

california educator

MAY / JUNE 2016 VOLUME 20 ISSUE 9

RECESS MAKES A COMEBACK

The benefits of play —
in and out
of the classroom

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JUNIOR COACH

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WHAT ARE YOUR SUMMER PLANS?

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Bilingual and Biliterate

Dual immersion programs help students understand one another and the world, and give them a competitive edge.

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Reclaiming Recess

Test prep and test-taking cut into recess. But play during schooltime improves students' academic performance — and their behavior, too.



On the cover: Student Rudolfo Martinez helps out at recess at Joyner Elementary School in Los Angeles.



Best Friends: Winners of the Pets of CTA photo contest, page 54



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YOUR OPINIONS AND LETTERS ARE WELCOME! There is a 250-word limit, and all letters will be edited. If you send photos or other materials, identifications and permissions are required. Letters must include your name along with your address, daytime telephone number or email address. Email editor@cta.org.

VERY CARING COUNSELOR

As a high school counselor for the last 19 years, I am very hands-on with my students with their college applications, because I want them to present their best self. I do college applications workshops and review every application for any errors before they submit. While it might take me more time to review over 120 UC, Cal State, and Common Applications, I have peace of mind knowing everything is correct.

A funny story: One year I took a group of at-risk students to Loyola Marymount University to expose them to a college campus. When we entered a large classroom, I explained that it was a lecture hall. A male student approached me and asked if they really yelled at the students in this classroom!

Every year during the college application season I share the students' stress as if I am applying to college all over again. When it is time to hear back from the colleges, I tease the students by excitedly asking them, "Did we get in?" I love seeing the students get accepted to a university, and knowing that they are going to spread their wings and fly away from the nest to embark on new adventures.

JACQUELINE BORJA

San Gabriel Teachers Association

HOW GPO/WEP AFFECT YOU

Last year CalSTRS found that half of active California teachers don't understand how the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision

(WEP) affect their Social Security retirement benefits.

If you have a spouse who earns Social Security, you would normally expect to get half the amount they get as a monthly spousal benefit when you retire, and then get the whole amount if they predecease you. A full-career CalSTRS-earning teacher won't get any of their Social Security spousal or death benefit money (\$600 to \$2,400 a month) because of the GPO. If you have earned your own SS retirement benefit, the WEP can cut it by \$400 a month.

How can you help yourself? Get life insurance on your spouse when you are young. Pay off your mortgage.

When Social Security Fairness surveyed 600 retired California teachers last year:

- 8 percent said that they'd lost money in a legal settlement — often a divorce

— because they hadn't known about the offsets.

- 35 percent said they lose so much that if they had known, they would not have worked summers to earn the 40 quarters for SS retirement benefits.
- Half would have planned differently for retirement, and a quarter would have worked longer.

Nearly 40 percent of California teachers over 65 who took the survey are still working part or full time.

Inform yourself. SS Fairness has links to the Social Security Administration as well as NEA's comprehensive section on the offsets (ssfairness.com/gpo-wep-information).

BONNIE CEDIEL

CTA/NEA-Retired



ON MAY 11, Doreen McGuire-Grigg, NEA's 2016 ESP of the Year (and CTA's 2015 ESP of the Year), was honored at the White House as a School Support Champion of Change, one of 12 education support professionals nationwide recognized for going above and beyond to meet the needs of students so they can achieve success inside and outside the classroom. Pictured: CTA Vice President Theresa Montaño, NEA Secretary-Treasurer Princess Moss, Doreen McGuire-Grigg, former NEA/CTA ESP of the Year Janet Eberhardt, and NEA President Lily Eskelsen García.

SEND IN YOUR BACK TO SCHOOL STORIES

The first day back to school is always rife with surprises and minor gaffes that make you gasp or laugh out loud or both — from unexpected critters in the classroom, to kids who grew a foot between May and August, to suddenly realizing you're wearing two different shoes. We want to hear your stories — we'll publish a selection in our August Back to School issue. Write to editor@cta.org with "Back to School" in the subject line, or [@WeAreCTA](https://twitter.com/WeAreCTA), [#ctabacktoschool](https://twitter.com/ctabacktoschool).



Protect what matters to you.

You do a lot of things for a lot of people. But while your students count on you to teach, your family depends on you for just about everything else. That's why it pays to protect their way of life with CTA-endorsed Life Insurance from The Standard. It can help pay for the things your loved ones might need in the event of the unexpected — like car payments, college tuition, the mortgage and more. Get the confidence that comes with knowing you've protected their future so you can focus on being your best today. Learn more at CTAMemberBenefits.org/TheStandard.



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Assessing what matters

AS THE SCHOOL YEAR comes to a close, I look back on the past months with great pride. Not only did we accomplish many of our advocacy and organizational goals, but you — our fantastic educators — continued to teach and inspire students every single day. In many ways it's been an extraordinary, wonderful year, and I applaud all of you.

Our work continues, of course. While new laws such as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) are now in place, we must be prepared to work at the state and local levels to make sure our voices are heard and our students and schools get what they need and deserve.

With ESSA we have a real opportunity to redefine what student achievement looks like. We know that an overemphasis on standardized test scores is not what they need. It's not one test score on one day that we've spent too much time prepping students for. No, it takes multiple measures to assess what a student knows and has yet to master. The new federal law asks states and local school districts to define those measures.

Right now, educators in California have an opportunity to develop a system of accountability that places learning over testing, that values teachers' observations, and that doesn't label and punish, but seeks to understand and improve.

I served as co-chair of the California Department of Education's Advisory Task Force on Accountability and Continuous Improvement this past year. Our mandate was to review "A Blueprint for Great Schools Version 2.0," Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson's plan to provide children with a world-class education, and make recommendations on what this system should be and how to achieve it. Here's what we discovered:

- We need an accountability system that focuses on continued student improvement based on multiple measures, not just a single statewide test score — one that focuses on equity and performance. It's like the dashboard of a car: You need several gauges that together give you critical information as you drive.
- Similarly, multiple factors are important to student learning and focusing on the whole child, factors such as teacher-developed tests, classroom work, attendance, graduation rates and advanced classes. There's also school climate, which includes class size, access to technology, teachers, parent involvement, support of school counselors and nurses, and after-school programs. So many factors shape how a student learns.
- Finally, we must support and advocate for equity, access and opportunity for all students. We have to fight to get the resources for students who need more help, more time, and an equal opportunity to succeed.

If we learned anything from No Child Left Behind, it's that



Eric Heins speaks at a May 4 rally at Forest Park Elementary School in Fremont, marking the National Day to Reclaim Our Schools.

all stakeholders, including lawmakers, should share responsibility for students' success. You can't institute an absolute system designed for failure and then blame those who can't achieve "perfection."

This work is just one of the ways CTA members are leading our profession — a focal point of CTA's long-term strategic plan. In this all-important election year, the plan is a critical tool as we move forward with purpose and clarity. It outlines how we must continue to build an organizing culture within CTA, engage our communities, and solidify strong, effective coalitions to advance public education and protect students.

With these strengths, we can ensure the success of initiatives such as the California Children's Education and Health Care Protection Act of 2016, which temporarily extends taxes on the wealthy to prevent billions of dollars in funding cuts for public education and other vital services. We can ensure that smart and humane people are elected to office. We can continue to transform our profession.

This year and into the future, it's vital that we all step up as leaders — in the classroom and in schools, of course, but also in our districts and communities. We must make sure we have a place at the table when decisions are being made; we must speak up and take action.

We can do it. We will do it. I can't wait to see what the next year brings.

Eric C. Heins

CTA PRESIDENT

@ericheins



CCTC Approved Reading and Literacy Added Authorization

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

The Reading and Literacy Added Authorization program is geared towards teachers with the potential to become leaders and mentors in the area of reading. It will provide educators with the right tools to improve student achievement.

Program Highlights:

- The program provides participants with the skills to develop a research-based program of reading instruction for implementation in their own classrooms or as a resource for other classroom teachers
- This certificate is aligned with the requirements and standards established by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC).
- **100% online**

To view credential requirements, the program FAQs and to download an application please visit our Reading Instruction at extension.ucsd.edu/teachreading

UC San Diego Extension also offers accessible and affordable online programs for K-12 and Postsecondary Educators.

