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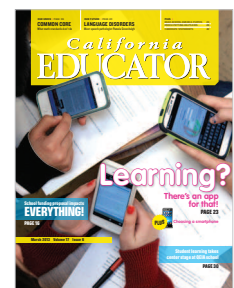
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ON THE COVER



CTA members are keen on cellphones as effective learning tools.

Editor's Note



Top Ten TO DO LIST

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- 2 Figure school finance (page 16)
- 3 Battle for smaller class size (page 20)
- 4 Plan ahead (page 22)
- 5 How to choose a smartphone (page 26)
- 6 Congratulate Zamboni Middle School (page 30)
- 7 Read *The Global Fourth Way* (page 31)
- 8 Calculate common core math standards (page 36)
- 9 Meet a speech pathologist (page 40)
- 10 Add to your CTA timeline: the 1920s (page 45)

Ch-ch-ch-Changes...!

One year, this month. That's how long I've been the editor of this magazine. It's exciting to take an outstanding publication and tweak it into something better. "The more things change, the more they stay the same," wrote French novelist Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr. That is evident in this magazine. And your input is shaping this change. It's also helping change the organization through the CTA Strategic Planning Process. Read about the planning process and all who are involved in that.

Read Across America, now in its 16th year, celebrates reading (page 34). It's FUN and phenomenally successful. Yet reading is at risk for teens, say members, because they don't have the time to read books in depth anymore (page 10). Why? Our article starts with mandated testing and includes views of members in San Leandro, Huntington Beach and Beaumont — plus the California School Library Association.

Besides reading, members are advocating for smaller class size (page 20) and school funding (page 16). Teachers advocating for improved learning, now that doesn't change. Tools change. Cellphones, for example. Don't want them going off in your class? Use them. Read how members in Auburn, Fair Oaks and Santee are using smartphones to make kids smarter (page 23). Oh — and do you need a smartphone? Check out our useful tips before making a choice.

Your letters indicate you really liked reading about school nurses last month. This month, meet an Anaheim speech pathologist who has an interesting take on language (page 40). By the way, did you know we've had fair dismissal language on the books since the 1920s (page 45)? And that brings me to the Common Core State Standards. You've asked about it, and last month we reviewed language arts; this month it's the math standards (page 36). In the next few months we'll cover assessment and implementation issues around Common Core.

In this first year of editing the *Educator*, there are so many things I've wanted to bring to you. And there are things we'd like you to do with the information you find in this magazine. See my top ten at left. We're still making changes to the look and feel of this, your magazine. What will stay the same? The tradition of providing you useful, interesting and well-written information.

Cynthia Menzel
Editor in Chief

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TOP TWEET

@MrsMielwocki Vision and relentless, urgent positive motion in the direction of that vision is what will transform education. Let's start moving.

CTA ONLINE

MOST POPULAR FACEBOOK POST



January 3

877 likes

667 shares

42 comments

MORE TOP TWEETS

@joe_bower

"In Finland, we have laws that do not allow students in elementary to be tested or graded." @pasi_sahlberg #catca

@CATeachersAssoc

6 Ways to Help a Child Become a Good Reader, available in multiple languages. www.cta.org/raa ... #readacrossamerica

@irishdreaming

Sacramento says they are aware. Why aren't they working harder on a viable solution? Put our children's education first! #ptaadvocacy

FAVORITE COMMENTS

Mary Knaus Sampson | Feb 24

If only the military had to hold cookie dough, wrapping paper and magazine sales to raise enough for a new jet or destroyer.

Corinne-Valerie Marin | Feb 23

Plenty of money is wasted on enrichment materials that teachers are denied time to use... More important is a paradigm shift towards student accountability for behavior... enforcing courtesy and civility, maintaining dress codes...

Nanson Hwa | Feb 22

The purpose of learning is to enjoy life, problem solve, be creative, exercise our imagination and adjust behavior to social and cultural standards.

Elisabeth Moore | March 1

This is why I read. I love to travel but can't always afford it so a cheap alternative is books.

WHAT'S NEW AT CTA.ORG



RIF DEADLINE MARCH 15

If you receive a RIF (reduction in force) notice, log in to the Legal section for assistance and resources. Immediate action is required. Contact your chapter right away.

www.cta.org/rifs



MARCH IS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

They've come a long way, with struggle and determination. Women now make laws when once they couldn't even vote. Honor women during Women's History Month and year-round. www.cta.org/women.



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VIRAL VIDEO

Read-a-thon Flashmob 2013: Students at Roosevelt School in Santa Monica sing and dance "It's a Read-a-thon!" inspired by "Gangnam Style." www.cta.org/santamonicaflashmob





Ask Dean

I received a survey from you – what’s that all about?

➔ **It’s about change.** I know you’ve heard the old saying, “Change is the only constant in life.” Well, that’s definitely been true of our organization. We’ve changed a lot in the last 150 years, adapting to meet the challenges of the day. And we’re poised to do that yet again. It’s time to take an honest look at where we go from here. And that look begins with you — our members — and the survey.

You received that letter because CTA is engaging in a long-term strategic planning process, with the theme “Your Voice. Our Union. Our Future.” That survey and this planning process are about the future of CTA, CTA’s role in public education, and its role in our communities. With your help, we are taking a critical look at who we are, exploring who we want to be, and helping create a plan to ensure we are a strong, vital and relevant organization in the future.

I know change can be scary, especially when you don’t know what lies ahead. It can also be very exciting. I’m feeling a little of both right now, and together, I know, we will make the right decisions for our students, our profession, and our union. We will hold on to what’s working and not be afraid to cast away what’s not — even if that means doing things differently than we’ve always done them. In building this strategic plan, we will embrace new ideas — your ideas — and we will welcome all members’ input in order to build the CTA we all want for our future.

I’m so proud of all that we accomplished together. But as we celebrate these personal, professional and political victories and mark the 150th anniversary of CTA, we must also take a deep breath and reflect.

So thank you for making time to take the “Our Future” survey. Your thoughts and ideas and concerns captured in this online survey will be instrumental in helping CTA become a better organization.

We heard from school teachers who are concerned about losing a voice in the profession, from community college faculty who want to know there will be continued funding for their students, and from education support professionals who have worries about school safety.

We heard from CTA staff who had questions about the process and from local leaders who shared the types of support they need.

You shared your opinion on health care and retirement benefits, educator evaluation, school funding, and classroom topics. You let us know how CTA is meeting your needs when it comes to class size, curriculum, standards and assessment, academic freedom, and student discipline. You shared the importance of CTA’s grievance assistance, discounts on travel and financial products, professional development, and legal representation.

It was interesting to read what you understand about your CTA — the governance structure, how budget decisions are made, and the role and function of the CTA State Council of Education. You’ve shared how you want CTA to communicate with you and what type of information you want to receive from your union.

It was good information to read, because sometimes we get so engaged in the minutiae of getting our work done, we lose sight of our ultimate goals. For example, far too often we spend so much time fighting “reformers” who have not set one foot into a classroom, that we’re in “defend” mode rather than “let us listen” or “show you how” mode. You know, that’s the biggest problem with many education reformers, like Michelle Rhee, Gloria Romero, and even Bill Gates. They do not have education practitioners at the table; instead, they

surround themselves with hedge fund managers and moneyed interests, and they assume they know more about teaching and learning than those of us in the classroom. *They don’t.*

Your voice is essential to this

process if you want a strong union that helps you in your classroom and helps you advocate for your students. We can make our future whatever we want, but we have to do it together. So, thank you for being the real education experts.

Thank you for what you do for California’s students every day. And thank you for joining me on this journey of change. This strategic planning process will surely take us to new places together.

I’m ready. Are you?

And that is how change happens. One gesture. One person. One moment at a time.

Libba Bray,

The Sweet Far Thing

Dean E. Vogel
CTA President

LETTERS & COMMENTS



Your opinions and letters are welcome.

So, too, are your photos of teaching, learning and association activities. There is a 250-word limit on letters and all letters will be edited. Photo identifications and permissions are required. All materials submitted must include your name, address, daytime telephone number and email address. E-mail to editor@cta.org.

LOVE 'OUR CALIFORNIA' ARTWORK!

A thousand thanks for the joyful [February] cover and the Read Across America poster by gifted artist Rafael López!

It had been a hectic week with our sixth-graders running a Greek Olympics, working our way through persuasive essays, surviving the Valentine's Day sugar rush and participating in a drill for code red. Then your cover reminded me of the simple reason I was drawn to teaching and go back each day: a great story, someone to share it with, and a safe place to grow.

► Kelly Kim

Cupertino Education Association

COMMON CORE — REALIZE WHAT IT MEANS?

It is distressing to read [in the February *Educator*] about the advent of these excellent, long overdue standards and the superior, far more professional level of teaching they require, and then see the statement that this will not do anything to lift the dreadful destructive burdens created by Every Child Left Behind and Race to the Bottom. (I cannot call either of these by their euphemistic titles.)

So the obsessional drill-and-kill teaching and testing is supposed to continue, operating concurrently with the Common Core? These are antagonistic to each other, and this is an impossible combination. At what point will districts invest in the massive staff development and purchase of richer instructional materials essential to making the Common Core and its craft and art of real teaching possible?

I hear and see no awareness by teachers that they realize this is about to descend on them. Does anyone really believe Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, the bean-counting micromanager who despises teachers and most students, will do anything to implement real education and real teaching, when he has built his empire on ECLB and RTTB?

What will CTA and the NEA do about this impending dilemma? Or is it sufficient to write pretty positive articles? I would like to think that we can all work together so that this time educational "reform" can be done by us, not to us.

► MaryMelissa Grafflin

United Educators of San Francisco (retired)

Editor's Note: Common Core will be explored in the next several issues of the Educator. See the article on page 36.

COMMON CORE ENGLISH STANDARDS INCLUDE ALL ACADEMIC CLASSES

I appreciate the background on the Common Core in the February magazine. I was dismayed to read the new standards will shift so that by high school students are reading 75 percent informational text and 25 percent narrative text, implying this reading will be completed solely in their ELA classes.

The shift includes all academic classes. The standards set requirements not only for English-language arts (ELA), but also for literacy in his-

tory/social studies, science, and technical subjects.

While informational text "meets the CCSS requirements and adds depth to students' experience of the texts" (Center for Learning), narrative literature is valuable to teach students to connect with other cultures, to identify common issues they may experience, and to connect motive and consequence through literary role models, both fictional and real-life. As pointed out, students will be responding to "text-based questions" that will require "evidence from reading to support their answers."

English teachers are already doing this, regardless of the genre of literature. We teach students to infer a character's motives, often relying on references to nonfiction, as well as the student's own observations and experiences.

► Sherri Hicks

Klamath-Trinity Teachers Association

RESPONSE TO 'NOT A VALID EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY'

I agree if Dave Brodkey (letters, February) is not comfortable celebrating holidays with his students, he probably shouldn't. I also agree the focus on just Christian holidays is too narrow and can lead to many kids feeling left out. Focusing on the commercial icons is OK for younger audiences, but limited in usefulness.

I disagree that other cultures do not celebrate holidays. Almost every culture and religion celebrates major events to commemorate their history and beliefs — and uses them as opportunities to teach important values. Many are associated with important calendar events.

Some examples are: the winter solstice (Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Goru, Native American story-telling festivals, Chawmos, Yule, etc.), the summer solstice (Jāñi, Tígegan, Midsummer, Ivan Kupala Day, Saint Jonas' Day, the Fourth of July), the spring and fall equinoxes (Easter, Passover, Naw-rúz, Sham El-Nessim, Mother's Day, harvest festivals, Día de los Muertos, Halloween, Jashne Mihragan, Chuseoko, Native American Pine Nut and Corn festivals, Thanksgiving) — to name but a few. Please note that this does not exhaust the list.

These should be opportunities to bring the heritage and family traditions

LETTERS & COMMENTS

of our students alive in our classes. We should be using them as gateways to history and ways to gain an understanding of our many cultures, religions and beliefs.

► **Wayne Decker**
CTA/NEA-Retired

LIKE TEACHING, SCHOOL NURSING HAS CHANGED

Thank you for your excellent article about school nurses in the February *Educator*. As a school nurse since 1977, I can tell you that like teaching, the landscape of school nursing practice has changed dramatically.

Of particular note is the skyrocketing number of insulin-dependent diabetics, virtually nonexistent in my first 15 years on the job. Now nearly every school nurse spends the hours between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. in her car, driving from school to school to deliver doses of insulin. This is a complicated balancing act involving timing of meals, carbohydrate calculation, and doctor's prescription individualized for each student. While some older students can do this independently, many more — virtually all elementary school students — require the assistance of a licensed school nurse to administer this life-saving medicine.

Like our dedicated teacher counterparts, we are committed to the process that will enable California's youth to be healthy, educated, productive citizens in the future. Thank you again for recognizing us as an integral part of the educational team!

► **Joyce Cox**
Teachers Association of Long Beach

THANK YOU FROM A NURSE

Thank you so much for "A day in the life of a school nurse" [February]. I enjoy receiving and reading through *California Educator*, although articles are very often not relevant for me as a nurse.

