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Fearless Problem-Solving
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Educators Speak Out
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Can Alexa Help Out
In Your Classroom?
PAGE 50

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FEBRUARY / MARCH 2019 VOLUME 23 ISSUE 4

UNITED TEACHERS LOS ANGELES

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*The benefits are offered by CTA to eligible members on approved disability claims under the CTA-endorsed Voluntary Disability Insurance plans with a disability date on or after 9/1/2018 who meet additional specific criteria. CTA provides these benefits at no extra cost, and The Standard acts only as the claims administrator of these benefits. Student Loan and Cancer Benefits are not provided under the Disability Insurance policy.

To enroll in new coverage you must meet eligibility requirements including being an active CTA member. For costs and further details of the coverage, including exclusions, benefit waiting periods, any reductions or limitations and the terms under which the policies may be continued in force, please contact Standard Insurance Company at 800.522.0406 (TTY).

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VOLUME 23 ISSUE 4



#WeAreCTA

OUR VOICE, OUR UNION, OUR PROFESSION

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

MAGAZINE

VIRAL VIDEO SECRETS

Want your video to blow up online? Read this.

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californiaeducator.org

BE THE CHANGE

South Tahoe educator on why she is an advocate for LGBTQ+ youth. **PAGE 25**

tinyurl.com/BHeidel

LGBTQ+ YOUTH REPORT

Survey shows two-thirds of LGBTQ+ students feel unsafe in classrooms. **PAGE 15**

[f](#) [t](#) [i](#) [v](#) tinyurl.com/YouthReport-California

GET READY TO READ

Read Across America is back on March 1. We've got you covered. **PAGE 10**

[f](#) [t](#) [i](#) [v](#) readacrossamerica.org

LIT FROM WITHIN

New section highlights new works — not just books — by and about our members.

PAGE 58

DIGITAL

VICTORY ON VIDEO

Watch our recap of the UTLA strike and get all the feels.

tinyurl.com/UTLAaction

ONLINE TRAININGS

Sign up for CTA's exclusive trainings, including the basics of messaging (March 12) and a primer on Instagram (April 11).

cta.org/onlinetrainings

A SECOND CHANCE

Community College Association task force supports teachers who work with prison inmates.

californiaeducator.org

YEAR IN REVIEW

See what your union has accomplished in our Annual Report.

ctayearinreview2017-2018.org

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CTA'S EMEID PROGRAM

Ethnic minority members who want to expand their leadership roles in CTA should apply for the Ethnic Minority Early Identification and Development program. Deadline: April 26. **PAGE 11**

cta.org/emeid

SPRING CUE CONFERENCE

The focus, as always, is on the latest educational technology. March 14-16 in Palm Springs. [f](#) [t](#) [i](#) [v](#) cue.org

TEACHERS TEACH TEACHERS

SoCal educators wanting to integrate student-centered practices into their classes can attend a free strength-based summit. March 16 at CSU Fullerton.

tinyurl.com/TTTsummit

MEMBER BENEFITS

YOUR ESSENTIAL LIST

Names, numbers, websites of CTA Member Benefits programs at your fingertips.

PAGE 68 [v](#)

STUDENT LOAN HELP

Debt relief is complicated and confusing, but help is on the way. **PAGE 60** [v](#)

CTAMemberBenefits.org/studentloans

GET FINANCIALLY FIT

Visit CTA's Financial Wellness Center to get the most out of your money. **PAGE 61**

CTAinvest.org

BUYING A HOME?

Provident Credit Union offers members discounts on mortgage loans. **PAGE 61**

CTAMemberBenefits.org/provident

ABOVE: Several thousand supporters of public education and Oakland schools, including CTA officers and leaders, march and rally near City Hall in January.



Musician Tom Morello, center, supports and performs for striking Accelerated Schools educators.

Hear Us Roar #RedForEd

California educators stand strong for their students, profession, communities and each other. **PAGE 17**

Creative Solutions

Design thinking teaches students, educators to be fearless problem-solvers. **PAGE 26**



Scott Buschman

Deaf Educators Speak Out

Marlton School teachers are finally being heard. **PAGE 32**

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LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK. We accept signed email and letters; we excerpt user posts from CTA social media platforms and californiaeducator.org. Content subject to editing for clarity and space. Photos must have identifications and permissions. Opinions expressed by writers are not necessarily those of CTA. Editor@cta.org; [#WeAreCTA](https://twitter.com/WeAreCTA)



Put an A in STEM

I read your article on the all-girls STEM school in LA with interest (“Set Up to Excel,” December/January). I think it’s a great idea to make sure that girls have an equal chance to succeed in both school and life, and that they are given the tools to do just that. However, I feel that *any* school that does not include visual and performing arts in its curriculum (STEAM) as an integral part of a child’s education is underserving its students. Those schools should not be considered “excellent” because they do not give students a complete education.

California educators and especially administrators should seek and obtain the funding to put visual and performing arts curriculum in every school in California.

FRED TEMPAS

Arcata Elementary Teachers Association (retired)

Our unconscious bias

I was dismayed to see CTA labeling inherent bias in our curriculum as “white supremacy culture” (“Fight the Power,” December/January). This would be akin to labeling a Muslim bias in a curriculum as “terrorist culture,” which I’m sure CTA would never do. White supremacy is a philosophy that consciously espouses the idea that white people are inherently superior and should be dominant. Inherent bias on the other hand is mostly unconscious, does not stem from a belief in white superiority, and is usually perpetuated unintentionally by well-meaning people who have no racist motivations. I completely agree with the goal of exploring, exposing and minimizing inherent bias; however, we cannot win the fight against racism with more racism.

Instead, let’s promote unity. Let’s make sure our curriculum is created, reviewed, and approved by educators from widely diverse backgrounds. Let’s actively seek to find and tell the stories of underrepresented groups of people. And let’s create a professional atmosphere where educators are safe to explore their own unconscious biases without fear of being indirectly labeled a “white supremacist.”

VALERIE ARMSTRONG

Santa Ana Educators Association

Editor’s note: CTA’s mission, in part, is to secure a more just, equitable and democratic society. CTA’s human rights trainings address challenges to that goal such as unconscious and inherent bias, and institutional racism. (As CTA policy adopted by CTA State Council, white supremacy is defined as an institutionally perpetuated system of overt and covert exploitation and oppression of people of color by white people for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power and privilege.)

CORRECTION

In our December/January issue we ran a photo related to the Rodda Act, the 1975 CTA-sponsored legislation that gave educators collective bargaining rights (“Union 101,” page 72). A reader noted that Assembly Speaker Leo McCarthy, second from left, was not identified in the photo. Also, Sen. Al Rodda represented Sacramento (not Santa Barbara, as our story indicated) in the state Senate for over 20 years.



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- [WeAreCTA](https://pinterest.com/WeAreCTA)

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For our full social media directory, see cta.org/social.



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UC San Diego Extension offers the CCTC Approved Reading and Literacy Added Authorization (previously referred to as Reading Certificate) which is a comprehensive program of study that provides students with a solid foundation in the research and methods of reading instruction.

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- Professional Development/Salary Point Coursework

For more information, please contact Morgan Appel,
Director of Education at: (858) 534-9273 or mappel@ucsd.edu

extension.ucsd.edu/education

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CTA/NEA membership dues for the fiscal year (Sept. 1, 2018, to Aug. 31, 2019) are \$892, including a \$20 refundable contribution (see cta.org/contribution for details). \$19.42 of CTA annual dues is designated for CTA/ABC political activities to support state and local candidates and/or initiatives, and \$10.00 of CTA annual dues is designated for independent expenditures, totaling \$29.42 not deductible for income tax purposes.

Subscription to the *California Educator* is \$10 per year, available to persons or institutions not eligible for CTA/NEA membership.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The California Teachers Association exists to protect and promote the well-being of its members; to improve the conditions of teaching and learning; to advance the cause of free, universal and quality public education; to ensure that the human dignity and civil rights of all children and youth are protected; and to secure a more just, equitable and democratic society.

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When We Fight, We Win!

2019 MAY STILL be young, but it's already looking like another Year of the Empowered Educator, thanks to the growing **#RedForEd** movement. Across the country, we've been standing together to demand what's best for our students, our schools and our communities. And in California, educators have been putting in the advocacy, and we are seeing historic results.

On Jan. 14, after nearly two years of fruitless negotiations, the 33,000 members of United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) took a courageous stand for their students, walking out of their classrooms, onto picket lines, and into the worst LA weather I've ever witnessed. That didn't stop our members. In fact, I think it showed us all just how much they are willing to endure to make sure their students get the public education they deserve.

As the rain came down, support poured in from throughout California, across the country, and even around the globe. The world was watching as UTLA educators put it all on the line for their students. For four days they marched, chanted and danced in the rain, showing the beauty of their solidarity. When the rain finally let up on Day 5, 60,000 people rallied to support UTLA in a sea of **#RedForEd** in downtown LA.

After a marathon bargaining session that lasted most of the holiday weekend, UTLA won a historic contract that included class size reductions, more support services for students, resources for neighborhood public schools, and increased accountability for charter schools. None of this would have been possible if these educators hadn't stood together. They fought, and they won.

The narrative on public education is changing as a result of the **#RedForEd** movement. Dinner tables in California and across the country are now buzzing about the importance of smaller class sizes, the need for adequate school funding, and the impacts of charter schools. After UTLA reached its historic agreement, the

Eric Heins with NEA President Lily Eskelsen García on the UTLA picket lines.



educators who work at The Accelerated Schools in LA were still embroiled in the first charter school strike in California history. They stood strong, even in the face of some terrible threats by their charter school board, and they won, too.

"When we fight, we win!" was a familiar declaration I heard throughout the UTLA strike. And it's true. You can't win sitting on the sidelines. You have to get in the game and fight.

Our colleagues in the Oakland Education Association are gearing up to do just that. They've authorized a strike, if necessary, to lower class sizes, increase student supports, and obtain a living wage for Oakland educators. We will be right there with them, wearing **#RedForEd**, walking picket lines, and showing our solidarity.

I'm proud to be your president during these times. While the country feels more divided than ever, I've never been more hopeful for our future. I believe that educators and unions can wake up our country and prompt a renaissance of justice.

Time and again, we show that our unity is unbreakable, our solidarity is invincible, and our collective action is unstoppable when we stand together. When we fight together, we win, so let's keep fighting together for our students, our profession and the future of public education. Our students are counting on us.

Eric C. Heins

CTA PRESIDENT

@ericheins

Teachers See the Possibilities

During her first year teaching in her own classroom, Rene Engle discovered that reaching high-school learners means setting clear expectations while getting to know students' hearts and strengths. Growth happens together every day, she says—for both student and teacher.



Gladstone High School, 9th Grade English Class, Teacher: Rene Engle '16, Single Subject Teaching Credential '17

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FEARLESS CHANGE-MAKERS

THERE IS, of course, no substitute for a real live teacher in a classroom or online, who can engage with students and quickly respond to their questions, moods and ways of learning. But as our Tech Tips story “**Your Classroom Assistant**” (page 50) shows, voice-controlled smart speaker systems are handy aides that can step in to read a book to the class, remind you to give a quiz, or provide students writing prompts or math word problems.

While privacy concerns with these virtual assistants are a valid issue, many educators have embraced artificial intelligence, finding that, for example, delegating routine assignments to Amazon’s Alexa gives them more time to handle small-group instruction or transition to another lesson. Hundreds of educators have contributed to building apps that extend Alexa’s capabilities (some 70,000 apps are available, many suitable for the classroom).

Speaking of reading a book to the class, **Read Across America** is on March 1 (page 10). Reading aloud to kids of all ages has clear cognitive and behavioral benefits. Brain scans show that listening to stories strengthens the part of the brain associated with visual imagery, comprehension and word meaning. And a 2018 study found that reading to very young children is linked to decreased levels of aggression, hyperactivity, and attention problems. Instead, children learn to use words to describe feelings that are otherwise difficult, which enables them to better control their behavior.

Another approach to learning with cognitive benefits is “design thinking,” which helps students understand how engineers and inventors think about a project (“**Creative Solutions**,” page 26). The first step in the process is to *empathize* with the person or community you’re focused on helping, to understand their perspectives, articulate their needs, and begin to visualize possibilities.

This leads to fearless, creative problem-solving. Says Molly McMahon of The Teachers Guild, which along with IDEO is a partner with several district and school cohorts across the country,

CTA Member Benefits: The List

Among the perks of CTA membership are great deals and discounts on auto and home insurance and travel, entertainment and shopping. Use our list on page 68 for quick access to the right phone number or website you need.

Parachute banner, designed by Claudio Martinez, at Oakland Education Association’s Feb. 5 rally at City Hall. Photo: Mike Myslinski



“We tell teachers: ‘If you’re going to create change, start with yourself, your own biases; start with questions, not answers; and believe that you can create change.’ ... Equity and innovation go side by side.”

Equity has been an issue at the Marlton School, a K-12 school for Deaf and hard of hearing students in LA (“**Deaf Educators Speak Out**,” page 32). Marlton has suffered years of district neglect, according to its educators. It has seen five principals in eight years, few of whom were experienced in Deaf Education and Deaf culture or fluent in American Sign Language. Things only recently started to turn around after two protests backed by United Teachers Los Angeles.

Our coverage of protests in this issue is extensive, including not just the historic UTLA strike, but what is happening in Oakland and other CTA locals as we go to press. Integral to protest, and perhaps labor protest in particular, is the powerful artwork created to express the messages. Take a look above and at “**The Art of the Protest**” on page 54 for a few of the inspiring signs and graphics that have been made recently, many no doubt destined to become iconic images that last through time.

#RedForEd, because it encompasses all of us — students, parents and communities as well as educators — in striving for the common good, will also last through time. Our movement is unstoppable.

Katharine Fong

EDITOR IN CHIEF

editor@cta.org

Feb./Mar. 2019

Art: National Association for Music Education



MAKE MUSIC AND ART

WE DON'T NEED special months to make the arts a focus of learning, but as March is Music in Our Schools Month and California Arts Education Month, it's a good excuse to involve students in both.

You can integrate music into your classroom in a variety of ways. Students can use audio recording software to analyze the sound waves from voice and instruments. Younger kids can create their own instruments. For that special report, allow students to parody a song, write a rap, or create a multimedia project with a soundtrack. The possibilities are endless. See nafme.org for more.

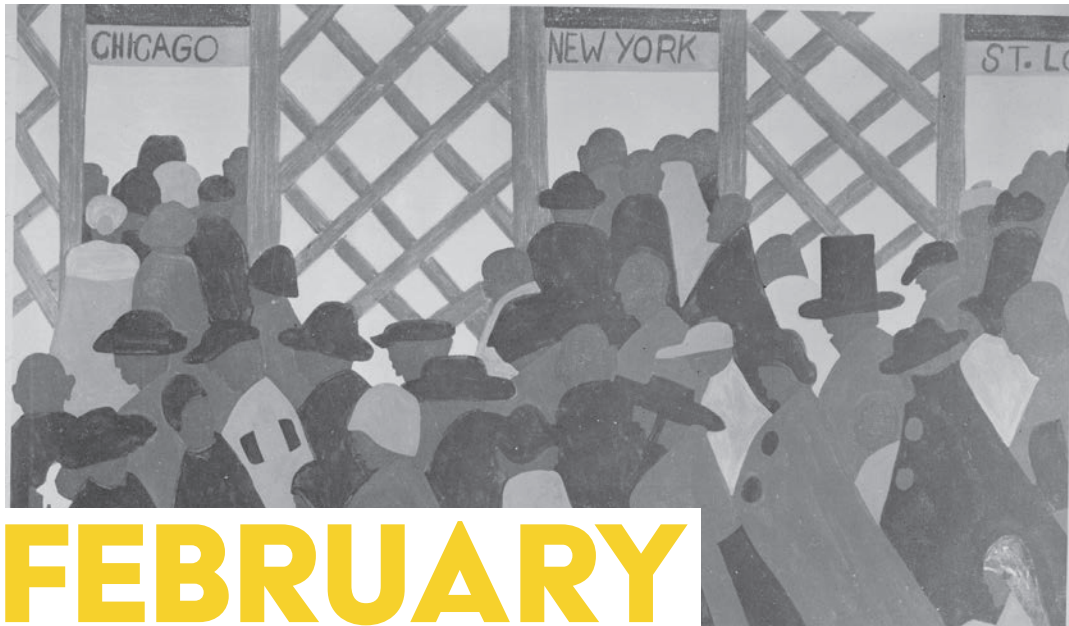
Art: Worker



VISIONARY WOMEN

WOMEN HAVE LED efforts to end war, violence and injustice, and pioneered the use of nonviolence to change society. Their tools have included public education, direct action and civil disobedience. This year the National Women's History Alliance celebrates "Visionary Women: Champions of Peace & Nonviolence" during Women's History Month in March. Find some stellar examples to share with your students at nwfp.org.

Jacob Lawrence, National Archives and Records Administration



FEBRUARY

IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH

ACCORDING TO the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, this year's theme is "Black Migrations," with a focus on the 20th century through today. African American migration patterns included relocation from farms to cities; from the South to the Northeast, Midwest and West; and from the Caribbean to U.S. cities. The Great Migration and subsequent movements have reshaped American social, cultural and political geography.

Educators can teach about this fascinating history using lesson plans and resources at cta.org and nea.org (search "black history"). [#blackhistory](https://twitter.com/blackhistory)

PLAN AHEAD:

RACIAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

CTA'S FOUR ethnic caucuses come together in the **Conference on Racial and Social Justice**, April 5–7 at the Hilton San Jose. Devoted to enhancing members' understanding and appreciation of the issues of diversity and equity, it is open to all members. In addition to more than 20 workshops on a variety of social and educational issues, the event offers multiple opportunities for discussion — and action. Register at ctago.org; the deadline is March 22.



Irvine Teachers Association members make a strong showing at 2018's **#CTANEW**: (top row, left to right) Christine Ng, Bailey Nixt, Amanda Wong, Nikhita Reddy and Danielle Cross; (bottom row) Laura Padilla, Nina Ali, Jessica Turlington and Hannah Choi.

CALLING ALL NEW EDUCATORS

IF YOU'VE BEEN an educator for three years or less, CTA's **New Educator Weekend North**, March 8–10 at the Hyatt SFO, Burlingame, is for you. It's your key to success as an educator, with sessions on classroom management, navigating IEPs and special ed, teaching to standards, and much more. A special pre-conference session covers professional development resources, important contract provisions, strategies for student debt, and financial planning. Hotel cut-off: Feb. 21. Details at ctago.org.

