type="checkbox"/> May 14-16 <input type="checkbox"/> May 18	Teacher Appreciation Week School Nurses Day California Day of the Teacher CTA ESP Conference, Millbrae CTA ESP Day
jun 2010	<input type="checkbox"/> June 8 <input type="checkbox"/> June 11-13	Statewide primary election CTA State Council of Education, Los Angeles
jul 2010	<input type="checkbox"/> July 1-6 <input type="checkbox"/> July 19-23	NEA Representative Assembly, New Orleans Presidents Conference, Asilomar
aug 2010	<input type="checkbox"/> Aug. 1-6	Summer Institute, UCLA
sep 2010	<input type="checkbox"/> Sept. 21	International Day of Peace in Education
oct 2010	<input type="checkbox"/> Oct. 1-3 <input type="checkbox"/> Oct. 8-10 <input type="checkbox"/> Oct. 15-17 <input type="checkbox"/> Oct. 22-24 <input type="checkbox"/> Oct. 29-31	Region II Leadership Conference, Reno CCA Fall Bargaining/Leadership Conference Region I Leadership Conference, Asilomar CTA State Council of Education, Los Angeles GLBT Conference, Rancho Mirage
nov 2010	<input type="checkbox"/> Nov. 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Nov. 14-20	General election American Education Week

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WHAT GOO

Jamie Jauch, an Association of
Placentia-Linda Educators member at
Valencia High School.



After visiting schools for 15 years, I have enough visitor's badges to wallpaper an entire floor of CTA's headquarters in Burlingame. I have visited schools in the inner city and the suburbs, schools with enormous resources and ones on the verge of closing. I have been to schools in detention facilities and in areas so remote the school's marquee had a message welcoming me in foot-tall letters.

Usually, within 20 minutes, I can pick up on a certain vibe within a school. I can tell the difference between schools where there's joy in teaching and learning — because class sizes are reasonable, students are on task and their needs are being met — and schools where the teachers are overwhelmed and unsupported, with some students falling through the cracks.

As a parent of two children, now grown, I ask myself whether I would want them to attend that school if they were younger. I've answered yes to schools from diverse areas all across the state. Mostly, I consider whether students are engaged in critical thinking and real learning, rather than test prep and filling in the blanks — something that's becoming all too common under current federal mandates. I consider whether the teachers bring the subject matter to life for the students. I consider whether those who work there seem happy and empowered, or nervous and oppressed.

I decided to ask other people the same question that I ask myself: What makes a good school?

An e-mail was sent out to association members asking them the question. Instead of e-mails trickling in, they poured in. Members were excited to give their opinions. They wanted to share their expertise with someone who'd listen.

CTA members are experts on good schools, because they see firsthand what works and what doesn't. They see the advantage of using methods like collaborative teaching — where educators can share ways to be more creative and effective — and the importance of parental involvement. Nonetheless, today's politicians insist that they know what's best and make decisions about reform without the input of educators. This sad trend continues with President Obama's latest blueprint for ESEA reauthorization, which is mistaken in the belief that when schools compete against one another, they improve. The stories in this feature show that when schools are divided into winners and losers, nobody really wins.

Perhaps so many members offered their opinions because the question struck a nerve. Public schools are under attack. They are underfunded and on the brink of getting new cuts so deep they may never recover. The things that make schools good are being threatened as never before. With so much at stake, there has never been a better time than now to treasure what is good about our schools.

In the following stories you'll see some of your own school reflected in the outstanding schools showcased. And if you agree with this article about what makes a good school — or don't agree — please feel free to send more e-mails. As we struggle with the issues of education reform, a good place to start the conversation is a simple question: What makes a good school? >>>

WHAT MAKES A GOOD SCHOOL?

Stories by Sherry Posnick-Goodwin • Photos by Scott Buschman

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Teachers turn around school

Teachers make Valencia High School awesome

Valencia High School has a population that's bigger than many small towns. The campus has 2,500 students of varying ethnicities, languages, academic abilities and styles of hair and dress. Despite their differences, most students share the same opinion of the Placentia campus: They believe it's a good school. When you ask them why, they say it's mostly because of the teachers.

"We don't have a good school — we have a *great* school," enthuses Patrick Chung, a junior at Valencia. "The teachers are very supportive and very good."

The school's unofficial motto "We Are Us" is based on the belief that everyone can thrive, be themselves and fit in at Valencia High School.

"We have a variety of cultures and races here, and that helps make it a good school," says Brandon Searcy, a sophomore with a hairstyle like Marilyn Manson. "Even special education students don't get picked on, which I haven't seen in other places."

"Our school thrives *because* of its diversity, not in spite of it," says teacher Jamie Jauch, an Association of Placentia-Linda Educators (APLE) member. "And the thing that makes our school great is a caring, committed and competent staff."

The sense of family is what prompted Luis Garcia, a 1994 graduate of the school, to return and teach English learners. "It just felt like the right thing to do," he says.

The staff, in fact, includes many alumni. Jim Bell, a Valencia teacher for 20 years, is now principal. Teachers say his high expectations and support helped boost student achievement.

Despite budget cuts, Valencia still has vocational education, sports, music and art. It has more AP classes than other district schools, and the school's AP exam pass rate — 83 percent last year — is higher than the national average. But this has come at the expense of APLE members, who voted to take pay cuts rather than lose valued programs and teachers.

"It was not something we wanted to



"A good school has good teachers. They make it easy to learn things and if you can't understand it, they show it to you."

*Khadijah Jackson, sophomore,
Anaheim High School*

do," says Jauch. "But if we were willing to lose programs it meant losing teachers — and the 'We Are Us' spirit makes us very protective of one another."

Teachers collaborate every Monday morning. They share the belief that good teachers can work with every kind of student — and they do. "That way, we aren't pigeonholed," says Jauch, who teaches ELD reading courses for English learners as well as English classes in the school's International Baccalaureate (IB) program, which has a 91 percent student passing rate and is one of the best in Orange County.

The school recently won a Golden Bell Award from the California School Boards Association for HOPE (House Opportunity Program Endeavor), an intervention program that helps struggling ninth- and tenth-graders. The Bridge program helps middle schoolers transition to the high school. A program for emotionally disturbed students, run by teacher Michele Lentz, has been successful in making students feel accepted



What makes a good school?

Gregory McWhorter, language arts and AVID teacher,
Tomas Rivera Middle School, Val Verde Teachers Association

I think that a good school is one in which the teachers truly value their students as young individuals, each with their own abilities and desires. I believe that the teachers at any good school must be life-long learners that are not afraid to challenge their students, regardless of their ability. Teachers that can both care about their students and challenge

them are the ones that will make a lasting impact and will ensure a good school, regardless of geographic location and adversity.



English language development teacher Luis Garcia at Valencia High School in Placentia.

INSETS: Association of Placentia-Linda Educators members David Chung and Michele Lentz.



and part of the campus.

Valencia High School is successful because the staff works hard to meet the

needs of all students, says David Chung, who teaches both HOPE and IB classes. "And we have great kids to work with, too."

Science teacher Brady Bilhartz, also a VHS alumnus, says former students who went on to college and careers attribute

their success to Valencia High School for several reasons. "Our pace is fast, but not too fast. Our curriculum includes both breadth and depth. We continually push students so they are inspired to do their best. We treat them with kindness and respect here. That's why they achieve success." ❖

Students and the arts

thrive at West Palms Conservatory



“Grab your mat, lie on your stomach and raise your head up *sloowly*,” Alison Stewart tells her first- and second-grade students. The youngsters arch like cobras and breathe deeply.

Yoga, says second-grader Jaydin Sharp, is the best part of the day. “It gets you really relaxed and calm,” she explains. “It wipes out all the stress.”

Yoga is one of many electives students can choose at West Palms Conservatory in Victorville. Peek into various classrooms during the afternoon and you’ll find students engaged in dance, visual arts, theater and music, including playing bluegrass.

The school, which opened three years ago, is not flush with money or in an affluent neighborhood. It is a Title I campus and facing cutbacks. But Victor Elementary Teachers Association (VETA) members have made the arts a priority. They share the philosophy that *everyone* is good at something. And this includes teachers — who teach electives based on

their expertise.

“We see the importance of this,” says Stewart. “We want our students to be well-rounded.”

Tammi McGauvran, a fifth-grade math and science teacher, says a “shared vision” and passion for the arts make staff feel enthusiastic about being part of a winning team.

LEFT: Second-grade teacher Alison Stewart listens to Angelina Gonzales read at West Palms Conservatory Elementary School in Victorville. **INSET:** Students start the day with balance and focus.

“We are blessed in that way,” says McGauvran, who instructs a drawing elective.

Second-grade teacher Dwayne Arvinger believes students do better in core subjects *because* of the school’s emphasis on creative arts — not in spite of it. Last year the diverse student population scored 831 on the state’s Academic Performance Index.

“The arts tie so many other subject areas together,” says Arvinger, who teaches musical theater and organizes the performances. “Music helps students learn division while counting to the beats. Music also helps kinesthetic learners succeed.”

There is a waiting list to enroll in the school and a booster club offering strong parent support. But emphasis on enrichment is only one component of why the school is good, say VETA members. Professional development, in the form of grade-level collaboration, fosters success



What makes a good school?