- New courses begin every month
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- CCTC-Approved Clear Credential Program
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- Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) Specialized Certificate
- Teaching Adult Learners Professional Certificate
- Teaching Online Certificate
- Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Professional Certificate
- Professional Development/Salary Point Coursework

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

extension.ucsd.edu/education

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CTA/NEA membership dues for the fiscal year (Sept. 1, 2015, to Aug. 31, 2016) are \$829, including a \$20 refundable contribution (see cta.org/contribution for details). Up to \$18.40 of CTA annual dues is designated for CTA/ABC political activities to support state and local candidates and/or initiatives and is not deductible for income tax purposes.

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

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MISSION STATEMENT

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

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Editor's
Note

All work and no play...

ASK ANY KID what their favorite part of the school day is, and the answer is often “Recess!”

In recent years, however, school and district efforts to prep students for ever more testing meant recess was not mission-critical and could be shortened or even axed — despite findings from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and other research that show its enormous benefits.

Our story “**Reclaiming Recess**” (page 20) highlights a few California schools and educators who are taking it back, recognizing recess’s crucial role in “optimizing a child’s social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development,” as an AAP report states, and how learning and attention improve following a break. An interesting aspect is that recess is not necessarily free play — it can involve structured activity and teamwork, and for some students an opportunity to practice leadership skills.

A break is probably needed after a few hours in a dual immersion program. Our feature “**Bilingual and Biliterate**” (page 24) explores these increasingly popular, challenging programs where students are immersed in a language other than English. Parents and educators alike are realizing that multilingual skills give students a competitive edge. The CTA-supported California Education for a Global Economy (Ed.G.E.) Initiative, on the November ballot, seeks to solidify this edge by expanding students’ access to multilingual education, and allowing teachers, parents and schools more control over the curriculum.

Speaking of parental and educator control, strong collaboration between the San Diego Education Association (SDEA) and the San Diego Unified School District — the second-largest in the state — helped convince the district to eliminate unnecessary testing (see “**Passing the Test**,” page 48). Among other efforts, SDEA surveyed local educators and found that 90 percent believe overuse of standardized testing is harmful to students, and a total of five weeks of classroom time is lost to testing. Additionally, SDEA reached out to parents about the issue, informing them of their rights to exempt their children from state-mandated testing.

Relationship-building is also why Debbie Hamme has accomplished so much. Winner of CTA’s **2016 Paula J. Monroe ESP of the Year Award** (page 51), Hamme has been thanked by her school district’s superintendent “for her leadership and deep belief that the best thing we can all do for our kids is to work together and operate as true partners.”



Educator Changes

There is always room for improvement, and in that spirit we plan to make a few tweaks to the *Educator’s* format and content over the coming months. We want your reading experience to be as useful, informative and engaging as possible — and we need your help.

Let us know what you like, what you don’t, what’s missing, and what can be improved. Send your ideas and suggestions to editor@cta.org. Look for a freshened-up Back-to-School issue in August, and for more changes in the future.

Relationship-building, in fact, is at the heart of CTA and NEA’s work. The **merger of NEA and the American Teachers Association** 50 years ago (page 50) is early proof.

Finally, the benefits of recess — helping kids relax, recharge and learn how to play — are also true of adult pastimes and passions, including guardianship of a pet. While we picked a few top dogs (and other animals) in our “**Pets of CTA**” contest (page 54), the winners are clearly all our members whose lives are enriched by their furry/scaly/feathered friends.

Cheers to the dog days of summer.

Katharine Fong

EDITOR IN CHIEF

editor@cta.org

CALENDAR



Get your students ready for LGBT Pride Month in June — and year-round — by talking about the impact that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning individuals and communities have had on history and culture locally, nationally and around the world. Include positive representations of LGBTQ+ themes and history in your curriculum — it will help LGBTQ+ students feel safer and more affirmed, and all students will benefit when you're a visible ally and build empathy and understanding.

The Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (glsen.org) and the Anti-Defamation League (adl.org), among others, offer ideas, resources and sample curriculum by grade level for educators. The American Library Association's Rainbow list has books, poetry and writings of LGBTQ+ writers (glbtrt.ala.org/rainbowbooks).



Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month

There's still time to observe Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month, which runs through May. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders represent more than 50 ethnic groups and 100 languages. They have made enormous contributions to the civic, cultural and economic fabric of our nation. Lesson plans and audiovisual features are available at cta.org/mayawareness; for more resources, see nea.org and search for Asians/Pacific Islanders.



Harness the Power of Diversity

Join NEA's 2016 Joint Conference on Concerns of Minorities and Women June 30-July 1 in Washington, D.C. Unite to fight social injustice. Inspire fellow rabble-rousers to action. Lead the movement to ensure opportunity for all students. The plenary and workshop sessions will help you create better learning opportunities for your students no matter their race, gender, ZIP code, sexual orientation, first language or immigration status. Sign up at nea.org/jointconference.

Member Jennifer Cisneros at the Liberty Bell last summer. ▶



JUNE 1 APPLICATION DEADLINE

NEA Foundation Grants

The NEA Foundation awards \$2,000 and \$5,000 grants to educators: Student Achievement Grants support improving academic achievement; Learning and Leadership Grants support high-quality professional development activities. Applications are reviewed three times a year.

▶ neafoundation.org

JUNE 7 ELECTION

State Primary Election

Find candidate recommendations and your personalized voter guide on the CTA website.

▶ cta.org/campaign2016

JULY 2-7 CONVENTION

NEA Representative Assembly

Washington, D.C.

With 8,000 delegates (including about 900 from California), the RA is the world's largest democratic deliberative body. CTA members will help set policy and chart the direction of NEA business. ▶ ctago.org

JULY 21-24 CONFERENCE

Presidents Conference

Fairmont Hotel, San Jose

This training is geared for local chapter leaders. New and second-year presidents and new community college chapter presidents begin on Thursday with specially tailored core training; others join them Friday for electives and workshops to enhance leadership skills. ▶ ctago.org

JULY 25 ENTRY DEADLINE

"Educators Are Everywhere" photo contest

While you're traveling this summer, take a photo of yourself with your favorite *Educator* magazine. You may win a gift card for school supplies. Email editor@cta.org with "Educators Are Everywhere" in the subject line, or tweet/Instagram [#WeAreCTA](https://www.instagram.com/wearecta) [#EducatorsAreEverywhere](https://www.instagram.com/wearecta). Include your full name, your chapter, and a description of the photo.

JULY 31-AUGUST 4 CONFERENCE

Summer Institute

UCLA Conference Center, Los Angeles

CTA's premier training workshop offers sessions in Instruction and Professional Development (focusing on student engagement, assessment and school culture), Community Engagement and Coalition Building, Communications, Legal, Member Benefits, Charter Educators, Emerging Leaders, Bargaining, School Finance, and Tax Fairness. See page 49.

▶ ctago.org

Summer Reading

When young Vasya Kandinsky first opened a paint box, he heard the colors "sing" and saw the sounds "dance." *The Noisy Paint Box: The Colors and Sounds of Kandinsky's Abstract Art*, by Barb Rosenstock, tells the story of one of the very first painters of abstract art, and how his unique perspectives and talents produced bold, groundbreaking works. For grades 1-2.

This One Summer, by Jillian and Mariko Tamaki, is a coming-of-age graphic novel for grades 9-12. Rose goes with her parents to a lake house every summer, and with her friend Windy she's had great times. But this summer is different. The prose and beautifully evocative illustrations capture the challenges of growing up, touching on topics such as changed friendships, divorce and sex.

For more California Reads recommendations, see cta.org/californiareads. [#californiareads](https://twitter.com/californiareads)





My Story: John Peterson grew up wanting to be a record album cover designer, but fell into teaching and loved it. When he was laid off in 2003, the Bakersfield Elementary Teachers Association helped him get hired back. He had taken his union for granted, he says, but not anymore. He urges others to be active — even by simply keeping up-to-date on chapter business or attending meetings — because “it’s rare that everything goes as planned.”

► [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) (search for **#MyStoryMyUnion** Peterson)

Social Buzz

The Fourth Was With Us Educators, parents and students across California participated in the National Day of Action to Reclaim Our Schools on May 4. The “walk-ins” demonstrated support for public education, educational justice and equity, and access to school resources and opportunities. The date coincided with “May the Fourth Be With You” *Star Wars* fan day, which led to some fun photos. **#reclaimourschools**



Clockwise from top left: Bridge Street Elementary in Los Angeles, Bret Harte Middle in Oakland, Two Rivers Elementary in Sacramento, Longfellow Elementary in San Francisco.