CTA/NEA-Retired Issues Conference

FEB. 28–MARCH 1 CONFERENCE

Fairmont San Jose. Learn how CTA/NEA-Retired works to protect your future and monitors federal legislation that affects retirement benefits. Stay connected, be protected, and enjoy great benefits.

► ctago.org

Read Across America

MARCH 1 EVENT

Plan local events to celebrate reading with your community, and continue the celebration year-round with California Reads teacher-recommended book selections.

► cta.org/raa

Member-in-Politics Award in Honor of Ted Bass

MARCH 1 NOMINATION DEADLINE

This award honors CTA members for outstanding contributions through political action during 2018. Each chapter may select one nominee. ► cta.org/awards

Chapter-in-Politics Award in Honor of Joyce Fadem

MARCH 1 APPLICATION DEADLINE

This award honors CTA chapters for outstanding contributions through effective political action during 2018. Any chapter may apply.

► cta.org/awards

Equity & Human Rights Conference

MARCH 1–3 CONFERENCE

Fairmont San Jose. **#CTAEHR** affirms CTA's mission to protect the civil rights of all children and secure a more equitable, democratic society. ► ctago.org

Cesar E. Chavez Awards

MARCH 15 ENTRY DEADLINE

CTA's Cesar E. Chavez Memorial Education Awards recognize students who submit visual arts projects or written essays (no biographies) that show understanding of Chavez's vision and guiding principles. Winners receive up to \$550 for both students and sponsoring CTA members.

► cta.org/scholarships

Good Teaching Conference South

MARCH 22–24 CONFERENCE

Hyatt Regency Orange County, Garden Grove. **#CTAGTC** offers professional development for K-12 teachers with a variety of workshops in curriculum content areas. Hotel cut-off: March 7. ► ctago.org

NEA ESP Conference

MARCH 22–24 CONFERENCE

Bally's Las Vegas Hotel. Enhances education support professionals' skills and knowledge so they can positively impact student achievement, organize, advocate, and build community relations.

► nea.org/esp

IFT Grants

MARCH 31 APPLICATION DEADLINE

CTA Institute for Teaching's grant program demonstrates what teachers can do when they have the freedom to create and invent. Apply for Educator Grants up to \$5,000 and Impact Grants up to \$20,000.

► teacherdrivencchange.org

2018 John Swett Awards

APRIL 5 NOMINATION DEADLINE

The 60th annual John Swett Awards for Media Excellence honor journalists for outstanding coverage of public education issues in publications and electronic media during 2018. Any local chapter or Service Center Council may nominate. Entries are judged by panels of independent media professionals.

► cta.org/awards

EMEID Leadership Program

APRIL 26 APPLICATION DEADLINE

Ethnic minority members who want to expand their leadership roles in CTA may apply to the Ethnic Minority Early Identification and Development program starting March 1. See page 11 for details. ► cta.org/emeid

CCA Spring Conference

APRIL 26–28 CONFERENCE

Hilton Irvine, Orange County Airport. The Community College Association's spring conference highlights advocacy and features the presentation of CCA's WHO (We Honor Ours) Awards.

► cca4us.org/conferences

READ *Across America!*

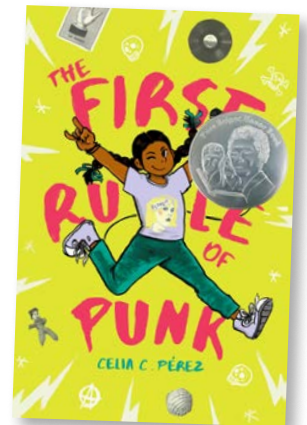
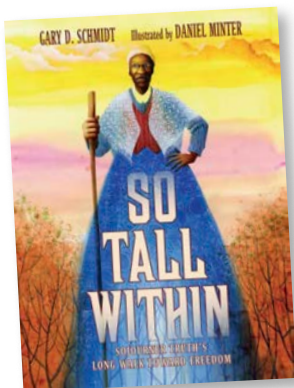
EDUCATORS CELEBRATE READING and literacy all year long, but especially on Read Across America Day, this year on Friday, March 1. Choose a book to read to your students (such as *Malala's Magic Pencil* by Malala Yousafzai, one of NEA's book selections for elementary students), and invite special guests to help, like local police officers, firefighters, or even the mayor. Get more ideas at NEA's readacrossamerica.org, and while you're there, check out the cool new digital calendar with book suggestions for every month of the year. [#readacrossamerica](https://twitter.com/readacrossamerica)



CTA'S CALIFORNIA READS (cta.org/californiareads)

has recommendations for books for all grade levels throughout the year, such as *So Tall Within: Sojourner Truth's Long Walk Toward Freedom* by Gary D. Schmidt (grades 3-5). The book traces Sojourner Truth's life from a painful childhood as a slave in the early 1800s through her remarkable emancipation to her leadership in the movement for rights for both women and African Americans.

In *The First Rule of Punk*, by Celia C. Pérez (grades 6-8), 12-year-old Malu loves rock music, skateboarding and zines. She's a misfit at her new school until she forms a band with a group of similar kids — which immediately causes waves with the administration and at home. But the first rule of punk is to be yourself, and Malu does exactly that. [#californiareads](https://twitter.com/californiareads)



Develop Yourself

BOTH NEW AND veteran teachers will find something inspiring and eminently useful at CTA's **Good Teaching Conference South**, March 22-24 in Garden Grove. How can you resist peer- and expert-led workshops and presentations with titles such as "There Is No Suck in Science" and "Are You Playing With a Full Deck?" Best practices and cutting-edge thinking boost your teaching, refresh your brain, and hone your professional edge. Register at ctago.org [#CTAGTC](https://twitter.com/CTAGTC)





▲ **Leaders in the Making** Above is the 2018-19 class of CTA's Ethnic Minority Early Identification and Development (EMEID) program, gathered at January State Council. EMEID was established to sustain and increase ethnic minority leadership in CTA and its affiliates. Members interested in expanding their roles in CTA should apply for the class of 2019-20. Applications are accepted March 1–April 26; applicants will be notified by May 17. Find more information at cta.org/EMEID.

Stockton School District Will Be Monitored

IN JANUARY, Stockton Unified School District agreed to five years of state monitoring to settle a complaint by the California Department of Justice over allegations that for years the district and its police department discriminated against black and Latino students and students with disabilities.


The five-year investigation found that black and Latino students were more likely to be punished on campus or taken into custody than other students, and that the district and police used unconstitutional search and seizure practices.

It also found that the district violated the rights of students with disabilities, who were interrogated, restrained and arrested for conduct resulting from their disabilities, said the complaint.

The Justice Department will monitor the district to ensure, among other things, it sets clear policies and procedures on how and when school administrators refer students to law enforcement; creates a diversion program to address minor school-based criminal offenses; and revises policies and procedures on treatment of students with disabilities to prevent discrimination.



STRENGTH BASED
7 Factors Driving a Culture of Success





STUDENT CENTERED

Emphasis is placed on learning over teaching.

STUDENT RELATIONS

Students view other students as supportive and interested in their well-being.







WORK ORIENTED

Work is valued, purposeful, and relevant.

FUTURE ORIENTED

Students have a dramatic, positive image of the future.







RESULTS ORIENTED

Students understand strength-based thinking increases capacity and resilience to achieve goals.

SCHOOL-WIDE RELATIONS

All school stakeholders are responsible for the education of each student.





SCHOOL FAMILY RELATIONS

Students understand strength-based thinking increases capacity and resilience to achieve goals.

GRANTS FOR YOUR GREAT IDEAS

CTA'S INSTITUTE FOR TEACHING (IFT) is accepting applications for Educator Grants (up to \$5,000) and Impact Grants (up to \$20,000) for the 2019-20 school year. But hurry: The deadline is March 31.

All members are eligible to apply, and applications are evaluated through the lens of the seven-factor IFT strength-based matrix (see graphic). Strength-based thinking assumes that every student, classroom and school has untapped stories of excellence, and that telling these stories releases positive energy and inspires creativity. To read about past winning projects, and for details on how to apply, go to teacherdrivenchange.org.



#BLACKLIVESMATTER

AT JANUARY State Council, CTA's African American Caucus presented a powerful panel discussion of Martin Luther King's work as a social justice warrior and how his words have an impact on our students today. The hope was to spur "courageous conversations," said caucus chair Angela Normand.

There were many resonant moments. At one point panelist Gina Nichole Gray, teacher at Mervyn M. Dymally High School in Los Angeles, said, "Educators need to have the confidence to say black lives matter. If you can't say that, you can't teach black children."

Pictured from left to right are John Brasfield, Student CTA Board member; facilitator Taunya Jaco, San Jose Teachers Association; Marcelo Clark, UCLA student; Normand; Melina Abdullah, chair of the department of pan-African studies, CSU Los Angeles; Gray; LaTosha Guy, teacher at King/Drew Magnet High School; and Carl Simms, teacher at Dymally High.

For educational resources including lesson plans, go to blacklivesmatteratschool.com, a national coalition organizing for racial justice in education.

Coming Up in May: Day of the Teacher, ESP Day

Heads up! California Day of the Teacher is on May 8, and CTA's Education Support Professionals Day falls on May 21. Our theme: "Great teaching is never forgotten." Stay tuned for more...

CTA Partnership Promotes Smiles in Kern County

A FREE MOBILE dental clinic provided much-needed services to 150 low-income Taft Union High School (TUHS) students in Bakersfield to kick off National Dental Children's Health Month in February. The annual event was the second of a three-year partnership of TUHS, California Resources Corporation, the Herman Ostrow School of Dentistry of USC, and CTA.

"Dental screenings are an important part of my students' health and well-being," says Amanda Carter, Taft Elementary Teachers Association. "Because students from our community have challenges accessing proper dental care, we often see children who come to school with abscesses and other dental issues. Too many times, they miss school because they are in pain or embarrassed."

Dental problems keep California students out of class an estimated 874,000 days a year, costing schools nearly \$30 million in lost attendance-based funding, according to the California Department of Public Health.

"Students learn best when they come to school healthy and ready to learn," says CTA President Eric Heins. "We are doing what we can to improve the oral health of the students in Kern County."



VIRAL VIDEOS

8 traits that can make them catch fire

By @samdemuro

1 INSPIRING

Videos that evoke emotion and move us tend to encourage sharing.

Example: Google "Online BFFs meet IRL"

2 TIMELY AND RELEVANT

Some of the most viral videos refer to events in pop culture that people are currently participating in or talking about.

Example: Google "In my feelings challenge"

3 INTERACTIVE

A video that encourages people to try something out and share their perspective is sure to catch on.

Example: Google "Yanny Laurel"

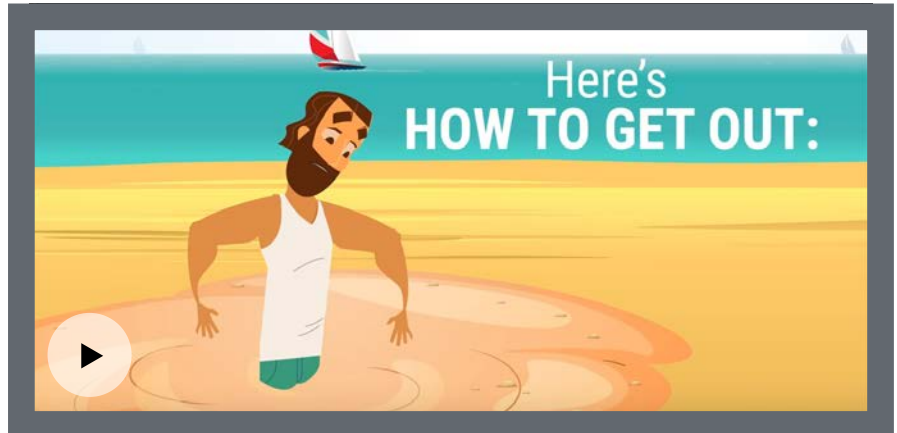
4 HUMOR

Videos that make us laugh may be the most infectious of all.

Example: Google "Chewbacca lady"

DO YOU EVER wonder why some videos become viral? Why are some videos constantly on your social media feeds while others get less love?

A viral video, as the name suggests, spreads quickly from one user to the next. There's a stickiness and contagious aspect to it that encourage people to share. While there is no exact formula for a viral video, many of them share these qualities.



5 PROVIDES USEFUL OR INTERESTING INFORMATION

How-to or life hack videos often go viral because they show viewers something they can apply in their life or remember for a future situation. *Example: Google "How to escape quicksand"*

6 BABIES OR PETS

Babies and pets are so lovable that people will spend hours on the Web watching fun videos with them.

Example: Google "Little girl regrets trying wasabi"

7 WEIRD OR SHOCK VALUE

Sometimes videos go viral when they provoke a surprised or disturbing feeling.

Example: Google "Tide Pod challenge"



8 CREATIVITY

Everyone loves a good video that goes outside the box.

Example: Google "Teacher has personalized handshakes with every single one of his students"

Compiled by **Mike Myslinski**

15 HOURS

Amount of time Oakland high school teacher Christopher Bautista works every weekend as a barista at a Starbucks in Fremont to make ends meet financially, due to poor pay by Oakland Unified School District, the *Los Angeles Times* reported Jan. 27.

\$2.8 BILLION

Increase in K-12 education funding in Gov. Newsom's proposed state budget, a spending plan that state Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond called a "home run" for public schools in a Jan. 10 statement.

50 YEARS

Average age of an American public school nationwide, as reported in a January *NEA Today* article about the need for states to invest more in public school infrastructure.

56 MILLION

Number of children and adults who spend time in a U.S. public school on a typical weekday, according to the *NEA Today* article.

\$46 BILLION

Gap between what is currently spent nationwide and what is needed to meet modern building standards, according to the *NEA Today* article.

"We did not win because of a single leader. We did not win because of a small group of leaders. We won because you — at 900 schools across the entire city, with parents, with students, with community organizations — you walked the line."

—United Teachers Los Angeles President **ALEX CAPUTO-PEARL**, speaking to a jubilant rally of UTLA members on Jan. 22 about the triumphant UTLA strike.

"UTLA'S FIGHT HAS BEEN ALL OUR FIGHT. THE STRIKE PUT THE NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT ON THE MULTIPLE CHALLENGES FACING PUBLIC EDUCATION, AND ON THE HISTORICAL FAILURE OF SOCIETY TO PROVIDE EDUCATORS WITH THE RESOURCES NEEDED TO ENSURE THEIR STUDENTS GET THE BEST EDUCATION POSSIBLE."

—CTA President **ERIC C. HEINS**, in a Jan. 22 statement on the day of the tentative agreement that ended the historic six-day strike.

"I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH THE LEGISLATURE TO PROVIDE FLEXIBILITY FOR SCHOOLS TO HIRE MORE COUNSELORS AND NURSES AND TO BETTER SUPPORT OUR NEEDIEST KIDS, INCLUDING THOSE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION."

—Governor **GAVIN NEWSOM**, in a Jan. 22 statement on the UTLA agreement.

"What we are witnessing is not a moment but a movement of and by educators who are fighting for the public schools our students deserve. We're raising our voices together for our students, for our schools and for ourselves as educators."

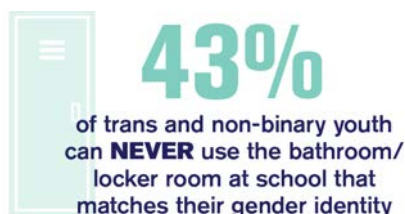
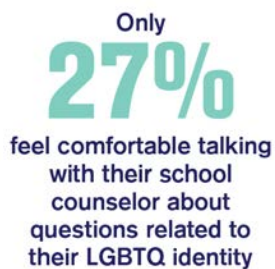
—NEA President **LILY ESKELSEN GARCÍA**, in a Jan. 22 statement as news of the successful UTLA tentative agreement riveted the nation.

"TEACHERS ARE FED UP WITH THE POOR WORKING CONDITIONS AND SALARIES, AND WITH THE LEARNING CONDITIONS THAT OUR STUDENTS ARE HAVING TO ENDURE."

—Oakland Education Association President **KEITH BROWN**, in a Jan. 24 story by NBC on teacher uprisings nationwide. OEA members were completing a four-day strike authorization vote on Feb. 1.

QUOTES & NUMBERS

HRC's "California LGBTQ Youth Report" revealed that...



Support Lacking for LGBTQ+ Students

Survey reveals two-thirds feel unsafe in California classrooms

By Julian Peeples

DESPITE CALIFORNIA LAW expressly protecting LGBTQ+ students, a recent Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Foundation survey found that these students are not receiving adequate support in their school environments.

In the "California LGBTQ Youth Report," HRC and researchers at the University of Connecticut (UConn) detail the experiences of LGBTQ+ students in the Golden State, and the results show there is much work left to create safe, affirming and welcoming schools. In a survey of more than 1,700 California LGBTQ+ students ages 13-17, only one-third reported always feeling safe in their classrooms.

Half of all respondents said they had been bullied because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, and more than a quarter were threatened with physical violence. Only 10 percent of California LGBTQ+ youth said they felt supported by all of the people who work at their school, while 43 percent reported never being able to use the restroom or locker room that matches their gender identity.

"The report clearly shows that while we have made progress in California, we still have a way to go," says CTA President Eric Heins. "All students deserve to feel safe and welcome at school. As educators, we must do all we can to build an inclusive learning environment that inspires all students."

A third of survey respondents said they could "definitely be themselves at school as an LGBTQ person," while only 5 percent reported being open about their sexual orientation

“The report clearly shows that while we have made progress, we still have a way to go. As educators, we must do all we can to build an inclusive learning environment that inspires all students.”

—CTA President **Eric Heins**

to all of their teachers, and 13 percent said they were open with their teachers about being transgender, nonbinary or gender-expansive.

Findings related to the mental health of LGBTQ+ students were particularly alarming, especially considering that LGBTQ+ youth are four times as likely to commit suicide as their non-LGBTQ+ peers. Nearly four-fifths of respondents said they felt depressed in the past week, and a stunning 93 percent reported having trouble getting to sleep at night.

“Schools must invest in creating climates that openly and vocally value and celebrate all forms of diversity, including LGBTQ identities,” the report states. “Ensuring that schools have LGBTQ-inclusive policies and procedures that are compliant with California law, and that school staff have received sufficient training on implementation, is a good starting point.”