Vinnie Pompei, language arts teacher, Tomas Rivera Middle School, Val Verde Teachers Association

I think a good school is inclusive. Staff doesn’t talk about “my students” but instead about “our students.” In a good school you have a school climate where collaboration allows people with amazing talents, backgrounds and credentials to come together and create the right recipe for each of our students. A good school works at building relationships with students so they know they are

cared about, valuable, and that we believe in them. This helps with their development and academic success. A good school doesn’t just teach content standards and academics — it teaches students social skills and real-world skills. A good school includes a safe learning environment for GLBT students — because these students have the highest suicide attempt rate and are bullied the most on campuses.

and allows teachers to discuss what's working and what isn't. Every Friday there is a student minimum day so this can take place. Teachers do student benchmark assessments and monitor student progress on a weekly basis, adjusting their interventions accordingly. (Struggling students have less time for electives, but are still allowed to take them.)

RtI (Response to Intervention) special education teachers work with full-inclusion students as well as mainstream students who need extra help — in order to prevent them from being diagnosed with learning disabilities in the future. Resource teacher Stephanie Hedberg, who works with special education and mainstream students, says children don't fall through the cracks. "I feel we are meeting the needs of *all* students with differentiated instruction. I feel honored to come to work here every day. I love my school."

Music teacher Teri Harps says strong leadership and a principal who treats teachers like professionals help make her school a good school. "Our principal is extremely passionate about our kids and about what we are doing."

Students are quick to say their school "rocks."

"It's a good school because we have good teachers and the opportunity to learn things like music and art," says fourth-grader Lawrence Brown.

"You get art and music and social studies and science and math and English," chimes in classmate Holly Atwood. "You are able to learn, and you are able to express yourself. I like that." ❖



INSETS: Second-grade teacher Dwayne Arvinger; music teacher Teri Harps; and resource teacher Stephanie Hedberg.

"A good school cares about you. The people there make sure that you are safe."

*Aisling Acuna,
fourth-grader,
West Palms Conservatory*



LEFT: Student Alexis Colburn at Jacoby Creek Charter School in Bayside.

Charter school fosters community and love of learning

At Jacoby Creek Charter School, students hatch salmon eggs in an aquarium and care for the babies before releasing them into the wild. Students also restore the local watershed, remove non-native plants from hiking trails, test water quality and promote animal spaying and neutering programs through volunteerism and public service announcements.

"Their curriculum is totally real and hands-on," says Bill Trewartha, whose fifth-grade students are raising salmon. "It fits in with our life-science curriculum perfectly. And we have so much community support. I have more volunteers in my classroom than I know what to do with."

The motto of the K-8 single-school charter district is "Community: Live in it, learn from it, and give to it." There is a community garden. Community volunteers are welcome to pitch in. Teachers mentor student teachers at nearby

Humboldt State University, who in turn work at the campus tutoring or teaching enrichment classes. Instead of being kept separate, middle school age students spend time with their younger "buddies" on the playground.

But the best form of community is "giving back" through service learning. By linking curriculum and state standards to hands-on projects, students are instilled with a sense of curiosity, purpose and love of learning, while benefiting the rural Humboldt County community of Bayside.

"You can see how much they have learned over the years," says third-grade teacher Catherine Girard, watching students pull non-native plants from the school's nature trail. "What they are learning in school makes

sense to them because it's in their backyard. In fact it *is* their backyard."

"Some people think that all we do around here is teach to the test, but nothing could be further from the truth," says Karen Simmons, president of the Jacoby Creek Teachers Association (JCTA). "We have high scores because of the good teaching that happens here every single day."

Among the good teachers is Kirk Goddard, California's History Teacher of the Year in 2008. He was selected by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History for keeping students engaged with primary documents such as eyewitness accounts from events in history. He modestly says that he is only one of many outstanding teachers.

"We have a great faculty that works very well together," he relates. "Students are motivated and interested. Starting in kindergarten, they are taught self-discipline and self-motivation techniques, so that by the time they get to the upper grades they have self-discipline. Once they apply what they are studying to their lives, they see value in what they are learning."

Another key to success is the faculty's commitment to ongoing and meaningful dialogue. Teachers hold grade-level meetings three times a month and schoolwide staff meetings to discuss issues. Central to these discussions is the school's vision for the next five years, which includes focusing on student achievement in a depressed economy.



Karen Simmons
Jacoby Creek TA
president



Bill Trewartha
Jacoby Creek
Teachers Association

"On the surface, we are no different from any other good public school," Simmons muses. "We are bound by the same standards as all schools and given the same standardized tests. We have a full special education program. Sometimes we take kids who have worn out their welcome everywhere else and we are asked to fix them. We have given up a lot of things due to the constraints of the state budget. We may be a charter, but being a charter school is not a magic bullet."

"A good school is really about good teachers," says seventh-grader Margo La Clair. "The style here is very interactive. They ask us questions so we learn to think critically. I've been to a lot of schools, and I like this one the best." ❖



"What they are learning in school makes sense to them because it's in their backyard. In fact it is their backyard."

Catherine Girard,
Jacoby Creek Charter School

What education experts have to say about good schools

While politicians may define a good school by test scores, education experts say schools are more than the sum of their scores.

"What makes a good school is that every child cannot wait to go to school," says Andy Hargreaves of the Lynch School of Education at Boston College. "And when children are in good schools, the days fly by because they are utterly absorbed in learning and what they are doing. And the weight of the troubles students bring with them to school falls from their shoulders as the minutes and hours of the day pass. When it's time to go home, they can't believe it's time already."



Andy Hargreaves

Mostly, good schools teach to the strengths that children already have and address individual learning styles, says Hargreaves, a guest speaker at CTA's Summer Institute who has worked with CTA on helping schools supported by the Quality Education Investment Act.

"Children in good schools find that every day engages them in ways they learn best — whether it's visually by drawing, by playing with things physically, or by listening — and differentiated instruction helps them to improve in areas where they are not so strong," continues Hargreaves. "In a good school or a great school, the teachers have time, skills and

training to know their children and how they learn. They don't have too many children in their classes, which makes this impossible."

Hargreaves believes that punishments under NCLB — instituted by President Bush and likely to be continued in the Obama administration — are not the way to transform struggling schools into good ones.

"If schools need to be good places for children, they also have to be good places for teachers. We cannot browbeat teachers into inspiring their kids and tell them that floggings will continue until things improve. Just as kids are inspired by great teachers, teachers are inspired by great principals. Great principals support teachers and involve them in the work and life of the school. They know how teachers learn best and how to engage them."

Experts agree that good schools have good professional development — taking the form of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) or groups — where they can collaborate, give each other feedback and reflect on best practices. The goal is to create an environment that fosters mutual cooperation, emotional support and personal growth by working together to accomplish as a team what cannot be accomplished alone.

Dennis Shirley, who co-authored *The Fourth Way of Change* with Hargreaves and collaborates with CTA on improving struggling schools, advocates for professional development and mentoring in a new book, *The Mindful Teacher*,

which he co-authored with a second-grade teacher in Boston.

"*The Mindful Teacher* is predicated on the observation that the pressures on classroom teachers have become so great that few teachers are able to find time for sustained reflection and modification from one's teaching in the company of one's peers," he maintains. Instead of imposing reforms on teachers, Shirley recommends that schools encourage teachers to participate in a "collegial community" of inquiry and best practices.

In good schools, professional development zeroes in on student learning and using disaggregated student data. But good schools also look at the whole child.

"I believe in the importance of data," says Shirley. "But I'm seeing educators spending so much time gathering data that they have less time to teach."

Shirley says good schools share other characteristics. "A good school is a kind and caring school where children learn a sense of ethics and responsibility to themselves and others," he muses. "Rigorous academic skills are learned and applied to the world around them."

Continued on page 33



Richard Rothstein

Research shows ingredients of good schools

The school a child attends can shape the student's view of the world. Studies show that school performance can influence a person's self-worth over the course of a lifetime, and can be a strong predictor of future success. It's no wonder, then, that parents go to great lengths to make sure their child receives a quality education when selecting a school. Parents have been known to camp out overnight at school sites before registration, pretend to live elsewhere, and even move to new cities to gain attendance to better schools.

Strangely, there is little in the way of hard research as to what really makes a good school. The *Chicago Journal* has likened the creation of a good school to baking ingredients: "A good school, it turns out, is a lot like a cake. Put in sugar, eggs and oil, but forget the flour, and all you end up with is a sweet, sloppy mess. Without all the right ingredients, success will

continually evade you."

According to the 1994 study "What Makes a Good School?" by UCLA's Center for Research on Evaluation, "For all the changes implemented in the American classroom, parents and the community in general are ill-prepared to measure the quality of the schools that serve them. As consumers of education, parents and other taxpayers have a right to know if their schools are doing a good job."

The study identified qualities that set successful schools apart. Good schools, says the study, have strong and professional administrators and teachers; a broad curriculum available to all students; a philosophy that says all children can learn, coupled with high expectations for all students; a climate that's safe, clean, caring and well-organized; an ongoing assessment system that supports good instruction; and a high level of parent and com-

When the **International Society for Technology in Education** asked students what made a good school, the students included the following:

- > The learning environment should be safe.
- > Learning spaces should be open and airy.
- > Activities should be hands-on and related to real-world work.
- > An array of technology tools and access should be available at all times, from home and school.
- > Varied learning styles should be honored.
- > Emotional and intellectual support should be offered to students.

munity involvement and support.

The study also concludes that the configuration of the school or the socioeconomic standard of the neighborhood does not determine whether a school is good and notes that there are successful schools in the inner cities of America and unsuccessful ones in the country's wealthy suburbs.

Time magazine asked what makes a good school in 1997. "There are no stock answers, like wardrobe or testing or size," it concluded. "A good school, like a good class, is run by someone with vision, passion and compassion. A good school has teachers who still enjoy the challenge, no matter what their age or experience. A good school prepares its students not just for the SATs or the ACTs, but also for the world out there."