CONNECT WITH CTA ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

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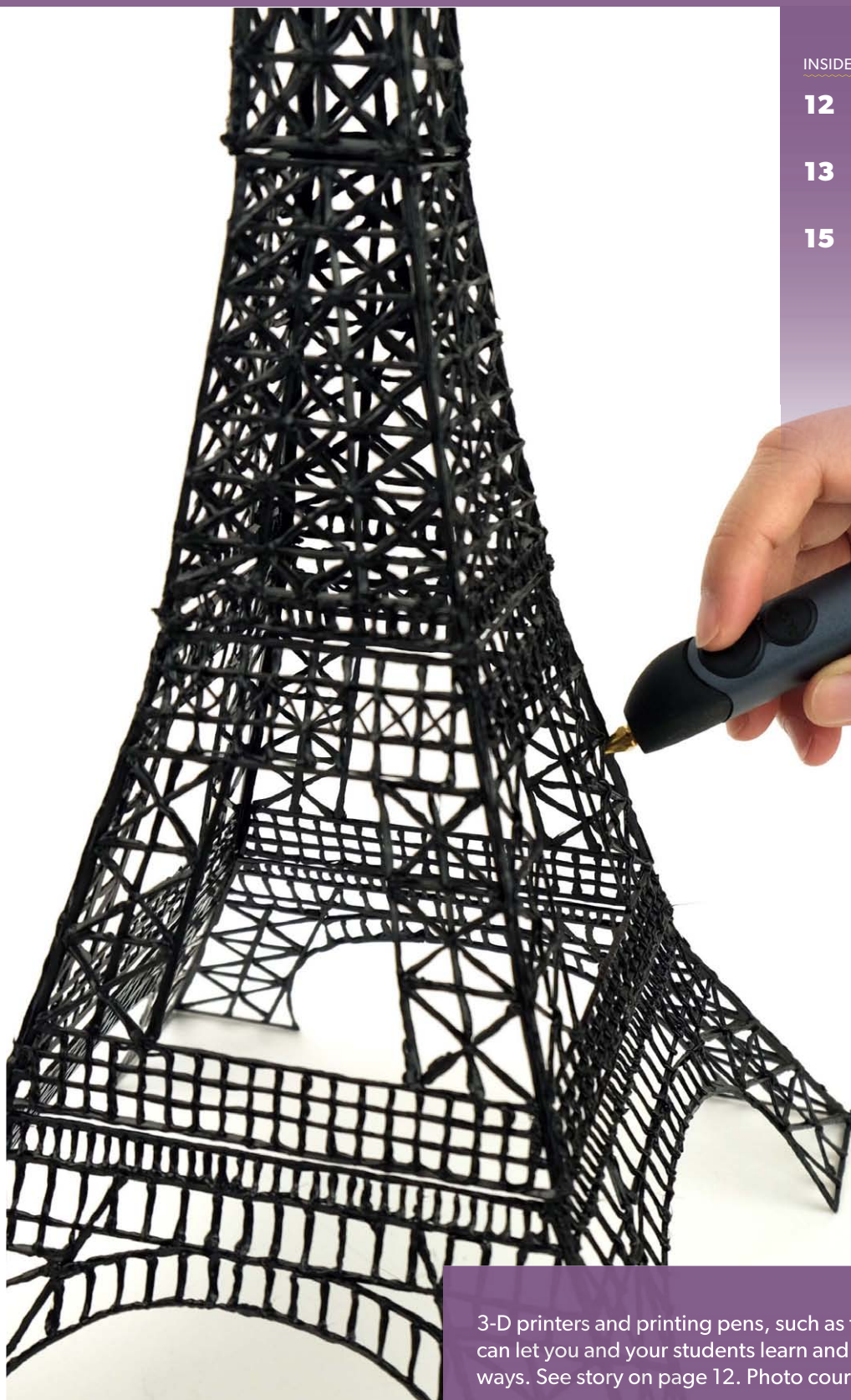
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#OurVoiceOurUnion
#WeAreCTA

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see cta.org/social.

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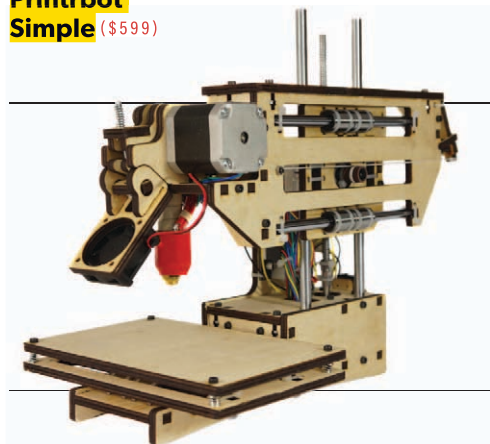
- 12 Tech Tips:**
3-D printers and pens
- 13 Quotes & Numbers:**
In the news
- 15 Your Whole Life:**
Educator discounts,
screen-free fun



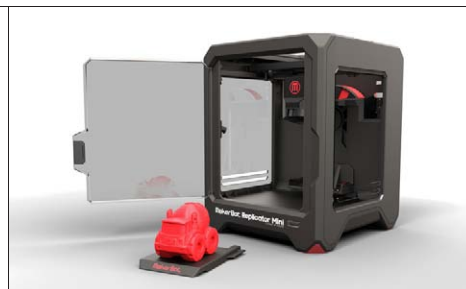
3-D printers and printing pens, such as the 3Doodler above, can let you and your students learn and be creative in unique ways. See story on page 12. Photo courtesy 3Doodler.



STARTER:
Printrbot
Simple (\$599)



MID-RANGE:
MakerBot
Replicator Mini
(\$1,375)



HIGH-END:
MakerGear M2
(\$1,825)



The Third Dimension

3-D printers offer multiple uses in the classroom

By TERRY NG

EDUCATORS ACROSS THE nation are using 3-D printers to revolutionize teaching and learning. Students — even young ones — are creating amazing objects that help them explore various concepts and understand core principles of design, fabrication and more.

What is 3-D printing?

Three-D printing takes a digital model and forms a physical object, by stacking layers of material one on top of another. This layer-by-layer printing process is known as additive manufacturing. Imagine the plastic building blocks you played with as a kid, only with a lot more precision.

What can you make with a 3-D printer?

If you can draw it, you can make it. Applications related to school subjects include:

- Biology — cross-sections of hearts and organs.
- Chemistry — complex molecules.
- Geography — topographic maps.
- Engineering — prototypes.
- History — artifacts.

Three-D printing enables students to handle objects that normally would not be readily available.

What material is used to print 3-D objects?

Three-D printers use filament, which costs an average of \$50 per spool. Each spool is enough to print about 300 chess pieces or 10 chess sets. Filament can be made from a variety of materials such as ABS plastic, nylon, epoxy resin and polycarbonate.

What modeling software do 3-D printers use?

Three-D printers use digital models created by CAD (computer-aided design) programs. Various free programs are available, such as Tinkercad, SketchUp, 3DTin, Blender and OpenSCAD.

Ready to go freestyle?

Three-D printing pens such as the 3Doodler allow you to literally draw in the air or on surfaces, without software or computers. As you draw, the pen extrudes heated plastic, which cools instantly and turns solid. You can build an infinite variety of shapes and objects.

Which 3-D printer should my school buy?

A decade ago, you couldn't buy a desktop 3-D printer for less than \$10,000. Today, you can get a great one for under \$2,000. Generally, the more you spend, the better the detail you'll get in your printed object. Also, higher-end printers allow you to print bigger objects.

Quotes & Numbers

Compiled by MIKE MYSLINSKI

WE COMB THE media daily for the best quotes and statistics about public education. If you discover a quote or stat you think we should highlight, send it along with your name to editor@cta.org.

"I can make a whole chicken last a week or two.
I'm incredibly frugal."

—Montclair Elementary teacher **VALERIE LINES** in Oakland Unified, quoted in an April 29 *San Jose Mercury News* story about teachers being priced out of housing in the Bay Area, and having to cope with high rents and take in roommates to make ends meet.

"This is not sustainable. We can't live like this forever. We want to be starting families and living like adults."

—San Francisco Unified kindergarten teacher **REBECCA SHEEHAN-STROSS**, quoted in a May 15 *San Francisco Chronicle* investigation about Bay Area educators struggling to find affordable housing. She rents the dining room of an Oakland apartment, with no closets and little privacy.