In recent years, California has led the way and passed several laws designed to

protect LGBTQ+ students and provide guidance on compliance. However, the data in the report suggests that some districts may be unaware of their legal obligations, while others have yet to complete updating their policies to ensure LGBTQ+ inclusion. According to HRC and UConn, these oversights, delays, and even some districts that are deliberately ignoring the requirements have contributed to the challenges experienced by LGBTQ+ youth who responded to the survey.

“The groundbreaking data reveals that the cards remain stacked against LGBTQ youth in California — and especially for LGBTQ youth of color and transgender and gender-expansive youth,” says Ellen Kahn, HRC Foundation director of the Children, Youth and Families Program.

This report was written in partnership with CTA, as well as:

- Association of California School Administrators.



More than **78%** of LGBTQ students in California felt depressed or down in the past week



93% of LGBTQ students in California report they have trouble getting to sleep at night



84% of LGBTQ youth in California rated their average stress level as a 5 or higher on a ten-point scale

45%

indicated feelings of worthlessness, hopelessness, letting people down and/or not being a good person within the past week

47%

indicated trouble concentrating or inability to focus on schoolwork in the past week

- California Association of School Counselors.
- California Association of School Psychologists.
- California Federation of Teachers.
- California School Boards Association.
- California School Nurses Organization.
- California State PTA.
- Equality California.

HRC’s “2018 LGBTQ Youth Report” is available at hrc.im/YouthReport.

HRC’s “California LGBTQ Youth Report” is available at tinyurl.com/YouthReport-California.

CALIFORNIA EDUCATORS

HAVE A LONG HISTORY OF STANDING UP FOR THEIR STUDENTS, PROFESSION, COMMUNITIES AND ONE ANOTHER. AFTER YEARS OF ORGANIZING AND ASKING LAUSD TO INVEST IN STUDENTS AND NEIGHBORHOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS, UTLA TOOK TO THE STREETS. SUPPORT POURED IN AS WE **ALL SHOWED SOLIDARITY BY WEARING**

INSIDE

SCENES FROM A MOVEMENT

POWERFUL SOCIAL MEDIA

SUPPORT FROM FAR & WIDE

#REDFORED



Photo: Joseph Brusky

Photo: Josh Kob



THE POWER OF EDUCATORS'

unity, action and shared sacrifice was never clearer than when some 60,000 educators, students, parents and community converged at Los Angeles City Hall on Jan. 18. Years of frustration about reprehensible classroom conditions — class sizes of 45 or more students, 40 percent of schools with a nurse only one day a week, inadequate funding for key programs such as early childhood education and special education — had boiled over, and the protesters would stand for it no more.

When United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) reached an agreement with Los Angeles Unified six days later, its members received nearly everything they went on strike for (see details on page 42). UTLA President Alex Caputo-Pearl expressed pride in the membership, who had picketed and rallied despite a series of Southern California downpours.

“I’m so proud of our members who took it upon themselves, on picket lines in record numbers, to express what we’ve all known, but that has been a hard truth to tell sometimes: that public education desperately needs attention, from the city, from the state, from the country. This agreement includes so many elements that are important to our students, families, parents, and communities.”



Sixty thousand educators and supporters come together at City Hall in Los Angeles on Jan. 18. Families and community back educators' demand for the public education students deserve.



Top Posts

A few of the most-liked, most-shared posts during the #UTLA strike

“IT IS DOWNRIGHT SHAMEFUL THAT THE RICHEST STATE IN THE COUNTRY RANKS 43RD OUT OF 50 WHEN IT COMES TO PER-PUPIL SPENDING.”

UTLA President **Alex Caputo-Pearl**, quoted in the *Los Angeles Times*

By far the most popular post was educator Nicholas Ferroni’s video depicting what a class of 15 students looks like, increasing to show how untenable a class of 45 is.





Above, children, parents, students and many others join in to show their support. At left and below, the mood among educators who took to the streets is upbeat despite days of rain.

THE #REDFORED MOVEMENT in California has drawn tremendous strength from what has transpired across the country in the past year, with walkouts and work actions in West Virginia, Oklahoma, Kentucky, Arizona, Colorado, North Carolina and Washington. But what made (and is still making) the movement in California so potent is the strategy to win based on bargaining for the common good: Our demands to give students the public education they deserve, and to give educators the tools they need, benefit the *entire* community, not just our members.

We've seen this in multiple CTA locals' actions across the state, where we have worked hard to build relationships with parents and community and a network of support around the common good. When parents and community wholeheartedly support and join our movement, we are unstoppable. →



6 RAINY DAYS + 30,000 EDUCATORS + 600,000 STUDENTS + 60,000 RALLY GOERS



Clockwise from top left: Spirited educators aim high; CTA Vice President Theresa Montaño, Secretary-Treasurer David Goldberg and President Eric Heins on the picket line; a jubilant marcher (photo: Josh Kob); civil rights activist Dolores Huerta stands with students during the strike (photo: vargas_fotograffix).

THE OUTPOURING OF SUPPORT HAS BEEN THE FORCE BEHIND THE COURAGEOUS TEACHERS WHO WALKED THE PICKET LINE IN THE COLD AND RAIN FOR THEIR STUDENTS.”

CTA President **Eric Heins**



#REDFORED

UP NEXT? OAKLAND



OUR DEMANDS ARE ABOUT A VISION FOR BUILDING THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM THAT OAKLAND FAMILIES DESERVE.” OEA President **Keith Brown**



Above, at the OEA community art build (photo: Joseph Brusky). Below, CTA Secretary-Treasurer David Goldberg and OEA President Keith Brown, center, at a January march and rally in Oakland.

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW in Oakland is just the latest example. The Oakland Education Association (OEA) has been strengthening its bonds with community for some time, including inviting local artists, parents and children to join in “art builds” (see story on page 54) and other events that make visible the broad support for public school teachers. That community stands ready to back OEA members after their vote to authorize a strike on Feb. 4 (see story on page 43).

“This is bigger than salary,” says OEA President Keith Brown. “This is about the heart and soul of public education. And this is about fighting for greater investments in our schools and taking on the privatizers. We are ready to fight for the schools our students deserve!”

Hear us roar: #RedForEd!



CTA'S #REDFORED POP-UP SHOP IS OPEN

Visit cta.org/RedForEdStore to pick out your next #RedForEd outfit.

Choose from Ts, hats, hoodies, magnets and buttons!



ARE YOU WEARING THE NEW COLOR OF ADVOCACY? IT LOOKS LIKE THIS>>>

MEANINGFUL MESSAGES

STRIKING EDUCATORS RECEIVED AN OUTPOURING OF SUPPORT FROM COLLEAGUES, CELEBRITIES AND FRIENDS WORLDWIDE. HERE IS A SAMPLING OF THE SOLIDARITY; SEE THOUSANDS MORE AT CTA.ORG/REDFORED.

RAMI MALEK,

actor: "I know how hard teachers work and how dedicated they are to their students. I support my brother and all other teachers in their fight for the schools their students deserve."

KELLEYANN MORRIS,

New Jersey Education Association: "We are with you today, tomorrow, and every day after that."

SUSAN SARANDON,

actress/activist: "I stand with the teachers on strike in LA. Teachers determined the strength of this Nation."

CHRISTIAN CASTRO,

Teamsters Local 911: "You create the future! We are with you!"

STEVIE VAN ZANDT,

musician/actor: "Teachers want what students need! Smaller classrooms! A nurse in every school! More counselors and librarians! Our future depends on them!"

RACHEL BLOOM,

actress: "California is the 5th largest economy IN THE WORLD yet our public schools are floundering. I stand with the teachers striking today. Their demands are reasonable and just."

MARLEE MATLIN,

actress: "Teachers have so much to give to children. Their teaching brilliance shall not go wasted as we need to embrace public education all around."

STUART BROWN,

Educational Institute of Scotland: "Solidarity from Dundee, Scotland!"

RACHEL CORNEL,

California Nurses Association: "Nurses stand behind California educators!"

SUSANNA LANG,

Chicago Teachers Union: "We in Chicago are proud of you for standing up for what your students need. Your working conditions are their learning conditions. Stay strong!"

KATHY GRIFFIN,

comedian: "My sister was a teacher and I'm always down to help anyone who wants to be an educator!"

AOC ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ,

U.S. representative: "Teachers are the unsung heroes of American democracy. Today they're putting everything on the line so our nation's children can have a better shot."

BERNIE SANDERS,

U.S. senator: "I stand in solidarity with [@UTLANow](https://twitter.com/UTLANow) teachers. Teaching is one of the most valuable and indispensable professions. We need to treat educators with respect and dignity."

KAMALA HARRIS,

U.S. senator: "Los Angeles teachers work day in and day out to inspire and educate the next generation of leaders. I'm standing in solidarity with them."

AMY GUZI PARKINSON,

Cincinnati Federation of Teachers Local 1520: "Sending solidarity and the strength of your union sisters and brothers as you stand strong for your students and for public education! Remember you have support NATIONWIDE!"

5000 MESSAGES

McDaniel conducts Desert Hot Springs High School students at the International Festival of Gold 2015 in Los Angeles.



ONE IN 100 MILLION

Brian McDaniel named a finalist for \$1 million Global Teacher Prize

By Julian Peeples

LIFE HAS BEEN unpredictable lately for band and choir teacher Brian McDaniel. The Palm Springs Teachers Association member's dedication and commitment to providing opportunity to his students through music led to his being honored as a 2018 California Teacher of the Year. Recently, he was named to the list of 50 international finalists for the Varkey Foundation's Global Teacher Prize and a \$1 million award.

"Honestly, I was just happy to be Teacher of the Year at my school," McDaniel says.

The Global Teacher Prize recognizes one exceptional educator who has made an outstanding contribution to the profession, and shines a spotlight on the important role teachers play in society as well. McDaniel is one of four teachers from the United States to be shortlisted for the grand prize, now in



Brian McDaniel

its fifth year and the largest award of its kind. The top 50 were selected from more than 10,000 inspiring educators from 179 countries. The 10 finalists will be announced in mid-February and will travel to Dubai for the award ceremony on March 24.

"My mom always told me I was one in a million," McDaniel says. "Now, I can tell her I'm one in 100 million!"

McDaniel was inspired to teach by the problems he had to deal with in his own childhood, and the positive support and encouragement he received from educators. Born to teenage parents in a home where gun violence was a recurring theme, he experienced a string of tragic events that led to a period of homelessness and depression. But it began to turn around when McDaniel discovered the joy of music and teachers who supported and inspired him. Now he does the same for hundreds of students every year in the same low desert community where he was raised.

"I create a space where every child can be successful," McDaniel says. "I'm doing this so the kids in my community can shoot for the stars!"

At Painted Hills Middle School,

"In my program, nobody pays for anything. I never take no for an answer. I always find a way."

McDaniel founded The Regiment — a student-led musical organization that helps students overcome life's difficulties through music. McDaniel has built this group from the

ground up to now more than 250 students who might otherwise not have exposure to playing music. Drawing from his own childhood experience when he couldn't afford an instrument, McDaniel will not allow lack of money be an obstacle for any student who wants to join his band.

"In my program, nobody pays for anything," says McDaniel, who has about 350 instruments on hand that he's obtained in a variety of ways. "I never take no for an answer. I always find a way. I'll go to jazz musicians and ask for their old instruments."

The Regiment is nothing short of magical. McDaniel sees music as the key to helping students express their humanity and take chances in a supportive and respectful environment. The program has received more than 200 honors and awards, and acclaim from educators and conductors nationwide, who praise the musicianship and professionalism of McDaniel's students.

"As teachers, we have the power to create success through opportunities. Never should a child leave our classroom feeling less than they arrived," McDaniel says. "Every day, we need to find new ways for every student to feel the joy of success, as it only takes one great experience to change the trajectory of a child's life." ■

Learn more about McDaniel's work at drbrianmcdaniel.com. For information on the Varkey Foundation, go to varkeyfoundation.org.



“Be the Change”

Why I advocate for LGBTQ+ youth

By **Bridey Thelen Heidel**

SEVERAL YEARS into my teaching career, a very popular honor roll student handed me his suicide note and ran out of my classroom. After reading the letter, I immediately called his father and told him that his son was in crisis. I did not share details of the letter. This young man had been bullied for several years by both students and adults who wanted him to acknowledge he was gay. He had not yet identified as gay and felt the pressure to entertain others’ opinions was just too overwhelming to bear any longer.

After making sure my student was safe with his parents, who responded with love and unconditional support, I sat with his letter and thought. If this young person — who had friends, enjoyed great academic success, and had an incredible support system — was struggling so profoundly, then there must be many others who were as well. I knew I needed to offer them help before some other sweet young soul lost his or her will to live. I discovered many high schools had gay-straight alliances (GSAs, later called gender and sexuality alliances), safe meeting spaces at school

wherein students could find allies and be themselves. In 2006, two students and I started the South Tahoe High School ALLY Club. Our first meeting boasted over 100 students, staff and community members!

I continue to host ALLY meetings every Thursday at lunch. No matter who walks through that door or how many, they always know that ALLY exists and welcomes them.

Our local community college started a GSA in our honor, Friends of ALLY. Two years ago, we started ALLY Jr. at our local middle school after years of fighting the principal, who said, “Homosexuality is not

part of the standards until ninth grade” (she retired). I knew the law allowed us to start the GSA, but I didn’t want to begin it with a principal who would fight the students and staff at every step. Incredibly, the GSA group is embedded in students’ schedule as an elective.

My advice for teachers wanting to create a safer and more accepting environment for LGBTQ+ students:

- **Create a GSA.** Protections exist within the law, so it’s not a matter of asking to create a GSA but just doing it. Schools with GSAs have



Bridey Thelen Heidel

significant impact on the health and safety of not only LGBTQ+ students, but all students and staff. Look to GLSEN or GSA Network for ideas.

- **Training specific to the LGBTQ+ population is key to helping staff understand their role** — whether it’s pronoun use, putting a stop to homophobic and transphobic language, or how to create a safe space in a classroom, teachers want to help.
- **Be the change.** Come out as an ally. Share with staff and students that you have LGBTQ+ friends and family members. Opening up about your story gives permission for others to do the same. The key is that each school begins to recognize its own issues. Maybe the campus climate is positive but lacks gender-neutral bathrooms; maybe teachers are creating gender-specific groups in their classrooms but don’t know other ways to create groups; maybe young advocates are looking for an adult to advise their GSA but don’t know you’re their ally. Taking a close look at the campus and students is the first step to knowing what is needed and where to begin.

Bridey Thelen Heidel is a South Tahoe Educators Association member, English teacher and department chair at South Tahoe High School. This is excerpted from an interview with Heidel in Read This, Save Lives: A Teacher’s Guide to Creating Safer Classrooms for LGBTQ+ Students by Sameer Jha (see page 58). Heidel goes into more detail about setting up her school’s GSA and getting support from her district at tinyurl.com/BHeidel.

See our summary of the Human Rights Campaign Foundation’s “California LGBTQ Youth Report” on page 15.

Say hello to some of Vista Unified's youngest designers. These kindergartners answer questions from fifth-graders about the new city they designed.



CREATIVE SOLUTIONS

Design thinking teaches students and educators to be fearless problem-solvers By **Julian Peeples**

IMAGINE A NEW planet similar to Earth has been discovered and you are asked to help build the first city there. What would you name the city? How would you ensure it meets the needs of people who live there? Where would you even start?

These were just a few of the questions that educator Tess Dickerson asked her kindergarten class in 2017 for a project using an innovative approach called “design thinking.” Assisted by a buddy class of fifth-graders, these kindergartners identified needs and developed ideas before building prototypes of these ideas, like a slide for city residents to ride from their hotel to a nearby restaurant. After testing and refining their ideas, the students built their city out of recyclables.

“We spent the whole morning building,” says Dickerson, a teacher with Vista Unified School District and member of the

Vista Teachers Association. “I don’t know how many times I heard the kids say, ‘This is the best day ever!’”

Design thinking is an approach to creative problem-solving that focuses on professional design methods, like empathizing and experimentation, to develop innovative solutions to questions or problems. Birthed in the 1950s, it initially guided the creation of new products that solved consumer problems or fulfilled certain needs, before starting to appear in education a couple of decades later and more frequently in the 2000s.

In design thinking, students follow a six-step process (see sidebar, page 29) that encourages the same kind of thinking process an inventor or engineer would use. But instead of inventing a better light bulb or designing a freeway interchange, students explore issues that are relevant to their lives. This year, Dickerson’s kindergartners are pondering “How do you stay safe at school?”



Vista educators take part in a Creative Leadership Institute in September to develop their design thinking skills.

“I tell the kids that mistakes are great because that’s when we learn, and I realized I wasn’t living up to that. Letting go of control helps educators grow, just like we ask students every day.”

—**Tess Dickerson**,
Vista Teachers Association



In the test stage of design thinking, students have built the cities they brainstormed.

“What does safe mean? It gets kids thinking about their part in the community. They become aware of their place in this world and how other people think about things,” Dickerson says. “When we give them this kind of foundation, it validates them as learners and individuals. Everybody can be a part of the process, have an idea or draw a picture.”

The design thinking program at Vista is a partnership between global design firm IDEO and The Teachers Guild, a professional community created to activate teachers’ creativity to solve major challenges in education. IDEO provides the design for learning techniques and foundation, while The Teachers Guild provides resources and support for implementation. Vista is one of three Teachers Guild chapters in California (along with Oakland and Fremont) and seven nationally.

Teachers Guild director Molly McMahon says that all teachers are inherently designers, and design thinking serves the near-constant need for educators to creatively problem-solve from the lens of their students and communities.

“In the design thinking process, there is a strong focus

on empathy in the work we do,” she says. “We tell teachers: ‘If you’re going to create change, you start with yourself, your own biases; start with questions and not answers; and believe that you can create change.’ So we create opportunities to understand yourself and others. Equity and innovation go side by side.”

LEARNING TO LET GO OF CONTROL

English teacher Vickie Curtis is one of eight “design leads” and oversees the design thinking program in Vista. Working closely with The Teachers Guild, Curtis helped facilitate workshops that taught the approach and each stage of the process. Vista educators were then given their own design challenge to complete: “How can we make learning more relevant for our schools?” Curtis says her fellow educators worked on ideas for that question all year in their classrooms before reconvening at the end of the year to share their ideas.