CTA has been involved in the conversation about what makes a good school and has been at the forefront of researching how investment in schools, instead of punishment, can make them better. The preliminary data shows that the Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA) is boosting achievement at hundreds of the state's



What makes a good school?

Teri Yamada, Asian studies teacher, CSU Long Beach, California Faculty Association campus president

I'm the task force leader on the committee dubbed "Task Force on Quality Education at the CSU," and we've just started meeting about this issue. A good university should have breadth and depth of general education classes, because we have to train students facing a future where they may have to change jobs eight times.

A good school does not have a narrow focus on education, and produces students who have great problem-solving and communication skills, so they understand culture and globalization. A good school does not have huge classes, even though there is pressure to have huge classes, because it's antithetical to graduating and retaining students. And even good colleges offer remediation courses, because students who take them graduate at the same rate as students who don't take them. If we don't offer them, low-income students and students of color will be especially impacted. It's important to talk about these things, because I fear this system is being destroyed.

CTA Principles for ESEA Reauthorization

Instead of continuing to pursue simplistic, mechanical solutions to the complex issues of education reform, we need to "Reach for the STARS" with a more balanced approach. CTA offers a five-point outline of principles to guide ESEA reauthorization:

Students

The federal role in education should be one of partnership with, and support of, the states in ensuring that all children receive a quality education in a safe, secure school. Practices promoted by federal policy, including ESEA, should foster consistently high and rigorous expectations for students by all educators. Outcomes for students must be focused on equitable access to high-quality teaching and learning — not on minimum proficiency and capacity — so that our state schools produce a graduating pool of college and career ready students.

Teachers

The federal definition of teacher quality lowers rigor and relevance of California's teacher preparation and induction standards. Federal definitions need to be descriptive, rather than prescriptive, of the types of multiple measures and appropriate practices to identify effectiveness.

Accountability

In its most basic aspect, educational accountability is conceived as a process designed to ensure that anyone can determine if the schools are producing the results required. Assessment and testing policies have a profound influence on the ways in which schools function. This influence is particularly strong with respect to the kinds of educational programs they offer. ESEA should allow school improvement efforts to be locally developed to meet specific student needs and community contexts, based on a needs analysis that includes all stakeholders.

Resources and Innovation

Proven reforms such as small class sizes and improved teacher training, and years of hard work by dedicated educators, are producing real results in many schools and school districts. Funding available through ESEA must be adequate to give students the opportunity to meet the expectations set for them. These funds must also be distributed equitably, based on the needs of students in those schools and not on the wealth of the school district. Mandates set by ESEA must be fully funded.

Systems

The program of sanctions and interventions under earlier reauthorizations has not worked to improve persistently low-performing schools. For example, school choice as currently implemented under ESEA does not address or improve the pervasive problems at the school of residence. Flexibility for schools means considering the needs of all student abilities in order to develop programs that match the local context.

To read the full text of CTA's recommendations, visit www.cta.org/Issues-and-Action/ESEA-NCLB/Principles. Also, look for CTA radio ads in April and May that show how Washington and Sacramento's ideas about reforming public schools are just not working for California students. You can also listen to them at www.cta.org/About-CTA/News-Room/Media-Center/Audio/2010/Top-Down-English.

schools of greatest need.

QEIA, passed in 2006 with CTA's sponsorship, provides nearly \$3 billion over eight years to bring extra resources to 501 schools in the lowest deciles of the Academic Performance Index. QEIA lowers class sizes, provides a credentialed counselor for every 300 high school students, and funds professional development and collaboration time for teachers to develop lesson plans, analyze student data and mentor new educators. Research shows that, on average, QEIA schools scored 5 API points higher than similar schools, and that 351 of them met schoolwide targets set by the state's accountability system. Several made such significant progress after one year that they exited from Program Improvement status under No Child Left Behind.

"QEIA schools have the resources that should be available to all schools," says



"A good school has supportive teachers and an overall safe feeling on campus. A good school feels like home."

Patrick Chung, junior,
Valencia High School

CTA President David A. Sanchez, who describes a good school as having "lots of parental involvement, a highly qualified teacher in the classroom, resources and support personal, and a highly qualified principal."

CTA's nonprofit organization, the Institute for Teaching (IFT), has been looking at successful public schools since 1967. Instead of studying what's not working in our schools, IFT is more interested in observing and asking questions about programs, policies and learning strategies that do work. The IFT is currently involved with programs to reform high schools, reduce the high school dropout rate, and support universal preschool, as well as provide "mini-grants" of \$5,000 to teachers.

"A good school continues to grow based on what is happening positively and building on strengths," says Jim Rogers, a CTA Board member who serves on the IFT board. "There are politicians and other people not involved in day-to-day teaching of our students who want to make quick fixes to our schools. But only continuous, ongoing change based on what is actually working will keep schools continuously growing and improving." ❖

The Alliance for Excellent Education has created a list of "Ten Elements Every High School Should Have in Place":

- 1 Strong leaders
- 2 A safe learning environment
- 3 Extra help for those who need it
- 4 Having students be involved in activities that connect school to the rest of the world
- 5 Family and community involvement
- 6 Personal attention for all students
- 7 Skilled teachers
- 8 Challenging classes
- 9 Necessary resources
- 10 User-friendly information

Teachers turn around Anaheim High

Five years ago, teachers decided to transform Anaheim High School with a group called, oddly enough, “Critical Friends.” Faculty from all departments and grades began meeting regularly for candid discussions about what was — and wasn’t — working at their campus. They displayed the work of their students and asked colleagues for their honest opinions. They began opening their doors and watching each another teach and giving feedback. They decided to trust each another.

Teachers had to lead the path to change because there was a vacuum in leadership at the time. The school and the district were in between principals and superintendents. The campus, in the second decile on the API with more than 70 percent English learners, was floundering.

Salvation arrived in the form of a

\$500,000 Comprehensive Schools Reform grant from the federal government. With no administrative leadership, teachers took control of the money.

“I ended up being in charge of it,” says Dean Elder, a chemistry teacher and member of the Anaheim Secondary Teachers Association (ASTA). “So I gathered a

group of teachers together to figure out what we were going to do with the money.”

ASTA members opted for using the money on professional development modeled on the Critical Friends Group program based in Bloomington, Indiana. They hired consultants from the South Basin Writing Project to help them. And slowly, things improved.

“We began creating benchmarks,” recalls Elder. “We began looking at data. We organized our departments so teachers were basically teaching the same



Doug Wager
Anaheim Secondary
Teachers Association



standards in the same classes. We began emphasizing critical thinking skills instead of filling in the blanks. Quality assignments replaced worksheets.”

The full-inclusion school also opted to have mainstream and special education teachers co-teach certain classes together, to address the needs of struggling students as well as students with special needs. Intervention classes were added.

Improvement was staggering: From 2004 to 2008, the school’s API ranking went from 571 to 701. The culture shift rocked the school, says English teacher Doug Wager. “People were willing to open their doors and talk honestly in an

Does competition make schools better?

The corporate viewpoint is that there’s nothing like “healthy competition” to improve quality. But should a school be run like a business where the emphasis is on winning rather than doing one’s personal best? And, when it comes to education, is the phrase “healthy competition” an oxymoron?

“There is too much focus on states competing for dollars rather than laying a solid foundation of resources on which states and local districts can count,” asserts CTA President David A. Sanchez. “Because of devastating budget problems across the country, states are laying off educators and increasing class size. A competition for grants is a cruel hoax on state and local taxpayers that desperately need a reliable stream of funding.”

A system that rewards “winners” and punishes “losers” based on test scores does not achieve the goal of helping struggling schools improve, adds Sanchez. “What would work better is a system built on proven reforms like smaller class sizes, more counselors and quality professional development for all educators. Reform works best when parents, teachers and principals work together to meet the needs of students in that particular neighborhood school.”

At the state level, the California Department of Education released a list of 188 low-performing schools, which were immediately labeled by the media as the “worst” in the state. Many of these schools are improving: 129 had a positive change in their API score from 2005 to 2009, and 20 had

a change of 50 or more points in their API score from 2005 to 2009. Now they are threatened with one of four options: a loss of funds unless they fire staff; closing down; transformation; or conversion to a charter school.

When schools are labeled “bad” as the result of competition, it can hurt schools rather than help — and even become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Parents remove their students; the school gets less state funding due to declining enrollment; students and teachers have low morale; experienced staff leave; and members are stigmatized.

Charter schools can have an advantage, since they can choose students through strict requirements resulting in the most motivated students and families. They can

exclude students with learning disabilities or limited English skills, and can drain students and dollars away from other schools.

“Increasing charter schools and promoting competition are very limited ways to improve education overall,” says Sanchez.

Promoting competition is not an effective means to achieve lasting reform, says Don Bridge, a CTA Board member and high school history teacher in Chino Valley Unified School District.

“I look at Race to the Top and other contests as a way for our detractors to implement rules and regulations that are not beneficial to us by dangling the carrot of money,” he says. “It is one-time money that will go away after these regulations are in place. How will that make for a sustainable reform or an ongoing successful school site, or make teachers successful in the classroom?”

Competitive funding will be a disservice to students everywhere, and



LEFT: Stephanie Gallardo and Cecilia Ureno carrying out an experiment at Anaheim High School.

environment where they weren't judged for having trouble. It helped my teaching tremendously, and I stopped beating myself up."

Student motivation increased, too, with Wager leading assemblies designed to instill students with taking personal pride in their schoolwork and test scores.

"I tell students that *everything* with their name attached to it is important, and that whether they like it or not it becomes a part of us," explains Wager. "I tell them that saying

'I don't care' is a defense mechanism, and nobody is really happy when they don't do well on something."