Thank you for providing your readers with a peek at a typical day in the life of a school nurse, and for clarify-

ing that we are "responsible for more than scraped knees." California's school nurses are responsible for managing, maintaining and monitoring the health and safety of large numbers of both general and special education students with a variety of health care needs. Your article is a testament to the importance of the nursing profession in the world of education.

► **Renee Welsh**
Fairfield-Suisun Unified Teachers Association

GUNS IN THE CLASSROOM

The school violence article [in February] has the same tone expressed by appeasers and handwringers throughout our history. The more you weaken the people, the greater the threat by those who prey on us.

While Senator Dianne Feinstein wants to ban guns, she has a concealed weapon permit for the same reason that we need one: for self-protection. Can you smell hypocrisy? As for protecting our students, we harden the targets, not soften them more! This concept flies in the face of the liberal mindset, I know! It means developing responders, and publicizing the fact that there are individuals on the campus who are capable of and who WILL defend our unarmed students against would-be murderers.

Guns in the hands of trained persons can be fine deterrents to the cowards who think of shooting those who have no defense against them. Teachers in Israel carry rifles slung over their shoulders. Their students are safer than ours. It's time for CTA to support the concept of a strong offense instead of acquiescing to those who would weaken us more.

► **Jay L. Stern**
United Teachers Los Angeles

Editor's Note: Sen. Feinstein's bill bans military-style assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines.



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SHOULD SCHOOLS BE MORE LIKE FORTRESSES?


In the wake of recent school shootings, should schools be more fortress-like? Here are the viewpoints of two CTA members.



Greg Vizzini Moreno Valley Educators Association
Canyon Springs High School



Peter Boyd Santa Ana Educators Association
MacArthur Fundamental Intermediate School



YES Why not? Schools can be beautiful fortresses. A fortress does not have to be unattractive. Disneyland has a large fence around it and all of my visits have been safe and pleasant. The fence did not detract from the good experience.

Of course, educators should know that a fortress doesn't guarantee safety — especially if the threat comes from within.

Existing school sites should be proactive, making safety changes as they are able. Fences, a controllable entrance, surveillance cameras and even metal detectors could all play a part. And the protection of students should be an even higher priority in the future of campus designs.


I didn't always worry about safety, but when a shooting was recently averted at my school site, it was a wakeup call. A threat was made against someone in my department. She teaches right next door to me. A student left a threatening note targeting that teacher, and when police searched his home, they found a rifle and ammunition. The student was arrested. Everyone was relieved and thankful the threat was resolved without further incident. We have been lucky.

I know our campus is not as safe as it could be. My school's Safety Committee, which expressed serious concerns in 2008-09, was disbanded. Currently a 6-foot chain-link fence exists on the back of our school, and the district is committed to extending the fence on the side of the school, while leaving roughly 25 percent of the perimeter open in front.

At schools in our district, visitors and would-be intruders alike need to check through a supervised entrance or climb over a very tall fence. Anyone familiar with Canyon Springs High School knows that it is a beautiful campus, but the porous design is an added safety challenge other schools in the area do not face.

We have unarmed campus supervisors and an armed police officer. This is a good balance. But part of the problem is that our administration does not enforce the laws and policies that are already in place, so some teachers don't bother. By not following and enforcing school policies, we actually create a less safe environment. When students think they can get by without adhering to the rules, they try to get away with more. I worry that at my school site, we are encouraging the very behaviors we all want to change.

The best defensive safety asset is an environment where students are comfortable reporting potential threats to the adults charged with their safety. Creating this kind of environment doesn't cost money, but it takes a lot of work. I believe a school cannot reach its potential until a safe culture exists.



NO I'm certainly not a Pollyanna and realize that there can be safety issues, but I don't worry about school safety in general. The majority of schools have adopted reasonable measures that ensure the safety of staff and students. These measures include a closed campus, a fence around the perimeter and a single point of entrance.

The level of school safety required depends on the neighborhood. A one-size-fits-all approach for school safety won't work.

My school is exceptionally safe. My child attends a wide-open campus in a public school — and my child's school is extremely safe. My wife teaches in a public school, and her school site is very safe. Most people think the school their child attends is pretty safe.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, schools are among the safest places for both adults and children. Some neighborhoods where schools are located are very dangerous and violent — yet schools within these neighborhoods are safe havens for children and adults. You are much more likely to die in a car accident than at school.

Instead of turning schools into fortresses, let's make our schools safer by offering more resources to troubled kids. This might include additional counselors, social workers, school nurses and school psychologists, and making anti-bullying programs part of the curriculum. My school has 1,300 kids and just two counselors.

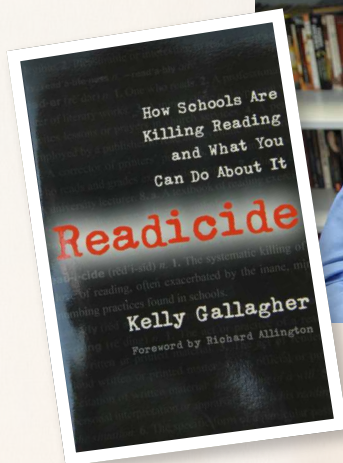
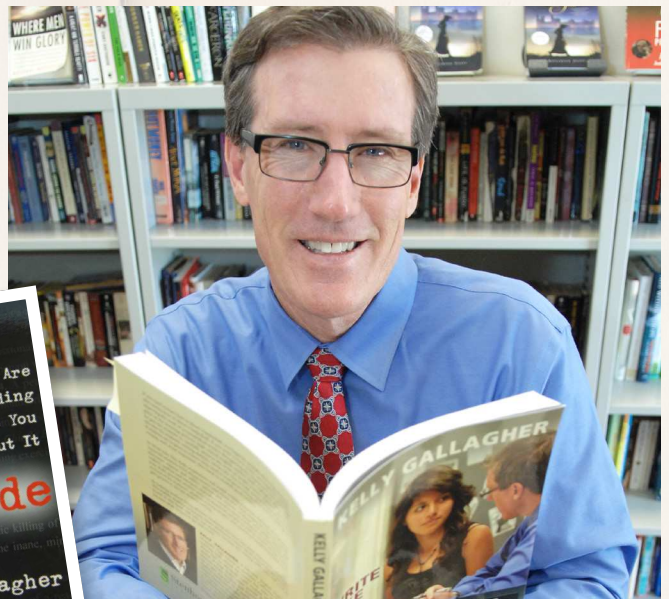
Unfortunately, the vast majority of school violence is committed by students or former students of that school. So let's help students who are stressed out, fearful or concerned. Let's find a way to enforce discipline and correct students' behavior without squashing their spirit. Creating a nurturing environment clearly promotes student learning. It is as simple as Maslow's hierarchy of needs: Higher level skills can't be learned while the lower level needs are unmet.

Instead of being more fortress-like, schools need to be more welcoming — especially in immigrant communities. Immigrant parents may not feel welcome if they feel they are entering a fortress. It's hard enough to get these parents on campus, and you don't want to intimidate those who don't feel comfortable. You don't want to expand on their concerns. We need these parents to feel welcome so they become involved with their child's school and therefore involved in their child's education.

Again, I am not a Pollyanna. I know that bad things happen to good people. But turning our schools into fortresses is not the answer.



Left to right: Emily Hager, Mia Gonzales and Najeeb Darwish do silent reading at the start of Jonathan Brubaker's class in Beaumont.



Kelly Gallagher wrote 'Readicide' after he brought up the topic of Al-Qaida for discussion in class and an honors student asked him to spell Al's last name.

Is Reading at Risk?

Growing up, Michelle Albaugh spent lazy afternoons on her couch, nose buried in a book. But that's not the case with many of her students today.

BY SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN
PHOTOS BY SCOTT BUSCHMAN

“TEENS DON'T DO THAT MUCH ANYMORE,” says the Sowers Middle School teacher. “Not long ago, kids could read *The Yearling* by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, and now they struggle with it. Some can't read anything of great length and struggle to read a 10-page short story. Students toil reading anything that's a novel if it isn't popular literature like *Twilight*. It's frustrating.”

While young children enjoy reading, enthusiasm frequently fades as they get older, say teachers worried about the trend. Reading becomes work, and reading for pleasure takes a back seat. Because older students don't like reading as much, they don't read as well, Albaugh observes.

Older youths are reading less in their free time than a generation ago, according to a report by the National Endowment for the Arts. The report said:

- Teens read less often and for shorter amounts of time compared with other age groups and with Americans of previous years.
- Less than one-third of 13-year-olds are daily readers, a 14 percent decline from 20 years

earlier. Among 17-year-olds, the percentage of nonreaders doubled over a 20-year period.

- Those ages 15-24 spend two hours a day on TV, and only seven minutes of daily leisure time reading.

Kelly Gallagher, an English teacher at Magnolia High School in Anaheim, worries about a decline in reading he's seen in students over the past decade.

“It's not a California issue, it's a national issue,” says the author of *Readicide: How Schools are Killing Reading and What You Can Do About It*. “Teachers everywhere share the concern that kids aren't reading enough.”

Blame NCLB and mandated testing

Luis Torres, a student at Cajon High School, discusses *The Great Gatsby* with classmates, focusing on themes of materialism, corruption and power.


“I enjoy reading now, but honestly, I didn't enjoy it much before this class,” admits Torres. “Kids in general aren't that interested in reading. We want to watch TV and play video games, for the most part.”



Michelle Albaugh



Jane Lofton



Teachers choose reading material with “power standards” that will be on the test and improve scores. Students have to have time to be curious about something, says Lynda Campfield, here asking Kairi Bynum about his book, ‘Wait Till Helen Comes.’

Jerry Tivey, his 11th-grade International Baccalaureate English teacher, believes reading is evolving due to technology.

“You have to look at the big picture, and ask what the ultimate purpose of reading is,” says Tivey, San Bernardino Teachers Association. “We read to get news, learn instructions or piece together something. We read a memo from the boss. I don’t think Twitter, Facebook or Internet news is any different; it’s just another way to get and exchange information. It may be useless information, but students are reading, processing and sharing with friends as they decide what to keep and what to delete from their account. We have to look outside the box when it comes to what we think reading is.”

Albaugh agrees students don’t read much for pleasure because they are watching more TV and spending time online. But the Huntington Beach Elementary Teachers Association member thinks changes in the way schools have been teaching reading under NCLB are also to blame.

At her school, students must read a 500-page textbook of anthologies (containing excerpts of novels and short stories) before reading an actual novel. So it’s not until end of the year that students can start *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Meanwhile, short stories or snippets of stories don’t hook them in.

Some say the anthology approach is like asking students to interpret a corner of



Lilly Alaniz talks with Marcavious Vega about stories they read during silent reading.

Turning the page

a painting, so they don't see meaning or the entire context and become frustrated. Several teachers say that once their class switched to mostly textbook anthologies, interest in reading waned among students.

"Students are reading for a test or because they have to meet a standard, and that is not inspiring a love of literature or the written word," says Albaugh, noting that constantly interrupting the flow of a book every few minutes to instill a standard creates frustration and barriers between students and the story.

"We've always had anthologies in textbooks, but we used to teach half anthologies and half novels," says Lynda Campfield, an English teacher at San Leandro High School. "After we went into Program Improvement, we

taught three-quarters out of the textbook and one-quarter novels. It doesn't really suit the students, and they don't particularly care for it."

Teachers don't always choose what students will read because it will interest them. Instead, they choose reading material with "power standards" that will be on the test and improve scores. Campfield's pacing guide stipulates that students must cover a story in their textbook about every three days.

"There is no time for rich discussions," says the San Leandro Teachers Association member. "We have a test and move on to the next story. There is no enrichment project or group project to help students synthesize what they have read. They read story after story without really processing them. It's not much fun. They don't have time to be curious about something."

Gallagher says "inane, mind-numbing" instructional practices kill the love of reading. Schools mostly emphasize academic reading and "functional reading," so reading becomes associated with work, not pleasure.

"We are taking a poem or a novel and beating it to death. A novel ceases to be a novel and becomes a worksheet. When teachers are trying to teach all the standards in all of the books, the book itself gets lost. If I had to do all the things my students have told me they had to do over the past 10 years, I wouldn't like reading either."

"You have to have water in the pool if you are going to be a swimmer," adds the Anaheim Secondary Teachers Association member. "That means you have to surround reluctant readers with good books. I believe that

The only sound in Jonathan Brubaker's classroom is the ticking clock. Students are intently reading novels. Their teacher is also lost in a book — *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens. Silent sustained reading happens regularly during the beginning of class.

The Beaumont Teachers Association member reads alongside students to set an example. "If you aren't reading, you are the biggest distraction in the room."

"Reading was boring before this class," admits Alexis Prior. "Now that we're forced to read, I like it. I was scared I wouldn't finish a book in a month, but it's easy if I pick a good book."



Jonathan Brubaker

Members offered other ways to encourage reading:

- Surround students with interesting books.
- Ask parent groups to support a classroom library.
- Ask students to briefly share with classmates why their book is a good read.
- Encourage parents to spend "family time" reading together and provide books that interest their teens.
- Talk to students about books that had an impact on your life.
- Tell teens why they should read. For example, reading helps fight oppression and paves the way for college and successful careers.

all kids like to read — they just don't know it yet. If you give them good books they will read. Do you go home and curl up with a good textbook?"