“It was really inspiring to see how teachers made the work relevant to education,” she says. “It can be scary for teachers and it can be a risk, but that’s the beautiful part.”

Giving students control of the learning process and guiding their experience is a major part of using design thinking in the classroom, says Paula Mitchell, an Oakland Unified elementary school teacher and design lead in the Oakland chapter of The Teachers Guild. There, the Guild partners with educators from public, private and alternative settings throughout



Vickie Curtis



East Bay educator Cicely Day, below, participates in an Oakland Teachers Guild workshop.



“In design thinking, there is a strong focus on empathy in the work we do. We create opportunities to understand yourself and others. Equity and innovation go side by side.”

—Teachers Guild director **Molly McMahon**

Oakland to support their creativity in reaching students using design thinking.

The 25-year educator says the empathy step of the design thinking process forces educators to take stock of students’ diverse needs and create lessons that are relevant to their experiences.

“Even though we talk about students being the center, with all the mandates and obligations, we often forget about our learners,” says Mitchell, an Oakland Education Association member. “Creating more empathy for our learners and their needs has been really useful. It’s getting to know our students in a different way. That’s been some of the most valuable work we’ve done so far.”

Mitchell says this empathy led to ideas like providing therapy animals for stressed students and a “shadow project” where students take photographs of their days to provide visual representations of their daily experiences.

Educator Cicely Day was involved in the Oakland Teachers Guild chapter in 2017 before moving to West Contra Costa Unified School District last year to run a high-tech “Fab Lab,” where students use computers, 3-D printers and other professional machines to bring their ideas to life. She says that design thinking gives students and teachers alike the tools and courage to find new ways to solve problems.

“I really like the process because it frees you up from the constraints of the system to try new ideas,” says Day, now a member of United Teachers of Richmond. “For my students, mostly girls, giving them permission to fail and think outside the box is refreshing.”

Being all right with mistakes and even embracing minor failure as a precursor to a major learning moment is a key piece to design



Each designer mindset comes with its own set of motivations.



Paula Mitchell

thinking, says Dickerson, who notes that adults could glean a lot from her kindergartners, their sense of wonder and lack of self-imposed limitations.

“Younger kids are willing to do almost anything,” she says, explaining that the fearlessness of her kindergartners is what finally convinced her to join The Teachers Guild. “I tell the kids every day that mistakes are great because that’s when we

learn, and I realized I wasn’t living up to that. Letting go of control helps educators grow, just like we ask students every day.”

DESIGN LESSONS THAT SPEAK TO STUDENTS

An approach that makes learning relevant to students and empowers them to take control of the process hit home for Emilie Barnes, 14, a ninth-grade student who learned design thinking in middle school with Curtis.

“It made us slow down and think about what we’re doing, what’s the problem, how can we solve it, and made us think,” Barnes says. “It’s a good skill for us to have in real life, so when a difficult situation or problem occurs, we can stop and think about it logically.”

This empowerment comes with responsibility too, Curtis says, as students learn to get rid of their preconceptions and empathize with others to find innovative solutions that consider their needs. This



Fremont educators immerse themselves in design thinking at their Creative Leadership Institute.

causes students to see how issues are bigger than the questions before them.

“We got the full picture and really thought about how we could help the person and see them as a person — not a problem that needs a solution,” Barnes says.

This applies to educators as learners as well. In Vista, one of the challenges posed to educators during a Teachers Guild workshop was to redesign the staff lounge at school. Dickerson says this experience helped bring home how her students were learning.

“I got to feel what it was like to be a student,” she says. “You need to go through the process yourself — you’ll see what it’s like for them. If you’re enjoying it, it’s easy to see how the students will enjoy it.”

FREMONT SPRINGBOARDS INTO INNOVATION

In Fremont, educators are just getting started on their design thinking journey. Seventh-grade teacher Chelsey Staley is putting the finishing touches on the design challenge she’s creating called a “passion project,” which asks students to consider what they can do to help people and improve their community. Among her students’ ideas: create a YouTube channel for educators to communicate with students in a medium they use every day; change the school lunch program at their school and across the state; and find ways to stand up against bullies on their campus.

“They are very motivated to stop bullying on campus and have asked, ‘How can we get to the root of bullying?’ and ‘How can we stand up



STEPS OF DESIGN THINKING

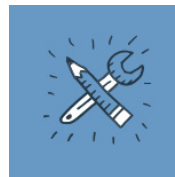
THE DESIGN THINKING APPROACH uses a six-step model to develop innovative solutions to problems. The model can be applied to nearly any question or problem, from the classroom to home life to global issues.



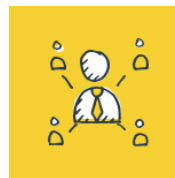
EMPATHIZE: Discover the needs of students, users or people in the community, and reflect on evidence to see the problem or question from the end-user’s perspective. Empathy is the foundation and inspiration of any user-centered design process.



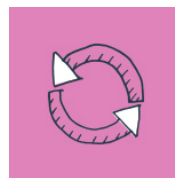
IDEATE: Generate new ideas through structured brainstorming that encourages thinking expansively and without constraints. No idea is too wild when ideating, especially because unorthodox ideas can often spark visionary thoughts.



BUILD: Make ideas tangible by building a prototype. The Build step brings to life the most promising ideas from the previous step. These early and rough prototypes can be tested to help improve and refine ideas.



TEST: Try out prototypes and get feedback from end-users. The Test step is the most critical phase of the human-centered design process. Without testing, it is unknown whether the solution is on target or the idea needs to evolve.



ITERATE: Refine ideas based on feedback from end-users and use that information to fuel design changes. There are usually multiple iteration, testing and feedback integration stages to fine-tune the solution.



SHARE: After making sure the solution meets the end-users’ needs and getting details just right with the design, it’s time to share your ideas with the world and inspire others to try them.



At the Oakland Innovation Summit, Salomeh Ghorban, an educator and leader in the Teachers Guild Oakland Chapter, shares her dreams for students.

for those that are being bullied?” says Staley, a Fremont Unified District Teachers Association (FUDTA) member. “I know my students enjoy the freedom design thinking allows them. I work with 12- and 13-year-old kids, and getting them interested in school takes a lot of work. Through the design thinking process, I have gotten more interest than anything else I’ve tried so far. Design thinking is here to stay in my classroom.”

At Fremont’s American High School, English teacher John Creger has been finding innovative ways to engage students for 30 years, many of which share core principles with the design thinking approach. Notably, Creger has worked to build empathy in his 10th-grade students, asking them to embark on a yearlong project centered around the question of how a sophomore can help build a caring world.

Creger says the empathy step of IDEO’s design thinking process sets it apart from other approaches he’s used previously. He says the emphasis on caring works well with sophomores and allows them to focus on deeper needs instead of getting distracted by abstract concepts. With that focus on empathy in mind, he is embarking on a district-level Teachers Guild project to incorporate the developmental needs of each stage of childhood into the district’s curriculum, so that teachers have the incentive and guidance to help students develop as well as learn.

“The Teachers Guild may well be the most encouraging development I’ve seen come to Fremont in my 30 years teaching here,” says Creger, a FUDTA member. “Unlike previous moves from the corporate world, this one does not dictate outcomes or processes, but equips teachers with rich innovation skill sets, trusts us to identify needs, and backs us as we design to meet them.” ■

A wealth of resources are available for educators who want to learn more about design thinking.



DISCOVER DESIGN THINKING

Educators do not have to be part of an official Teachers Guild cohort to take advantage of the wealth of resources on design thinking available online, including a free toolkit produced by the Guild (teachersguild.org).

The site also provides a collection of plans and projects undertaken by educators in schools across the country, and a forum to share ideas. Paula Mitchell in Oakland says the Guild is a supportive community where educators share ideas and “lift each other up in service of students.”

“Teaching can be so isolating sometimes. Organizations like The Teachers Guild bring educators together to share and support,” she says. “The great thing about design thinking is it really just encourages you to try.”

Fremont’s John Creger says the Guild partnership of many education stakeholders is a welcome change in approach, centering efforts around what matters most. “It was refreshing to convene not in our usual school or district enclaves, but in the heart of the community, partnered up from Day 1 with community members who care about what we do and who we do it for, and want to be involved.”

Chelsey Staley in Fremont says that students learn more when teachers work together, and The Teachers Guild facilitates collaboration so educators approach learning from the perspective that nothing is impossible.

“The Teachers Guild has given teachers at my school the opportunity to work together and hear what common goals we have for the staff and students, learning from one another about topics we may never have thought of on our own,” she says. “That alone has made being a part of The Teachers Guild worth it for me.”

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DEAF EDUCATORS SPEAK

United Teachers Los Angeles members at Marlton School say their voices are finally being heard at the school for Deaf students in Los Angeles

By **Sherry Posnick-Goodwin** Photos by **Scott Buschman**

TEACHERS, PARENTS, students and alumni of Marlton School took to the streets twice last spring. The revolt was sparked by the dearth of administrators who are fluent in American Sign Language (ASL) and have experience and training in Deaf Education. Protesters also charged that neglect by Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) has resulted in cuts to extracurricular programs, sports and electives; large class sizes; high staff turnover; and decreased morale in educators and students.

Protesters demanded the departure of the school principal, because she lacked knowledge and experience in Deaf Education, was not fluent in ASL, and could not fluently communicate with Deaf students and staff. The principal has since left, an interim principal is on campus, and a new principal is slated to be hired next fall.

Educators have reason to hope that the next principal will be different. The first-of-its-kind LAUSD school principal job description requires the new hire to be experienced in Deaf

Education and fluent in ASL, instead of meeting requirements for principals at typical hearing schools.

Another positive outcome since the protests is that United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) member Lauren Maucere was hired as the new program specialist for LAUSD. She is Deaf, a former Marlton teacher, and the current president of California Educators of the Deaf. She will work with all ASL-English bilingual programs within the district and has begun visiting classrooms and meeting with staff to help improve outcomes for Deaf students. Her hiring is a groundbreaking move and a step in the right direction, say educators.



Lauren Maucere

“I believe it’s the first time a Deaf person is working at the district level with the Deaf Education sector, and it’s about time,” says Maucere.

“Deaf people are rooted in their community, which is rich in heritage, culture, language and connections they bring to the classroom. Deaf people, especially those trained in Deaf Education, must be a critical part of the Deaf Ed system, for they

Third- and fourth-grade Marilton School teacher Claire Ettlin works with Glenford Reneau. Opposite page: a mural in the school hallway.



OUT

“I was proud to see the protests happen. We often weren’t included in decisions made by administrators who were not familiar with Deaf culture.”

—Richard Hall, UTLA chapter co-chair

have the knowledge, experience and perspective to ensure a just system that taps into the strengths and abilities in Deaf children. Deaf children and families need role models.”

UTLA chapter co-chair Richard Hall is feeling cautiously optimistic these days.

“I believe good things will happen,” says Hall, who is Deaf and teaches ASL, English, career exploration and filmmaking. “We have had several meetings with Local District West [the LAUSD office responsible for overseeing Marilton] and special education leaders. They are interested in supporting us by providing resources in our search for a permanent principal with proper qualifications. They also recognize there’s a lack of Deaf administrators in LAUSD — and there are obstacles that the hiring system created for the Deaf.”

The protests increased public awareness about a population that is traditionally underserved, says Hall.

“I was very proud to see the protests happen. It was way overdue. Educators, students and parents are fed up with how things were handled. We often weren’t included in decisions made by



Richard Hall

administrators who were not familiar with Deaf culture. I am very grateful for the support the school received from our community.”

A once-prestigious school

Founded in 1968, Marilton is the only school for Deaf and hard of hearing students run by a California school district. (Residential schools in Fremont and Riverside are operated by the state.) Serving students in preschool through 12th grade, Marilton offers standards-based, college preparatory A-G curriculum. The goal of the bilingual school is to nurture the development of ASL and English language literacy skills in Deaf and hard of hearing children.

The school, which currently has about 15 teachers (not counting several long-term substitutes), also has hearing students enrolled in a program for siblings of Deaf students, created by Carol Billone, the first Deaf teacher hired in LAUSD. About 85 percent of the school population is low-income.

Nestled in Baldwin Hills, Marilton is not easily



UTLA chapter co-chair and Marlton educator Richard Hall with student Nicole Sweet.



“The social aspect of Marlton alone is an enormous gain for students as opposed to a mainstream school where many Deaf children suffer from isolation, which can affect their education regardless of the quality of instruction they may receive.”

—Claire Ettlin, UTLA

accessible to many students in LAUSD. Some say its remote location has led to district neglect and is a factor in why just 135 out of 2,100 Deaf and hard of hearing students attend school there. Despite a small student population, Marlton has strong parent supporters. Some drive many miles each day, so their children can be taught in both ASL and English.

The other Deaf and hard of hearing LAUSD students attend local schools and rely on interpreters. This mirrors national statistics: More than 86 percent of Deaf or hard of hearing students in the U.S. are mainstreamed in public schools. Students spend most of the school day in general education classrooms with support from an interpreter, according to “Raising and Educating Deaf Children,” a 2016 report from Oxford University.

Susan Margolin, a Deaf teacher for Marlton’s middle and high school students, believes students benefit from receiving direct instruction in ASL.

“Other students may attend regular classes with sign language interpreters who often do not sign details in full, and students may miss information as a result of their dependence

on inadequate signing,” Margolin says.

Marlton was created to provide students with an environment where they could communicate with everyone on staff without an interpreter present. However, because none of its administrators are fluent in ASL and the majority of past and current administrators lack a background in Deaf Education, administrators may resort to pointing, gesturing, or not communicating with students and staff.

The school has been a revolving door for administrators, with five principals in eight years, not including interim principals. Educators hope new administrators will bring a wealth of best practices in Deaf Education to enrich the academic and linguistic environment, propelling Marlton beyond providing just a basic education.

“The general impression from past administrators has been that our school needs to be ‘fixed’ and that our Deaf and hard of hearing population is somehow not as important or lesser than the general education population,” says Laura Carls, a Marlton preschool and transitional kindergarten teacher. “In



Laura Carls



A scene from one of the protests held at Marlton last spring, when teachers, students, parents and alumni sought to have their voices heard.

reality, we are all equal. Some of us just use another language to communicate.”

Years ago, Marlton was considered a state-of-the-art school that offered extracurricular activities including a wide range of sports, plus woodshop, culinary arts, art and theater. Funding cuts eliminated these programs along with most electives.

“It’s sad to see those programs go, because they were instrumental to our students’ learning and social experiences,” says Hall. “Participating in sports and community-based instruction — a program designed for Deaf students from 18 to 22 to be college and career ready — allowed our students to build self-esteem and become team leaders as well as team players with their peers. They also learned how to communicate with each other and other adults.

“With those programs cut, it’s like losing limbs. It affects school morale. It’s difficult getting students excited when they have nothing to do after school but go home where they are alone. Many of the students’ families do not sign, and they feel like strangers among their families.”

Noe Perez, a Marlton senior and vice president of his class, says that he has noticed the school’s decline since he enrolled as a fifth-grader.

“When I first came here, there was a lot of interaction,” he signs. “I liked it. I wish there were more things going on for students now like sports, social events and field trips. Because of these things, the school’s population has gotten smaller. I think bringing things back like sports would help Marlton improve and make it a better place.”

As programs dwindled, class sizes increased dramatically. The California Department of Education recommends a teacher-student ratio for this population of 1-to-8, but many classes have

Glossary

Terms associated in Deaf Education and the Deaf community

deaf with a small d

Describes a medical condition of not hearing.

Deaf with a capital D

Indicates those who associate themselves with Deaf culture including Deaf history, traditions, beliefs and behaviors. This story uses Deaf in an all-inclusive manner to reflect people who may identify as Deaf, deaf, DeafBlind, hard of hearing or late-deafened (where individuals lose their hearing over time or suddenly become deaf, which can happen at any age).

Hard of hearing

The same as being deaf with partial hearing loss.

Hearing impaired

A derogatory term in the Deaf community, since members consider themselves neither hearing nor impaired.

American Sign Language (ASL)

A complete language for Deaf people with its own vocabulary and grammar that differ from English. The perception is that ASL is easy to learn, but many compare its complexity to Arabic or Japanese. Researchers — and educators in Deaf Education — recommend Deaf students master ASL to develop their metalinguistic skills so they can more easily learn to read, write and speak (if applicable) in English.

ASL-English bilingualism

Designed to facilitate early language acquisition in both a visual language (ASL) and a written/spoken language (English). This approach can be implemented to meet the individual needs of children with varying hearing levels and varying levels of benefit from listening devices.

Cochlear implant

A surgically implanted device that provides a sense of sound to a person with severe to profound hearing loss. Cochlear implants bypass the normal acoustic hearing process, instead replacing it with electric hearing. Implants are not a “cure” for deafness — deaf people don’t understand speech perfectly as soon as the device is activated. They must spend months or years working with speech therapists, learning how to process this unfamiliar sensory input.

Language deprivation

Occurs in Deaf children when they are not exposed to an accessible language during their first few years of life, a critical period for language acquisition.

Audism

Term used to describe a negative attitude toward Deaf or hard of hearing people. It is typically thought of as a form of discrimination, prejudice, or an unwillingness to accommodate those who cannot hear.





Stephanie Johnson, Marlton teacher and UTLA chapter chair, communicates with student Anthony Aguilar.



Marlton audiologist Mallorie Evans says students' attachment to the nurturing school is deeper than at most other schools.

more than 20 students.

“With small classes of one teacher to eight students, we can prepare students for graduation and jobs in the larger world,” says Margolin. “As of now, we have almost all big classes due to LAUSD’s budget issues. Can you imagine that I am now teaching two courses — Financial Algebra 1 and Financial Algebra 2 — to 23 Deaf students during

the same period? It’s not quality time.”

“I feel LAUSD has not concentrated on quality Deaf Education,” she continues. “This failure impedes opportunities for graduates. Many students do not reach grade level in math.”

Data from the National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes show Deaf people attain lower levels of education than their hearing peers. In 2015, 83 percent of Deaf adults in the United States had successfully completed high school, compared to 89 percent of hearing adults. The gap in educational attainment between Deaf and hearing was the widest, at 15 percent, among individuals who had earned a bachelor’s degree. This is important because increasing levels of educational attainment has been shown to narrow the employment gap between Deaf and hearing individuals. Research shows that only 18 percent of Deaf adults in the United States have a bachelor’s degree or more, compared to 33 percent of hearing adults.