Thanks to funds from the Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA), class size reduction occurred in some areas last year. By next year, all core classes

should have a ratio of 25 students per teacher. QEIA funds will allow additional counselors to be hired. Last year the school received a bronze medal from *U.S. News and World Report*, which evaluated 22,000 schools nationwide and awarded 1,300 medals for improvement.

Anaheim High School is a good school, but it needs to get better, says math teacher Jessi-



Dean Elder
Anaheim Secondary Teachers Association

that will ultimately decrease equity among students. When adequate funding is lacking in states across the country, the first priority should be to provide adequate funding for every student and every school, rather than creating more winners and losers.

Education scholar Diane Ravitch, a research professor of education at New York University and author or editor of 20 books on education, no longer believes that competition helps schools and that schools should be run as a business, she told attendees at the CTA Urban Issues Conference in February. With the Obama administration pushing an aggressive program of school reform that relies on the power of incentives and competition, it could make schools worse, not better, she says, with public schools becoming the schools of last resort for those who don't get into charter schools.

Larry Cuban, professor emeritus of education at Stanford University, takes issue with the philosophy that schools

should be more businesslike and the notion that a business model, based on competition, can be successfully applied to education.

Cuban, the author of *Why Schools Can't Be Businesses*, describes an incident in his book where Jamie Vollmer, CEO of an ice cream company whose blueberry ice cream was voted "Best in America," addresses a gathering of teachers. He tells teachers that if he ran his business the way schools were run, he'd be out of business. A teacher then asks what he would do if he received a shipment of blueberries not up to snuff. He replies that he'd send them back.

"We can never send back our blueberries," the teacher replies. "We take them big, small, rich, poor, gifted, exceptional, abused, frightened, confident, homeless, rude and brilliant. We take them with attention deficit disorder, junior rheumatoid arthritis and English as a second language. We take them all! Every one! And that is why it's not a business — it's a school."



"A good school has really good teachers who want to help kids learn. They talk to students and ask them lots of questions, so they can learn to think critically."

Margo La Clair, seventh-grader,
Jacoby Creek Charter School

ca Torres. "I think we need to step it up a little bit. We need to improve, not just in terms of getting low-end kids where they need to be, but also help higher-end kids prepare more for college."

English teacher Sharon King believes that is entirely possible. "It gets harder every year, but teachers still have the power to make changes." ♦

Desperate for money, schools could have to start competing against one another

for funds if the Obama administration has its way. For example:

- > Before even being allowed to compete for Race to the Top (RTTT) funds, schools nationwide were asked to pay and evaluate teachers based on test scores so they could, in effect, compete against one another.
- > There was hope that Obama's reauthorization of NCLB would provide stable funding for schools to meet high expectations. Instead, the administration's "blueprint" for reauthorization relies on standardized tests to identify "winners" and "losers."
- > According to *Education Week*, the Obama administration's proposal would essentially "flat-fund Title I grants, transform several other formula streams into competitive programs, cut the Title II teacher quality state grants by \$500 million, and consolidate 38 smaller programs into a number of new competitive programs."
- > Education Secretary Arne Duncan maintains that the number of charters should be increased so they can compete with other schools for student enrollment.

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CTA Quality Education Investment Act pays off

story and photos by Mike Myslinski

Kindergarten teacher Jennifer Howard remembers when Miraloma Elementary in San Francisco was not such a successful “school in demand.” Four or five years ago, classes were crowded and supplies and professional development lacking, the nine-year veteran educator says.

When parent Leslie Acosta-Bhattacharya moved nearby seven years ago, neighbors told her Miraloma “had problems” and that she should look at other options.

Today, there is a waiting list to get in, the teachers and the principal are collaborating in creative ways that have caused test scores to soar, and parents are thrilled with the inventive learning and smaller class sizes.

After winning a lottery of sorts to get her son into kindergarten, Acosta-Bhattacharya, an attorney, is overjoyed she chose Miraloma for her boy, now a first-grader. “The teachers are fabulous,” she says. “They work together. It was the best decision I ever made.”

Many Miraloma stakeholders point to a CTA-sponsored law for sparking much of the positive transformation at this 370-student campus, where about 20 percent of students meet federal poverty guidelines to receive free or reduced-priced lunches.

BELOW: Fifth-grade teacher Yukendra Harris at Miraloma Elementary.



Miraloma is one of 501 lower-performing public schools receiving extra state funding from the Quality Education Investment Act of 2006, authored by Assembly Member Tom Torlakson (D-Antioch). QEIA schools will share nearly \$3 billion over eight years for proven reforms such as smaller class sizes, extra teachers, more counselors, and better staff training. Miraloma gets about \$210,000 a year from QEIA to invest in students and teachers.

“It’s making such a difference here,” teacher Jennifer Howard says of the positive impacts of the landmark law. “The school has changed tremendously since I’ve been here.”

Parental involvement

Parent Acosta-Bhattacharya co-chairs the Miraloma School Site Council of parents, teachers and administrators, which oversees QEIA funding, making sure the requirements of the law, such as smaller classes, are met. “It’s a platform for people to feel comfortable,” she says of the council’s camaraderie. “Our focus remains on taking each individual student and giving them the resources to take them wherever they can go.”

Of the QEIA-enriched schools in California, Miraloma had the highest state Academic Performance Index score for the 2008-09 school year at 851. It was one of seven QEIA schools that exceeded the 800 API benchmark score recommended for all public schools by the California Department of Education. Many factors go into a school’s success, but on average, QEIA schools scored five points higher on the API than similar schools last school year, the first full year of extra QEIA funding.

As many schools face severe cutbacks, QEIA funding — and devoted parents who raised about \$165,000 for the school last year — mean that Miraloma enjoys many extra resources. They include two half-time academic intervention teachers, cutting-edge professional development training for teachers, individualized math and reading programs, high-tech Internet-connected whiteboards in classrooms, a poetry instructor, a garden expert,



ABOVE: Fourth-grade teacher Rebecca Stewart at Miraloma Elementary, a school that benefits from Quality Education Investment Act funding.

and a hands-on garden where students raise and study vegetables.

Fourth-grade teacher Rebecca Stewart raves about the small class sizes — with only 23 students in her classroom.

“It’s made a huge difference,” she says. “When you have a smaller class size, children get more attention from the teacher. Studies show kids work better in small groups. With 23 students we actually have enough space to move around, to have diverse instruction. I can diversify my teaching a lot more because I have a little bit more time with each child.”

More attention builds confidence, Stewart noted. “Inevitably, they feel more important when they get more attention, and they get more attention when there are fewer students in the class.”

Time to collaborate

She treasures the half day a month that her colleagues get to meet and collaborate, finding ways to be more creative and effective. “Teaching is a very lonely job if you don’t have that time to collaborate. You get in the classroom and often you don’t see another teacher again, it seems. We’ve managed to share some of the burdens.”

Fifth-grade teacher Yukendra Harris has only 21 students in her classes, and uses that wonderful situation to build relationships with students.

“I feel very, very lucky,” Harris says of the

chance to bond with so many students. “I remember so many things about them. I am able to remember their interests.”

A former art teacher at the De Young Museum in San Francisco, Harris also appreciates that the school’s art supply closet is fully stocked — without teachers having to pay money out of pocket to stock it. Like all Miraloma classrooms, hers is adorned with the latest art assignments, having to do with earthquakes and other themes.

She grows as a teacher during staff collaboration meetings. “We share lessons, we share students’ work. We get to flush things out. We say to each other, ‘Why don’t you try this, why don’t you try that.’”

Principal Ron Machado fought to get Miraloma on the QEIA list, and credits the law with raising the school’s test-driven API score by roughly 150 points. He attributes a team effort by teachers and parents for the school’s stellar score of 851.

“What QEIA has helped us do is reach that goal without having to sap money from other programs,” says Machado, who has been at the school for four years now. “Our kids are happy, they are really happy.”

How well-regarded is Miraloma today? Last fall, the school had 33 kindergarten student

RIGHT: Fourth-grade teacher Laura Mazotti reads to her students at Miraloma; elementary students having fun at break in the gymnasium.

openings — and 480 parents rating the school as one of their top choices, Machado says.

Trouble may loom on the horizon

Only two of the 900 preliminary teacher pink slips issued this spring by San Francisco Unified were to Miraloma teachers. But the district is facing a deficit of \$113 million over the next two years, and Machado fears its financial crisis may result in Miraloma being dropped from QEIA because smaller class sizes will become too expensive for the district to subsidize and maintain.

For now, the law is working as designed, showing that proven reforms and teacher-driven programs help student learning.

Teacher Howard recalls how the extra remedial classes helped one boy last year who could barely speak English. “Now he’s communicating. He’s really keeping up in class.”

She is proud of getting her kindergarten students to “publish” a story in one classroom exercise. Howard holds an “authors brunch” and invites parents to class to hear excited students proudly read their works.



“It’s just an incredible moment in their lives.”

Thanks to Miraloma’s teachers, parents and administrators all working together, the promise of extra resources and smaller class sizes from CTA’s QEIA law is being kept at this school and hundreds more across California. ❖

To view a video of Miraloma teachers talking about the difference QEIA is making at their school — as well as a video of educators at another successful QEIA school, Martin Elementary in Santa Ana — visit www.cta.org/Issues-and-Action/QEIA/QEIA.



What makes a good school?

Patrice Harris, English teacher, Rancho Verde High School, Val Verde Teachers Association

A great school provides an environment where students feel safe and respect the teachers on campus. The teachers on campus maintain good student-teacher relationships so that students who have been in their class during previous years are still influenced by disciplinary expectations that were established in the past.