"This is encouraging news any way you look at it, especially since the increase is occurring as we are introducing much more rigorous academic standards."

—State Superintendent of Public Instruction **TOM TORLAKSON**, in his May 17 news release announcing that California's high school graduation rate has climbed for the sixth year in a row to 82.3 percent.

"We, the teachers in this room, are the faces of LCTA. I guarantee that when you step into our classrooms for the coming week, we do the best job possible to make sure our students have the best possible education."

—La Cañada Teachers Association President **MANDY REDFERN**, quoted in the May 14 *La Cañada Valley Sun*, speaking out at a school board meeting as educators still fought at press time for fair compensation at the bargaining table.

"If we want to give children a path to better health and improved academic outcomes, while also pushing back against the inactivity epidemic, we need to invest in quality physical education. It can change the life of a young person. How do I know it can change lives? Because it saved mine."

—Former National Football League star **HERSCHEL WALKER**, in his May 11 column in *Education Week*. See our story about the importance of physical activity in California's schools on page 20.

78.5%

Graduation rate for California Hispanic or Latino students in 2015, up 1.9 percentage points from the year before, the California Department of Education announced May 17.

\$591.7 MILLION

Amount Los Angeles Unified School District lost to unmitigated charter school growth this year alone, according to an independent analysis released May 10 and commissioned by United Teachers Los Angeles that is posted at thecostofcharterschools.org.

47

Number of U.S. conservative advocacy groups, think tanks and media outlets that act as an "echo chamber" driving the public education privatization movement and union-busting, as cited in a revealing April 27 study at mediamatters.org.

\$3,500

Median monthly rent for a one-bedroom San Francisco apartment, causing the average San Francisco teacher to spend about 64 percent of their salary on housing, according to a May 15 *San Francisco Chronicle* story on educators and the Bay Area housing crisis.

7/10

Minimum proportion of U.S. teachers who assign homework that requires Internet access, as noted in "Harper's Index" in the *May Harper's*.

2/5

Proportion of U.S. students from low-income households who do not have broadband Internet access, from the same *Harper's*.

Switch colors



just like that.



YOUR WHOLE LIFE

Tips and trends for a smarter, healthier you



Get Real

School's out, and you're tempted to loll in bed and catch up on *Empire* and *Outlander* or master *Hungry Shark*. Fight it! Let screens go dark and use your precious downtime to reconnect with family and friends in meaningful, face-to-face ways. NEA staffer and blogger Bethe Almeras offers a week's worth of ideas for screen-free fun:

1. **Have a cookout** or indoor picnic.
2. **Have a game night** with cards and board games.
3. **Go for a long walk after dinner**, and chat with neighbors you haven't seen all winter.
4. **Go to the library** and pick out a book — maybe one you can read together as a family.
5. **Visit a local nature center** for programs on stargazing, night hikes and nocturnal wildlife.
6. **Take a day trip** — hike, bike, or visit a nearby museum.
7. **Start a backyard garden or container garden**, or spend time in one you already have.

Teacher Discounts

Take advantage of great deals from major retailers and service providers. NEA Member Benefits' "Big List of Educator Discounts" at neamb.org will get you started. A few highlights:

- **Adobe:** Software discounts, including 60 percent off Creative Cloud.
- **Aerosoles**, Banana Republic, J.Crew, Ann Taylor Loft, The Limited, and more: 15 percent off (minimum purchase \$39.99 at Aerosoles).
- **The Apple Store:** Education pricing available on Macs, iPads, accessories, apps, iBooks and iTunesU courses.
- **Barnes & Noble:** 20 percent off publisher's list price on select purchases including most hardcover and paperback books; up to 25 percent off during Educator Appreciation Days.
- **Educational Impact:** 20 percent off online professional development with self-paced courses that utilize streaming videos.
- **Jo-Ann Fabric and Craft Stores, Michael's:** 15 percent off on purchases.
- **NEA Member Benefits Apparel Store:** Exclusive pricing on items from Macy's, L.L.Bean, Under Armour, and more.
- **OpenEd:** Free resources aligned to Common Core including K-12 assessments, homework assignments, videos, games and lesson plans.
- **PBS Learning Media:** Access to classroom-ready, curriculum-targeted, digital resources and lesson plans.

Save for the Future With New CTA Plan

With the new, exclusively endorsed **CTA Retirement Savings Plan**, you're in control. You decide how much to contribute. You can pick a no-fuss fund with a target date closest to your retirement, or be a hands-on investor. You get **high-quality investment options** recommended and monitored by a national independent investment consulting firm, and **low fees**. Plus, you save on taxes. Check if your district offers the plan. To find out, and to enroll, contact CTA Member Benefits at 650-552-5200 or see CTAMemberBenefits.org/rsp.

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Perspectives

INSIDE:

- 18 Member Spotlight:** Melissa Abadia helps kids get in the game
- 19 Your Voice:** "Magic Man" Irving Rothstein



Adapted PE teacher Melissa Abadia watches a student use her "Kicker Helper," which enables students with disabilities to propel a ball and play soccer and kickball with others. See story on page 18.





Adapted PE Teacher Kick-Starts New Way for Students to Join In

MELISSA ABADIA WANTED all of her students to participate in her adapted PE classes. But many were unable to kick the ball from their wheelchairs to participate in kickball, soccer or bowling. So Abadia designed the “Kicker Helper,” which allows students to use a lever attached to their wheelchair to “kick” the ball and play with others.

Now every student is getting a kick out of PE class, thanks to the inventiveness and perseverance of this San Leandro Teachers Association member.

“Go, Precious, go!” cheer youngsters as Precious Espinosa’s Kicker Helper hits a beach ball and sends it flying in the gym at Madison Elementary School. A smile lights up her face as she makes contact and is wheeled away.

Abadia has taught adapted PE for four years to students with moderate to severe disabilities at six elementary schools, one high school and two adult education programs in the San Leandro Unified School District. Many of her students are in wheelchairs.

“When I first started this job, I didn’t know what to do with these kids,” she confides. “They have multiple disabilities and are nonverbal, for the most part. They may have grip issues, feeding tubes, seizures, and other medical issues. But I wanted them to be able to play kickball and soccer. I wanted them to be able to participate and be active. I thought there had to be some piece of equipment out there that would help them.”

But no such equipment existed, so she invented it. Her first kicker was created from an old shoe, PVC pipe and foam noodles (used for play in swimming pools) attached to the chair with a zip tie. Students would squeeze a grip and the foot would kick out.

It worked OK but not great, because it often fell off the chair. So she looked for ways to improve upon her invention. Google engineers helped with the prototype when she participated in Google’s Bay Area Makeathon last fall. The new model has a battery and a button students can push. It’s an improvement, but it’s not yet perfect.

Abadia with her first Kicker Helper.



Photo by Scott Buschman

IN MELISSA’S WORDS:

My long-term goal...

is to make the Kicker Helper available throughout California and the U.S., to adult recreation centers and rehabilitation centers. It would be great if paraeducators and teachers could take it out at schools everywhere during recess time and adapted PE.

What I love best...

is seeing kids’ reactions. A lot of these kids are nonverbal, but when they kick the ball and see the cause and effect, you can see the smile on their faces and in their eyes. They think they are superb athletes and they develop confidence.

The best moments...

are when kids help each other. You see one student trying to use the Kicker Helper and having grip problems, and another kid comes by and helps them. Different kids have different challenges. But the moments I love best are when the kids show that they care about each other, help each other, and cheer for each other. They have genuine heart, and I love their spirit.

However, the project is still alive and kicking. The San Leandro Teacher of the Year is now collaborating with metal fabricator, designer and welder Mark Monico to produce a lightweight aluminum model. She has started an online fundraiser at indiegogo.com/projects/kicker-helper-wheelchair-sports-equipment.

—Sherry Posnick-Goodwin



YOUR VOICE

Magic Man

By IRVING ROTHSTEIN

February 1971

Mr. Rothstein,

I have an apology to make. I came in thinking that no one in San Francisco knew what it meant to be a teacher, and tried to substitute my own lesson plan. The students quickly showed me I was wrong. The class was amazing. Thank you for the lesson.

Sincerely,

Your Substitute, Mary Atrade

THE NOTE IS in my school mailbox when I return on a Friday.

A broken wrist that didn't set properly and a medical appointment that could only be had on a Thursday made it necessary to take a sick day. I'd left instructions that the students would run the class.

But why the note, what had happened?