Everyone agrees that it’s time to

close the achievement gap. However, because Marlton has suffered more than its share of budget cuts and neglect, staff and students say they feel marginalized and unsupported.

Janette Duran, a Marlton School counselor, says students face challenges in addition to being Deaf, since most are poor and minorities.

“Given the history of how students of color have been marginalized in school districts across many generations, with schools and administrations neglecting students’ multiple social experiences, the hope is that LAUSD can recognize that this reality is intensified with our Deaf students, given their multiple intersections.”

A strong sense of community

Despite difficult conditions and low morale, educators are passionate about Marlton, and say working there is extremely rewarding.

“I believe that Marlton has the potential to allow Deaf students to be more

“This is a place with great teachers. It’s a place where we can teach Deaf students about life and how to become role models.”

—**Maria Hernandez**, Marlton School paraeducator

successful academically,” says Claire Ettlin, who teaches third- and fourth-graders. “There are enormous benefits to having language exposure everywhere in school. The social aspect of the school alone is an enormous gain for the students as opposed to a mainstream school, where many Deaf children suffer from isolation, which can affect their education regardless of the quality of instruction they may receive.”

Marlton has a great sense of community, she adds. “We are constantly advocating for our population and trying to give them access and opportunity wherever it is possible.”

“Marlton school culture is very close-knit and nurturing,” says Mallorie Evans, an audiologist at Marlton for 13 years.

“Since many students come from families in which they have little or no communication, school becomes home to them. It’s a place where they can truly express themselves and have meaningful relationships with others who are like them. Students’ attachments are much deeper at Marlton than it is at most schools.”

Maria Hernandez graduated from Marlton in 2009, earned a bachelor’s degree from CSU Northridge in liberal studies, and works at Marlton as a paraeducator. She wants to become an elementary teacher at the school.

“I learned so much here,” she says. “This is a place with great teachers. It’s a place where we can teach Deaf students about life and how to become role models.”

See the following page for a brief history of Deaf Education.

Noe Perez, vice president of the Marlton senior class. Below left, Maria Hernandez, Marlton paraeducator and graduate.



Union Strong

During last spring’s protests at Marlton, UTLA officers and professional staff were there in support every step of the way. (UTLA members continue to support their Deaf colleagues with sign language interpreting services at UTLA conferences, meetings and rallies.)

Marlton audiologist Mallorie Evans, who serves on the UTLA Board of Directors, says the Deaf community’s support and union activism forced the district to listen to educators’ concerns.

“UTLA stepped up in a major way when Marlton teachers needed them the most. Even though they didn’t know much about Deaf Education and the unique needs of our students, they learned quickly and empowered the teachers to organize and take a stand for the school our students deserve.”



Stephanie Johnson

“LAUSD is finally listening to the Deaf community and Deaf Education experts,” says Stephanie Johnson, Marlton’s UTLA chapter chair and a Deaf teacher for first- and second-graders who has been at the school for nearly 20 years. “We could not have accomplished this without UTLA’s support.”

Marlton educators will continue to push for positive changes to benefit students, teachers and classroom conditions with union support.

“We still have a long way to go,” says teacher Laura Carls. “But knowing our union brothers and sisters are behind us — and support us — helps us to keep hope alive that things will change for the better.”





Marlton School student Tafari Booth.

Deaf Education Through the Years

Before the 1860s, sign language was popular among the Deaf community and also supported by the hearing community. The hearing community believed that sign language brought deaf people closer to God, which created sign language acceptance.

In the late 1860s it was argued that sign language was not a natural language. Support for oralism

— teaching Deaf people to communicate by the use of speech and lip-reading rather than sign language — increased. Oralists believed that sign language made Deaf people “different” and therefore abnormal. Sign language was forbidden. Punishment included forcing students to wear white

gloves tied together to prevent them from using signs.

Oralism continued until the early 20th century. Deaf children who were not successful under the oral method were transferred to sign language classes and considered “oral failures” who would never know anything or be able to make it in the world.

After ASL was recognized as a language by William Stokoe in 1960, residential programs in the United States began to adopt the

Total Communication approach, which allowed schools to offer sign language along with speech classes, cued speech and other communication modes in classroom teaching. By the 1990s, the Bilingual-Bicultural approach was adopted by many Deaf schools, including Marlton, where students develop cognitive and linguistic skills needed for ASL and English literacy.

“Full inclusion” — in place since the 1975 law that became the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act — lets Deaf students attend regular classrooms with interpreters. However, many in Deaf Education believe this can lead to isolation, since students lack peers to speak with directly. Regardless of program placement, all Deaf students receive an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that outlines how the school will meet a student’s individual needs.

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Record Education Funding

Proposed \$80.7 billion budget lays groundwork for universal preschool

By Julian Peeples

GOV. GAVIN NEWSOM showed he intends to honor his campaign promises to California’s educators, parents and students with his proposed budget for 2019-20, which includes a record \$80.7 billion for education.

The proposal reflects Newsom’s commitment to supporting children and students by increasing resources to the state’s public education and health and human services — a combined 81 percent of California’s budget is earmarked for these areas. CTA President Eric Heins says the governor’s proposal shows he understands the needs and priorities in public education.

“He clearly listened to parents and educators by presenting his historic \$80.7 billion budget for our students, which is a big step toward reducing chronic underfunding of public education,” Heins says. “Educators

look forward to working with Gov. Newsom and the Legislature throughout the budget process to ensure all students have the resources to succeed, safe environments to grow, and opportunities to thrive in their communities.”



Gavin Newsom

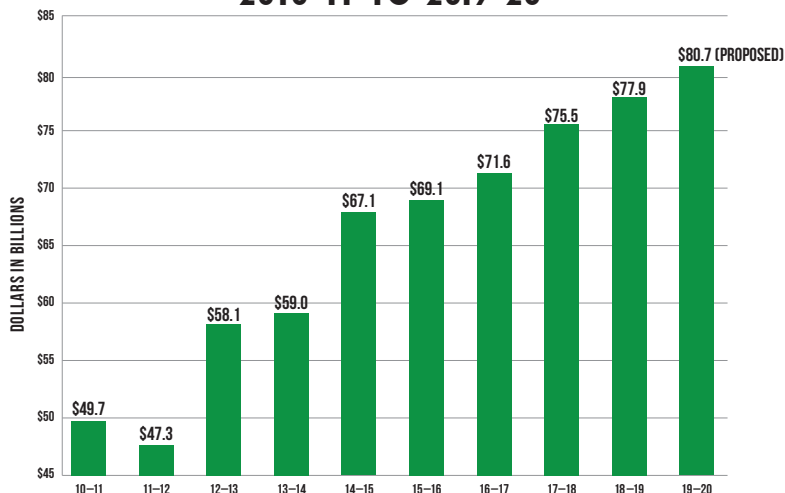
“Cradle to college”

Newsom is proposing a \$2.8 billion increase over last year’s record funding in the K-12 education budget (including a \$2 billion increase to the Local Control Funding Formula, reflecting a 3.46 percent cost-of-living adjustment), and per-pupil spending from all funds is projected to be \$17,160. The budget makes good on Newsom’s

promise to support California kids “from cradle to college” by expanding investments to preschool, kindergarten and child care while improving access to health care



**PROPOSITION 98 FUNDING
2010-11 TO 2019-20**



“The governor’s commitment to universal kindergarten and preschool is how we give all children an equal start. As educators, we know the importance of early childhood education.”

—CTA President **Eric Heins**

services for these children. This new focus on early childhood education includes the development of a long-term plan for providing universal preschool, a major part of working toward educational equity.

“The governor’s commitment to universal kindergarten and preschool is how we give all children an equal start,” Heins says. “As educators, we know the importance of early childhood education. It gives kids the start they need and improves learning as they advance in school.”

Boost for higher education

For higher education, the proposal includes a 7 percent increase in Prop. 98 funding for California Community Colleges, including a boost in money to support a second year of free tuition, impacting about 28,000 students. The California State University (CSU) budget includes an overall increase of 8 percent and no tuition increase.

“The CSU funding increase and money for a second year of free community college for full-time students is a historic achievement,” Heins says. “This will make college and careers accessible to more students who want to further their education but just can’t afford it.”

Newsom’s budget also takes a stand against waste, fraud and abuse in privately managed charter schools that adversely impact students. Newsom called for transparency and accountability at corporate charter schools to ensure they are subject to the same public records and open meeting laws as other public schools.

Other highlights of the governor’s budget proposal:

- **Special Education** — \$576 million to expand special education services and school readiness support at school districts with high percentages of both students with disabilities and unduplicated low-income students, foster youth and English learners.
- **Pension Costs** — \$3 billion in one-time non-Prop. 98 General Fund dollars for a payment to CalSTRS to reduce long-term employer liabilities.
- **Paid Family Leave** — Newsom has a goal of extending the current leave for parents to bond with newborns from six weeks to six months. The budget proposal includes a down payment on expanding the program, and a task force will be convened to work out options and details.

The budget is available for review online at ebudget.ca.gov. Newsom will present a revised 2019-20 proposal in May. The state Legislature is expected to pass a budget by June 15. ■

Photo: Jollene Levid / UTLA



LA School Board Calls for Charter Moratorium

“We need to invest in our existing schools, not follow a business model of unregulated growth when new schools are not needed in LA.”

—UTLA President Alex Caputo-Pearl

IN THE WAKE of United Teachers Los Angeles’ successful strike, the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education on Jan. 29 called for a state study on the impacts of charters and a moratorium on new charter schools until the study is complete.

The vote was a historic moment in the fight for public schools, and a direct result of UTLA educators, parents and communities standing up for a sustainable school district that provides opportunity to all Los Angeles students.

“LAUSD has joined the NAACP and other key organizations in calling on the state of California for a moratorium on charters,” says UTLA President Alex Caputo-Pearl. “This is a win for justice, transparency and common sense. We need to invest in our existing schools, not follow a business model of unregulated growth when new schools are fundamentally not needed in LA.”

Charters have grown exponentially at LAUSD, from 10 in the 2000-01 school year to 277 this year, with the district now the largest charter school authorizer in the nation. Due to the oversaturation of charters, more than 80 percent cannot meet their projected enrollment numbers, calling into question the charter industry’s assertion that their schools have waiting lists and underscoring that there are already more than enough charter schools to meet demand. —Julian Peoples

Newsom Calls for Study on Impacts of Charter Schools

IN RESPONSE TO growing concerns about unregulated charter schools siphoning public funds away from neighborhood public schools, Gov. Gavin Newsom called for a study on the impacts of charter school growth on local school districts statewide, and announced he is working with the Legislature to improve charter school transparency and accountability.

Newsom asked state Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond to convene experts to closely examine how charter schools impact school district budgets and to provide recommendations by July 1. The governor is also working with state legislators to mandate transparency for charter schools to ensure tax dollars spent on education only support schools that are accountable to the public.

“We commend Gov. Newsom on asking for this study. It is an important and long overdue step toward holding charter schools accountable,” says CTA President Eric Heins. “California leaders must have an accurate picture of the impact that charter expansion has had on many traditional neighborhood public schools.”

Newsom’s plan to shine a light on unregulated charter schools comes on the heels of the historic United Teachers Los Angeles

(UTLA) strike, which led to the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education’s call for a state study of charter impacts and a moratorium on new charter approvals (see story on facing page).

The NAACP has also been active in seeking more accountability and transparency for charter schools, adopting a resolution in 2016 calling for a moratorium on charter school expansion until these issues are resolved. The NAACP created a task force to investigate charter schools nationwide, eventually issuing a report that found a “wide range of problems” with charter schools.

NAACP President and CEO Derrick Johnson says many charter schools’ practices are troubling. “For the NAACP, we have been far more aggressive toward bad public schools than we’ve ever been against charter schools. We aren’t going to change our approach because there is a market-driven concept to education. We believe the same for public schools should apply to charter schools.”

For more information about the impact of charter schools on community public schools, see kidsnotprofits.com.

—Julian Peebles

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Bargaining Roundup

Details of these stories at cta.org/bargainingupdates

By Cynthia Menzel, Julian Peeples, Ed Sibby and Frank Wells. #OurVoiceAtTheTable

Los Angeles: Strike makes major gains

On Jan. 22, **United Teachers Los Angeles** announced a tentative agreement ending a six-day strike that had riveted the nation and drawn new attention to key issues facing students and educators in Los Angeles and elsewhere. The settlement gave UTLA members nearly everything they had been striking for, and made progress in other areas, laying a strong foundation for the future.

UTLA leadership had made it clear from the beginning that this was not a strike over salary, but instead over things that matter to students and to the future of public education. Although the 6 percent raise ultimately agreed to was roughly what Los Angeles Unified School District had offered before the strike, UTLA was able to force the district to drop tying that increase to additional working hours. UTLA also ensured retroactivity for the increase and pushed back against attempts to start a two-tiered health coverage system impacting new hires.

The real gains came in student-centered areas. Class sizes were reduced potentially across the board by eliminating a clause that had allowed the district to increase class sizes at every level by declaring financial hardship. That move will finally force adherence to hard caps. The settlement also puts an immediate cap of 39 on high school English and math classes, with additional reductions to high school and middle school classes to begin next year.

Schools starved for years of support services will now have a nurse every day (LAUSD will hire 300 nurses over the next two years), high schools will have a library technician every day, high school counselors will see their student caseload cut in half, and newly funded community schools with wrap-around services will have psychologists and social workers available along with other programs.



The district will take a hard look at all district assessments and is tasked with reducing testing by 50 percent. LAUSD had previously rejected any discussion of testing as outside the scope of bargaining. The agreement also calls for more educator input into school magnet conversion and charter school co-location, as well as a Board of Education vote on a resolution capping the number of charter schools.

Other issues agreed to include a hotline and full-time attorney to help immigrant students and their families, and more schools exempt from so-called random searches that target students of color.

UTLA members overwhelmingly ratified the agreement in a preliminary vote the day of the settlement and returned to classrooms the next day.

OEA President Keith Brown speaks at a press conference. Photo: Mike Myslinski



Oakland: Educators Authorize Strike

Oakland educators are ready to walk off the job and onto the picket line. The **Oakland Education Association** announced Feb. 4 that OEA members had voted by 95 percent to authorize a strike, with 84 percent of members casting ballots.

The announcement came after a fruitless two-day fact-finding session, during which OEA called Oakland Unified School District's management of Oakland public schools "educational malpractice." The vote allows OEA leaders to call a strike if necessary, to win smaller class sizes, a living wage for educators, and additional support resources that students need — including more counselors and school nurses for the district's 37,000 students.

"This is a clear message that our members are ready to fight for the schools our students deserve," says OEA President Keith Brown. "This powerful vote is a mandate for smaller class size, more student support, and a living wage. It is a mandate to keep our neighborhood schools open and not shut down our schools."

Oakland educators will now wait for the nonbinding fact-finding report, which at press time was expected

Feb. 15, the same day as a **#RedForEd** Statewide Day of Action in support of OEA. After the report is issued, OEA, which represents 3,000 educators in OUSD, can legally strike. Oakland educators have been working without a contract since July 2017, and seven sessions with a state mediator were unproductive.

Brown says that without a serious proposal by OUSD, OEA will take action "instead of watching 600 teachers leave OUSD year after year."

Oakland educators are fighting to end the district's teacher retention crisis. Over the past 12 years, an average of 18.7 percent of Oakland teachers have left the district every year. Starting pay for beginning Oakland teachers is about \$46,000, while the average monthly rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Oakland is \$3,191. Meanwhile, OUSD spends nearly double the state average on administrators' salaries.

Visit cta.org/redforedoakland for the latest information.

Spring View Middle School math teacher Jennifer David.



▲ **Rocklin: Safety, special ed**

In January, the **Rocklin Teachers Professional Association** reached a two-year deal with Rocklin Unified School District that requires RUSD to invest 11 percent more in teachers and includes a salary schedule compression from 25 to 17 steps. The agreement, ratified by both the teachers and the school board, averted a strike and comes after months of contentious negotiations. Teachers agreed to a 5 percent salary increase, retroactive to July 2018, in Year 1. Year 2 includes the salary compression, a 1.86 percent increase, \$40 increase to health benefits, and an increased stipend for special education teachers. Teachers also negotiated improved language on school safety issues and student resources, and improved quality of services provided to special ed students with protected access to IEPs.

Discovery Charter: Strong finish

At Discovery Charter School in Chula Vista, the **Discovery Charter School Teachers Union** (DCSTU) continues to battle anti-union behavior by charter leadership that culminated with DCSTU filing an unfair labor practice charge with the state Public Employment Relations Board last May. DCSTU has since settled with the charter board after securing a commitment from Chula Vista Elementary School District and the site administrator to publicly uphold guidelines of the state Educational Employment Relations Act. According to DCSTU President Olivia Norman, successful organizing resulted in a 3 percent raise retroactive to July 2018.

Darnall Charter: Improved conditions

At Darnall Charter School in San Diego, the **Darnall Charter Teachers Association** (DCTA) recently completed a lengthy negotiation that included a full review of their contract. They successfully secured a 3 percent raise retroactive to 2018 and an additional 3 percent starting July 2019. DCTA President Janet Burton was pleased with the addition of six weeks of fully paid child bonding leave, along with additional improvements to member working conditions.



ACTA Co-Presidents Eleanor Moore and Philip Marks

▲ **Alpine County: Child care, salaries**

Organizing matters. Just ask the 10 members of the **Alpine County Teachers Association**, whose negotiated agreement with Alpine County Unified School District achieved an average 10.75 percent salary increase, paid child care, and a say in the school calendar and binding arbitration.

The agreement reduces the workday by 15 minutes, and any faculty meeting, including IEPs and parent conferences, that runs over one hour will be paid. It also adds days to the calendar so educators can prepare for and hold parent conferences, grade, and prepare report cards. Teachers are also pleased with respectful workplace language, protection of ACTA's orientation rights, and enhanced privacy measures.



Accelerated teachers; student supporters, below.



Accelerated Schools: State's first strike by charter educators

A strike by charter school educators — California's first, and only the second in the nation — ended in a settlement. Teachers at three Los Angeles campuses operated by **The Accelerated Schools** (TAS) reached a tentative agreement Jan. 27 after an eight-day strike that put new focus on problems unique to privately run charter schools.