Some schools have traditions which are passed on from year to year and modified to encourage the next set of students to embrace that tradition. I

can remember traditions that my high school passed on to our generation, like our homecoming parade and football game against the crosstown rival played in the Rose Bowl every year. Each year alumni attend the game in their letterman jackets and cheer on the new generation.

The school where I work established a tradition which holds students accountable for getting to class on time. It is referred to as TNT (Tardy Not Tolerated). When students are constantly late to class, there are consequences ranging from detention to suspension. This teaches students that punctuality is essential for academic success. It also prepares them for the workforce. They learn how valuable time will be for them as adults. The bottom line is that a great school provides an environment which maintains tradition, helps students excel academically and prepares them for society. It is a place that a student looks forward to attending each day.

Visit us online

To read more comments on good schools by these CTA members, see the Web exclusive at www.cta.org/educator.



Delma Caunday, special education aide, R.J. Fisher Middle School, Los Gatos Union Classified Employees Association



Janet Barker, language arts teacher, Redondo Beach Teachers Association



Lesley Legakis, kindergarten teacher, Sheppard Elementary School, Roseland Educators Association



2010 Human Rights Award winners

The 2010 CTA Human Rights Awards were presented March 6 at CTA's Equity and Human Rights Conference, whose theme for this year, "A Nation for All: Celebrating the Diversity in Education," reflects CTA's mission of protecting the dignity and rights of children and youth, and securing a more just, equitable, and democratic society. The goal of the Human Rights Awards Program is to "promote the development of programs for the advancement and protection of human and civil rights within the association," says CTA President David A. Sanchez.

President Sanchez was joined by Vice President Dean E. Vogel and Secretary-Treasurer Gail Mendes in welcoming and honoring the winners of CTA's standing awards for human rights activists in the public schools.

NANCY BAILEY LEADERSHIP IN LESBIAN AND GAY ISSUES HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD: *Carl Bullard*, a member of the Fremont Unified District Teachers Association, is a passionate advocate for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender rights. He has been a trainer for NEA's GLBT Safety and Bias Cadre, presenting workshops across the nation. Active in his local association as the Human Rights chair, he also serves as the Washington High School Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) adviser. His work has had a profound impact on his campus. The annual Day of Silence, Student Empowerment Summits and Youth Activism Day in Sacramento are fostering the next generation of leaders to



CTA photo by Rowena Russo

impact legislation. Under his leadership, the GSA has lobbied for a state "day of remembrance" for Harvey Milk, which is now included in the CTA calendar. The GSA has also been a past recipient of the CTA Guy De Rosa GLBT Grant and Scholarship Program, which recognized the alliance's work to attain equality for GLBT students.

JIM CLARK AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKA NATIVE HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD: *Melodie K. George-Moore*, a member of the Klamath-Trinity Teachers Association, is a teacher and tribe medicine woman on the Hoopa Indian Reservation. She strives to preserve the language of the Hupa and has worked successfully to get teachers of the Hupa, Karuk and Yurok languages credentialed in Califor-

nia. She also developed a cultural curriculum. She often uses her skills to mediate between students, educators, families and the law. She has been honored for her dedication to justice and peace for her people.

CTA MEMBER HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD: *Susan Pease*, a Unified Association of Conejo Teachers member, has established a training program called Parents Making a Difference (PMAD) in Title I elementary campuses, which has increased the involvement of parents in their child's education. When her district was planning to close two Title I schools, the parents she trained and organized came to school board meetings and explained why their schools should stay open. Because of her training, parents and faculty joined together

ABOVE: At the 2010 CTA Human Rights Awards ceremony (front row left to right), CTA Vice President Dean Vogel, Dixie Johansen, Melodie K. George-Moore, Jill Brabson, Simone Zulu, and Sandra Fink; (back row left to right) CTA Secretary-Treasurer Gail Mendes, Jose Lara, Susan D. Pease, Andy Griggs, CTA President David A. Sanchez, and Carl D. Bullard.

er to keep the school open. The campus will now will become a model school for English language learners.

CÉSAR CHÁVEZ "SÍ SE PUEDE" HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD: *Jose Lara*, a member of United Teachers Los Angeles, is just beginning his teaching career, but is no stranger to activism. He has been active in the Hispanic community for years — as a student, a mentor to

other young adults, and as a union activist. He has participated in marches and boycotts, helped organize the teacher hunger strike in Los Angeles against layoffs last spring, and has worked to increase the scholarships for undocumented high school students who wish to attend college.

CTA PEACE AND JUSTICE HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD: *Andy Griggs*, a United Teachers Los Angeles member, is an activist for peace and justice at the local and national level. To inspire youth involvement, he has designed curriculum around this subject. Using the International Declaration of Human Rights as a guide, he has taught fourth- and fifth-graders to develop their own Students' Bill of Rights. He has worked with the Coalition for World Peace, U.S. Labor Against the War, and the UTLA Human Rights Committee. As the national chair of the NEA Peace and Justice Caucus, co-founder of the American Federation of Teachers Peace and Justice Caucus, and chair and co-chair of CTA's Peace and Justice Caucus, he has tackled issues ranging from immigration to environmental policy and international relations.

PHYSICALLY/MENTALLY CHALLENGED STUDENTS' ISSUES HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD: *Jill Brabson* of the New Haven Teachers Association is a role model for the staff at Delaine Eastin Elementary. Her perseverance, knowledge and patience make her an outstanding educator not only for the special education students in her caseload, but for all the children of her school. She started her career as a special education aide, and after two years decided to become a teacher. Her efforts to eliminate discrimination against individuals with disabilities include visits to mainstream classes and sponsoring a club that encourages

students to buddy with a special education student.

LOIS TINSON HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD: *Simone Zulu*, chief negotiator for the Palmdale Elementary Teachers Association (PETA), strongly advocates for the rights of her association members. She has been instrumental in organizing PETA members and the community to become vigilant defenders of public education. She has worked with her association on an outreach project called "Night on the Square," where members talk to parents and community members and give away school supplies to students. She serves as treasurer of CTA's African American Caucus, and shares information about African and African American history and culture at many conferences. As an exemplary teacher, member and leader, she is a mentor to many.

PACIFICASIAN AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD: *Dixie Johansen*, a member of the Ravenswood District Teachers Association, chairs the CTA Pacific Asian American Caucus and the NEA Asian Pacific Islander Caucus. She has worked tirelessly to encourage member involvement in CTA, particularly in leadership positions, and serves as a strong voice for Asian and Pacific Islander teachers, students and community members.

WOMEN'S ISSUES HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD: *Sandra Fink* of the Bay Valley Service Center Council was featured in some of CTA's television ads in 2005 that fought attacks on public education and persuaded voters to make good decisions. She advocates for women's rights and educates others about strong women who have changed history, women who struggle to gain respect, women who have no voice, and women who have been ravaged by gender-specific diseases.

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CTA'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE JUNE 8 PRIMARY

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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

Gavin Newsom

CONTROLLER

John Chiang

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INSURANCE COMMISSIONER

Dave Jones

TREASURER

Bill Lockyer

BOARD OF EQUALIZATION #2

Chris Parker

SECRETARY OF STATE

Debra Bowen

SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Tom Torlakson

BOARD OF EQUALIZATION #4

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AD 07 Michael Allen

AD 08 Mariko Yamada

AD 10 Alyson Huber

AD 11 Susan Bonilla

AD 12 Fiona Ma

AD 13 Tom Ammiano

AD 14 Nancy Skinner

AD 15 Joan Buchanan

AD 16 Sandré Swanson

AD 18 Mary Hayashi

AD 19 Jerry Hill

AD 20 Bob Wieckowski

AD 21 Rich Gordon

AD 22 Paul Fong*

AD 23 Nora Campos

AD 24 Jim Beall

AD 27 Bill Monning

AD 28 Luis Alejo

AD 30 Pete H. Parra

AD 31 Henry T. Perea

AD 33 Hilda Zacarias

AD 35 Das Williams

AD 37 Ferial Masry

AD 39 Felipe Fuentes*

AD 40 Bob Blumenfield

AD 41 Julia Brownley

AD 42 Mike Feuer*

AD 46 John Pérez

AD 47 Holly J. Mitchell

AD 48 Mike Davis*

AD 49 Mike Eng

AD 50 Luis Marquez

AD 51 Steve Bradford

AD 54 Bonnie Lowenthal

AD 55 Warren Furutani

AD 56 Tony Mendoza

AD 59 Darcel Woods

AD 61 Norma Torres

AD 62 Wilmer Amina Carter*

AD 64 Jose Medina

AD 65 Carl Wood

AD 68 Phu Nguyen

AD 69 Jose Solorio

AD 76 Toni Atkins

AD 78 Marty Block

AD 80 Manuel Pérez

STATE SENATE

SD 02 Noreen Evans

SD 08 Leland Yee

SD 10 Ellen Corbett

SD 12 Anna Caballero

SD 20 Alex Padilla

SD 22 Kevin de León

SD 24 Ed Hernandez

SD 26 Curren Price*

SD 28 Jenny Oropeza

SD 32 Gloria Negrete McLeod*

SD 34 Lou Correa

*PENDING RECEIPT OF THE CTA CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

VOTE NO ON PROP. 14

THIS OPEN PRIMARY INITIATIVE IS COSTLY AND UNNECESSARY.

Encuentros program shows youths path to success

They stride confidently to the front of the class like business executives of the future, giving PowerPoint presentations to fellow classmates and teachers at Rancho Minerva Middle School in Vista. The sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade boys are poised and self-assured when asked questions about the subject matter or about the special effects they used to make their onscreen presentations *zing*.