The class was set up so that everybody has a turn to choose topics, make presentations, give assignments, and do follow-up.

I show the letter to Ray O'Neil, my student second-in-command. He laughs a response: "Hey, Brotha, you missed a good show — but, come to think of it, if you were here, it wouldn't have been a show.

"That lady is sitting here when we walk in. Soon as the bell rings, she stands up, all five feet of her, and gives us a big pep talk on how we were gonna learn a whole bunch of political things that day. Then she writes some title headings on the board and passes out copies of one of those political papers they give out at the peace rallies.

"But you know how psyched up Danny gets. It's his day to lead a discussion on Samoan culture. He stands up and says, 'Mrs. Lady, did you read Matai Rothstein's instructions?'"

Danny is 6-foot-5 and weighs 250 pounds. *Matai* means chief in Samoan.

"She blinks but stands her ground and tells him, 'I'm teacher today and I am running the class.'

"Danny gets a little upset, and, well — well, he tells her what's what."

I envision all sorts of scenarios, none of them good, as Ray narrates.

"That was supposed to be your job, Raymond," I say.

"Hey, Kool, it happens too quick for me to do anything. But nobody gets hurt. In fact, it went so well, she made nice to us after the class.

"Danny shouts at her real loud: 'If you read the Matai's instructions, you'd know that I am the teacher today.'

"Well, that poor lady looks like she is gonna cry. But she pulls herself togetha, sits down and lets Danny do his thing."

Two weeks later, I meet Mary at a union meeting.

"That class of yours was fantastic," she says. "Once I backed down from that big Samoan kid, they totally amazed me. He told a few legends of Samoa, some Samoan history, and passed out a ditto sheet with some questions on it, and then opened up the class to discussion. He and that other young man, Ray I think his name is" — I nod and she continues — "led a discussion that pulled everyone in. There were 30-plus

kids participating in a nonstop talk that went past the bell."

I respond, "That wasn't me — it was them. I just get them and let them do their thing."

"However you do, it's magic," she says, "and since you are their designated teacher, my name for you is Magic Man."

I laugh to myself and mentally add it to my list of roles.

Fast-forward to August 2015, when a former student adds a new role: writer. He publishes a collection of my stories called *It Couldn't Have Been the Pay*.

He's right.

Irving Rothstein is a retired United Educators of San Francisco member. His memoir, It Couldn't Have Been the Pay: A Life of Teaching and Learning in Public Schools (Rocin Publishing, 2015), collects his stories from more than 30 years of teaching. He used storytelling and humor in the classroom to teach, but also to help students from all backgrounds learn about themselves and one another.





At Joyner Elementary in Los Angeles, fifth-grade teacher Raquel Williams interacts with students at recess.

RECLAIMING RECESS

*Play during schooltime
improves students' behavior
— and academic performance*

By SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN
Photos by SCOTT BUSCHMAN

WHEN THE BELL rings for recess at Joyner Elementary School, students rush out of their classrooms, eager to go to various stations on the playground where they can play Wizard Tag, four square, volleyball, dodgeball, or a game of basketball called Knockout. The games differ, but the lingo used by players is the same.



LaVal Brewer, executive director of Playworks Southern California, plays with students at Joyner Elementary. Brewer oversees recess and physical activity at 53 schools.



Emmanuel Viray and David Hernandez play basketball during their recess break at Tara Hills Elementary in San Pablo.



Ethan Dodson, a Playworks junior coach at Joyner Elementary, gets ready to hand out “Good Job” tickets to fellow students.

“Good job, nice try,” they call cheerfully to their teammates. Differences of opinion about whether the ball is in or out are settled with a game of rock-paper-scissors. There are lots of high fives.

Recess wasn’t always such an enjoyable experience at the school, located in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles, recalls fifth-grade teacher Raquel Williams, who is enjoying a friendly game of volleyball with students. In the past, there were frequent arguments on the playground. They carried over into the classroom, which interfered with learning, says the United Teachers Los Angeles member.

Things changed for the better with help from Playworks, an Oakland-based nonprofit organization

partnering with educators to provide safe, healthy and fun play during recess.

“Students here are definitely happier,” says Williams. “Before, if they were out, it was the end of the world. Now they offer each other encouragement. No one is sitting out and being sedentary. It’s much better.”

Fifth-grader Ethan Dodson is one of several junior coaches trained by Playworks staff. He encourages peers to participate in games and helps them resolve playground problems peacefully. The positive vibe extends beyond the school yard and into the classroom, he observes.

“Everyone has respect for the game and each other,” he says. “I used to have friends who argued over a pencil in class. But now they do rock-paper-scissors to work it out.”

LaVal Brewer, executive director of Playworks Southern California overseeing 53 participating schools, says teachers constantly thank him for providing them more instructional time by ensuring peaceful play.

“Before, kids would be arguing when the bell rang and not get over it. The first thing they’d do when they got





Lauren Kaplan, first-grade teacher at Tara Hills Elementary in San Pablo, thinks the school's focus on recess has made students happier and healthier.

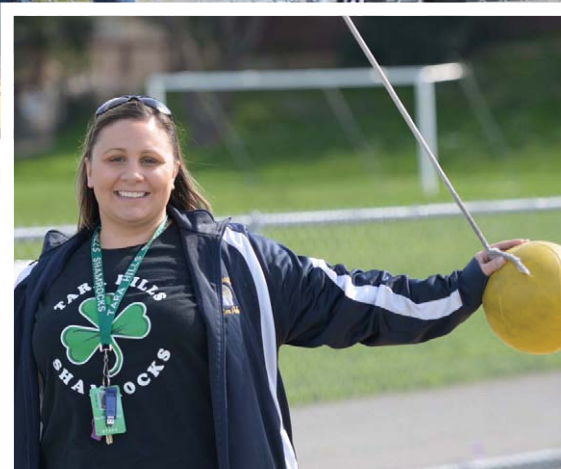
into class was say, 'Teacher, teacher, let me tell you what happened.' When you eliminate that, teachers get extra minutes of instructional time every day, not to mention their sanity."

RECESS IS MAKING A COMEBACK

Ask students what their favorite part of the school day is, and the answer is often recess. But pressure to raise test scores caused many schools throughout the U.S. to reduce or eliminate recess, depriving youngsters of fun, happiness and exercise — along with opportunities to interact with peers and develop important social skills.

According to the American Association for the Child's Right to Play, 40 percent of districts in the U.S. reduced recess time due to No Child Left Behind. The most impacted students were from low-income neighborhoods. Along with the reduction of recess came another trend: schools withholding recess as a punishment. In some school districts, including Berkeley, parents strongly objected to recess deprivation for bad behavior, maintaining that students need movement to stay healthy and shouldn't be expected to sit all day long.

Studies show that allowing children to play during schooltime makes them more attentive to classwork and improves academic performance. Also, classroom behavior improves dramatically when children are given recess breaks. According to *The Journal of Pediatrics*,



Jennifer Gulick, fifth-grade teacher at Tara Hills Elementary, says, "Playing with the kids makes for a better relationship with them."

youngsters demonstrate better behavior when they are given at least one 15-minute recess, compared with students who go without.

California, like most states, does not require schools to have recess. However, California's Education Code encourages schools to offer supervised playtime for students. Many schools, including Joyner Elementary, see value in providing students fun, safe and creative playtime.

Playworks, which has partnered with 200 low-income schools in California and 1,200 nationwide, offers three levels of services to schools. In Playworks Coach, a full-time professional coach delivers the program; in the Playworks Pro model, recess experts provide

“I like helping little kids and teaching them different strategies.
I’m learning responsibility. It’s making me kinder.
It’s helping me be a better person.”

—*Ryan Karnsouwong, sixth-grader at Tara Hills Elementary School*

professional development to school personnel; and in TeamUp, a staff person rotates among four schools throughout the year, providing consultation. Costs vary depending upon the location and needs of the school, with donors contributing up to 50 percent for some school sites. An impressive list of donors includes the Golden State Warriors, the Los Angeles Dodgers, Mattel, Disney, Salesforce, Kaiser Permanente, and PG&E. In all levels, staff provide professional development for educators who want to engage students in meaningful play. Schools are expected to provide equipment.

A February 2015 Stanford study looked at six low-income elementary schools that had implemented Playworks’ programs — with coaches, a common set of rules, and conflict resolution tools — for two recess periods per day. The report, which included teacher interviews, concluded that students felt safer because they experienced less bullying and more collegiality. Teachers reported an improvement in overall school climate and said they had developed a new appreciation for recess time. The Stanford study suggests that well-organized recess engages students in meaningful play and prepares them for success in academics and life.