No money for librarians/books

For the past 35 years, California has ranked near last in the country for school library funding, resulting in a reduced number of librarians, a limited number of books, and in some cases, no operating school library. Currently there is no designated school library funding. In 2011, less than one in four California schools was staffed with a librarian teacher.

"Teenagers are still reading, but the decline in library staffing

means that fewer students have access to books and someone who can inspire them to select titles they will enjoy," says Jane Lofton, librarian at Mira Costa High School and president of the California School Library Association. "For so many reluctant readers, all it takes is someone to match them with one perfect book to ignite a love of reading. With fewer librarians in schools, students have fewer chances of having that interaction that will convert them to readers."

The decline in librarians has been accompanied by a decline in funds for library materials, says Lofton, Manhattan Beach Unified Teachers Association, so it's difficult for libraries to update their collection of books.





Students are reading for a test or because they have to meet a standard, and that is not inspiring a love of literature or the written word.

MICHELLE ALBAUGH

Exercise for the brain

Kelly Gallagher wrote *Readicide* after he brought up the topic of Al-Qaida for discussion in class and an honors student asked him to spell Al's last name.

"Due to a lack of reading, kids come to class with limited prior knowledge and background. I could give them a political cartoon, and they wouldn't understand the lesson if they don't know Susan Rice is being interviewed for secretary of state. It's worrisome. Studies show that adults who read regularly are more involved in their communities and civic life."

Because the brain gets exercise from reading material that is challenging and extended, students are not exercising their brains the way they once did, he asserts.

"They lose the ability to maintain concentration. It becomes a chicken-or-the-egg thing; they won't read long pieces, so we don't assign long pieces. But it's absolutely necessary that kids read challenging and difficult works, because that is when valuable brain exercise comes into play. And that includes the classics."

Jonathan Brubaker, a seventh-grade English teacher at Mountain

View Middle School in Beaumont, finds students are losing the ability to "endurance-read" because of anthologies.

"It's like physical fitness, except it's mental fitness. They lose the ability to push themselves through a difficult part of a book and then feel at the end it was worth it."

Brubaker believes less reading results in reduced vocabulary; students tend to use words used in everyday conversations rather than a rich vocabulary gleaned from books. (Gallagher calls this phenomenon "word poverty" and says students are becoming more limited in their word usage due to less time reading.)

The biggest threat, says Brubaker, is a loss of critical thinking in teens.

"When you read, you imagine possible worlds and become a person who sees what other people don't see. In a good book you are challenging your views, because it opens a window into something that is not

your life and forces you to understand something unlike yourself. Reading not only makes you smarter, it makes you more compassionate and understanding." 📖




Jerry Tivey

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Tectonic shift in funding impacts teaching and learning conditions

Subsidiarity: Localizing decision-making; an organizing principle stating decisions should be made at the lowest possible level of a government or an organization, rather than at a high level; a central authority should have a subsidiary function, performing only those tasks which cannot be performed effectively at a more immediate or local level.

➔ **IMAGINE A WORLD** where California public schools have all the resources they need, so educators are empowered to create effective structures and supports for student learning. Teaching conditions and education careers may look different, and saying no to new fads may be easier. The answer to the question “How should we fund the education of all our students so all children can learn?” may look different.

In the real world, Gov. Jerry Brown’s 2013-14 proposed Local Control Funding Formula gives educators an opportunity to do that. Education guru John Mockler, who crafted the state’s constitutional minimum funding guarantee for schools (Proposition 98), has worked on 48 budgets in his career. He says he has never seen as dramatic a change as this before. (Mockler was featured in the December/January *Educator*.)

What’s changing? Subsidiarity.

In what some are calling a “tectonic shift in everything,” the plan calls for localized decision-making. In particular, Gov. Brown is giving the school districts more power to decide what is best for students. He calls that localizing of decision-making “subsidiarity.”

The categorical funds outlined in California’s Education Code that apply to the work educators do are being collapsed into one funding formula. The governor’s stated intent for local control means eliminating many state mandates that tie the hands of those doing the work, which provides

numerous opportunities to impact school learning and teaching environments.

This increases the importance of the negotiations process because classroom experts — teachers, certificated personnel and education support professionals — will have more to discuss at the bargaining table.

The proposal phases in more money, or weightings, to schools with students who require more funding to educate. Students identified as having greater needs, thus higher costs, are students who qualify for free and reduced-price lunch, English language learners, and foster kids.

The Department of Finance released district-specific information regarding funding and numbers of students that fall in the various categories identified as needing more funding. To see your local numbers, go to www.cta.org/districtbreakdown.

Be aware there is potential for high drama and for gratifying success because of the sheer volume of the changes offered. For example, CTA wants to ensure the data used in the new formula are accurate and calculated the same way in all schools. The controversy around moving adult education to community colleges already made the news.

Should lawmakers approve this element of the governor’s budget, it will likely occur on the same timeline as deliberations about the rest of the budget. The state constitution requires lawmakers to send the governor their final budget plan by June 15 so that he can sign it into law prior to the July 1 start of the next fiscal year.

FAQs

CTA’s State Council of Education will review the budget proposal to understand its impact on, and opportunities for, issues like bargaining, class size, Common Core and teacher evaluation. Here are answers to frequently asked questions.

■ **Should the new school formula be implemented before money owed to schools from past years is paid?** CTA believes schools should be repaid the money they are owed from years of cuts before the new formula is implemented.

■ **How will a local control funding plan impact class size reduction?** The proposal allows K-3 class sizes to grow to 24 students in targeted classrooms, up 25 percent from the current maximum. CTA wants to ensure the state has adequate funding to reduce class size and to implement the new Core Curriculum Standards, already hamstrung by lack of funds.

■ **What criteria will be used to determine which schools should receive the additional funding and how much they should receive?** Each school gets a base grant tied to average daily attendance and extra money for English learners, low-income students and foster kids. CTA wants to ensure that whatever criteria are established are fair, and that the data used to make these decisions is both consistently measured and accurate.

■ **When will the new funding formula be phased in?** Changes kick in with the 2013-14 school year and phases in over the next seven years with the implementation of Proposition 30.

■ **How will accountability be established to ensure the funds are being spent effectively?** This is the biggest question for CTA. We believe accountability measures must be in place to ensure the money goes to students.



MORE INFO

Follow what’s happening at the Capitol by checking in at www.cta.org/legislation, and read blog.cta.org for timely updates.



**Are you a political wonk?
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CTA's *Capitol News*.**

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Members advocate for teaching and learning conditions

Educators lobby Congress on school funding, school safety, and the Dream Act

The U.S. Capitol may be thousands of miles away, but the voices of California educators and education support professionals are heard there, thanks to your elected representatives on the National Education Association Board of Directors. See the list at right.

Last month, educators met with the California congressional delegation on critical issues about to be considered by federal lawmakers.

On the financial side, CTA members pressed Republicans and Democrats to find a compromise that will head off automatic cuts in federal programs, including services that will hurt children, public schools, and public workers. The directors asked Congress to take positive steps to head off the "sequestration" or automatic funding cuts that threaten to throw the economy back into recession and reduce revenues that underwrite public services. See www.cta.org for the latest on the "fiscal cliff."

Teachers made sure federal legislators understood that cuts of that magnitude forces districts to reduce staff, increase class size, shorten school days or weeks, reduce activities and enrichment programs, and delay the purchases of instructional materials and technology.

Making schools safer and preventing gun violence was another topic. Educators advocated a three-element approach:

- Expand background checks to weed out would-be purchasers who should not be in possession of firearms.
- Provide more services for persons with mental illnesses.
- Provide schools with the flexibility and authority to make decisions about implementing further school safety measures and hiring school safety personnel.

The member lobbyists also sought the passage of the Dream Act, a comprehensive immigration reform package. Among other things, the Dream Act allows longtime residents who have graduated high school the ability to apply for financial aid for college education.

For more information on the Dream Act, see the NEA Legislative Action Center at the NEA website: www.nea.org/home/LegislativeActionCenter.html.

Who's Who? Your colleagues represent you nationally, too.

Elected NEA directors from California are listed below. Contact them if you have questions about national issues. Find more at www.cta.org/neadirectors.

Elizabeth J. Ahlgren, *San Diego Education Association*

Gilda Bloom-Leiva, *California Faculty Association, CSU San Francisco*

Greg Bonaccorsi, *Fremont Unified District Teachers Association*

Colleen Briner-Schmidt, *Unified Association of Conejo Teachers*

Sue Cirillo, *United Teachers Los Angeles*

Ron Edwards, *Riverbank Teachers Association*

Gerri Gandolfo, *Teachers Association of Norwalk-La Mirada*

Karl Kildow, *Visalia Unified Teachers Association*

Sonia Martin-Solis, *United Teachers Los Angeles*

Sergio Martinez, *Hacienda-La Puente Teachers Association*

Doreen McGuire-Grigg, *Lakeport Classified Education Association*

Claire J. Merced, *United Educators of San Francisco*

Eric Padget, *Garden Grove Education Association*

Robert V. Rodriguez, *San Bernardino Teachers Association*

George Sheridan, *Black Oak Mine Teachers Association*

KC Walsh, *Oak Grove Education Association*

Paula Monroe, *Redlands ESP Association*, serves on the NEA Executive Committee

MEET
Sebastien Paul De Clerck
TEACHER
of the
YEAR



IN THIS SERIES, we profile each of the three CTA members among the 2013 California Teachers of the Year. Sebastien Paul De Clerck teaches French and Italian for grades 9-12 at Ventura High School. He was selected for his positive interaction with students, for his high expectations for them in the classroom, and for “not just closing the achievement gap — but demolishing it.” He is a member of the Ventura Unified Education Association.

FAVORITE CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

I give few assignments. I am not interested in making them work; I want to make them think. I want to guide discovery, not give answers. I ask questions that help students reflect on who they are, where they are, and what they want to know. We read aloud together, not working toward predetermined goals or seeking specific answers, but exploring questions as they arise.

FAVORITE CLASSROOM RESOURCES

Music, movies and text from any culture that is not their own are perfect vehicles to provide students the opportunity to think something they have not thought before, to question their perspectives, or to redefine their understanding of our world. I'd have a harder time exposing students to these without an iPod, good speakers, an LCD projector, the Internet and a laptop. I understand the value of technology in learning.

FAVORITE INTERNET LINKS

The strength of the Internet is its ability to bring the outside world into the classroom. It renders classroom learning more relevant and allows students to interface with information that has not been artificially filtered or edited for classroom purposes. For this reason, I prefer sites that are geared to noneducational purposes over those created with classrooms and teachers in mind. My personal favorites are YouTube and NPR.

WORDS TO LIVE BY

“The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.” —Marcel Proust.

ON HAVING A MENTOR

I've had many mentors, but the most meaningful and current is my colleague in German, Mr. David Reich. I arrived eight years ago thinking I knew how to teach language. I was wrong. David reminded me to constantly question the nature of my practice. Thanks to David, I overcame

the frightening and daunting challenge of changing everything I did; I redefined and redesigned my methods and pedagogy. He gave me the “new eyes” Proust talks about.

FAVORITE BOOKS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OR CLASSROOM

Any foreign language or EL teacher should be familiar with Dr. Stephen Krashen's works on language acquisition, *Second Language Acquisition* and *Second Language Learning and Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. The predictions made in these two studies ought to shape all foreign language and EL instruction. For professional development use, I recommend Sir Ken Robinson's book, *Out of Our Minds*.

WHY I STAY IN TEACHING

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Fremont educators fight back for smaller classes

BY MIKE MYSLINSKI

➔ LIKE MANY CALIFORNIA EDUCATORS, Bay Area math teacher Jan Frydendahl worries that student learning suffers when too many kids are crammed into classrooms. He is fed up with large class sizes and is fighting back through his local CTA union.

He's a member of his union's bargaining team in Fremont and is at a top high school where faculty are unified in their campaign for fair working and learning conditions. Even parents have joined the fight.

Frydendahl was frustrated when 35 students turned up in two math classes at the start of this year — well above his district's contractual goal of 30 students for high schools. "I had to have desks brought into my classroom," he recalls. "We have academic core classes with 36 or 37 students in them. We've been trying to get some relief for our students by filing grievances and putting pressure on the district."

As more school districts ignore class size limits, educators are seeking remedies at the bargaining table. They need to. California's class sizes are soaring, and federal data shows California has the most students per teacher of any state, according to National Education Association research. Also, districts strapped for cash were given the option by the state of putting funds originally earmarked for small class sizes into their general funds, paying modest penalties for the new revenue that went to other uses besides class size reduction.

The 32,000-student Fremont Unified does that, but it has about \$30 million in reserves, and educators have taken 12 unpaid furlough days since 2009. The school board ignored parents who collected more than 1,000 signatures on a petition last May demanding class sizes be lowered by voting to raise maximums to 30 in K-3.

So Frydendahl's concerns grow. His school, Mission San Jose High School in Fremont Unified School District, was ranked 13th in the state and 67th in the nation among all high schools last year for academics by U.S. News and World Report. The high-achieving school's API (Academic Performance Index) score is a stellar 951.

His colleague, English teacher John Boegman, says he can no longer do a drawing exercise when he teaches about Ray Bradbury's novel *Fahrenheit 451* due to overcrowding. The book includes a poem to which he asks students to react by drawing on a large poster. But with 34 students in his ninth-grade class, there is no room to draw, so class time is lost while everyone troops down to the cafeteria to finish.