TAS teachers, represented by UTLA, began their strike one day after UTLA members hit the pavement themselves. They spoke powerfully and emotionally about the uncertainty of ongoing employment and poor working conditions, which had led to a 40 percent annual teacher

turnover rate at the schools. The settlement, approved by 98.7 percent of TAS teachers, provides severance pay and benefits for teachers who are not rehired, a \$10,000 re-signing bonus for teachers who return to their positions at the beginning of the year, increases to employers' share of health costs, a stronger arbitration process, and more collaboration on student-centered issues.

"Our strike was critical for our profession, and unfortunately this dispute was a long time coming here at our schools," says TAS kindergarten teacher Amanda Martinez. "Having this agreement in place provides teachers solid ground to stand on as we work toward building the school that this community deserves."

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Third-graders at Dena Boer Elementary in Salida take their slates and chalk outside for a math lesson as in the pioneer days of the 1850s.



PIONEER DAYS

Salida students have a blast from the past

By **Sherry Posnick-Goodwin** Photos by **Scott Buschman**



he girls wear braids, bonnets and long dresses. The boys sport suspenders and caps. Students share their “readers” with classmates. During recess they pitch pennies and play jacks and pick-up-sticks. At PE, they square-dance.

NO, THIS ISN'T *Little House on the Prairie*; it's third-graders at Dena Boer Elementary School in Salida going back in time to fully comprehend pioneer and Native American life in the 1850s. It happens every May.

“Their whole world changes,” says teacher Lenora Gerber, who started the tradition over two decades ago in this rural community near Modesto. “It’s a great way to end the school year.”

Gerber and fellow third-grade teachers Lori Hall and

Michelle Kwietkauski, all members of the Salida Teachers Association, take the “Wagons Ho — Pioneer Days and the West We Go!” project seriously, and so do the children.

Lights are off to simulate life without electricity. Paper, pencil and computer are replaced with slate and chalk. Students learn to weave cloth and Native American baskets, churn butter, make strawberry jam and ice cream, and bake pretzels. Boys sit on one side of the room and girls on the other.

The Origin of Everyday Sayings

In Dena Boer Elementary School's "Wagons Ho — Pioneer Days and the West We Go!" project, youngsters learn how to sew a button and hold a hammer, and they learn the real meaning of everyday sayings.

"Waste not, want not," for example, has taken on new meaning for student Ana Villavazo, who understands that pioneers needed everything at their disposal for survival, while people today think nothing of throwing away excess food.

Another saying, **"throwing the baby out with the bath water,"** refers to the fact that the entire family used the same tub of water for a bath every week or so, and the baby was always bathed last. The water was so dark by then it could be difficult to see the baby.

The expression **"It's raining cats and dogs"** refers to a time when houses were made of mud, and cats and dogs stayed up on the thatched roofs. When it rained extremely hard, the cats and dogs fell through.

- Newly freed slaves, who lack the staples and other supplies schoolchildren bring with them.
- The storekeeper's children, who always have abundant supplies.
- The Allen boys from the reverend's family: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
- Other groups of siblings.

The teachers also take on new identities. They are single, since female teachers were not allowed to marry in the 1800s. Many had to live with the families of students, since they were not supposed to live independently.

Educating students about the political realities of the past is incorporated into the unit. Students learn



Above: Adamariz Betancourt, Jayne Lopez and Dylan Duran play pick-up-sticks. Dylan wears a placard describing the character he is role-playing.

Left: Students take their partner by the hand for a square dance.



"Students learn that freed slaves and Native Americans were extremely mistreated and not treated equally. We have important discussions about the social injustice of the era."

—Lori Hall, Salida Teachers Association

Last year, the project received grant money from CTA's Institute for Teaching, which has been a longtime leader in rewarding innovative educators.

Classrooms at the fictitious "Apple Valley School" are modeled after a one-room schoolhouse, and teachers incorporate hands-on projects with state standards. Each student assumes a new identity, becoming a child from the past, with a

new name, age and persona. Students have other "family members" in the classroom and work cooperatively with them as a team throughout the two-week event. The older the child, the more responsibilities he or she has.

The family groups include:

- Farmer's children, who at times may have to miss school to help with the crops.



Teacher Lori Hall helps students with pretzel making. Students also learn how to make butter, strawberry jam and ice cream.

about the Underground Railroad, which helped transport slaves to the North, and the hardships and unfairness that Native Americans suffered. Their studies involve reading appropriate texts and watching informative programs.

“Students learn that freed slaves and Native Americans were extremely mistreated and not treated equally in any way,” says Hall. “They realize that the land was taken away from the Native Americans. We have important discussions about the social injustice of the era.”

Every morning when students walk in the door, a “clean hands and clean face check” takes place, and then they’re assigned “fates” based on possible



Above: Marieli Magana, center, has fun kneading her pretzel dough.



Left: For this project, boys share the work equally with girls, such as washing their socks with a tub and washboard.

scenarios of that era. For example, a student may have a sick lamb at home and miss school to take care of it. Or they may have to walk five miles into town to unhitch a horse named Snowball because their parents are occupied. Fortunately, students don’t really have to do these things, but they get an idea of challenges pioneer youngsters faced.

Students also learn about other challenges in the days of yore — in class they received a “swat” if they misbehaved and had to wear a dunce cap if they were caught daydreaming or gave a wrong answer. However, during the re-enactment, they receive points for participation, not punishment. They must acquire a certain number of points to “graduate” during a ceremony attended by their real families, where children can show off their square dancing moves.

Students, for the most part, develop an appreciation for the era they really live in.

“We get to make fun stuff and learn fun things, but I wouldn’t want to live during that time, because it’s a hard life and you

Left: As boys return to the classroom after recess, they bow respectfully to their teacher (Lenora Gerber), and she returns the gesture with a curtsy.



Above: Ana Villivazo and Grecia Marquez enjoy their freshly baked pretzels as Lenora Gerber looks on.

Left: Jazmine Barreras, Grecia Marquez and Giselle Brown follow the pretzel recipe.

own property.

Boys in pioneer times eschewed “women’s work” such as washing clothes and cooking. However, for this project, boys and girls equally share the cooking and even wash socks by hand with a washboard and a bar of soap, which they do not find especially fun.

In the end, both students and teachers learn from the experience.

“I love teaching this,” says Gerber. “Normally the end of the year is pretty chaotic. But during Pioneer Days, students don’t even think about being disruptive. That’s because they are learning so many interesting things and having so much fun.” ■

“Students don’t even think about being disruptive. That’s because they are learning so many interesting things and having so much fun.”

—**Lenora Gerber**, Salida Teachers Association

have to work hard all day,” confides Alvaro Calderon. “If you wanted something and you didn’t have money, you’d have to trade for it. And if you got sick or stung by a bee, there wasn’t modern medicine, so you just had to pray.”

Reagan Noble read a book about “amazing ladies” of that era, which made her appreciative that she will never have to wear a corset. She is also grateful that women today can choose any profession — not just teaching — and can vote and

Your Classroom Assistant

Amazon's Alexa is here to help

By **Terry Ng**

NEED A LITTLE HELP in your classroom? Someone to keep track of your classroom schedule, remind you to give a quiz, or read a book to students?

Help is here — and her name is Alexa.

Alexa is Amazon's virtual assistant that works with their line of Echo voice-activated, Internet-connected smart speakers. Named after the ancient library of Alexandria, Alexa allows you to ask questions and make requests using just your voice. It's like having a *Star Trek* computer inside your classroom. Here are just a few examples of what you can ask Alexa to do.

“Alexa, how do you spell ____?”

“Alexa, remind me to ____.”

“Alexa, what is the definition of ____?”

“Alexa, what is a synonym for ____?”

“Alexa, what is the weather today?”

“Alexa, what is my schedule today?”

“Alexa, set a timer for ____.”

“Alexa, read ____ book.”

*“Alexa, what is ____ plus ____?”
(Or minus, times, etc.)*

“Alexa, pick a number between ____ and ____.”

“Alexa, play ____ music.”

Along with impressive out-of-the-box commands you can ask, there are 70,000 more skills you can add to extend Alexa's capabilities. Just go to [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) and search Alexa Skills to link to your account. On the following page are a few popular ones for the classroom.



▼ Echo Chamber

Get started by purchasing an Alexa-enabled Amazon Echo speaker:

Echo Dot

(\$29.99)

Amazon's most popular smart speaker, with new fabric design, and improved speaker for richer and louder sound.

Echo

(\$89.99)

Powerful speakers with Dolby technology play 360-degree audio with clear vocals and dynamic bass response.

Echo Dot Kids Edition

(\$69.99)

Just ask and Alexa will play music, answer questions, read stories, tell jokes, and more — all with younger ears in mind. The Kids Edition, pictured above, filters out explicit lyrics on Amazon Music and disables voice purchasing, news, and adult-themed question-and-answer scenarios. It's more durable and comes with a year of FreeTime Unlimited, which gives you access to thousands of books, movies, TV shows, educational apps and games.



Heads Up by Ellen DeGeneres

Fun and hilarious game that the comic actor plays on her show. She'll provide clues to help you guess the word on the card, from naming celebrities to identifying your favorite movies. Guess the word before the timer runs out!



National Geographic Geo Quiz

Put your kids' geography knowledge to the test. Only the first try counts, but you can repeat the questions as many times as you'd like each day for practice. Six new questions are released every day.



This Day in History

Check in with Alexa to find out about the historical events that happened on this day and every day of the year.



Amazon Storytime

A collection of more than 100 short stories featuring lively full-cast recordings. Turn any time into story time with this free Alexa skill for kids ages 5-12.



The Queen's Mathematician

Kids use early elementary math facts, solve word problems, and stretch their imaginations and vocabularies in a quirky tree house castle full of surprises and kid-friendly humor.



AskMyClass

Set up askMyClass to give your students a morning message, reflective question, writing prompt, math word problem, dance breaks, and music countdowns. AskMyClass allows teachers more time for planning and instruction, while saving effort in looking for new ideas.

OUR CHANGED NARRATIVE

Highlights from January CTA State Council

SOLIDARITY RULES

The energy at January's CTA State Council was palpable as delegates celebrated **United Teachers Los Angeles'** historic, enormously successful six-day strike and settlement with Los Angeles Unified School District.

CTA President Eric Heins, in his address to Council, praised UTLA leadership's work and added, "Organizing and collective action are becoming the new normal. ... This strike changed the narrative on public education in California and across the country!"

UTLA President Alex Caputo-Pearl gave full credit to the collective action of UTLA members. "Strikes work," he said, repeating UTLA's rallying cry: "When we strike, we win!" He added that partnerships with parents and communities and "being bold in our demands" were critical, and promised: "[UTLA is] absolutely 100 percent going to be there with our sisters and brothers in Oakland," referring to a potential strike by **Oakland Education Association** members in February. Council in fact approved an OEA Day of Action on Feb. 15.

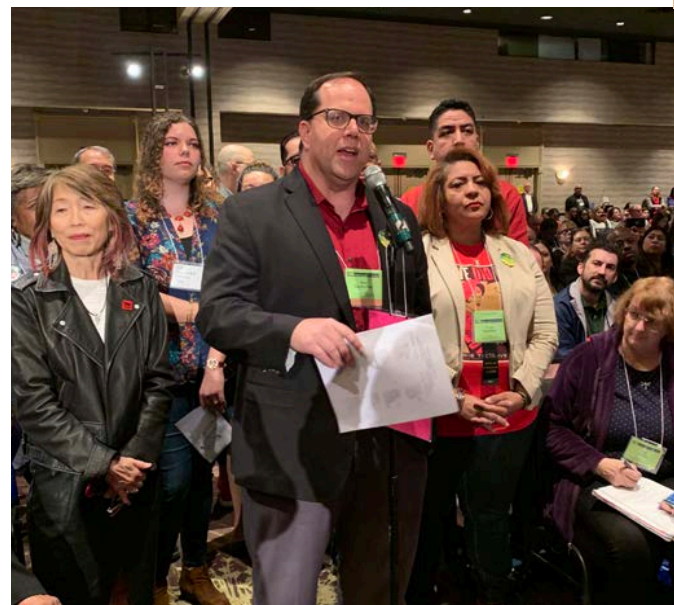
Delegates roared their support for striking educators at three Los Angeles campuses of **The Accelerated Schools** — the first charter school teachers in California to go on strike. Their eight-day strike ended with a settlement on Sunday, Jan. 27.



◀ The Accelerated Schools teacher German Gallardo speaks to Council about the charter school educators' strike.



▲ CTA President Eric Heins, Secretary-Treasurer David Goldberg, Vice President Theresa Montaño, state Superintendent Tony Thurmond, and CTA Executive Director Joe Nuñez.



▲ UTLA President Alex Caputo-Pearl addresses the delegates, flanked by Arlene Inouye, UTLA bargaining chair, and Cecily Myart-Cruz, UTLA/NEA vice president.

Delegates also heard from **UNITE HERE Local 11** workers at the Westin Bonaventure, the long-time CTA State Council hotel in Los Angeles, who successfully settled a contract that gives them base pay of \$25 an hour, affordable health care, increased pensions, and stronger protection for immigrants. Local 11 Co-President Kurt Petersen said CTA backing was invaluable during negotiations. He was able to tell the hotel, "If we don't settle by 3 p.m. today, CTA is not coming back."



◀ Superintendent Tony Thurmond greets fellow Panamanians and CTA educators Karen Lord-Eyewe, Kelly Villalobos and Antonieta Buglioni Somoza. Lord-Eyewe gifted him with a souvenir scarf.



TONY GIVES THANKS

Tony Thurmond, the new state superintendent of public instruction, came to Council on Sunday morning to warmly thank delegates and CTA for supporting him in the November election. Calling educators “courageous,” he told the crowd, “I’m always listening and following your lead so we can work together to make our public schools the best they can be.” He also assured OEA, “We got your back!”

MORNING JOE

CTA Executive Director Joe Nuñez addressed Council on Sunday morning, giving a rousing talk about CTA’s election victories, UTLA’s successful strike, and Gov. Gavin Newsom’s proposed budget, which includes a \$2.8 billion increase in K-12 funding over last year’s budget.

He noted that all of these “give us focus and voice to work on the important policy goals of adequate school funding, charter school accountability, charter school caps, social justice, class size caps and early childhood education.”

ELECTION RESULTS

State Council delegates elected the following members:

NEA Board of Directors

- District 3: Robbie Kreitz
- District 4: Taunya Jaco
- District 5: Telly Tse
- District 6: Mel House
- District 13: Ruth Luevand

NEA Alternate Director,
Seat 1: Nora Allstedt

CTA/ABC Committee,
District O: James Benanti

EXECUTIVE OFFICER ELECTIONS

CTA’s president, vice president and secretary-treasurer are elected to two-year terms by CTA State Council of Education. The officers report to the CTA Board of Directors. New officers will be elected at the March 2019 State Council. Candidates’ campaign statements start on page 65.

LOOKING AHEAD

State Council meets March 29-31 at the Westin Bonaventure in Los Angeles.

TAX FAIRNESS

Council unanimously and enthusiastically approved CTA’s support of the Schools and Communities First initiative, which will be on the ballot in November 2020. This will be the first commercial property tax reform initiative to qualify for the ballot in 40 years since Proposition 13 passed in 1978.

Prop. 13 was passed to give important protections to California homeowners. Unfortunately, over the years, big corporations and wealthy commercial property owners avoided paying their fair share in taxes — keeping billions from schools, parks and services that rely on local property tax revenue. Closing California’s commercial property tax loophole restores \$11 billion for schools, community colleges, health clinics and other vital local services.

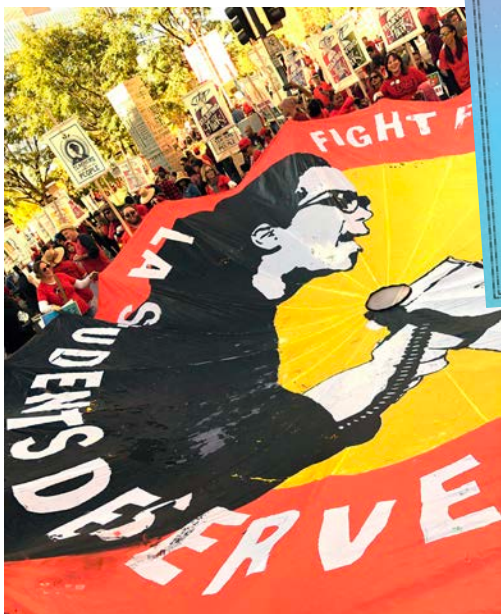
CTA has been advocating for tax fairness and closing this loophole for years, and was part of the broad coalition of community groups working on the issue. CTA joins the League of Women Voters of California, Common Sense Kids Action, the California Federation of Teachers and others to fund our schools by closing Prop. 13’s loophole while continuing to guarantee protections for homeowners, residential renters, agricultural land, and small businesses. Go to cta.org/taxfairness for more.



Roxana Dueñas, a Roosevelt High School educator and UTLA member, became the face of the strike thanks to this artwork by Boyle Heights artist Ernesto Yerena.



This banner, designed by artists Paul Kjelland and Jeanette Arellano, adorns Oakland Education Association Headquarters. Inset at left: Artwork by Nisha Seti.



Educators, artists and community members created 24-foot-wide parachute banners at the UTLA Art Build.

THE ART OF THE PROTEST

Visual work has long punctuated labor struggles, including current CTA actions

By Julian Peeples

FROM A COLORFUL BANNER created in 1835 for the Journeyman House Carpenters' Association of Philadelphia, to the roller-skating "Don't Be a Scab" girls in New York's Union Square, to a multitude of creative (and rainproof) signs that lined the sidewalk in front of every school in Los Angeles in January, art has always been an integral part of the labor movement.



Artists Favianna Rodriguez and Claudio Martinez designed this parachute banner to highlight Oakland's teacher retention crisis.



OEA member Kampala Taiz-Rancifer and her daughter Jade color Micah Bazant's "Public Schools are the Heart of the Community" design.

Oakland educators and supporters silk-screened hundreds of picket signs in preparation for a potential strike,



The art builds attracted students and their parents, who painted and created while also discussing how to improve their communities.

Whether simple, persuasive, incisive or just downright funny, the art of labor struggles serves many purposes: to spread the word of injustice, attract attention, build support for workers, shame the bosses, and rally the union to victory, among others. Many famous works of labor art are striking and iconic, like the "I AM A MAN" sign carried by Memphis sanitation workers during their 1968 strike, and timeless in their simplicity, like the black and red Aztec eagle of United Farm Workers.