GIVING SCHOOLS A NEW PLAYBOOK

Jennifer Gulick, a fifth-grade teacher at Tara Hills Elementary in San Pablo, puts on her sneakers and a big smile when she goes out to play with students during recess.

“Playing with the kids makes for a better relationship with them,” confides Gulick, a member of United Teachers of Richmond (UTR). “They love to see the teachers engaging in play, especially dodgeball.”

Lauren Kaplan, also a UTR member and a first-grade teacher at the school, enjoys playing with students. She believes it “humanizes” teachers and builds strong connections.

“Playing games fosters respect and kindness from working together as a team,” she says. “It goes way beyond the school yard in how we interact with each

other. And it makes my job a lot easier on yard duty, because it’s not fun to always be bossing kids around.”

Both teachers say the focus on recess has made students happier, healthier and less likely to form cliques or engage in bullying.

“We have found that students really would rather play together than sit together and gossip,” says Gulick.

Junior coaches trained by Playworks share that they are learning more than just how to play; they are acquiring important leadership skills.

“I like helping little kids and teaching them different strategies,” says Ryan Karnsouwong, a sixth-grader at Tara Hills. “I’m learning responsibility. It’s making me kinder. It’s helping me be a better person.” ■

Does your recess offer a setting where children thrive?

A checklist:

- **Twenty minutes** or more of recess daily.
- Recess is not taken away for punishment or academic reasons.
- The playground has **specific areas for games**.
- Boundaries are displayed with cones, chalk or painted lines.
- There is **enough equipment** to provide active play for all students.
- Students have a **variety of play** to choose from, including traditional sports and imaginative play.
- **Teams are created inclusively**, by “counting off” or creating rotational lines.
- Staff set **positive, simple and clear rules**.
- Coaches **stop negative behavior** immediately.
- Staff ensure that if rules are broken, consequences are responsible, respectful and related.

Source: Playworks

Playworks.org has hundreds of games in its free online games library, plus tips on how to play successfully and indoor recess ideas for bad-weather days.



Ruby Sandoval, with Cayleb Hunter and Larry Sarria, teaches Spanish in her fifth- and sixth-grade dual immersion class.

Bilingual and Biliterate

Dual immersion is rewriting the language of success

By SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN

Photos by SCOTT BUSCHMAN and CYNTHIA MENZEL



Ja'Patrick Smith

BEGINNING IN KINDERGARTEN, Ja'Patrick Smith was taught in Spanish most of the school day. At first it was confusing and difficult, because his family speaks English. Teachers used pictures and pantomimed so he could learn words and concepts. He felt frustrated and misunderstood, as though he had entered a strange new world.

But now that he's in sixth grade, he can speak, read and write well in both languages. He also feels at home in both cultures. His baby sitter and her family,

who come from Mexico and speak mostly Spanish, have become his second family, sharing cultural celebrations and family vacations with him.

Ja'Patrick's ability to move comfortably between two languages and cultures is a benefit of the dual immersion (DI) program he attends at Victoria Magathan Elementary School in Adelanto. When the program began seven years ago, most parents were skeptical. But times have changed. Now there's a waiting list, and the school has added another kindergarten class to meet demand.



Don Kinslow, fifth-grade teacher at Rosedale Elementary, says dual immersion has helped create a more inclusive environment at the school.



Educator Lourdes Cassetta, center, at Rosedale Elementary, a two-way immersion school that groups native Spanish speakers with native English speakers.

The increasing popularity of DI programs throughout the state reflects an understanding that multilingual skills are an asset that can give students a competitive edge in today's global marketplace. In fact, the California Education for a Global Economy (Ed.G.E.) Initiative, supported by CTA on the November ballot, seeks to solidify this edge by expanding students' access to multilingual education, and allowing teachers, parents and schools more control over the curriculum. (See sidebar, page 28.)

A GROWING TREND

DI begins in kindergarten, with 90 percent of instruction in a second language and 10 percent in English. English instruction increases gradually; by fourth grade the ratio is 50:50. Schools may vary this formula with a higher percentage of English in the beginning. The goal is to foster biliteracy, so students can speak, read and write fluently in two languages.

Schools throughout California have expanded DI programs to meet the demands of parents, who believe a second language benefits children in a diverse state and a global economy. Over the past decade, the number of DI programs in the U.S. has increased tenfold, notes the U.S. Department of Education. California has

369 dual-language schools, most of them Spanish, according to the California Department of Education (CDE).

"It's definitely becoming a trend in our diverse state of California," comments Elena Fajardo, administrator of the CDE's Language Policy and Leadership Office.

Most of the districts that implemented DI did so fairly recently, and the majority of their programs are in elementary schools. Districts with older DI programs, such as San Francisco and Chico, have created programs at the secondary level, while others are scrambling to create them so students can continue what they've started. Fremont, for example, has a Mandarin DI program in the works for children about to enter middle school.

The programs are also popular with immigrant families who want their children to read and write in their native language — and ethnic families who want their children to maintain their heritage.

After Proposition 227 of 1998 mandated that English learners be taught in English, Latino parents turned to DI programs to replace bilingual education programs that were dismantled. Because they are open to all students and not specifically

"Dual immersion expands children's understanding and acceptance of others. It gives them a perspective of what it's like to be in a different culture without having to leave the country."

—Lourdes Cassetta, Chico Unified Teachers Association

¿Cómo estás?





Chiu-Yen Jen, fifth-grade Mandarin teacher at Azeveda Elementary in Fremont, with students Nathan Massoth and Hayden Harrison. She says her students excel not only in Chinese, but in math and English.

English learners, DI programs have flourished. (The Ed.G.E. Initiative would repeal Prop. 227.)

At Magathan Elementary School, many DI enrollees are from Mexico and Latin America, says Ruby Sandoval, who teaches Ja'Patrick's fifth- and sixth-grade combination class.

"For English learners living in a country where English is the main language, a dual immersion program is a way of preserving students' language and culture," says the Adelanto District Teachers Association member.

Adrian Ruiz, a sixth-grader who has been in the program since kindergarten, enjoys being able to converse with his grandparents in Spanish.

"They don't speak English, so without this class, I would not be able to communicate with them," he says.

RESULTS ARE NOT IMMEDIATE

A Stanford Graduate School of Education study in 2014 echoes findings of earlier studies: Students in English-only classrooms perform better in the short term, but over the long term, DI students catch up to their counterparts and eventually surpass them academically and linguistically. The Stanford study finds that by middle school, students in DI programs score substantially higher than students enrolled in English-only programs.

Research shows other benefits: Bilingualism improves

早安

students' reasoning skills, attention control, problem-solving skills, and when they're older, the delay of dementia.

"Learning a second language helps to stimulate students' brains," says Sandoval. "In a dual immersion program, students exercise

their brains more, so everything comes easier to them. Even students with learning disabilities do better academically when they learn a second language."

In the rural community of Chico, Rosedale Elementary School's Spanish DI program has helped create a more inclusive environment, say teachers who work there.