"Thirty-four students are way too many," he says, recalling how state funding

that used to limit his class to 20 was instead routed into the district's general fund. "It's not ethical for the district to do that, but it's legal to do it."

In contract negotiations now, the 1,600-member Fremont Unified District Teachers Association (FUDTA) hopes class size grievances — like the 54 filed last fall by FUDTA on behalf of Mission San Jose educators — will pressure the district to agree to stronger contract language on class size maximums. Other grievances had limited success. Even special education classes have increased from 12 to 17 students, says FUDTA President Brannin Dorsey.

"These are our most needy students, and they're just packing them in there," she says, noting that some PE classes have up to 63 kids at once. "It's just not safe."

The problem, Dorsey says, is one that teachers in other districts face — contract language that's not clear enough. In Fremont, class sizes are capped at 30 for K-6 classrooms, but for middle and high schools the cap is actually only a "goal" of 30, on average. The goal is 12 for special education students.

We are fighting for student learning conditions. We're just getting started and we're not going away.

Bargaining Updates

Across the state CTA members are fighting for improved teaching conditions and professional compensation. Here are just a few examples...

► Rally moves Alameda settlement

A huge East Bay community rally supporting Alameda teachers' battle apparently helped convince the district to settle after 10 months of negotiations. Supporters included Castro Valley and Fremont teachers, Alameda firefighters, California School Employees Association members, the Teamsters union and United Food and Commercial Workers.

► Hacienda-La Puente settles

Hacienda-La Puente Teachers Association's new contract calls for a 1 percent salary increase effective Feb. 1, a \$1,000 ongoing increase in the district's contribution to health benefit costs, and a one-time \$450 total contribution toward health benefits for the rest of this school year.

► Millbrae's fight to keep quality teachers in the classroom

No improvements to salary or benefit levels for six years prompted the 110-member Millbrae Education Association (MEA) to file for impasse on Feb. 8. Educators are seeking fully paid health and dental benefits for single employees and a 3 percent raise. The district is only offering a 2 percent raise and wants to restrict a post-retirement benefit that helps defray some health coverage costs.

Teacher retention is a concern, says Trish Althaus, MEA's bargaining chair. "There will be no incentive to stay here."

Teachers took 4 percent pay cuts each of the last two school years. MEA members voted down a tentative agreement reached last summer, and contract talks continued.

► Nevada County retirement options

Nevada Joint Union High School Teachers Association members in Grass Valley, Nevada County, have a teacher retirement one-time incentive for this school year with two options: Educators can accept \$40,000 toward health benefits for five to seven years, or two years of retirement service credit with CalSTRS.

► Ocean View feels impact of "revolving door" superintendents

Five different superintendents — one lasting only four days — have whirled through the Huntington Beach district like a "revolving door" in the last eight months, creating uncertainty and instability. Now contract talks are bogged down over cutting four school days and the district's refusal to pick up minimal health insurance costs amounting to less than what was paid last year.

"If fiscal necessity really impels cutting additional student instruction days, then how can the district justify recent unnecessary expenses, including the employment of a superfluous director of communications at a salary equivalent to the cost of one furlough day?" asks OVTA President Marcy Drum.



► Sonoma County adds one student day

The St. Helena Teachers Association in Sonoma County added an extra student instruction day in a Feb. 4 agreement. Teachers will get a 2.34 percent raise and an additional pay step at the top end of the salary schedule.

► Standing up for due process rights

"We simply could not open the door to letting the district weaken the rights of our members to have fair, impartial hearings when disciplinary action is taken against them," says San Ysidro Education Association President Carol Wallace, "and now, our persistence has paid off with new language that makes those protections stronger."

Due process language, plus class size and instruction days, led to an impasse last October. SYEA organizing efforts impelled the district back to the table, where an all-day session resulted in the tentative agreement members ratified.

The new contract includes language establishing just cause for discipline and strengthens grievance language, modest class size increases in grades K-3 and five furlough or "no pay" days.

► Visalia members win back "no pay" days

"We are restoring our school year back to 185 days," says Karl Kildow, Visalia Unified Teachers Association president. Teachers get back three "no pay" days and get two lump payments to reflect 1.65 percent in salary restorations.

MORE INFORMATION

For the rest of the story, see www.cta.org/bargainingupdates.



Plan ahead for these events!

MARCH 22-24 CONFERENCE

Good Teaching Conference South

Los Angeles Airport Marriott

The Good Teaching Conference supports excellent teaching and learning practices. Workshops cover curriculum content areas for K-12 teachers and provide time to network and share ideas with colleagues and experts in the field. One-day pre-conference sessions on the Common Core State Standards, educator-led quality teaching and retirement planning are on Friday, at additional cost.

Find out more: www.cta.org/conferences

APRIL 3 NOMINATION DEADLINE

2012 John Swett Awards

The 54th annual John Swett Awards for Media Excellence, CTA's highest honor for media professionals, honor outstanding coverage of public education issues in 2012. Newspaper, radio and television editors, reporters, producers, directors and bloggers are recognized.

Nominations may be submitted by CTA chapters (local affiliates) or Service Center Councils. Entries are judged by panels of independent media professionals. Winners are honored May 31 at State Council and recognized in the *Columbia Journalism Review*.

Find out more: www.cta.org/awards

APRIL 26-28 CONFERENCE

CCA Spring Conference and WHO Awards

Hyatt Regency Mission Bay, San Diego

The Community College Association's annual Spring Conference and WHO (We Honor Ours) Awards features trainings in political action, membership-building, communications, discussions on topical issues of concern to CCA members, and the presentation of the David Milroy Award for Part-time Faculty.

Find out more: www.cca4me.org

APRIL 30 APPLICATION DEADLINE

IFT Grants

CTA's Institute for Teaching grants support projects and programs that demonstrate the efficacy of strength-based, teacher-driven reform for students and public schools. Grants of up to \$5,000 are awarded to individual members and small teams of teachers. Chapter grant awards are up to \$20,000. Applications must be submitted by April 30.

Find out more: www.teacherdrivenchange.org

APRIL 30 EVENT

El Día de los Niños

El Día de los Niños (Children's Day) is a traditional festival in Latino culture. Many public libraries have events to promote literacy on this day.

Find out more: dia.ala.org

MAY 5 APPLICATION DEADLINE

Incentive grants for summer conferences

Members attending the Presidents Conference (July 22-25) and Summer Institute (Aug. 4-8) can apply for grants covering transportation expenses and conference fees, including materials, meals and housing based on double occupancy. Specific grants are available for members of racial-ethnic minority groups, members from small chapters, first-time participants, ESP members, and participants in the Emerging Leaders Track and the Member Benefits Strand.

Find out more: www.cta.org/conferences

MAY 7 EVENT

National Teacher Day

National Teacher Day is on Tuesday of Teacher Appreciation Week (May 6-10).

Find out more: www.nea.org/teacherday

MAY 8 EVENT

School Nurse Day

Since 1972, School Nurse Day recognizes school nurses on the Wednesday of National Nurses Week (May 6-12).

Find out more: www.schoolnurseday.org

MAY 8 EVENT

California Day of the Teacher

As a result of legislation co-sponsored by CTA and the Association of Mexican American Educators, California patterned its celebration after the traditional Día del Maestro festivities in Mexico and other Latin American countries.

Find out more: www.cta.org/dayoftheteacher

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Learning?

There's
an app
for that!

BY SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN
PHOTOS BY SCOTT BUSCHMAN

Students in this classroom don't have to keep their cellphones hidden inside a backpack. They are used for research, as calculators and flash cards, and even for test-taking.

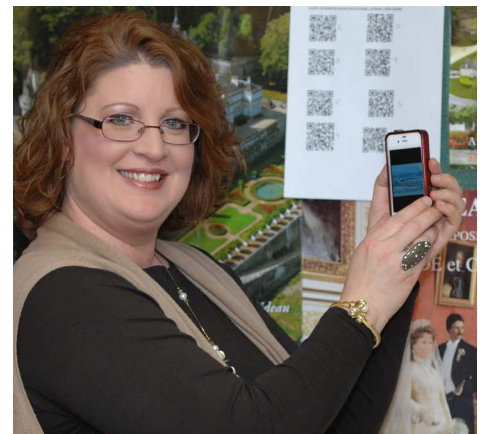
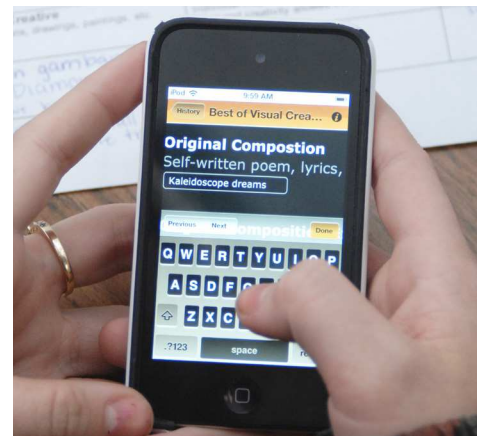


THE USE OF SMARTPHONES IS NOT GOING AWAY, so teachers need to embrace it," asserts Suzanne Scotten, a middle school teacher at E.V. Cain STEM Charter Middle School in Auburn. "What's the point of banning them? We should use them to serve our teaching purposes. It's made my job easier, because I'm not fighting it all the time."

Students were stunned when first told to take out their phones to use the educational apps or online tools, says Scotten, Auburn Union Teachers Association (AUTA.)

"When we explained the reasons and rules, we earned their respect for acknowledging their medium and allowing them to use phones responsibly. It's satisfying to see kids reading or studying on their phones. Schools don't have funds for unlimited technology, so why not use what students already have?"

Twenty-three percent of students ages 12-17 in the U.S. have a smartphone, according to a 2012 survey by the Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project. While 54 percent have a regular cellphone, another 23 percent don't own a phone. Educators encourage students to share phones in class — or use other available technology such as tablets or computers.



Clockwise from top left: Students work with cellphones in class. Nicole Naditz notes that selecting the appropriate tool for the right purpose at the right time increases engagement. Students were surprised they could get information on their phones even if it wasn't a smartphone, says Daniel Moon.

Erin Stevenson creates vocabulary flashcards on her phone with the help of StudyBlue, a free application that also creates quizzes (www.studyblue.com). She also loves Sounds: The Pronunciation App, a free online tool that sounds out new words.

"It's helpful to use cellphones in class," says Stevenson. She relies on her phone's calendar to issue study "reminders" and uses her phone's camera to take pictures of class notes on the board or record the teacher lecturing. "It makes it easy for me to remember things."

It was not easy for Scotten to become adept at incorporating smart-phones into her classroom.

"As an older teacher, I had quite a learning curve to overcome, but it benefited both me and my students. I can now speak to them in their language. We learn and grow together."

In the classroom next door to Scotten, English teacher Olivia Conn's students are engaged in silent sustained reading (SSR). Some read books downloaded onto their cellphones, because it's cheaper than buying hard copies. Conn's cellphone sounds an alarm when reading time comes to an end.



Suzanne Scotten

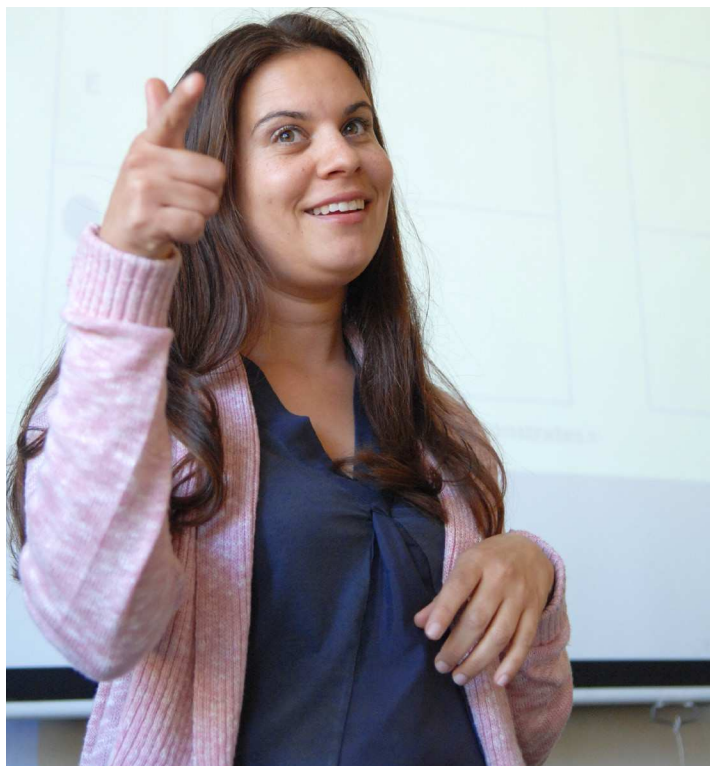
"Cellphones allow my students to check their grades, log in to the class website and e-mail the teacher, all while sitting at their desk," says Conn, who presents with Scotten at technology conferences. "With proper guidelines and appropriate use, these devices enhance students' learning experiences."

Smart phones = smart students?