The art of labor is rooted in our communities, reflecting the images, values, hopes and dreams of united workers. It is through these creations that they speak to the public about their struggles — about what it means to be a worker in America.

Recent community "art builds" held by United Teachers Los

Angeles and the Oakland Education Association have embraced the idea that labor struggles are community struggles, inviting local artists, students, parents and neighbors not only to paint, draw and create, but also to talk about how they can work together to create opportunity and improve their collective quality of life.

"Our fight is for a better future for public education in Oakland," says OEA President Keith Brown. "We invited local parents and students to join us in creating the artwork and signs that will help educators defend and promote Oakland public schools."

To see an extensive collection of impactful and evocative labor art throughout history, visit laborarts.org. ■

Mother-Daughter Team

These educators bring learnings from CTA conferences back to the classroom **By Cynthia Menzel**

THE BEST TEACHING

ideas come from CTA conferences, according to mother-daughter science teachers Rachel and Katie Wilson. The Visalia Unified Teachers Association (VUTA) members teach at Divisadero Middle School and say you can see the results of CTA's professional development sessions all over their classrooms.

"At the beginning of the year, we get strategies from presenters like *Teach Like a Pirate* author Dave Burgess that we can use all year," says Rachel. "It helps me put the wow into my lessons."

And it helps them team-teach more efficiently. A weekly planner, for example, allows them to collaborate continually, not only with each other, but with their students and with another teaching partner, C.J. Williams.

"We team-teach in two separate rooms and now use Google Sheets to lesson-plan, something we learned about at CTA's New Educator Weekend," says Katie. "Students can see what we're doing and where we're going."

"This has been the best thing we've learned at a conference, because it

allows that continuous PLC (professional learning community) collaboration," says Rachel.

Katie uses toys to serve as memory aids and illustrate scientific concepts. "When I'm talking about molecules, for example, I talk about Lolli the Lobster. When we're cold, molecules are attracted to each other," she says, hugging a stuffed red lobster to show how molecules cling together to form a liquid or a solid, like ice. Then she throws Lolli over her shoulder, like a molecule flying away from the others, and explains, "When Lolli gets hot, he is now a gas. Students look at Lolli and think, 'Oh! Attraction! Molecules are attracted to each other.'"

Teaching partner Williams utilizes Mr. Whiskers, a stuffed cat, for his molecule lesson.

Rachel, on the other hand, eschews toys. "I have a skeleton in my classroom, and we're attracted to each other," says Rachel, demonstrating the lesson.

District involvement

VUTA makes sure members have opportunities to attend CTA's New Educator Weekend and Good Teaching Conference, especially



Katie Wilson, her mother Rachel Wilson, and C.J. Williams are science teaching partners at Divisadero Middle School in Visalia. They all hold props they use in the classroom.

"At the beginning of the year, we get strategies from [conference] presenters that we can use all year. It helps me put the wow into my lessons."

—**Rachel Wilson**, Visalia Unified Teachers Association

new teachers. Some 40 percent of Visalia's teachers have been in the district five years or less.

School administrators have attended CTA conferences, as well. This has resulted in bringing to Visalia specialists like Conscious Teaching consultant and author Grace Dearborn, and creating mini-conferences taught by VUTA members. "Katie and I demonstrated the chicken foot dissection, the prosthetic hand model building, and blueprinting and 3-D printing," Rachel says.

The collaboration has enhanced the district's mentoring program, something the union fully supports.

Lured away with a dishwasher

Rachel started teaching "because I really liked working in my children's classrooms when they were in elementary school." Katie came into teaching through an internship program, assigned to a

class that had had multiple substitutes. Her mother was her mentor. "I came in midyear and couldn't have done it without her. Her mentorship was invaluable, even though at that point she was at a different school."

Rachel eventually moved to Katie's school. "The principal said she'd provide a dishwasher," says Rachel, "and as a science teacher, not having to wash dishes..." She pauses. "The dishwasher and Katie were incentives for me to change schools."

Rachel appreciates having a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to work with my daughter."

Both women are involved union activists. At 29, Katie co-chairs the VUTA bargaining team and is its youngest member. Rachel serves as a VUTA mentor.

"There are things I want changed, and the best way to make change is through the union," Rachel says.

MLK JR. MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP CELEBRATES 25 YEARS

Nearly \$1.5 million awarded to more than 500 aspiring educators

By Julian Peeples

FOR 25 YEARS, CTA has awarded scholarships in memory of Martin Luther King Jr. to encourage ethnic minority students to become educators and promote professional growth for ethnic minority educators.

Since its founding, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund has awarded nearly \$1.5 million to more than 500 recipients to further those goals and work to address the shortage of ethnic minority educators in California — only one-third of California educators are ethnic minorities, compared with three-fourths of students statewide.

Scholarship recipients have been eager to follow in educators' footsteps. "Just as my teacher shaped me into who I am, I want to do the same," wrote Alyssa Gomez of an influential art teacher, in her winning application this past year. She also credited her mother, a longtime educator and CTA member, as a role model.

During this Silver Anniversary year of the MLK Jr. Scholarship, CTA awarded 22 scholarships worth a total of \$90,000 to CTA members, dependents of members, and Student CTA members. ■



THE 2017-18 RECIPIENTS ARE:

CTA Members (and chapter): Justine Almanza (Manteca EA); Lily Cooke (CTA of Berryessa); Rosanna McCormick (Monterey Bay TA); Roberto Moedano (Holtville TA); Seth Simas (Modesto TA).

Student CTA Members (and school): Irene Amezcua (CSU San Marcos); Brayden Campos (The Master's University); Erin Githens (Chapman University); Alondra Guadarrama (Bakersfield College); Sherman Vernon (Fielding Graduate University).

Dependents of CTA Members (and chapter): Ilianna Delgado (Visalia Unified TA); Alexis Garcia (Vallejo EA); Alyssa Gomez (TA of Norwalk-La Mirada); Jasmin Gonzalez (Bakersfield Elementary TA); Jesus Gonzalez (Coachella Valley TA); Sabina Hills-Villalobos (Turlock TA); Grant Johnson (Panama-Buena Vista TA); Alexandria Nunez (Corcoran Faculty Association); Cameron Riefe (UTLA/NEA); Alexis Roman (Associated Chino Teachers); Cheyenne Torres (San Mateo Elementary TA); Isabella Wagner (Elk Grove EA).

The application deadline for the 2018-19 MLK Jr. Memorial Scholarships is Feb. 15. More information is available at cta.org/scholarships.



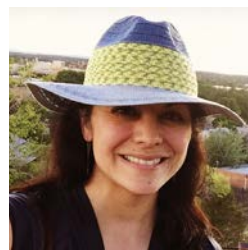
Erin Githens



Grant Johnson



Irene Amezcua



Rosanna McCormick



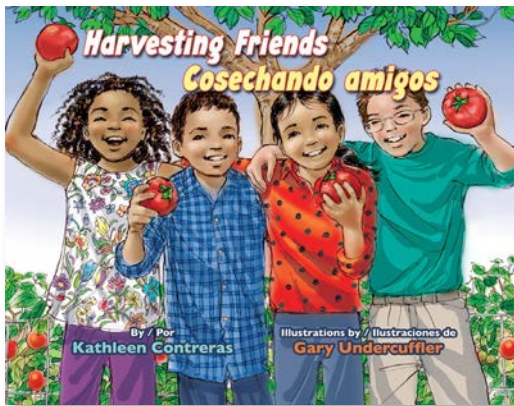
Sabina Hills-Villalobos

LIT

From Within

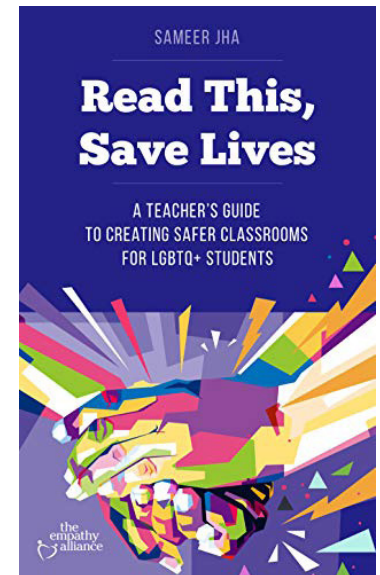
New work by our members

Educators are a talented bunch, and often their creativity spills over into a book, album or other publication. We're happy to debut a new, recurring section that showcases their gifts.

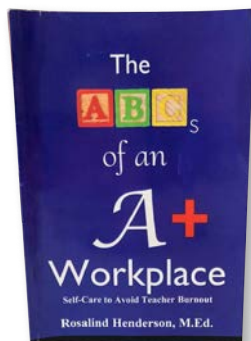


California Faculty Association member **KATHLEEN CONTRERAS** is a bilingual educator and author of children's books, including the new picture book *Harvesting Friends/ Cosechando Amigos* (grades pre-K–3). In the book, young Lupe and Antonio learn that planting and tending a garden not only yield great veggies, but can grow community as well. A few simple recipes are included.

South Tahoe Educators Association member **BRIDEY THELEN HEIDEL** met student Sameer Jha at Human Rights Campaign's 2017 Time to Thrive conference, which promotes safety, inclusion and well-being for LGBTQ+ youth. Jha, who was severely bullied at middle and elementary school for being different, was 16 when he wrote *Read This, Save Lives: A Teacher's Guide to Creating Safer Classrooms for LGBTQ+ Students* in 2017. One chapter contains an interview with Heidel, who teaches English at South Tahoe High School and founded the school's Gender and Sexuality Alliance. Read an excerpt of the interview on page 25.



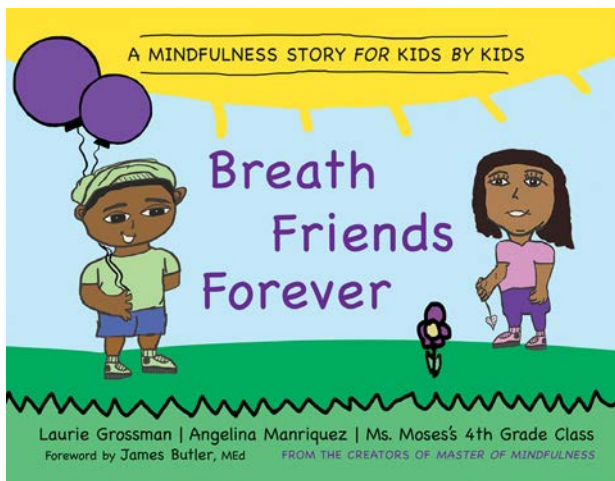
FREE FOR MEMBERS ONLY: Jha, now a leading trans activist, is making his book available for free to *Educator* readers March 1-3. Download it at tinyurl.com/ReadThisSaveLives. You'll find more than 100 actionable tips created with busy, resource-constrained teachers in mind, as well as cutting-edge research, critical terminology, real-world case studies, and resources from some of the best LGBTQ+ rights organizations in the country.



As an elementary school teacher for almost 30 years, **ROSALIND HENDERSON**, Inglewood Teachers Association, understands stress. Henderson is also a certified leadership trainer, and her book, *The ABCs of an A+ Workplace: Self-Care to Avoid Teacher Burnout*, shares research-based strategies, mindsets and tools that will help you control your work environment so you can be a more powerful educator. Burnout is preventable, says Henderson, and she can show you how.

Work, Work, Work

Do you have or know of work by CTA members that can be highlighted on these pages? Let us know! Send details to editor@cta.org, with "Lit From Within" in the subject line. We lean toward work that can be used in the classroom. (Member letters, opinion pieces and essays are welcome; send inquiries to editor@cta.org.)



Oakland Education Association members **PETER CATALFO** and **SUSAN SUMMERFIELD**'s kindergarten and first-grade classes at Reach Academy figure prominently in *Breath Friends Forever: A Mindfulness Story for Kids by Kids* (grades pre-K–2). That's because their students served as study subjects for authors Laurie Grossman, Angelina Manriquez and **CHASMIN MOSES**' fourth-grade class. The book tells the story of how little Leo teaches his friend Nessa a few easy ways to stay calm while dealing with day-to-day stresses.



Let CVT show you
and your chapter
members the
right path.

More Choices and Value-Added Benefits

Healthcare can be confusing with all the plans, options and variables. CTA members have different family healthcare situations and need to have choices, as well as plans, that meet their needs. That's what California's Valued Trust is all about. More choices, more options and people to help your Association and its members through the complex journey of healthcare benefits.



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Student Loans

Getting debt relief is complicated and confusing — but help is on the way

Do you have student loan debt that's weighing you down? You're one of many. According to Fidelity Investments, about 44 million Americans owe more than \$1.4 trillion in student loan debt — a debt category second only to home mortgages. And the number of people taking on such debt is expected to double by 2025.

Whether you're a millennial, Gen Xer or baby boomer, the burden of student loan debt can manifest itself in increased stress and postponement of major life decisions such as marriage, starting a family or buying a home. You might also contribute less toward your retirement or even delay retirement.

The good news is that depending on your loan type, current teaching assignment and length of time teaching, you could be eligible for a loan cancellation or loan forgiveness for teaching in the public school system.

CTA has information and resources to help members with the three federal student loan forgiveness programs:

The Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program

Which allows you to reduce or eliminate your loan debt from several different types of loans. Applies to Direct and Stafford loans.

The Teacher Loan Cancellation Program

Which allows you to reduce or eliminate your loan debt from Federal Perkins Loans.

The Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program

Which allows you to eliminate your loan debt balance and is available to people who enter and continue to work full-time in public service jobs, including public education.

NEA Member Benefits' Sean Mabey, who presents workshops on student loan debt at CTA conferences and for individual chapters, says that each person's case is different.

"It's highly personal," says Mabey, adding that many people do not even know what kind of loan they have.

He tells members that after graduation, you should work with your loan servicer, such as FedLoan. The servicer can help determine, for example, how much

debt you have and whether you have a Stafford or a Perkins loan.

It gets complicated, he cautions. If your debt is high, a Public Service Loan Forgiveness program could be a good option for you, but it depends on other factors such as if you are married and file joint taxes, how many children you have, and new revisions to the tax code.

Mabey suggests that you use a loan servicer's chat feature — versus the phone — because conversations are

documented. Documentation is important when you ask such questions as “If I do what you are recommending, am I eligible for a Stafford loan forgiveness program? And if not, what should I do?”

These programs have varying eligibility requirements, and the rules, paperwork and documentation can be confusing. Fortunately, NEA Member Benefits (NEAMB) will soon unveil a solution to help you navigate through them; it will pull your data together, make projections about what forgiveness program is best for you, and facilitate the processing of paperwork.

“You’ll learn if a Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program is worth it,” Mabey says.

“NEAMB heard members’ requests for assistance and advice through this process,” Mabey says. “We want to help make it smoother and easier to understand.”

Be sure to read the next issue of the *Educator* about the launch of the new NEAMB program.

Resources

- Federal Student Aid, U.S. Department of Education, studentloans.gov
- Federal Student Aid Information Center for questions about eligible loans or more information about your loan, studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/loans or 800-433-3243.
- National Student Loan Data System (to find out more about your loan, locate your paperwork, etc.), nslds.ed.gov
- CTA Member Benefits website for federal student loan debt information and resources, ctamemberbenefits.org/studentloans
- NEA video on Public Service Loan Forgiveness and Income Driven Repayment, nea.org/degreesnotdebt

Should I consolidate my loans?

This is one of the most-asked questions, and one you should consider carefully. Know that you may jeopardize your ability to apply for loan forgiveness programs if you consolidate, and you are not eligible for deferment or forbearance. Consolidation is a one-time deal, unlike, say, a mortgage where you can refinance. The advantages are that you may qualify for a lower fixed interest rate or lock in a rate instead of being subject to annual rate changes.

Financial Wellness

Let CTA help you get financially fit and informed

INTERESTED IN SOME advice on financial wellness? Visit the CTA Financial Wellness Center at CTAinvest.org. You’ll find key financial topics that can help you get the most out of your money and achieve your financial goals, including helpful videos, calculators, and other resources. Topics include:

- **The Academy:** Information and tools to help sort out your finances.
- **The Buzz:** Financial news and must-reads.
- **The Plan:** CTA’s Retirement Savings Plan for members.
- **Jargon:** Decoding financial terms so you can make the best decisions.
- **Tools:** Simple tools to help you crunch the numbers.

You’ll also find answers to some common member questions, and of course contact information so you can ask us your own questions.



BUYING A HOME?

BUYING OR REFINANCING a home is a team effort, and Provident Credit Union can help. Its well-trained, highly experienced mortgage consultants can assist CTA members in getting the financing you need to purchase or refinance the home you want as quickly and painlessly as possible.

Provident offers CTA members an exclusive 0.125 percent discount on mortgage loans — saving thousands over the life of the loans. It also provides informative on-site home-buying seminars and online webinars, and with its 19 branches and over 900 credit union shared branches, it can compete with the big guys while remaining agile enough to be truly responsive.

To learn more, go to CTAMemberBenefits.org/provident.

Celebrating the gift (from left): Reiner Light, Camp Fire education administrator; David Smith, TA of Paradise president; Mike Greer, PUSD board member; Christy Forward, CalCas field marketing manager; Kat Stevens, teacher; Cris Dunlap, principal; Valerie Murufas, educational specialist; Larry Johnson, co-principal; Susan Green, CTA Board member; Michelle John, PUSD superintendent; Mark Leach, Chico area UniServ staff.