All of the boys are Latino and enrolled in a unique class designed to motivate them to stay in school, be successful and take pride in their heritage. Their PowerPoint presentations are about a book they have just finished, *Taking Sides* by Gary Soto, in which the protagonist leaves a school in the barrio for one in the suburbs, and then struggles with his Latino identity.

The classes, held before and after school, are taught by Vista Teachers Association (VTA) members at four middle schools

and two high schools in the Vista Unified School District. The curriculum was designed by Encuentros Leadership of North San Diego County, a nonprofit that wants to reduce the dropout rate among Latino boys. The classes, however, are open to all students, not just Latinos.

"We had to do something," says Joaquin Aganza, a VTA member and school psychologist who helps oversee the program, piloted in 2005. "In our district one out of every two students is an English

learner or reclassified; 53 percent of our K-12 enrollment is Hispanic; 63 percent of all district expulsions are Hispanic males; and 66 percent of our district's dropouts are Hispanic males. Last year, 70 percent of Hispanic males were below proficiency on the California Standards Tests."

The program gets its name from the book *Encuentros: Hombre a Hombre*, which translates to "Encounters: Man to Man." It was writ-

ten by Francisco Reveles, a CSU Sacramento professor and California Faculty Association member, for the California Department of Education. This text was the inspiration for middle school curriculum designed for Encuentros Leadership by Dr. Zulmara Cline, a former literary professor at CSU San Marcos who now works in the CSU chancellor's office as an associate director for teacher education programs.

Encuentros students read books that relate to their culture, such as *Chicken Soup for the Latino Soul*. They learn computer skills, since many lack access to technology at home. They take field trips to nearby college campuses and are encouraged to think optimistically about the future.

The standards-based curriculum asks students to reflect on such questions as: *Who are you? Where did you come from? Where are you going?* The boys talk about goals, challenges and possibilities that exist outside of the barrio. They are

encouraged to have big dreams — beyond working in fast-food restaurants and service jobs. Encuentros also holds an annual career expo for students to learn about various professions.

"Those who teach the classes serve as role models," says Aganza. "And we also bring in guest speakers, such as Latinos who are successful in business, science, engineering or academia." Guest

speakers have also included teen moms or others sharing first-hand accounts of making poor choices.

"We want to open up their eyes to reality," says David Prieto, who has taught the program for three years at Ranch Minerva

Middle School. "Sometimes what they see on MTV taints their perception of reality. They think they can bring that type of behavior to school and into the classroom and that everyone will be OK with that. We talk about being respectful to parents, toward family members and others."

"I like Encuentros because it helps kids connect to school and to their community," says Alfred Loza, who teaches the class at Washington Middle School. "They can see that the school places value upon their culture and their story. And they feel empowered to express themselves and take chances."

Guadalupe "Mario" Santiago, whose students were showing



Joaquin Aganza
Vista Teachers
Association



Mario Santiago
Vista Teachers
Association



LEFT: Samuel Roman and Sebastian Sanchez listen to fellow students' presentations.

PowerPoint presentations, says the class offers students the tools to resist peer pressure.

"We talk about the 'crab bucket' syndrome a lot: If one crab tries to get out of the bucket, the other crabs will grab on so he can't get out. Sometimes they are afraid to be labeled a 'schoolboy' because it can have a negative connotation in certain subgroups. In this class we tell them it's OK to be a schoolboy. It's OK to be successful in school. And you can still retain your cultural heritage and be proud of who you are."

The boys are expected to be leaders within their own schools

and change the attitude of other students through their own positive example. According to students, it seems to be working.



David Prieto
Vista Teachers
Association

"We are encouraged to graduate and to be professional," says Israel Gutierrez, a seventh-grader. "We get to know each other and support each other."

"It helps us appreciate who we are," says eighth-grader Sebastian Sanchez.

Encuentros students have shown academic improvement, according to data from Rancho Minerva Middle School. The average GPA of 28 students went from 2.66 to 2.91 after participating in the program in 2008-09, and the average

participant's GPA exceeded students not in the program. The absentee rate for participants decreased.

"Encuentros has also helped me to get better grades," says seventh-grader Juan Avila. "In language arts and social studies I had F's, but I have brought them up to C's."

"It's good to be in here and learning instead of other places where there are drugs and gangs," says Jose Sanchez. "It's taught me to be respectful and be a good person."

Administrators are so pleased with the program that they recently renewed their commitment to continue it, despite declining state revenue. Recently the Vista School Board approved the Encuentros curriculum as a non-departmental elective class

for Vista's high schools. It is scheduled to begin as a class in fall 2010 and is currently being evaluated for meeting the University of California A-G entrance requirements.

"We appreciate the district's confidence in the program," says Aganza. "Secondary school can be a real turning point for Latino boys and is often when we lose them. The demands of the language become harder, they may feel they will never catch up, and they may wonder why they should invest energy in school. The goal of this program is to offer a robust intervention that targets academic achievement and builds a productive school attitude among Latino males. Through the Encuentros program, we are doing that."

SHERY POSNICK-GOODWIN

Good Teaching Conference: What members had to say

This year's Good Teaching Conference offered an array of cutting-edge classroom techniques for attendees. Workshop topics included using testing and other data to improve instruction; developing strategies to help English language learners and close achievement gaps; how to stop campus bullying; why engaging students in multimedia can improve performance; and using the art of storytelling to grab and keep the attention of math, history and English students of all ages. Here's what members who attended the Southern edition of the conference in March had to say.



"There were a lot of new strategies that would be applicable in any classroom. Grace, who presented, was fun!"

Amy Kongkeo, Associated Teachers of Pixley



"You can collaborate with different teachers and different districts. If you've been teaching for several years, you can get rejuvenated and get excited about teaching again!"

Cori Larsen, Panama-Buena Vista Teachers Association



"Awesome ideas to keep students engaged. ... You also learned the retention skills as he was teaching us [about] retention."

Jennifer Brown, Ramona Teachers Association



"It's nice when a bunch of different presenters come to give a variety of tools, strategies and advice."

Anaya Padilla, Panama-Buena Vista Teachers Association



"It was very interesting ... learning how the brain works to help motivate students."

Tiquio Arellano, Vineland Teachers Association



"I've thoroughly enjoyed the workshops, and the presenters are very realistic with what's going on in California."

Michelle Hughes, Santa Barbara Teachers Association



Capistrano educators call for strike

"Sometimes you have to draw a line, and if the issues are as critical as the ones 2,200 members of the Capistrano Unified Education Association are fighting for, if it has to be a picket line, so be it!" said CUEA President Vicki Soderberg.

As the Educator went to press, striking CUEA members walked the lines for the second time on Friday, April 23, following a first strike day participation of well over 90 percent. CUSD student absentee figures for Thursday, April 22 indicated more than two-thirds of the district's students stayed home.

Community pressure – and yet one more of a series of offers from CUEA for discussions that might lead to a break in the impasse – lead to informal talks between CUEA and school board representatives into the evening on April 22 with resumption scheduled for Friday afternoon, April 23. But striking CUEA members remained determined to stay out until a settlement was reached.

"A strike has never been the goal of Capistrano teachers," said Capistrano Unified Education Association (CUEA) President Vicki Soderberg, "but members and hundreds of parents and community members are outraged over the CUSD board's savage March 31 unilateral imposition of work year reductions and permanent wage and benefits cuts, including hard caps on future district contributions to health premiums.

"Even though the board helped select a highly experienced neutral fact finder – who recommended a settlement acceptable to CUEA and close to what the union had offered all along – the board total-

ly rejected the compromise," said Soderberg. "Not only are the board's cuts well beyond the scope of the fact finder's reasonable recommendation, they also exceed cuts agreed to by teachers' associations and school boards in comparable school districts throughout Orange County.

If the CUSD board's imposed cuts stand, new teachers at the bottom of the Capistrano salary schedule will lose more than \$15,000 over the next five years. Veteran teachers near the top of the scale will take a hit of almost \$30,000. Even worse, by being the only school board in Orange County to dictate permanent cuts, the CUSD board is condemning Capistrano teachers to a perpetual economic free fall. For example, a Capistrano teacher on step 10 of the salary schedule will lose more than \$87,000 over a 20-year career and more than \$155,000 over a career lasting 30 years.

"These cuts are absolutely devastating for me and my family," said 14-year Capistrano teacher Carter Johnson, who teaches fifth grade at George White Elementary in Laguna Niguel. "We have four children who range from a two-year-old to a 15-year-old daughter approaching college age. Even if my wife goes back to work as a nurse, we'll be forced to sell our home and move away from the community we love and where I love to teach."

"Taking on the Capistrano school board is like taking on a second job," said CUEA bargaining team member Joy Kelly, a third grade teacher at Arroyo Vista Elementary in Rancho Santa Margarita. "What's happening in

RIGHT: Capistrano educators walking the lines on day two of their strike. **INSET:** Capistrano Unified Education Association president Vicki Soderberg speaks to the crowd at a March school board meeting attended by educators, parents and other community members.



CTA photos by Bill Guy



our school district is consuming people's lives. But in spite of the school board's imposition and how disrespectful they've been to us in so many ways, my colleagues maintain their professionalism, providing quality instruction for our students on a daily basis."

"CUEA members are dedicated professionals," said Soderberg, "and we're also reasonable and responsible citizens and community members. The teachers realize that some concessions are necessary during these tough economic times, but the board's imposition goes far beyond what is reasonable, much less respectful."