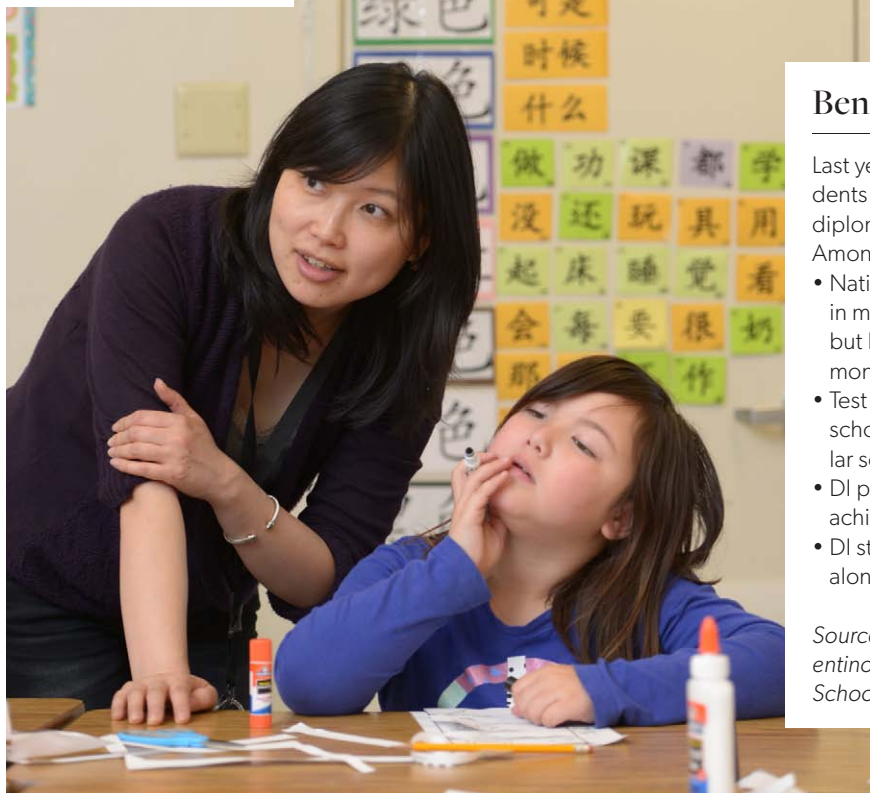
"Typically at schools you have a group of students on one side of the playground and another group from another culture on the other side of the playground," observes Don Kinslow, a fifth-grade teacher and member of the Chico Unified Teachers Association. "But in an immersion program, the students are so intertwined, there aren't factions. There's just one big community."

First-grade teacher Lourdes Cassetta agrees.

"It expands children's understanding and acceptance of others," she says. "And it gives them a perspective of what it's like to be in a different culture without them having to leave the country to see what another culture looks like."

But in the beginning, she admits, it can be difficult.

Azevada second-grade teacher Yi Zeng works with student Bailey Skaggs.



Benefits of Dual Immersion

Last year, nearly 32,000 California high school students earned the State Seal of Biliteracy on their diplomas — three times the number from 2012. Among the benefits of DI:

- Native English speakers may lag behind peers in monolingual programs in elementary school, but by middle school often equal or exceed monolingual peers' performance.
- Test results show that most dual-language schools outperform other demographically similar schools, locally and statewide.
- DI programs are the most effective in closing the achievement gap.
- DI students develop multicultural competencies along with social skills.

Sources: PACE Policy Brief, 2015; research by Valentino and Reardon, Stanford University Graduate School of Education, 2014.

Sometimes DI parents worry that their children aren't verbalizing much in kindergarten, and take them to a doctor. Often, says Cassetta, the children are merely "processing" both languages and it's a bit overwhelming. Eventually, something "clicks" for children, and in most cases, verbalization takes off.

RIGOROUS AND CHALLENGING

Enrolling in a DI program is a long-term commitment for students, families and teachers — and it is more rigorous than a traditional classroom. And some languages are more difficult than others.

Chinese, which is written with characters and not an alphabet, can be extremely challenging, say Fremont Unified District Teachers Association members who teach Mandarin at Azevada Elementary School. While nearly all of the students are Asian, not all of them are Chinese, and most students don't speak Mandarin at home.

"It was hard in the beginning, and I cried a lot," recalls fifth-grader Dylan Ho. "But it got easier and easier."

"In the beginning, there are a lot of tears," says

kindergarten teacher Jamie Choi. "There are blank stares. So I do a lot of charades. I act everything out. I sing a lot and dance a lot, and we practice lining up and sitting down. Everything is very active. I don't speak in abstract terms; I speak in relation to what they are seeing or doing. In a few months, they begin to understand what I'm saying."

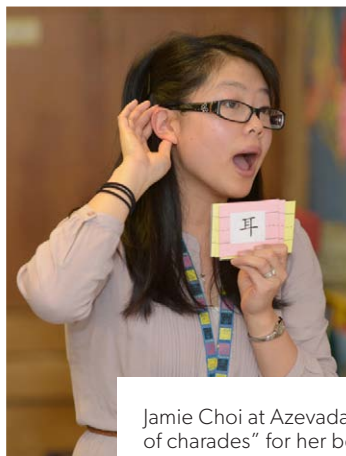
Teachers make learning fun and culturally relevant with holiday celebrations, Chinese food and artwork. But it's not all fun and games.

"Being in a dual immersion program is challenging and difficult," says second-grade teacher Yi Zeng. "Chinese is very different from English and there's no pattern, so they have to memorize all of the characters. When speaking, tones distinguish words. It's very hard to learn as an adult, so these kids are amazing."

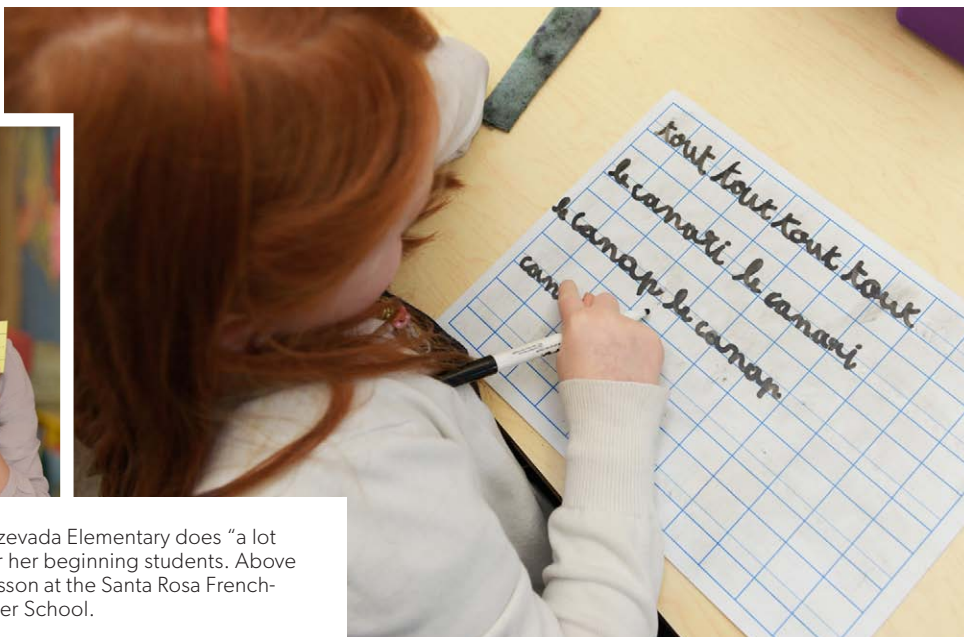
Expectations are set extremely high, says Chiu-Yen Jen, a fifth-grade teacher at the school.

"Our principal tells the parents, 'If you decide to have your child come into this Mandarin program, you and your children must work very hard. It's a big commitment.' I am shocked at their performance. If you didn't





Jamie Choi at Azeveda Elementary does “a lot of charades” for her beginning students. Above right, writing lesson at the Santa Rosa French-American Charter School.



know better, you would think they were native speakers. Their pronunciation and tone is better than many Taiwanese people. They excel not only in Chinese, but math and English. I am very proud of them.”

She is also proud of the parents, who have been extremely supportive with fundraising and volunteer work for the program, providing books, dictionaries and laptops.

EXTRA WORKLOAD, HIGH TURNOVER

Until recently, teachers in Azeveda Elementary School’s Mandarin DI program had to create their own curriculum. Materials have become available, however, and teachers are using lessons they created along with a new Common Core-aligned program the district purchased.

The situation is not unique: Finding curriculum aligned with the new standards has been a challenge for all DI teachers regardless of language.

“Dual immersion is hard enough dealing with different languages and language levels. Finding materials makes it even more difficult,” says Sandoval, whose school is using a Common Core program translated into Spanish from McGraw-Hill.

Teaching DI is more work for teachers, in general. Members of United Educators of San Francisco who teach in Cantonese and Mandarin DI programs addressed the school board in February to ask for adequate pay, support and training for the extra work that’s required, which includes conducting assessments and writing report cards in both Chinese and English. UESF filed a grievance to compensate teachers for their extra work.

Turnover in some DI programs has been an issue in San Francisco, and in a few cases necessitated relying on substitutes and a paraprofessional to teach Mandarin at Starr King Elementary School, which has angered parents. The high turnover rate is likely due in part to average salaries that are lower than in neighboring cities, and the city’s higher cost of living.

Hiring qualified DI teachers in San Francisco and similar areas is hard for those reasons. Also, there is fierce competition for Mandarin teachers in particular because there are fewer qualified to teach

Giving Students the Ed.G.E.