Students are on a treasure hunt in Reuben Hoffman's social studies class at West Hills High School in Santee. They are looking for information to help them understand the concept of "global stratification," or inequality based on power, property and prestige.

Posted around the room are student illustrations of global stratification. One is of Wal-Mart driving out small stores around the world. If students like one of their classmates' illustrations and want to learn more, they hold their smart-phones up to the QR code posted alongside, which takes them to essays of classmates posted on the class website.

A QR or Quick Response Code is the trademark for a type of matrix barcode consisting of square dots arranged in a square



Top: Madilyn Zawalnicki, Christine Dominguez, and Brianna Barnes scan QR codes. Above: Olivia Conn says with proper guidelines and appropriate use, cellphones enhance student learning.

grid on a white background. Smartphone users can install an app with a QR code scanner that can read a code and direct the smartphone's browser to a website for that code.

Hoffman's students use their phones to evaluate classmates' essays by logging into Google Forms. In no time, responses are put into a spreadsheet and a "winner" is picked.

"We are a Google Apps for Ed school district," says Hoffman, a member of the Grossmont Education Association. "We don't have to go to a computer lab. We can pull up or create documents right in class." (Google Apps for Education offers free Web-based documents for collaborative study.)

"I like using my cellphone in class," says J'Ana Diamond. "You get things done faster. You're saving paper. Teachers shouldn't be freaked out by the idea. It's a good thing."

If she receives a text from a friend, will she respond?

"It's tempting," she replies thoughtfully. "I would probably answer it, but also get my schoolwork done."

Hoffman's view of students' texting in class might surprise colleagues.

"These are high school seniors working in a high-tech environment. Why would you expect them to behave differently than other adults in the workplace? I received a text a few minutes ago and responded to it. My students have to learn how to multitask in a world where they are being inundated with technological data."

➡ **Not a silver bullet**

Incorporating phones into lesson plans doesn't automatically engage students, says Nicole Naditz, a French teacher at Bella Vista High School, Fair Oaks.

"It is the selective use of the appropriate tool for the right purpose at the right time that increases engagement," says the



Reuben Hoffman teaches global stratification with a cell phone.

San Juan Teachers Association member. “If the students are using the phones to do something that is not relevant to them or using their phones to complete tasks that are just as efficient on paper or by other means, their engagement will not automatically go up.”

Naditz especially likes Socrative, an online application that allows students to take a traditional quiz on their phones or answer an “exit question” before leaving the class so she can view their responses to see what they don’t understand. Socrative also allows students to team up for games. The teacher site is t.socrative.com, and on their mobile devices, students navigate to m.socrative.com and enter their teacher’s “room number” to access activities. (Teachers create the room number when they set up the accounts.)

Naditz has been exploring the use of the SlideKlowl app, which allows students to follow a teacher’s PowerPoint presentations on their phones in real time.

“No more straining to see the front board,” she says. The program currently requires a demo license and is not yet available for purchase.

“I’m always looking for ways to ensure that my instruction provides students with a variety of opportunities to engage with the content, practice with immediate feedback and have access to tools they need in order to be successful. Mobile devices were a logical next step in making this a reality for my students.”

➤ Even ‘dumb phones’ enhance learning

Younger students may have cellphones, but they are not likely to be smartphones with Internet access. But Daniel Moon, a sixth-grade teacher at Lake Forest Elementary School, says students can benefit from these cellphones in his class.

During math, students use calculator functions in phones. Students text questions to Google SMS (466453) and answers are texted back instantly to them.



Which smartphone is right for you?

BY TERRY NG

Choosing which smartphone to buy

can seem daunting. With the multitude of devices on the market, each with a different set of features operating on a different platform, choosing one without knowing what you need can be a recipe for unhappiness.

To help you in this crazy world of smartphones, here’s a quick guide to help you choose your next phone.

► iOS (iPhone)

iOS is the operating system that powers the popular iPhone. Although not very customizable, it’s intuitive and easy to use. iOS’s strong point is its large apps selection: Over 775,000 apps are available, ranging from favorite games to mathematics apps that help kids learn algebra. In Apple’s own words, if you need it, “There’s an app for that.”



Best iOS phone: There’s only one. iPhone 5.

► Android

If you’re a heavy Google Gmail or Google Maps user, then the Android phone will make you happy because Android OS is designed to work with all Google’s services. The app ecosystem is second only to iOS, and most key apps are available for both systems. Android’s strong point is that it’s built for customization. If you love to tinker, Android’s home screens can be modified to your exact liking with different dynamic widgets and icons. With great customization, however, comes a slightly steeper learning curve.



Best Android phones: Samsung Galaxy S3, Samsung Galaxy Note 2, HTC Droid DNA, LG Nexus 4

► Windows Phone

Windows Phone was designed to work with Microsoft’s ecosystem. If you have deep ties with Xbox, Office, Bing and Microsoft’s cloud services, then this may be for you. Instead of using icons and widgets like iOS or Android, Windows Phone uses square “Live Tiles” to display apps and other information. Its fresh interface is appealing, but power users may not find it very flexible. App selection is the smallest of the three operating systems, but key apps such as Facebook and Twitter are still represented.



Best Windows phones: Nokia Lumia 920, HTC Windows Phone 8X

“Students were surprised they could get information on their phones even if it wasn’t a smartphone,” says the Saddleback Valley Educators Association president. “And they were surprised at the quick response time and accuracy of the results.”

Moon began incorporating cellphones into lessons five years ago. To avoid cheating, students put their phones face down, in plain sight, during a quiz.

“Cellphones are powerful tools that can enhance instruction and motivate kids when used thoughtfully by teachers,” says Moon. “I encourage others to give them a try.”



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► Once a week,

Ren the therapy dog visits April Giles' class of ED students, who show a compassionate side of their personality to the pooch they aren't ready to share with people.

In most schools, ED stands for "emotionally disturbed." To Giles, who teaches at Grass Valley's Lyman Gilmore School, ED stands for "emotional deficits," which can be corrected with the right combination of patience, encouragement and a pooch.

"Ren snuggles with students and helps them with reading," explains Giles, Nevada County Special Education Group. In her classroom of fifth- through eighth-graders, small miracles occur daily among kids most educators gave up on.

With Giles' support, and collaboration with mental health professionals, community agencies and others, many of her students enroll in mainstream classes and participate in after-school activities such as sports and school dances.

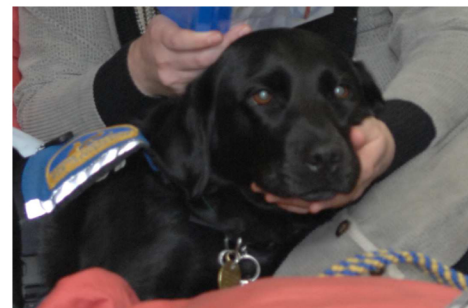
Giles provides structure and predictability for students whose lives are unpredictable. Her positive outlook in teaching ED students — along with excellent results in helping them overcome problems — earned Giles the 2009 Nevada County Teacher of the Year title.

BY SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN
PHOTOS BY SCOTT BUSCHMAN



Joy, enthusiasm and a pooch

fill 'emotional deficits'



Ren relaxes while April Giles reads to students.

In Giles' words:

I believe that my students....

are beautiful inside. I figure out what is beautiful about my students inside and foster it. It's what drives me. But it can be hard when there is a lot of cussing, fighting and negative behavior. Progress can be slow. Unfortunately, some colleagues are afraid of my students and ask why they are here. Well, if they are isolated, they will never learn socially appropriate behavior and how to get along with their peers. Some have ADHD or are on the autism spectrum, but a person is an individual, not a disease or a condition.

I treat every day...

like a clean slate. It's the most powerful gift, I tell my students.

One of the best things about my job...

is when a student can express himself to another teacher so there's a moment of understanding. When a student says "I have a hard time focusing my mind, so I need to chew gum" or "I need a fidget object in my hands to help me pay attention." That's a thing of beauty. It shows they learned to express themselves in an appropriate way. It's wonderful when they learn to use their words.

My best advice for working with ED students...

is understanding we are all in a different place when it comes to social skills used to navigate our environment. The *Love and Logic* parenting book series by Foster Cline and Jim Fay helped me look at behavior as a learning tool for life. Behavior is an alternate form of expression. I tell parents the price tag for lessons learned now is far less than the cost in the future.

One of my success stories...

is a boy who was on the spectrum and constantly blurting things out. He turned out to be technologically advanced and now helps me with my computer and iPads my classroom recently received. He's a huge help.

I feel so lucky...

because I am making a difference. In my heart of hearts, I believe I did not choose to work with these wonderful spirits. Instead, they chose me. They've changed my life forever in wonderful ways.



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QEIA middle school honored for student learning

BY MIKE MYSLINSKI

➔ YOU CAN HEAR THE PRIDE AND ACCOMPLISHMENT in sixth-grade teacher Nelda McCone's voice when she talks about her 922-student Zamboni Middle School in Los Angeles County earning a prestigious state "School to Watch" award.

The high-poverty school in Paramount Unified School District is one of hundreds receiving extra funding from the CTA-sponsored Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA) of 2006 for proven improvements like smaller class sizes, better training and more time for vital collaboration. McCone is Zamboni's QEIA liaison with CTA, making sure the goals of the landmark law are being met. She feels the new award is a vindication of the turnaround program's potential.

"We are excited by our success," McCone says. "We have made a lot of growth over the years. And we really are fortunate to have had QEIA funding, especially to keep our class sizes small."

In January, Zamboni was one of only 12 new California middle schools named by the California Department of Education as model schools in the state's "Schools to Watch — Taking Center Stage" program. The state partners with the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform and the California Middle Grades Alliance on the program.

These model schools demonstrate academic excellence, responsiveness to students' needs, social equity and other progress. Visitors from around the world come to these schools looking for the secrets of success that they can replicate. (See book review.)

McCone joined CTA President Dean E. Vogel and district officials to celebrate the award at Zamboni. "With the help of QEIA resources and the dedication of these teachers, Zamboni students are getting a chance at a brighter future," Vogel says. "While this new state award is a vindication of our goals for QEIA, it's also indicative of the good work being done by all Paramount Unified educators. Your dedication inspires me."

QEIA promotes team effort

Zamboni educators praise the support they get from Principal Elizabeth Salcido, whose commitment to students, parents and educators is key to making QEIA reforms succeed. The student demographics at Zamboni are typical for a QEIA school.

The California Department of Education praised Zamboni educators for focusing "on poverty issues facing their students as part of their concern for the whole child." This year, 96 percent of Zamboni students are poor enough to qualify for free or reduced-price meals at school. Ninety-one percent are Hispanic.



CTA President Dean Vogel joins QEIA liaison Nelda McCone in celebrating successful student learning at Zamboni Middle School.

The state singled out the school's Academic Performance Index (API) growth. Zamboni had an API score of 807 last year — above the state's goal of 800 — and was scoring in the 600s in 2006 before receiving QEIA funding support. Students who are English learners scored 789 last year, a 27-point gain.

While cuts have increased class sizes in the Paramount district, Zamboni class sizes remain mercifully manageable, thanks to QEIA. The law requires the state to annually invest an additional \$900 per student in grades 4-8 at a QEIA school, for example, and requires a class size average of 25 in middle schools.

McCone says her sixth-grade classes contain 23 students or fewer, which allows her to spend more time with kids who need more attention, and to contact parents to partner with them.

Smaller class sizes are one of the most cherished aspects of QEIA, McCone says, along with ongoing freedom to collaborate with colleagues. "We create student assessments together. We create lessons together. The collaboration is probably one of the key components of our success."

See California's 12 newly named "Schools to Watch" middle schools at www.cta.org/schoolstowatch. The model schools were honored by the California Middle Grades Alliance and at the California League of Middle Schools Conference.

CTA and school improvement

The Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA) helps schools serving a higher percentage of low-income students, minorities and English learners to close achievement gaps.

Passed into law in 2006 thanks to CTA-sponsored legislation, QEIA provides opportunities to close achievement gaps, improve teaching and learning in those schools that are struggling, and invest in the future of our students and state.

New data show QEIA schools continuing to excel: About 85 percent have exceeded the three-year API growth targets.

Nearly \$3 billion will go to K-12 schools with API scores in the bottom two deciles over eight years. Community colleges will also receive a portion of the funding to expand career technical education. Program goals include:

- Reducing K-12 class sizes (max 20 in grades K-3, and average 25 in grades 4-12 in these schools).
- Increasing the number of credentialed counselors in high schools.
- Establishing districtwide teacher quality index to ensure equitable distribution of teacher experience.
- Quality training programs and time for collaboration.

The Global Fourth Way: The Quest for Educational Excellence

New book praises CTA's bold QEIA program

BY MIKE MYSLINSKI

➔ **CRITICS AGREE THAT** *The Global Fourth Way: The Quest for Educational Excellence* is a must-read for anyone interested in education, especially so for those currently involved in any form of teaching and learning, as well as those responsible for developing and implementing education policy.

Authors and education researchers Andy Hargreaves and Dennis Shirley praise the QEIA program, noting that CTA showed itself to be a “morally centered union” by sponsoring the landmark Quality Education Investment Act.

The 2006 reform law helps hundreds of at-risk California schools get extra resources needed to succeed. It invests nearly \$3 billion in schools of greatest need over eight years for proven reforms such as smaller class sizes, better training for teachers and administrators, and more high school counselors. QEIA is one of six case studies examined in the book.