Soderberg said that not only will the district's imposed cuts put Capistrano's teachers dead last among their colleagues throughout Orange County now, but the cuts permanency will cripple the district's ability to attract and retain quality educators in the future. "This will drive valuable teachers away from our district, and new teachers will look elsewhere rather than take a job

where they can't afford to live."

"When it became obvious that the Capistrano school board did not intend to negotiate in good faith, we had to stand up for our profession and for our students," said CUEA bargaining committee chairperson Sally White, George White Elementary fifth grade teacher and life-long Capistrano resident whose children and grandchildren have been students in the district.

"We held out hope over more than nine months of bargaining that we were working with people who would meet us with mutual respect and collaboration. But by imposing these drastic, punitive cuts when a reasonable settlement was on the table, the board made clear that this isn't about fairness, it's about ideology, pride and power. Their intent is not to bargain with the union, it's to destroy the union. If my CTA colleagues around the state are not already strengthening their local association's communications, organizing and bargaining programs, I strongly encourage them to do so. They are going to need them if the top-down, dictatorial management style we're facing here in Capistrano spreads."

BILL GUY

State Council announces election endorsements



CTA photos by Dave Earl Carpenter

LEFT: The 2009 Education Support Professional of the Year, Mike Shanteler of the Redlands ESP Association (second from left), joins CTA Vice President Dean Vogel, CTA President David A. Sanchez, and CTA Secretary-Treasurer Gail Mendes.

on page 26. For further information, see www.cta.org/Issues-and-Action/Election-2010.)

The release of the Obama administration's blueprint for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act earlier in March was also a major topic of concern for Council during its two-day meeting. Sanchez said CTA will work with the National Education Association as well as the American Federation of Teachers to push back the punitive aspects of the plan. Council urged that CTA provide teachers across the state with as much information as possible regarding the blueprint. In anticipation of the recommendation, the CTA

In advance of the gubernatorial election in November, CTA's State Council of Education voted on March 27 to support state Attorney General Jerry Brown in his bid for governor, state Sen. Tom Torlakson for superintendent of public instruction, and other candidates for constitutional offices.

"Jerry Brown is the choice of educators because he has shown himself to be committed to ensuring all students have a quality education and providing public schools and colleges with the resources they need to succeed," said CTA President David A. Sanchez. "California needs a leader who fully understands the problems that threaten the stability of our state and who knows what is needed to resolve them."

State Council also voted to

support state Sen. Tom Torlakson for superintendent of public instruction. "Tom is a former teacher who has been a true champion of public education as a legislator," said Sanchez. "He has carried legislation to increase funding for education, and worked with CTA to sponsor the Quality Education Investment Act, which has directed nearly \$3 billion for proven classroom reforms to assist lower-performing schools, rather than sanctions. CTA wholeheartedly gives its support to his campaign."

In other races, Council voted to support San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom for lieutenant

governor; Assembly Member Dave Jones for insurance commissioner; and Chris Parker and Jerome Horton for the State Board of Equalization, 2nd and 4th District seats, respectively. Council took an "Oppose" position on Proposition 14, the Open Primaries initiative. (See CTA's recommendations for the June primary



RIGHT: United Teachers Los Angeles member Floyd Worsham addresses Council.



ABOVE: Three of the California Teachers of the Year: Kathy Marvin of the Irvine Teachers Association; Melanie Tolan of the Association of Educators; and Amber Carrow of the Riverside City Teachers Association.

ESEA Reauthorization Workgroup developed an outline of principles for ESEA reauthorization, which is available on the CTA website at www.cta.org/Issues-and-Action/ESEA-NCLB/Principles. (See sidebar, page 17.)

The news that 26,000 pink slips have been sent to teachers so far this year, on top of 17,000 layoffs last year, is not only devastating for members, but has an impact on CTA's ability to provide important services. The organization, which represents 320,000 educators, has had to make budget cuts due to a loss of membership, CTA Executive Director Carolyn Doggett told Council during her remarks on Sunday morning. Despite a \$10 million hole in the CTA budget, however, CTA's books are balanced and the CTA Board and the Budget Committee are taking a proactive approach to keep

CTA strong.

"Our number one priority is to keep any CTA budget cuts as far away from the services we provide to local chapters as possible," she said.

Budget-conscious measures that are being implemented include combining the 2010 Rural Issues, Urban Issues and ESP conferences into one Issues Conference; canceling the CTA Board and ABC Committee meetings for March; and, as attrition allows, leaving some staff positions vacant.

DINA MARTIN

In other action, State Council:

- Re-elected the following CTA Board members by acclamation for a three-year term beginning June 26, 2010: Eric Heins (Dist. C), Dana Dillon (Dist. D), Tyrone Cabell (Dist. L), and Mikki Cichocki (Dist. O).
- Also elected by acclamation for a three-year term beginning June 26, 2010, the following representatives to CTA's ABC political action committee: Terri Jackson (Dist. C), Joan Sholars (Dist. J-HE), Rick McClure (Dist. K), and Madeline Shapiro (Dist. L).
- Re-elected Sonia Martin-Solis as NEA Director, District 6/14, effective Sept. 1.
- Honored three of the California Teachers of the Year: Amber Carrow of the Riverside City Teachers Association, Kathy Marvin of the Irvine Teachers Association, and Melanie Tolan of the Association of Educators (San Diego).
- Recognized the 2009 Education Support Professional of the Year, Mike Shanteler of the Redlands ESP Association.
- Approved a recommendation that CTA support the circulation of petitions for the California Democracy Act and encourage members to sign them.
- Authorized up to \$1 million from the Initiative Fund to support CTA's position opposing Proposition 14, the Open Primaries initiative.
- Urged local chapters to join the California Federation of Teachers in Sacramento April 21 to celebrate the arrival of the March for California's Future at the state Capitol.



RIGHT: CTA State Council of Education delegation meets at the first general assembly.

Photo courtesy of Jim Garrett, Hesperia TA

As May Revision looms, CTA fights to protect schools

CTA and its statewide Education Coalition partners are continuing the fight to block more than \$2.5 billion in additional education cuts proposed in January by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Work on a state budget will accelerate after the middle of May, when state law requires the governor to publish a revised budget proposal that reflects updated estimates of state revenues and expenditures.

State Controller John Chiang has reported in recent months that state revenues have been running higher than the governor's January projections, and those additional revenues may help bolster support for the coalition's arguments

against additional education cuts beyond the \$17 billion already slashed from schools.

"We've told lawmakers enough is enough, that our students and our schools can't take any more reductions," says CTA President David A. Sanchez. CTA and other coalition members have brought the case to the public through news conferences and radio advertising.

A key element of the battle is to block the governor's effort to renege on an agreement approved by legislators and signed by him earlier this year that locks in the calculation of the Proposition 98 minimum funding for schools for the 2009-10 budget year. The governor's spending plan seeks to

manipulate that calculation and reduce school funding. CTA is asking lawmakers to honor the agreement, which is now law.

As part of the battle to protect schools, CTA and its coalition

partners are asking legislators to sign pledge cards committing them to vote against any further cuts in schools. CTA has also been sending legislators updates on the number of teachers and

Continued on page 35

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CTA-opposed measure would gut teachers' rights

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sen. Bob Huff (R-Diamond Bar) are attacking public education and teacher rights in a new bill that will make it harder to keep quality teachers in local classrooms. Senate Bill 955 would gut teachers' due process rights and protections against discrimination and unfair evaluation. Like the governor's anti-union initiatives that voters soundly defeated in 2005, the Huff bill would not save local school districts any money and does nothing to improve student learning.

Instead of focusing on the real problems facing our schools, such as larger class sizes and cuts to student programs, the bill simply blames teachers. It undermines teacher experience in the classroom, eliminates educators' right to a hearing before being laid off,

authorizes districts to ignore experience when rehiring laid-off teachers, and reinstitutes a system of favoritism and discrimination.

As California Educator went to press, SB 955 was headed for a hearing in the Senate Education Committee.

LEN FELDMAN

If approved, SB 955 would:

- Change the deadline to notify a second-year probationary teacher of non-re-election from March 15 to June 15.
- Allow districts to hold dismissal hearings between May 15 and Sept. 15, when teacher witnesses are often not available.
- Eliminate the March 15 RIF (reduction in force) notice to teachers and eliminate their right to request a hearing.
- Ignore teacher experience in the classroom when making layoff and rehiring decisions, and create a system based on performance evaluations, which many districts have not conducted for years.
- Allow district officials to fire employees for any reason, including for speaking out on student safety and employment issues.
- Give principals the power to discriminate against older teachers, setting back hard-won protections against age discrimination.
- Authorize school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools to assign, reassign, and transfer teachers and administrators based on effectiveness and subject matter needs, and without regard to years of service.
- Scapegoat teachers during bad economic times.

Experts

Continued from page 15

What students learn has a sense of history, meaning and purpose. Everyone — including principals, teachers, parents and kids — feels a sense of enthusiasm and joy in learning and achievement."

Richard Rothstein, author of *Grading Education: Getting Accountability Right*, believes good schools produce well-rounded students. "In good schools, students are not only expected to master math and reading. In good schools there are other subjects like science, history, art and music appreciation so students have the ability to be creative and express themselves. Good schools teach good citizenship, social responsibility and work skills."

Historically most schools have taught these subjects, but today there is a narrowing of curriculum and many schools are only teaching core subjects due to NCLB. It is tragic, says Rothstein, to have enrichment no longer offered in schools that serve mostly low-income students.

"There will be consequences if we continue on this path," says Rothstein, a research associate of the Economic Policy Institute who lectures about education policy issues. "When we eliminate or reduce the efforts of schools to promote good citizenship, create social skills and develop conflict resolution skills, we diminish culture in our students and do tremendous harm to society."