A Lounge of Their Own

Paradise educators get a special space from California Casualty

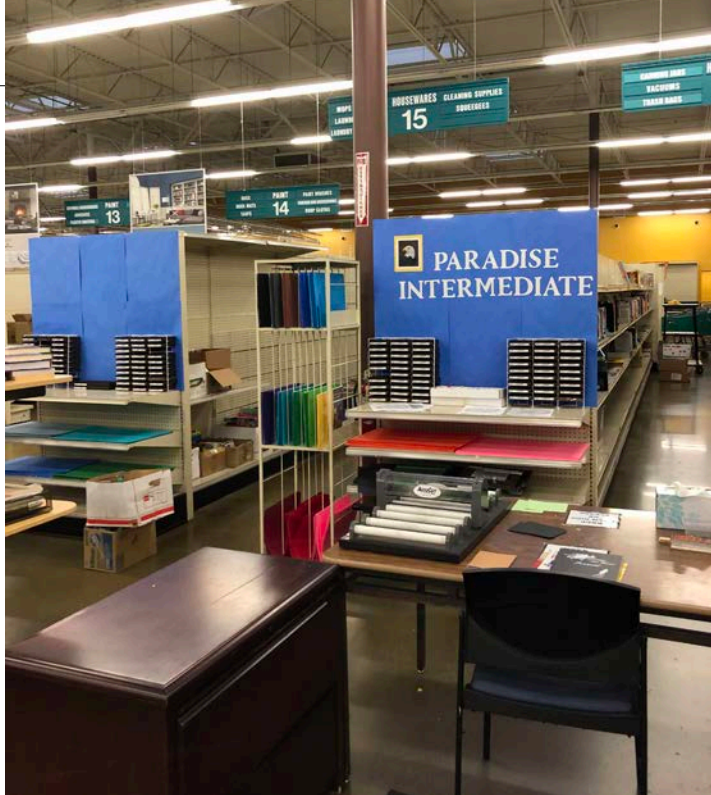


IN THE HORRIFIC Camp Fire in November, educators in Paradise did a miraculous job of ferrying students away from the inferno that consumed schools, churches, stores and houses — getting kids to safety in nearby communities. While no students were harmed, all but one of the Paradise Unified schools suffered significant damage or were destroyed. The fabric of the tight-knit town was stretched to the limit with homes of educators, retirees, school board members and students in ashes.

Eager to get their students back into a school routine, Paradise Intermediate School (PINT) set up classes 25 miles away in Chico in a vacant Orchard Supply Hardware store. It is not the most inviting environment: Overhead signs still show where the garden supplies, paint and appliances once were, and aisles still divide the space. Educators did their best to make it comfortable and conducive to learning.

Knowing the emotional and physical trauma the wildfire inflicted on Paradise educators, California Casualty is providing a School Lounge Makeover to PINT.

California Casualty, which provides auto and home Insurance to CTA members, is gifting the \$7,500 makeover to offer a more soothing, useful area for instructors and support personnel to take a break, relax and recharge.



“AS EDUCATORS, WE PUT OTHERS AHEAD OF OURSELVES. IT’S SO NICE THAT CALIFORNIA CASUALTY RECOGNIZES EVERYTHING OUR TEACHERS ARE DOING TO BE THERE FOR OUR KIDS.”

—Cris Dunlap, principal of Paradise Intermediate School

▲ A scene in the video “From the Ashes”: Dan Owen teaches seventh-grade history in a makeshift classroom in a vacant Orchard Supply Hardware store in Chico. The video, by Tava Kessler, documents how Paradise Intermediate School educators and students are resilient in the face of challenges at their temporary site. View it at tinyurl.com/PINT-video.

Principal Cris Dunlap, one of 35 PINT staff members who lost a home in the fire, says the offer means a lot to everyone. “We’ve focused so much on giving students a learning space and place to be with their teachers and friends. As educators, we put others ahead of ourselves. It’s so nice that California Casualty recognizes the valor of our teachers and everything they are doing to be there for our kids and to keep the district going.”

She added that it’s important for staff to continue to bond with students, providing a sense of normalcy for a community that has been decimated.

California Casualty field marketing manager Christy Forward, who dedicated time working at the Chico Regional Resource Center during the fire, lives and works in the area. “This is our way to give back. We realize there are many needs, but this is something that we could do. This group is the most positive, resilient people who I have had the opportunity to work with.”

“We’ve seen the dedication of administrators, teachers and staff firsthand, and we’re proud to show our appreciation,” adds Mike McCormick, California Casualty senior vice president.

Eon Office designers will work with PINT staff to create the school lounge of their dreams. The finished project will be

revealed later this spring. The lounge will be relocated back at Paradise Intermediate School once repairs there are completed.

California Casualty will be giving a School Lounge Makeover to another lucky school this year. CTA members can enter at NewSchoolLounge.com/CTA. The entry deadline is July 12, with a winner announced later that month. ■

California Casualty has partnered with CTA to provide members auto and home insurance tailored to their professional needs since 1951. Headquartered in San Mateo, California Casualty has been led by four generations of the Brown family. To learn more, or to request an auto insurance quote, visit CTAMemberBenefits.org/calcas or calcas.com/CTA, or call 800-800-9410.

Hope & Resilience

Educator survivors of California wildfires over the past few years come together to heal

By **Cynthia Menzel**



Tamsen Nash (Cobb/Middletown fire), TAP President David Smith (Camp Fire) and Nancy Blair (Santa Rosa fire) listen to SRTA President Will Lyon share lessons learned.

ON FEB. 2, CTA hosted “Teachers Thrive Together,” which brought Paradise educators who suffered through the recent Camp Fire together with educators who survived devastating wildfires in Santa Rosa and Middletown. Held in a Chico gym, the gathering was a time for sharing stories, comfort and caring.

Attendees sat informally in a circle and shared key moments, such as when they realized they’d lost all personal and professional possessions and nearly their lives. The fall-out included not remembering common words, like “coffee” and “salt.” They also spoke about what did or did not help in their recovery, and offered resources and ideas on how to help traumatized colleagues.

Paradise teachers said the love of colleagues and the generosity of the education community have been and continue to be overwhelming. CTA members continue fundraising efforts and support for Paradise area educators (gofundme.com/camp-fire-paradise-teachers), many of whom now teach in makeshift schools and classrooms.

“Teachers have done an amazing job adapting to their new teaching spaces and preparing for their students,” said David Smith, president of the Teachers Association of Paradise (TAP). “They greatly appreciate all of the letters of encouragement and donations.”

He said teachers are struggling in more ways than they always want to admit. “Teachers’ new ‘classrooms’ aren’t their classrooms, and for those who have lost their home and are in new living situations, that isn’t truly their home. There’s still a lot of sadness and stress due to picking up the pieces of their lives, and

frustration at the lack of support from our own district.”

Smith has been working with CTA leaders and staff to push for a bill that will secure state funding for the Paradise Unified School District at pre-fire Average Daily Attendance levels, which will avert educator layoffs for five years. “We believe that is the minimum amount of time it will take to rebuild the town of Paradise,” he said.

Thus far TAP and the district have not come to an agreement on additional hardship leave for teachers or compensation for extra work done by TAP members as a result of the Camp Fire. “Six other districts in Butte County have already completed agreements for hardship days,” said Smith, “but TAP is still negotiating language on something that is so minor in the scope of this massive, unprecedented disaster. This leaves our teachers feeling unsupported by their own employer.”

Despite this, teachers are persevering with and for their students. ■

Relief, and Ways to Give

The CTA Disaster Relief Fund has provided grants to 338 Paradise area teachers, and the CTA Chico Service Center Disaster Fund has distributed \$350 Costco cash cards, totaling some \$133,000, to members. Donations can be still be made by sending checks to CUTA Fire Relief, 819 East Fifth Ave., Chico, CA 95926.

Candidate for CTA President

Toby Boyd

Member, Elk Grove Education Association; CTA Board of Directors member.

I believe integrity is essential. Integrity requires that our association follow our established rules and that we conduct our business with transparency. We are a member-run organization with policies that guide our decisions, by-laws that ensure practices are consistent, and an election process that ensures individual member voices are heard.



Boyd

These core tenets are the foundation of our organization. I want to safeguard these tenets so that CTA continues to be the organization that people look to and trust.

Public Education is under attack from outside forces who do not have the best interests of students at heart. Now, more than ever, it's important for educators who are the experts in our field to unify our professional voices. We must work collectively and inclusively to maintain high standards within our organization and profession for the betterment of all our students.

We must ensure that we look at our profession through our lenses of Equity and Social Justice while seeking a dedicated funding source that provides educators and our students with adequate resources. ALL our voices and viewpoints are needed in order to steer this organization, fight for our student's educational needs, and provide them a quality education that will support them in being productive citizens.

I am the leader who will serve with integrity, include ALL voices, consider ALL ideas and bring people together to forge the path forward in the difficult times ahead.

Please support my candidacy to become your next president of the California Teachers Association.

I will be that Voice for All of Us!

Candidate for CTA President

Theresa Montaño

Member, California Faculty Association, CSU Northridge; current CTA vice president.

Thank you for the privilege of serving as your Vice President. In meeting many of you these past four years, I have learned that our students ages may vary, but their future depends on what happens in our classrooms.



Montaño

As we approach this election, post-Janus, billionaires continue to attack public education. The need for a strong, visionary and unifying CTA leadership — one that listens to, respects, and encourages diverse voices and opinions within our organization — is greater than ever! That's why I am running for President, not as an individual, but as part of the **Building Power Together** team. A team committed to providing the inclusive, pro-active, and visionary leadership needed to address the many challenges facing us — low salaries, inadequate working and learning conditions, growing privatization, etc.

Red State teacher rebellions have demonstrated that with parents, students, and other school employees, only the *collective* action of our *members*, not just elected leaders and staff, can build the necessary power to win sustainable and adequate state funding for public education and combat corporate school "reform." It is **that** collective unified vision that unites **Building Power Together**. Placing member power at the center, **BPT** (David, Leslie and I) is committed to a comprehensive platform. The platform: *Responsive Leadership, Strong Locals, Improved Classroom Conditions and Strong, Sustainable Community Alliances for Racial and Social Justice* was developed with many of you, it is a universal platform representing CTA's diversity.

For me, the **BPT** platform represents almost forty years of advocacy and organizing for public education, both as a K-12 and higher education teacher.

Beginning as a paraeducator, then twelve years as a Social Studies teacher, I served on UTLA's Board and CTA State Council. Later, as UTLA's *first* Professional Development Specialist, we established the Helen Bernstein Professional Development Center, where UTLA hosted teacher-led professional development. Today, as a college professor, I believe that professional development and social justice issues must be married to the need for decent salaries and working conditions. As VP, I turned that belief into action, working on cross-union, cross-constituent projects/grants for Dream Centers, music in school, after school and teacher pipeline programs.

Building Power Together, has experience and vision, but only collectively can we build a strong, transparent, united, pro-active, democratic CTA. **BPT** will work hard to win your trust and confidence, hoping to ultimately earn your vote—so that we can continue to build power together.

Candidate for CTA Vice President

Kim Lawrence

Member, Moreland Teachers Association; CTA State Council delegate; Santa Clara Service Center Council chair.

My name is Kim Lawrence. I am running for Vice President of CTA. CTA wins! What does that mean? In statewide politics, CTA wins. In court case after court case, CTA wins. In statewide political contests candidates seek out CTA's endorsement and support because CTA wins. CTA wins because of its representative democratic structure, which places its members first, always. Our members' representatives, in the open, make all of CTA's policies. Some want to change CTA's structure, ending officers' term limits and, therefore, removing one of our greatest values, that rank-and-file members are in charge. This kind of power grab will not happen under my watch. Under OUR watch, CTA wins, our members win.



Lawrence

I'm Kim Lawrence, a 32 year veteran of the classroom. My career began in a school with an extremely high poverty rate and a transiency rate of over 50% a year. My student advocacy work began immediately, becoming the voice for my students and their parents when they were denied services and treated unfairly due to their inability to access the system.

Upon relocating to my current school, I found that along with my passion for teaching, I found a passion for my union. During my years in local leadership, both at the bargaining table and as local president for 11 years, I was able to build a strong relationship with my members and district administration. I worked alongside my administrators to oppose a charter petition from a poorly planned and discriminatory charter school. Speaking before the State Board of Education and listening to their biased comments in favor of ALL charters, I realized that my passions extended to issues that affect the broader community. I also learned that I can, indeed, speak truth to power.

My experience as a teacher and local leader make me fully qualified to be your CTA Vice President. I am a strong advocate for our students and our members. I will continue to fight for not only what is right for the students of California but also what is right for our organization. CTA is an organization that must be run by people who uphold our mission and values above all else. A leader who will listen to all members and will keep at the forefront what is good for the whole, so that we can still say that CTA WINS! I am Kim Lawrence and I am that leader.

Candidate for CTA Vice President

David B. Goldberg

Member, United Teachers Los Angeles; current CTA secretary-treasurer.

It has been one of the biggest honors of my life to serve as your Secretary Treasurer these last four years. I have learned so much from you as I traveled all corners of California. The love for our students and for each other that guides so much of our work together always inspires me. As the dust settles after the last election, it is clear that we have proven our ability to win over voters at the ballot box once again. Now it is up to us to continue to win over our colleagues to becoming active members in our union. It is at our schools and worksites, after all, where our real power lies. It is the shared commitment to building collective power that brought together the Building Power Together Team. Theresa Montano (candidate for President), Leslie Littman (candidate for Secretary Treasurer), and myself (candidate for Vice-President) have each committed to a platform that puts our belief in member power at the center of our work.



Goldberg

Over the last 4 years as your CTA Secretary Treasurer I have committed myself to using our resources to build on our collective power. Aligning our budget with the priorities that council laid out in our Strategic Plan was the first step. Working with the budget committee to establish the Membership Engagement Grants as a new source of funding for local organizing helped us put our money where our mouth was. Talking to member leaders, especially those in small and rural chapters that the grant was geared towards serving, about the deeper engagement the grant has meant for them, is what motivated me to increase the funding available to \$660,000 for this year even as we were looking at a shrinking budget.

The planks of our platform, Responsive Leadership, Strong Locals, Fighting for Improved Classroom Conditions, and Building Strong Community Alliances for Economic and Racial Justice was developed collectively with many of you from all parts of the state; from the smallest chapters to our largest urbans. It was also shaped by the examples set last spring by educators across this nation who believed in themselves as catalysts for creating the changes needed in education. By running on a platform we are making a pact with you, and each other, that no matter whatever comes our way as leaders of CTA, we will continue to retain our focus on our collective power.

Below are campaign statements of candidates for CTA officers in the March 2019 State Council elections. The statements are unedited and limited to 400 words. Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed are those of the candidates and not necessarily those of CTA and NEA.

Candidate for CTA Secretary-Treasurer

Leslie Littman

Member, Hart District Teachers Association; CTA Board of Directors member.

I began teaching social studies in 1994 at Hart High, in Santa Clarita, a conservative suburb near Six Flags Magic Mountain. In the twenty-five years since, I've seen how the relentless efforts to privatize and defund public education have made our work much more challenging. In a world where the opposition is tireless and seems to have unlimited resources, we have had to constantly fight attacks on our public schools, our rights, our unions, and thus our students.

To win these battles, it takes strategic collective action. I've seen its power while serving in various leadership roles within the union, including as President of the Hart District TA, CTA ABC Committee member, Chair of both the Credentials and Professional Development and Elections Committees, and currently as the CTA Director for District I. Today, we are seeing its strength with the Wear Red for Ed Campaign, the walkouts last spring in Red States, and the powerful actions taken by chapters in California this year.

I've also learned that it takes an organizational structure with resources to build upon past victories and set up new ones. Leadership positions at the local, state, and national level have given me the experience, skills and knowledge to have both the big picture mentality and small detail focus necessary to maintain the financial security of our organization as the next CTA Secretary-Treasurer.

We are at a pivotal moment in public education. I believe we need to continue to build a stronger, member empowered CTA and I am committed to doing that alongside David and Theresa as part of the Building Power Together Team. Collectively, we have a vision for CTA that focuses on organizing, advocacy, and member engagement. Our platform starts with a commitment to be responsive leaders, because power doesn't rest with the leadership, it rests with the membership. It builds with strong locals, working with members, leaders, and staff to empower locals, support new leaders, and engage members. It focuses on the need to fight for improved classroom conditions and build strong community alliances for racial and social justice. We believe that the ideas outlined in the platform are universal and we've worked hard to bring in voices from all parts of the state to build it. But we need your help, your voice, and your vote to help make it a reality. Please vote for the BUILDING POWER TOGETHER TEAM.



Littman

Candidate for CTA Secretary-Treasurer

Chris Aguilar

Member, Sylvan Educators Association; CTA/ABC Committee member; Stanislaus Service Center Council chair.

Choice is the ultimate power you have! I was born and raised in the Central Valley. I have travelled throughout the state and listened to the needs of our members from all areas. Our strength goes beyond having relationships, it means having connections to each other. Inclusivity is about us constructing a bold union where members and nonmembers want to seek us out because of the values that we represent. We will have a union, without barriers, where everyone is welcomed to participate and be respected. CTA is a family and at the end of the day we unite to stand against what is wrong and fight for what is right.

As an elementary school teacher still working full-time in the classroom, I know the struggles we face on a daily basis. I have felt the attacks upon public education during my seventeen years in the classroom. My union experience includes being the currently elected CTA/ABC member for District F, present Chairperson for the Stanislaus Service Center Council, and a former Chapter President. I have worked with individuals across the state while serving on various committees and workgroups. These include the original Long Term Strategic Planning Workgroup, the Teacher Evaluation Workgroup, as Chair of the CTA Scholarship committee, and being a member of several other committees. These various roles have given me direct insight into the various finances and policies throughout our union. With this knowledge, I know that I am ready to serve as your next CTA Secretary-Treasurer.

Representing our members and remaining solvent as a union is vital as we move forward into the future. Working with the CTA Budget Committee, I will ensure that this continues to be accomplished. Know that if elected as your next CTA Secretary-Treasurer, I will devote myself to fulfilling the trust that is placed upon me. CTA State Council members will vote at the end of March for this office. If I represent a union you want to have, then I ask for you to reach out to your CTA State Council members and alternates. Let them know your candidate choice to have action for our union! I ask you to choose Aguilar for CTA Secretary-Treasurer.



Aguilar



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CTA Disaster Relief Fund	CTA Member Benefits	650-552-5200	CTAMemberBenefits.org/drff
Vision Discount Program for CTA/NEA-Retired Members	Vision Service Plan	800-877-7195	CTAMemberBenefits.org/vsp
CTA Group Life Insurance	Standard Insurance Company	800-522-0406	CTAMemberBenefits.org/life
CTA Group Disability Insurance	Standard Insurance Company	800-522-0406	CTAMemberBenefits.org/disability
CTA Auto and Home Insurance Program	California Casualty	866-680-5142	CTAMemberBenefits.org/calcas
CTA Financial Services	Provident Credit Union	650-508-0300 800-632-4600 outside 650	CTAMemberBenefits.org/provident
CTA Credit Card Program	Bank of America	888-758-7946	CTAMemberBenefits.org/creditcard
NEA Member Benefits Programs	NEA Member Benefits	800-637-4636	neamb.com
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