The sustainable, teacher-driven changes that occur at QEIA schools show that CTA is willing to “shift from an industrial to professional model of unionism” that reaches into the “heart of classroom practice.” From their research of bold QEIA improvements and their ripple effects for stakeholders, the authors find that “young teachers become inspired and feel that this more professionally oriented and morally centered union is the right place for them and their activism.”

They define “fourth way” educational change as going beyond earlier reforms, dating to the 1960s, that showed how “standards turned

into standardization” and evolved into an obsession with data-driven testing processes. Today, to be high-achieving, educators need “a strengthened professionalism that propels them forward, and a cultural and structural coherence that holds them together.”

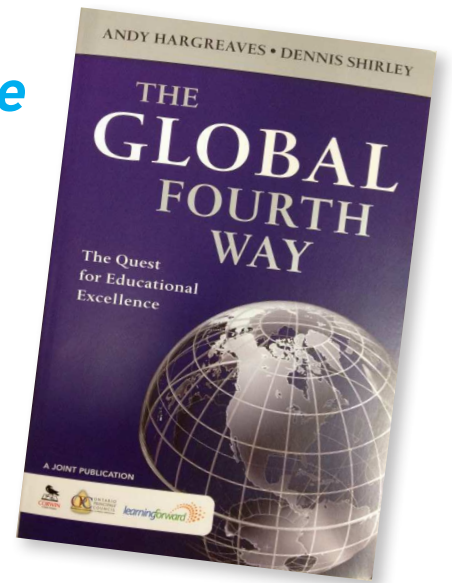
The QEIA program is the only U.S. school turnaround project featured in the book, which also reviews school reform innovations in Finland, Singapore, Alberta, Ontario and England. The origins of QEIA, the settlement of a CTA school funding lawsuit filed against then-Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, are fully discussed.

In this sequel to *The Fourth Way*, their earlier book about educational change, the authors find that QEIA, the largest school reform effort of its kind in the nation, succeeds because it truly empowers teachers at the local level to collaborate to meet local student needs. CTA President Dean E. Vogel, Vice President Eric Heins and CTA Board member Mary Rose Ortega — a member of the QEIA Workgroup, which Heins chaired — are quoted in the book explaining why CTA supported the QEIA approach to helping schools.

“We have to give teachers an authentic role in determining the pedagogical needs of students,” Vogel tells the researchers. “Don’t rest that in Washington, D.C., or the state Capitol. Rest it at the school site. Give the teachers an authentic role. That’s the real issue.”

Heins says in the book: “We had to be able to reach into the schools in a different way.”

And Ortega, a former Los Angeles Unified



educator, says that way must focus on California’s Hispanic students, who make up half the student population. She favors “getting the community into the schools,” which QEIA fosters by stressing the hands-on role of school site councils of parents and teachers. Ortega likes the new book and says it does not shy from discussing the obstacles faced by students at QEIA schools, such as poverty and language barriers.

The authors note that the “disruptive innovation” of QEIA is yielding consistent improvements in API scores, especially at elementary schools in the QEIA network. (See more QEIA progress reports at www.cta.org/QEIAprogress.)

Hargreaves authored or edited more than 30 books and is the Thomas More Brennan Chair in the Lynch School of Education at Boston College. Shirley is professor of education at Boston College, is researching new education technologies, and has been a visiting professor at the National Institute of Education in Singapore, the University of Barcelona, and Harvard, where he earned his doctoral degree.

They consider QEIA to be “inside-out innovation that builds a platform of professional capital where classroom teachers become the dynamos of change themselves, not in this school or that school, but across hundreds of schools in one of the world’s largest systems.”

QEIA, the largest school reform effort of its kind in the nation, succeeds because it truly empowers teachers at the local level to collaborate to meet local student needs.

Your Piece in the CTA Puzzle



YOUR VOICE. OUR UNION. OUR FUTURE.

⇒ “I WANT AN EVEN STRONGER CTA. A CTA where everyone sees they have a role.” So says fifth-grade teacher Chris Aguilar, who serves on CTA’s Strategic Planning Group. Hear Chris and other members talk about the process at www.cta.org/talkaboutplanning.

The 55-member Strategic Planning Group is divided into internal and external committees. The internal committee is focusing on members, leaders and staff, surveying members in person, at meetings and online.

Focusing on labor, education and community partners, the external committee is hearing from partners about public education and how they view CTA. They are also interviewing those who have suc-

cessfully navigated the process. Yvonne Walker, president of Service Employees International Union Local 1000, and Jackson Potter, staff coordinator of the Chicago Teachers Union, were guest speakers last month. They discussed lessons learned in being member-centered organizations, the union movement’s impact on communities as a whole, and making tough decisions for the betterment of the profession.

The groups will analyze the research in a series of four two-day work sessions. Ultimately, recommendations will be reviewed and acted upon by CTA’s State Council of Education.

Find out about your piece in the CTA puzzle at www.cta.org/strategicplan.

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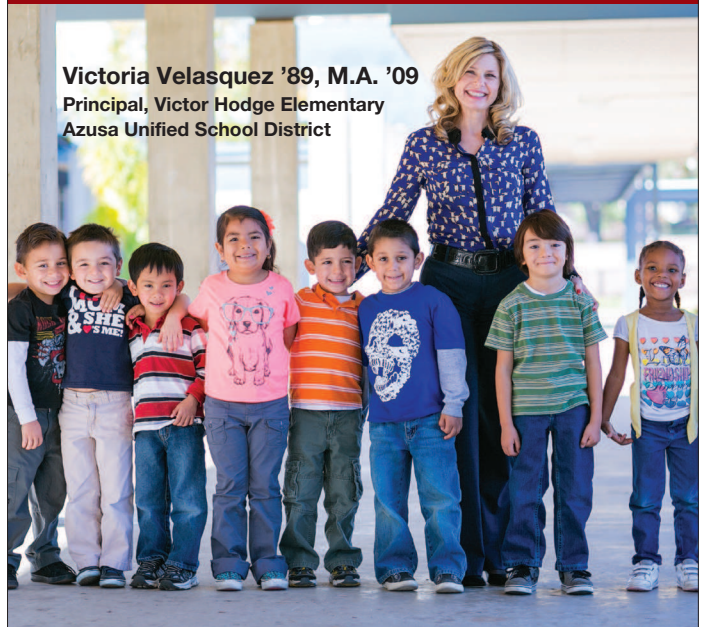


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In San Ysidro, CTA Vice President Eric Heins read in English and Spanish to fourth and fifth graders at La Mirada Elementary, a Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA) school that receives extra state funds to help at-risk students under the CTA-sponsored law.

READ ACROSS OUR CALIFORNIA!

From Calexico to Yreka, young and old shared the love of reading during Read Across America events March 1. CTA's featured book, *Our California*, provided fodder for readers to learn about the state.



Javier Claudio and Koby Guzman love to read in their PJs.



CTA Secretary-Treasurer Mikki Cichocki-Semo reads to Darlene Naslund's kindergarten class in Fullerton.



Supreme Court Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye reads in Deborah Williams' class at Mark Hopkins Elementary in Sacramento.

SEE MORE PHOTOS

Check out member photos and activities at www.cta.org/raa.



Mike Samson watches Supreme Court Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye read.



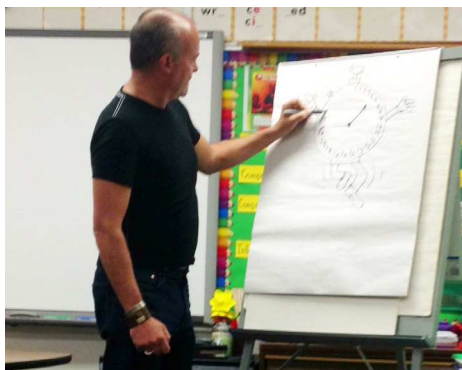
School board member and firefighter Daniel Berlant reads to Lysa Sassman's second-grade class at Rock Creek Elementary School in Auburn.



Lee Ellis Johnson, held by his aunt and Bakersfield Elementary Teachers Association President Michelle S. Johnson, enjoyed BETA's weeklong events, including a block party, face painting, and a book walk. Lee's mom is Ynette (Nettie) Johnson, Ontario Montclair Teachers Association.



State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson reads to students at Morello Park Elementary in Martinez.



"Our California" illustrator Rafael López demonstrates how he creates the illustrations for his books and posters in the classrooms of CTA members Janet Hughes and Lianne Loomis.

COMMON CORE

Commonsense Math Standards

BY FRANK WELLS

It's like asking students to solve difficult problems and make extensive computations with fractions without once telling students what a fraction is.

FEWER TOPICS AND GREATER DEPTH are among the goals of the newly adopted Common Core State Math Standards (CCSSM), which California will begin implementing in the 2014-15 school year. The new standards pare down topics, realign content to and across different grade levels, and eliminate redundancies that hinder students from building on what they've learned before.

Emphasizing focus, coherence and rigor, the new standards modify what were already widely regarded as some of the strongest standards in the nation, so that students are better prepared for college or careers.

The new standards' focus on depth is a welcome step for many. Critics of current practices say U.S. math courses cover too much with too little understanding. While U.S. students fared quite well in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), those nations that performed better actually covered fewer topics. The U.S. fourth grade curriculum omits only 17 percent of the TIMSS topics, while Hong Kong students cover only half.

The U.S. eighth grade curriculum addressed 30 topics, the Japanese, only 10. Some experts argue that fewer topics lead to better mastery of content and therefore higher test scores. The new standards attempt to offer students that path to mastery and better understanding.

UC Berkeley professor emeritus of mathematics Hung-Hsi Wu has written and presented extensively on the subject. He

argues that states have already had a de facto curriculum dictated largely by textbooks that share the same basic content — content that is often defective. An example is asking students to solve difficult problems and make extensive computations with fractions without once telling students what a fraction is. Content that doesn't really build on itself, along with an erroneous “earlier is necessarily better and more rigorous” philosophy, has placed students at a disadvantage and made math needlessly discouraging.

To illustrate a difference between current practice and the new Common Core, Wu compares two approaches to adding fractions. Currently, students are taught a formulaic procedure — find the lowest common denominator, multiply, fiddle with the fractions in some comprehensive way and then calculate — bypassing any sense of actually combining things (learned when adding whole numbers) or understanding the connection between adding fractions to whole numbers.

The Common Core approach to the same problem puts the emphasis on making sense of the computation. Students learn to place fractions on a number line, learn that addition means finding the total combined length of the segments representing the numbers in question, learn to find a common (not necessarily lowest) denominator, and finally see that addition is combining things after all. As a result, adding fractions is no longer a topic that has too many students searching for the classroom exits long before the bell rings.



Hung-Hsi Wu

NEXT MONTH

Is the smarter balance smarter?

Coming soon:

- Getting ready and transitions
- Implementation challenges: lessons learned from pilot schools
- Science: the next generation

The Common Core Math Standards require three shifts in math:

1. Focus within the grade levels identifying essential skills and understandings for deeper learning.
2. Coherence: Think across grades, and link to major topics.
3. Rigor: In major topics, pursue conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and application.

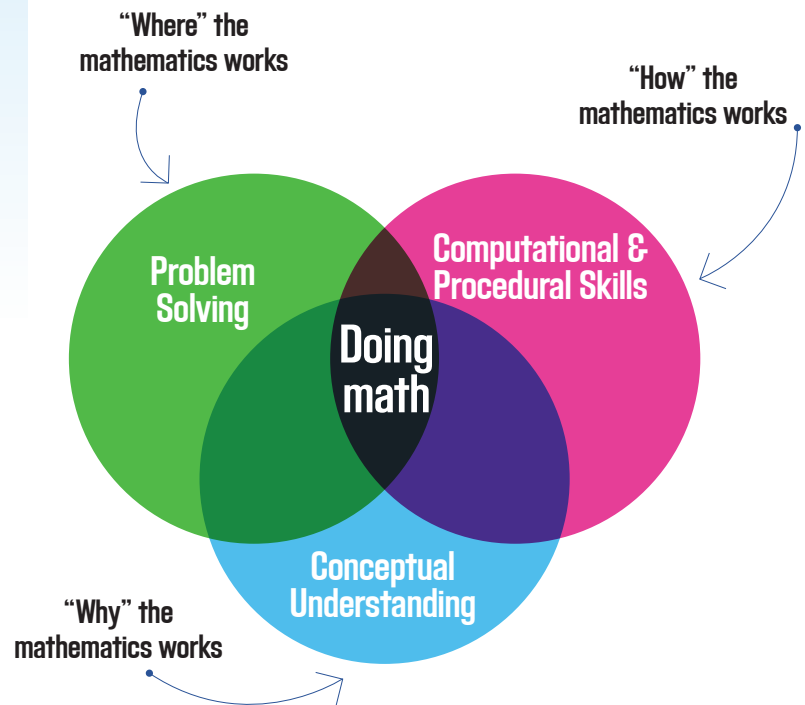
Adding fractions isn't the only source of student frustration under current practices. In an effort to correct what some view as another obstacle to student engagement and progress in math, one of the biggest changes to California's math curriculum was the elimination of California's 15-year-old Algebra I requirement for eighth-graders. In January the California State Board of Education voted unanimously to drop the requirement, leaving some students the option of an alternative path for that would still include some algebra but that would not be more transitional than the current requirement.