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Students create pottery, donate to the hungry

You might say that it took a pottery class to get Temecula Valley High School students, teachers, parents and the surrounding community all fired up for a good cause — fighting hunger.

Students and other volunteers worked at an assembly-line pace in Tom Brown's pottery class for more than four months to meet the goal of creating bowls for a March 11 fundraiser. A total of 700 colorful bowls — some made on the wheel and some by hand — were filled with soup and sold for \$10 apiece. Support poured in — the event raised \$7,000, which was donated to the Temecula Community Pantry, the Temecula-Murrieta Rescue Mission, and victims of the Haiti earthquake.

It was no easy feat for the students, who spent a few months learning how to “throw” bowls on the wheel, create coil ones by hand, and glaze them. Sometimes their creations did not survive the

firing process, and they learned to cope with setbacks.

“My students practiced and practiced and practiced, and every week their bowls got better and better,” says Brown with pride. “We in Temecula are fortunate to be teaching the best kids ever. They were so excited to be involved and responded in such a large way. They never stopped working from the day I mentioned it.”

The concept of Empty Bowls is a grassroots effort to raise money for the hungry. It began with an event at a high school in North Carolina and has spread across the United States and beyond, raising millions of dollars for anti-hunger organizations.

The idea took hold at the campus a year ago when English teacher Meline Akashian asked Brown to sponsor an Empty Bowls

ABOVE: Kyle Amposta works a bowl on the wheel at Temecula Valley High School; stacked water bowls.

fundraiser and he agreed. Then culinary arts teacher Jean Brown asked if she could pitch in by obtaining donations of food, bread and other items from local restaurants and catering companies.

The enthusiasm of the three Temecula Valley Educators Association members quickly caught on with students, who offered to serve meals, sell bowls and assist as needed. The teens posted a promotional video on YouTube, and created a Facebook page and a website to publicize the event www.tvhs1.tvusd.k12.ca.us. As the deadline loomed closer, others in the community visited Brown's classroom after school and on weekends to

make bowls, including elementary school students and parents. Even the school's principal, Rani Goyal, made a few bowls.

Twelfth-graders working feverishly to complete their bowls on the last day of production took a few moments to reflect on the project that has united the school and community and what it has meant to them.

“It's given me the opportunity to be creative and do something that has a real purpose,” relates Alexis Thrift, a senior. “It's fun and also good to help others, which makes it



BELOW: Beautiful new pottery to raise money for the hungry.



Photos by Scott Buschman



very worthwhile.”

“It’s good to be involved in this really amazing charity event,” says Chantelle Marchand.

“I’ve made 35 bowls and helped the homeless,” says Kyle Amposta. “I’ve had fun, too, and it’s always good to get your hands dirty.”

As the last pot moved into the kiln, Brown gave his students kudos for a job well done. “You learned how to

ABOVE: Temecula Valley Educators Association members (left to right) Jean Brown, Tom Brown, and Meline Akashian, who started an Empty Bowls project at their school site.

work independently and how to mass-produce. This was square on your shoulders, and you did an awesome job.”

SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN

To learn more about Empty Bowls, check out www.emptybowls.com.

Budget

Continued from page 32

other certificated school employees who have received layoff notices. The most recent report alerted lawmakers that more than 25,000 teachers and other educators have been notified they may not have jobs next year.

These layoffs come on top of thousands of layoffs of education support professionals who are not covered by the March 15 preliminary notice provisions of the Education Code.

When the governor’s May Revision is released, it will signal the start of a sprint to complete a state spending plan prior to the June 15 deadline, so that the Leg-

islature has time to send a fiscal road map to the governor. Under state law, the governor has until June 30 to sign a final budget that takes effect on July 1, the start of the new fiscal year.

To help win the fight, CTA has designated May 25 as Presidents’ Lobby Day, when hundreds of CTA chapter leaders from around the state will converge on the state Capitol to press lawmakers to protect public education as they finalize a budget. CTA is also encouraging local chapters to use important dates in May, like Day of the Teacher and ESP Day, to plan events and bring attention to how state budget cuts are hurting our neighborhood schools.

LEN FELDMAN



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CTA-sponsored and co-sponsored legislation for 2009-10

	BILL #		STATUS
SECOND-GRADE TESTING Hancock	SB 800	Would eliminate second-grade tests in the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program effective July 1, 2010.	Dead (failed to pass Senate by Jan. 31)
UNIVERSAL HEALTHCARE Leno	SB 810	Would establish a single-payer health insurance system in California. <i>(Co-sponsored bill)</i>	Assembly Desk
IMMIGRATION INVESTIGATIONS Mendoza	AB 132	Would limit the extent to which immigration raids disrupt students' education.	Vetoed by governor
CONSEQUENCES OF DROPPING OUT Block	AB 374	Would encourage schools to provide at-risk students with a "consequences of dropping out" notice developed by the CDE. <i>(Co-sponsored bill)</i>	Vetoed by governor
50% LAW COMPLIANCE Torlakson	AB 581	Would require annual random audits to ensure district compliance with existing law that requires 50 percent of community college funding to be spent on instructors' salaries.	Dead (failed to pass Assembly by Jan. 31)
75/25 FACULTY RATIO COMPLIANCE Hill	AB 1095	Would ensure full compliance with law that mandates 75 percent of instruction be performed by full-time faculty in California Community Colleges within three years of passage.	Dead (failed to pass Assembly by Jan. 31)
PART-TIME FACULTY RE-EMPLOYMENT Fong	AB 1807	Would require a community college district to place part-time faculty members on a re-employment preference list with specified rights of first refusal. <i>(Co-sponsored bill)</i>	Assembly Appropriations
RETIREE HEALTH BENEFITS Buchanan	AB 1814	Would provide that the Fair Employment and Housing Act does not prohibit an employer from reducing health benefits when a retiree becomes eligible for Medicare. <i>(Co-sponsored bill)</i>	Assembly Judiciary
PART-TIME FACULTY HEALTH INSURANCE Mendoza	AB 1892	Would provide full state funding for the Part-Time Community College Faculty Health Insurance Program.	Assembly Higher Ed
CHARTER SCHOOLS Swanson	AB 2320	Would increase the role of teachers in the design, operation and governance of charter schools, and make the governance and operation of charters transparent and free of conflicts of interest.	Assembly Education, Assembly Local Government

AB 551, formerly a CTA-sponsored bill pertaining to community college funding, has changed substantively, and CTA has taken a "Watch" position on this measure.

Photo by Glen Korengold

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Shared school leadership that improves student learning

This year's Instruction and Professional Development (IPD) strand at CTA's Summer Institute, Aug. 1-6 at UCLA, will focus on the topic "Shared School Leadership That Improves Student Learning." The weeklong strand will explore ways to examine and redefine leadership for improving your school.

Featured speakers include Michael Fullan, recognized worldwide as an authority on educational reform, and Anthony Muhammad, renowned for turning low-performing schools into

high-performing schools.

Highlights of the strand include working with colleagues to develop a clear, focused and purposeful vision for school sites; redefining shared leadership and how to successfully distribute roles and responsibilities; learning skills to become an effective teacher leader in grade-level team meetings; engaging in learning to establish norms for respect and trust in a leadership role; acquiring the necessary skills to utilize data results for increasing student learning and achievement; and learning

what it takes to be part of a fundamentally successful and sustained school change.

Priority is given to those who register as school teams. The IPD strand will limit attendance so that participants have an opportunity to meet, discuss and network with colleagues from their schools near and far.

The training is a collaboration of CTA, the Association of California School Administrators, and the California Staff Development Council.

Look for other sessions available at this year's Sum-

mer Institute regarding Communications, Emerging Leaders, Bargaining, School Finance, Healthcare Benefits and Issues, Legal, Member Benefits and Community Outreach at www.cta.org.

For questions about the IPD program content, please call Martha Buenrostro at (650) 577-5181 or e-mail her at mbuenrostro@cta.org. For registration assistance, please contact the CTA Conference Coordination Center at (650) 552-5355. Online registration will be available in April at www.cta.org/conferences.

Heads up

Deadlines

INCENTIVE GRANTS FOR SUMMER CONFERENCES April 30, 2010

Small chapter and minority incentive grants are available for the Presidents Conference (July 19-23) and Summer Institute (Aug. 1-6). Apply by April 30. Minority incentive grants are offered to members of racial-ethnic minority groups to encourage minority leadership within the association. Small chapter incentive grants are awarded to chapters that represent a unit of 100 or fewer members for collective bargaining. Each grant pays for transportation expenses and the conference fee, which includes materials, meals and housing based on double occupancy. In addition, Summer Institute offers grants for participants in the Emerging Leaders Track and the Member Benefits Strand. The Presidents Conference offers additional grants for first-time chapter participation (available to chapter presidents whose chapter has not previously participated) and first-time presidents participation (available to new presidents from chapters of 1,000 or

fewer members); the first-time presidents participation grant pays 50 percent of the shared room cost. You can register and apply for incentive grants online at www.cta.org/conferences.

Conferences/Events

EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS CONFERENCE May 14-16, 2010 Millbrae

Westin San Francisco Airport
The 23rd annual CTA ESP Conference will focus on issues specific to CTA Education Support Professionals, including topics relating to California's current fiscal crisis. This year's theme is "We are One: One Voice, One Union." The conference kicks off with a reception on Friday night. Sessions are offered on Saturday and Sunday, and the conference concludes on Sunday with a lunch general session. For more information, visit www.cta.org/professional-development/events/conferences.

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