While some argue that the move lowers standards and rigor, others point to the high failure rate among students who may not have been quite ready and who need additional foundations before attempting a complete algebra course. Algebra may still be offered to eighth-graders deemed ready, and it will remain a requirement for high school graduation.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson praised the move. "The Common Core — and common sense — calls for a student's progress in mathematics to be based on their readiness to advance, not a timeline or a mandate from Sacramento," Torlakson said. "Making this change now will help our schools make the transition to Common Core, and marks another step in our push to provide students the practical, real-world skills they need."

Wu agrees with the board's move. "There has been a prevailing and erroneous belief that earlier is basically better and more rigorous," he says, "and some have tried to discredit new standards because they don't do algebra in grade 8. But the new standards actually make algebra learnable in grade 8 for the first time in decades by using part of grade 8 to provide students with the geometric knowledge needed for learning algebra."

CTA members can and should begin preparing now for the coming changes to the math curriculum and to the related assessments. Department and grade level meetings should include discussions of the new standards. Additional resources are available at www.cta.org/cderesources, commoncoretools.me and www.cta.org/ipd. Sample assessment questions are available at sampleitems.smarterbalanced.org.



Common Core State Math Standards:

Do:

- Set grade-level standards for grades K-8.
- Identify standards for Algebra I.
- Provide conceptual cluster standards in high school.
- Provide clear signposts along the way toward the goal of college and career readiness for all students.

Do not:

- Define intervention methods or materials.
- Define the full range of supports for English learners, students with special needs and students who are well above or below grade level expectations.
- Dictate curriculum or teaching methods.

Generally, the Standards do NOT define:

- How teachers should teach.
- All that can or should be taught.
- The nature of advanced work beyond the core.
- The interventions needed for students well below grade level.
- The full range of support for English language learners and students with special needs.
- Everything needed to be college and career ready.

Teachers Teaching Teachers

STORY AND PHOTOS BY BILL GUY

➔ **SHARING BEST PRACTICES AND TRENDS** is a hallmark of CTA's Good Teaching Conferences. The "North" conference held in San Jose involved nearly 900 educators and topics ranging from classroom management, new technology and workshops for specific curriculum content areas. All presenters pass rigorous muster for the

opportunity to share their knowledge, skill and expertise with CTA members. Here, CTA member presenters share their workshop take-aways. Check out all of CTA's learning and networking opportunities at www.cta.org/conferences.



Combining the Teaching of Vocabulary Words with State and National Standards to Achieve Good Writing Skills

Gridley High School English teacher Ken Hardy's session focused on enhancing vocabulary instruction while strengthening grammar, punctuation, mechanics and writing.

Session takeaways:

- Cornerstones of a solid writing program include repetition and structure.
- The challenging paradigm shift from CST standards to the Common Core gives teachers the exciting ability to take control of the curriculum.
- Hardy's ideas are just suggestions; use some, all or none as you build your own program of instruction.

Suggestions:

- Get up-to-date on the Common Core standards.
- Begin to take a leadership role in your department and school.
- Instead of waiting for change, embrace it and get out in front of it.

Want to know more?

Email Ken at khardy@gridley.k12.ca.us.



Yoga for Teachers and Students

Garden Grove intermediate school math teacher, AVID coordinator and yoga instructor Alyson Hoberecht offered instruction in basic yoga and Pilates poses that can help students activate their brains while strengthening their bodies for benefits related to learning objectives and testing situations.

Session takeaways:

- Yoga provides a sense of balance for teachers' intense work and dedication to their students and profession.
- Yoga focuses on breathing, stretching, relaxation and flexibility, while Pilates focuses on strengthening the core, toning and preventing injuries.
- Simple deep yoga breathing techniques can be used to help students relax before a quiz or test in class.

Reminders:

- Make sure any yoga video, book, website or class you use is by an author or instructor who is nationally certified by the American Council on Exercise (ACE) or the Aerobics and Fitness Association of America (AFAA).
- Yoga programs for students at school should include a parent notification letter and parent permission.

Want to know more?

Email Alyson at ahoberec@ggusd.us.

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Language disorder — or just learning a new language?

Pamela Greenhalgh shows a picture to a student and asks what he sees in the drawing...

“THE GIRL IS THINKING ABOUT the cookies,” replies the fifth-grader at Maxwell Elementary School in Anaheim.

Greenhalgh, a speech-language pathologist, is determining whether Erick’s difficulties are caused by a language disorder or are part of the process of acquiring a new language. Erick comes from an indigenous community in Mexico. Zapotecan is his native language, but his mother spoke to him in Spanish. When he arrived in the United States a few years ago, he began learning English. He is struggling with word endings and the ability to imitate sounds.

English learners are often misdiagnosed as having a language disorder and wrongly put into special education programs. Greenhalgh worries about students like Erick being misdiagnosed. It is important that English learners have help, she asserts, but it must be the right kind of help. We asked Greenhalgh, who is president of the Magnolia Educators Association, to explain.

Misdiagnosing language disorders happens often?

The 24th Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act reported that, between 1987 and 2001, the percentage of the general population who did not speak English at home increased by 2.5 percent. However, the percentage of students from these homes who were identified for special services increased 10.9 percent. As the pressure increases for higher test scores, there is more pressure to put children into special education. We really care about kids and want to make sure they have as much

help as possible, but sometimes more is just more, and not necessarily better.

Does second-language learning mimic a language disorder?

Yes. Moving from one’s homeland to a new country can induce cultural shock, feelings of isolation, and linguistic challenges related to immersion in a totally different language. It does not, however, mean a child has a language disorder. The Education Code says that if problems are due to second-language acquisition or cultural or environmental types of issues, the child does not have a “disorder.” But we are in a quandary when a second-language learner is behind.

What are the implications of misdiagnosis?

Research has found that if we have expectations for children to do well and have them in general education with English language development and access to core curriculum, they do well. If there is an expectation that they can’t do well because they have a disorder, they will sometimes live up to that, even without a disorder.

Does environment play a role?

Yes. I recently had an “aha!” moment about what might be contributing to the delay in a child’s developing language. You may have families renting one bedroom of an apartment, and nobody is supposed to make any noise or they lose their living situation. So keeping

children quiet is extremely important. Do people interact or talk with kids on a consistent basis? If the parents are mixing two languages, it could mean the child doesn’t



have a true primary language and they may need more time to develop language in the classroom. The parents may be fluent in English, but perhaps the primary caregiver is the grandparent who doesn’t speak English, so the child’s primary language is Spanish. So it helps to look at other factors in the child’s environment.

What about professional development?

There is little professional development that deals with this topic. Sometimes there’s pressure because parents want special education. They believe the more services a child has, the better off that child will be. And parents sometimes will take their child to a doctor or psychologist who doesn’t speak the language of the child to see why the child isn’t talking, and that can be a problem.

How does the process for second-language acquisition work?

It takes three to five years to develop basic conversational proficiency and five to seven years for cognitive academic skills that are required in schools. Children have a silent period when they are first acquiring a second language. Some programs children are in are so demanding at such a young age that children are in a state of shock. Sometimes they need more time and opportunities. Preschool can help in catching a child up.

What is the protocol?

The Education Code says you’re supposed to refer a child to special education only after



Pamela Greenhalgh

Erick Sanchez practices pronouncing words with Pamela Greenhalgh.

the resources of general education have been considered and when appropriate, utilized. General education support programs like RtI (Response to Intervention) give struggling students supports before we consider putting them into special education.

How can educators work with parents?

Many parents are working and busy, so they tend to just have rudimentary conversations with children. “Brush your teeth; go to bed; put your things away; go get a snack.” I encourage parents to speak in their primary language and to use the world as a teaching environment for vocabulary. Encourage parents to read books aloud, talk about items they see when they go to the grocery store, and teach all the names of household items. I asked one parent to do these things and a year later, when I retested the child, his vocabulary was off the charts.

What about speech-language pathologists?

There are little things that can help. See what the child’s primary language is and how it is structured. Sometimes the “th” sound is not in the primary language, so the SLP will realize the child does not have a disorder if he or she cannot make that sound. Sometimes a child will not have an s at the end of words to signify plural in their primary language, so they are using the rules of their own primary language to produce English. Try and see if they are using the grammar and rules of their primary language to speak English and you might see they do not have a disorder.

Any last thoughts?

We owe it to our children to give them a chance — to see whether they are going to do well in a general education setting — and then if they don’t do well, we can look at special education services. My district is getting really good at that. Being aware of possible misdiagnosis and having the resources to understand the second-language acquisition process is important for general education teachers, special education and specialists. The more we know, the better we can serve our children.

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—Amber Carrow (pictured above)
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CTA to hold election for president

■ AT THE APRIL STATE COUNCIL MEETING, an election will be held for the office of CTA president. Running for the position are Bret Baird and Dean E. Vogel.

Baird is president-elect of the Redwood City Teachers Association. Vogel is the current CTA

president and a member of the Vacaville Teachers Association.

Following are unedited campaign statements submitted by the candidates, limited to 400 words.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed are those of the candidates and not necessarily those of CTA.

Candidates for CTA president

BRET BAIRD

My name is Bret Baird, and I am a candidate for the office of CTA President. I have been a public school teacher since 1982 and a leader of my 500 teacher local in Redwood City for the past 20 years. I have been a full-time teacher my entire career.

My reasons for running are 3-fold:

1. Change Race to the Top
2. Make CTA more democratic
3. Unify our massive base: teachers, students, parents

President Obama's Race to the Top has hurt us, but he appears to be willing to modify it if we put pressure on him to do so. We must act immediately. Over the past few years, my local, and others statewide, have seen too many amazing teachers leave the profession prematurely. Teachers with excellent evaluations for 20 to 30 years are leaving due to one set of poor test scores. This "testing above all" philosophy has hurt locals because as districts fall further into Program Improvement, senior union leaders leave, and younger teachers are too busy to take their places. The stress levels put on school boards, superintendents, administrators, teachers, and students is ridiculous and must stop. It looks as though some form of testing is here to stay; however, we can form coalitions to modify the current situation. If we don't unify and demand change, we won't have much of a profession to protect.

CTA must become more democratic if we are to actively engage all of our 300,000 members. The current system is outdated. One way to begin the change is to directly elect our Board of Directors from the districts they represent. The State Council Representatives are elected by the people they represent. But, the Board Members are not elected by the region they represent: they are elected by the State Representatives at State Council. This would be like the Congress deciding who the Senators will be. Every teacher in the state should know both who their State Representative and Board member are.

Our base can defeat anyone or anything, if unified. Public Schools affect over 47% of the population. (This does not include Pre-K and Higher Education.) We all have one thing in common, they are OUR kids in OUR schools. I have worked with a vast array of different groups to pass bonds and parcel taxes. As President, I will work tirelessly to unite our base.



Baird

DEAN E. VOGEL

The conditions of teaching and learning today are dreadful. Every day teachers are being asked to do more with less, even as expectations rise and opportunities for authentic roles in decision making decrease. Educators feel overworked, disrespected and discouraged daily, yet they continue to give more, to be creative, to do what they know is right. And, as I pause and consider this first year and a half I've spent as CTA President, I find myself drawn to this very real truth: The women and men working in our public schools and colleges today are some of the most courageous, resilient, determined people alive. Yes, they are my heroes, and they inspire me daily to do this work.

We must take back our profession, our schools, and our right to shape the education of California's students. To that end, The California Teachers Association must focus its effort not only at Sacramento but also into the classrooms and schools in every community. Too many people with little experience and less understanding of the dynamics of teaching and learning have bought their way into the offices of the power brokers and policy makers. It's time for CTA to lead a reformation that will restore the educators, the practitioners, to their rightful place at the center of the education change debate.

Two years ago, in this very publication, I wrote, "The disconnection that teachers are feeling between their classrooms and CTA is real, and it is CTA's responsibility to do something about it. Teachers and educators are being asked to do more with less every day. It's time for CTA to ask the same of itself."

As your President, I have taken this responsibility very seriously. Yes, the California Teachers Association is in transition. That is a fact. We're in the middle of a very comprehensive effort to develop a Long Term Strategic Plan that will position our association, our union, to be relevant to all our members, not just some of them and, also, to provide the leverage necessary to move our profession and the ideal of a free, universal public education forward. The theme for this very important work is "Your Voice, Our Union, Our Future," and it is intended to reach all the way into local chapters, schools, and classrooms.

The challenge is before us and, in concert with my leadership team, I look forward to leading the charge.



Vogel

CTA to hold election for vice president

■ AT THE APRIL STATE COUNCIL MEETING, an election will be held for the office of CTA vice president. Running for the position are Mark Kotch and Eric C. Heins.

Kotch is president of the Delano Union Elementary School Teachers Association. Heins

is the current CTA vice president and a member of the Pittsburg Education Association.

Following are unedited campaign statements submitted by the candidates, limited to 400 words.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed are those of the candidates and not necessarily those of CTA.

Candidates for CTA vice president

MARK KOTCH

I am Mark Kotch, and I am a candidate for the office of CTA Vice President. I am in the contest because I believe strong locals are the foundation of a strong CTA.

We know CTA gets the lion's share of our dues money, and local leaders get the lion's share of responsibility for protecting membership. As a committee chair at State Council, I am overwhelmed by the staff support I receive, as a local president, not so much.

I have 29 years of public education service, and I am completing my 13th year as a local president. Our membership, of 400, still has fully-paid health care premiums, and we own our office building on Main Street in Delano. Right now, we are negotiating an Academic Freedom article as part of reopeners to our 2011-2014 contract. My local is fighting for the integrity of our profession.

Prior to the 2011 election, President Vogel wrote that many classroom teachers no longer feel a strong connection with CTA. I believe that is due to changing demographics and the relentless attacks on teachers by our political enemies. But, it is also reflected in the way we conduct business at CTA State Council.

I stand for direct election of any CTA Board of Directors member who represents a geographical district. Currently, your CTA Board member is elected by CTA State Council. Direct election of Board candidates will put the electoral process in school site lunchrooms and local union offices and make our politics more accountable to membership. Your CTA dues are \$647 per year; shouldn't you be allowed to vote?

I am glad we passed Proposition 30 and defeated Proposition 32. That was important work, yet we missed an opportunity to encourage community outreach and political activism in every CTA local. If we truly want to engage membership, it has to be where they live and work.

We need to get out of the corner and start throwing some punches. Most teachers are dedicated, hardworking and productive. The public needs to learn the cause of dysfunction in our schools is in the way they are financed, governed and managed. That dysfunction is compounded by a corporate "reform" agenda that has robbed millions of students of their childhoods and undermined the professional status of classroom teachers.

As Vice President, I will work to strengthen CTA from the ground up and connect our organization to membership.



Kotch

ERIC C. HEINS

Let me begin by saying "Thank you!" For your participation in the day-to-day struggles of being a public school employee and a public education advocate, for your involvement in the daily lives of our students as a hands-on worker and leader, for your unrelenting determination to protect public education and our members' union rights in last November's election — every day you make the difference!

I am a 22 year elementary teacher in Pittsburg, CA. I deeply appreciate my many years spent working with my students and gaining experience at every level of our Association. As your vice-president, I have learned more fully with each passing day that, whatever our life experiences or backgrounds may be, we really are one CTA family, pre-school through graduate school. We share the same characteristics and ideals: strength, compassion, hope, vision, honesty, and the touch of humor that gets us through difficult times.

We are living in times of challenge and opportunity. Public education and unions are being attacked as never before. How we, CTA and public education, emerge depends on the actions we take today. Without a doubt, we will have to change, but according to our own self-identified needs and desires, not those of our enemies, and without abandoning our core values and commitments. We can and will take charge of our profession, build it up and demand the respect that is rightfully ours.

Like you, I believe that CTA must be dynamic and innovative in order to remain vital and effective. We must engage in honest, meaningful conversations with each other — to learn, grow and lead together. We must value our individual wisdom and connect to our collective power: in our governance activities, at the bargaining table, and in the legislative and political arenas.

As part of an outstanding team of CTA officers, I have worked to ensure that CTA remains strong, healthy, and relevant. As we seek re-election, I believe that we are the right team at the right time to serve you, our members. We know that it will take all of us, coming together, listening and responding with openness and respect, to move our Association forward. We ask for your continued support. I ask for your questions, concerns, and advice to build a better CTA and a public education system providing an education second-to-none for all students.

I am Eric Heins, Candidate for CTA Vice President.



Heins

Secretary-treasurer-elect's statement

■ AT THE JANUARY STATE COUNCIL MEETING, Mikki Cichocki was re-elected secretary-treasurer of CTA. Cichocki is a member of the San Bernardino Teachers Association. Her second term as secretary-treasurer begins June 26.

Although Cichocki ran unopposed, a campaign statement was submitted by the candidate. This unedited statement was limited to 400 words.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed are those of the candidate and not necessarily those of CTA.

MIKKI CICHOCKI

I wish to start by thanking the members of state council for re-electing me to my second term as your Secretary-Treasurer. I am honored by your confidence in me. I pledge to continue the work of keeping CTA fiscally sound, activating our membership, protecting public education and speaking out on behalf of the children of California. CTA must continue to move forward with strength and I will not let you down.

CTA has seen many challenges and successes in the 18 months that I have been an officer. Our election victories in November were crucial to school funding and the maintenance of our collective political voice. I salute each and every one of you who walked a precinct, made a phone call, wrote a postcard, or talked to a friend. We did it and we did it because CTA is truly a team. I am privileged to be a member of another team — our team of CTA officers. President Dean Vogel and Vice President Eric Heins are amazing leaders and the three of us together are a force to be reckoned with. We need to keep our team together. I wholeheartedly endorse Dean and Eric in their bids for re-election. I could not continue to do what I do without them at my side.



Cichocki

I will continue to actively listen to diverse voices in order to create a stronger and more effective organization. I will continue ensuring that every member has access to all levels of our organization and provide ongoing opportunities for members to grow into CTA leadership positions. My commitment to intensive member engagement is unwavering because I believe we need to grow the next generation of CTA leadership.

Public education continues to be at a crossroads and we must move forward in advocacy for all. Your team of officers has the drive and energy to navigate us through the challenges and opportunities yet to come. Together we will protect public education. Together we will fight for the rights of our members. Together we will work to protect and enhance funding for public education and champion CTA as the driving force for a quality education for every student.

We are one.

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Note: In every 2013 issue of the *Educator* we will be highlighting a portion of CTA's proud history in a timeline. Collect all 9 and put them together for a big look at all we've accomplished over the past 150 years. To get started just cut out the timeline from this page. Your next installment will be coming to you in April.



1920s

Continuing Contract. Tenure. Due process.
Whatever the name, it is not a benefit or privilege of teaching but an important right that CTA has fought for since founder John Swett first decied arbitrary and capricious firings of teachers back in 1863.

What educators now call due process was known as a "continuing contract law" when it was first passed by the state Legislature in 1912. That first law said a teacher would automatically be reemployed unless he is notified by June 15 that his services would not be required. During the '20s, that law would be fought over, but ultimately strengthened through the efforts of CTA, and particularly then-President Mark Keppel.

Keppel shepherded a flurry of teacher rights laws through the Legislature. In 1921, the due process law was extended to include school districts with seven or more teachers. After two years of service teachers could not be dismissed except for "good and sufficient cause."

The law was tested in 1925 when a school board refused to employ an experienced teacher because she

had the audacity to get married. A Superior Court ruled the due process law was unconstitutional, but for three years, CTA carried the fight through to the state Supreme Court to win reemployment rights for the teacher.

In 1927, the law was extended to all districts, regardless of size. When an attempt was made to limit mandatory due process, CTA fought back. It is said that in 1928 Keppel's dying words to CTA Executive Secretary Roy Cloud were, "Don't let them repeal the tenure law, Roy."

Roy didn't.

There were numerous changes to the law since then, but throughout, CTA continued to maintain that teachers must be held to the highest standards and will continue to uphold a teacher's right to a fair hearing during dismissal proceedings.



1919

CTA led the fight for state funding of junior colleges. Fresno City College opened in 1910, and by 1919 there were 21 colleges serving 1,800 students.



1920

To call public attention to postwar school and teacher shortages and low teacher salaries, the Masonic Lodge and CTA sponsored the first Public Schools Week in April. NEA followed suit with American Education Week in 1921.



1927

CTA won a "radical" victory when the State Supreme Court ruled that a school board could not fire a female teacher simply because she had the nerve to actually get married.



1928

CTA president and Los Angeles county superintendent of schools Mark Keppel is credited with enacting a longer school year, free textbooks, free rural transportation for children, compulsory school attendance, and teacher rights laws.

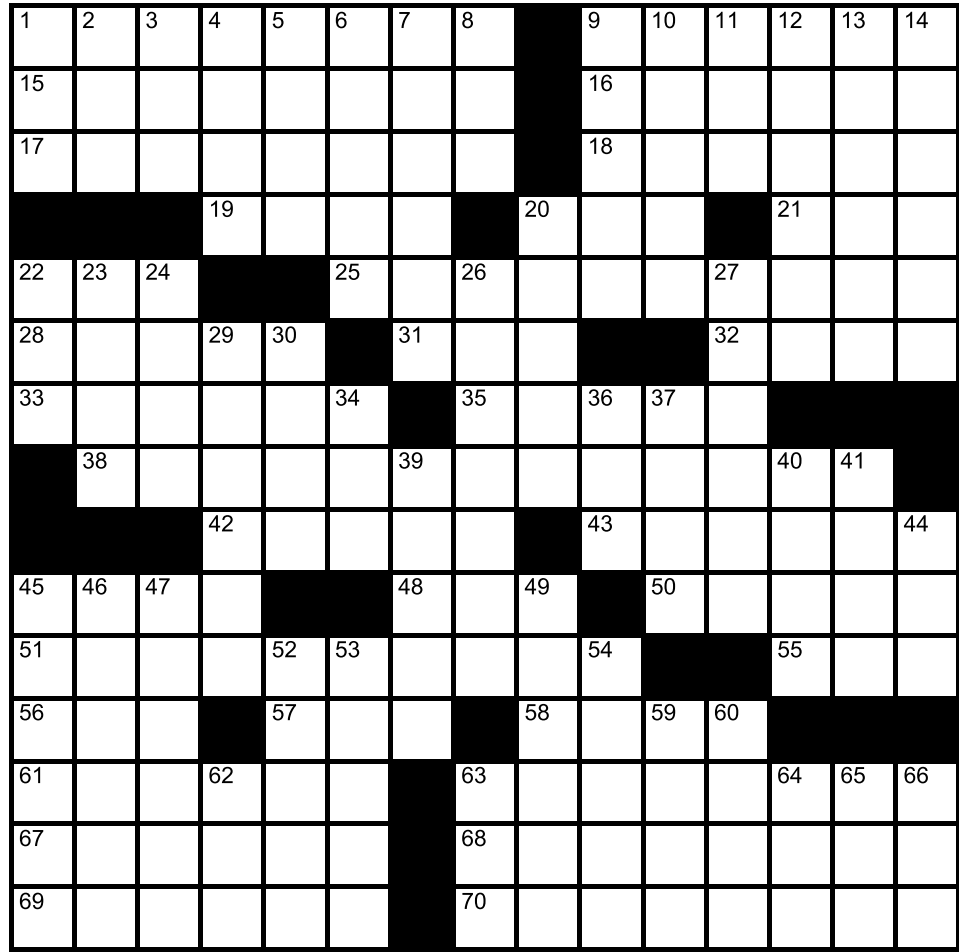
1929

The stock market crash and Depression years drained school funds. Teacher salaries were reduced and building programs were canceled.

Crossword Puzzle

BY CRAIG HAMILTON

Solution on page 22.



> Across

- 1 Site of monoliths and waterfalls
- 9 Where the Gold Rush began
- 15 "Green Acres" co-star
- 16 Worshiper
- 17 Japanese farewell
- 18 Stop working
- 19 Irritated
- 20 Heat meas.
- 21 German article
- 22 Little bit of Brylcreem
- 25 Western terminus of the Pony Express
- 28 Lock of hair
- 31 Mai _____
- 32 _____ Mary's (L.A. college)
- 33 Lists of candidates
- 35 Shelf
- 38 Book featured in this year's Read Across America celebration, which visits six of the answers in this puzzle
- 42 Book of maps
- 43 Annoying person
- 45 Highlander, for example
- 48 Hwy.
- 50 Other half of a hit 45
- 51 Where swallows return in March
- 55 Catch some rays
- 56 Qty.
- 57 Plaything
- 58 Steep, rugged rock
- 61 Winemaker Paul
- 63 Cut out pieces of a puzzle
- 67 Monastery, perhaps
- 68 Extremely agitated
- 69 Site of the Bear Flag Revolt
- 70 Cannery Row locale

> Down

- 1 "_____ we can!"
- 2 Egg cells
- 3 Voice
- 4 Swelled heads
- 5 "Look _____ hands!"
- 6 Certain girders
- 7 Caused anguish to
- 8 Period of history
- 9 Magna _____
- 10 Concert hall
- 11 Film studio area
- 12 Point in the right direction
- 13 Virtues
- 14 Retort to "Am too!"
- 20 Lawyer's summary
- 22 Drunk's affliction
- 23 Singer Guthrie
- 24 Boyfriend
- 26 Flockhart of "Ally McBeal"
- 27 Corrects
- 29 Low clouds blanketing a large area
- 30 Religious denomination
- 34 Erie Canal mule
- 36 CTA Board member Dawson
- 37 Vittles
- 39 CTA Board member Allen
- 40 "What's _____ for me?"
- 41 Opera set in Egypt
- 44 Barbie's boy toy
- 45 Rascals
- 46 Chevy introduced in 1966
- 47 Chooses to participate
- 49 Los Angeles suburb near Sherman Oaks
- 52 Tempest
- 53 Figure skater Harding
- 54 The Phantom's instrument
- 59 Mgr.'s aide
- 60 Golden _____ Bridge
- 62 "Barney Miller" actor Jack
- 63 CTA Board member Groth
- 64 Conflict
- 65 Summer in Tours
- 66 Susan of "L.A. Law"



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