The California Education for a Global Economy (Ed.G.E.) Initiative, on the November 2016 ballot, expands multilingual education programs to better prepare students for college and careers in a global economy (see preparestudents.org). Ed.G.E. would:

- Overturn Proposition 227 (1998), which mandated English-only education.
- Allow school districts, together with language experts and parents, to determine the best instruction methods and language acquisition programs to implement.
- Provide all parents with the choice to have their children educated to high standards in English and one or more additional languages, and encourage local schools to provide opportunities for native English-speaking pupils to be instructed in another language.
- Allow parents to request school districts to provide multilingual programs.



in California schools compared with, for example, Spanish-language teachers. And there's an increasing number of schools offering Mandarin classes, including private schools.

High turnover is not unusual in DI programs, say educators.

At the Santa Rosa French-American Charter School, teachers are brought in from France to meet the demand, and there is constant turnover because they are on three-year visas.

"It's not enough time," says Bertrand Le Rebours, a fourth-grade teacher in his third year at the school.

The Santa Rosa Teachers Association (SRTA) member is from the south of France, and taught French in Dubai for eight years.

"I like this school and culture," says Le Rebours. "We try to give these kids the heart and spirit of French culture. We are trying to open their minds and give them a broader understanding of the world."

EXPANDING HORIZONS, OPPORTUNITIES

Cindy Beurtheret, a teacher at the school since it opened in 2012, loves the European environment — and seeing how quickly students adapt. She comments that in Europe, students are usually taught a second and third language and are expected to be fluent, unlike Americans, who expect people from other countries to know English. Some of the school's youngsters have traveled to Europe and translated for their parents.

"I didn't learn French until I was in high school, and it took me a long time to become fluent," says the SRTA member, who is American. "I love seeing students age 6 and 7 speaking and understanding French."

Beurtheret has a big secret: Her first-grade students don't have the slightest idea that she speaks English. That's because she only communicates with them in French. Sometimes students feel sorry for her, so they volunteer to



Students of Cindy Beurtheret, who teaches first grade at Santa Rosa French-American, think she does not know English.

"It's exciting to know that students will have a big advantage when they venture out into the job market. They will discover many career opportunities are open to them."

—Cindy Beurtheret,
Santa Rosa Teachers Association

act as interpreters when visitors come. The ruse is a common practice in DI programs.

The pre-K–8 school, one of three in the state with French DI programs, has a chef who creates cuisine such as crepes and fisherman stew. Students enjoy a midday break of 55 minutes, allowing for lunch at a leisurely pace instead of gulping American-style.

The school is trying to "harmonize" both the Common Core and curriculum used by schools in France. It's an ongoing challenge,

even though they are similar, especially in math. Students also study French history.

The students were hit emotionally when terrorists attacked Paris. "There's a lot of empathy," says Beurtheret. "In November, we did a minute of silence in memory of all those who were killed in Paris. It was a very sad day for our school."

When students reach seventh grade, they study Mandarin as a third language. Beurtheret believes being trilingual will give students even more opportunities.

"It's very exciting to know that students will have a big advantage when they venture out into the job market. They will discover many, many career opportunities are open to them."

But for students, it's more about the present. "I like the meals and being with my friends," says fourth-grader Liliana Lanvin. "And it's fun being able to talk to each other in another language." ■

Tout va bien.



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Saddleback Valley Educators Association members rally in May for a fair contract. Barbara Schulman, SVEA president, told the news media, "We're fighting for our students. We love this district, but we want to be valued." See story on page 35. Photo by Ed Sibby.



Protecting Children and Schools

CTA, coalition launch initiative to extend high earners' temporary income tax

By LEN FELDMAN

REPRESENTATIVES OF MILLIONS of parents, educators, school employees, health care providers, business groups, and working Californians came together on May 11 in Sacramento to launch the **California Children's Education and Health Care Protection Act of 2016**. The initiative will appear on November's general election ballot, and if passed would extend Proposition 30's income tax rates on the wealthiest Californians to prevent billions of dollars in funding cuts for public education and other vital services, including children's medical services.

"Without this initiative, we know public education will again lose \$4 billion a year," says CTA President Eric Heins. "We risk going back to the days of massive educator layoffs, larger class sizes, and more cuts to programs like art and music."

The initiative would extend for 12 years the current income taxes on the top 2 percent of California's wealthiest — individuals earning more than \$250,000 and couples earning more than \$500,000 a year. (Working and middle-class families and businesses will benefit as the quarter-cent sales tax that was part of Prop. 30 expires as planned at the end of this year.)

It will generate \$8 billion to \$11 billion annually for the Education Protection Account, a dedicated fund for K-12 public schools and community colleges. Other revenues will go to the state's Rainy Day Fund to improve access to health care for low-income children and their families.

Budget forecasts show that without the initiative, public schools will face \$4 billion in cuts, and the state budget will face a deficit of more than \$4 billion in the first year (2019-20) alone.

Funding from the initiative "will allow us to continue to adequately invest in education and secure a strong economy for our future," says Laphonza Butler, president of the SEIU (Service Employees International Union) California State Council.

See protectingcalifornia.com for more information.
#CACantGoBack #KidsMatterMost



CTA President Eric Heins speaks at the launch of the California Children's Education and Health Care Protection Act of 2016.



Without the Tax Extension on the Top 2 Percent of Earners:

- Public schools will face \$4 billion in cuts.
- The state budget will face a deficit of more than \$4 billion.

Get informed — your vote counts!

AS WE WENT TO PRESS, California was gearing up for the state presidential primary election on June 7. It's critical that pro-education candidates succeed and move on to the general election in November.

CTA has a member-driven process for candidate and initiative recommendations. Your colleagues have carefully reviewed candidates' records and commitment to public education, and put together a list of CTA-recommended candidates. Go to cta.yourvoter.guide to view your personalized voter guide. And check out the CTA Campaign 2016 site at cta.org/campaign2016 for more information and updates.

Members Lobby for Differential Pay Bill

By LEN FELDMAN

IN MAY, members of CTA State Council's Negotiations Committee and Professional Rights and Responsibilities Committee, including Elizabeth Esquivel-Waterman (Terra Bella Teachers Association), Chantaine Fauntleroy (Hayward Education Association), and Deborah Behm (Alvord Educators Association), talked to lawmakers in the state Capitol about a bill of high interest to educators: AB 2393 by Assembly Member Nora Campos (D-San Jose).

The visit paid immediate dividends: Lawmakers followed their advice and approved the bill out of committee; it passed the Assembly Floor and is headed to the Senate.

The CTA-co-sponsored bill would clarify existing law to make sure that education support professionals and higher education faculty would be eligible for "differential pay" when on leave due to the arrival of a new child. The bill adds to the ability of a primary caretaker to bond with the child, helping ensure the child will be eager to learn at the start of school. Because its provisions rest on differential pay — the difference between salary paid to a substitute and the pay of the full-time staff person — AB 2393 does not represent any new costs.



From left, Assembly Member Nora Campos with members Elizabeth Esquivel-Waterman, Chantaine Fauntleroy, and Deborah Behm. Photo by Seth Bramble

Key Dates in the 2016 State Budget Process

May 13

Gov. Jerry Brown releases the May Revision of his proposed budget, warning that updated forecasts from the Department of Finance find that the state will face a \$4 billion deficit in 2019-20 if voters do not approve the California Children's Education and Health Care Protection Act (CEHCP) in November. (See story on previous page.)

May 24

Hundreds of CTA chapter leaders from around the state gather at the state Capitol to lobby their lawmakers in support of higher funding for public education, including passage of CEHCP.

June 15

Deadline for state lawmakers to complete work on their budget proposal and send it to the governor for his review.

June 30

Deadline for the governor to sign the new spending plan into law.

July 1

Start of the state's new fiscal year.

November 8

General election: Voters should approve the CEHCP initiative, which extends for 12 years current income taxes on the top 2 percent of California's wealthiest, to avoid billions in cuts to education and children's health care.



The Redding educators who were fired from APL in 2014, and where they are now: From left, **Rosanne Blevins**, Montessori teacher at Shasta Union Elementary School District; **Cindy Silva**, K-3 teacher at Igo-Ono Elementary School; **Candy Woodson**, retired; **Robin Thorne**, school counselor in Red Bluff; **Peggy Youmans**, independent study program teacher in Enterprise Elementary School District; **Christy Gadbois-Vail**, teacher in Enterprise Elementary School District; **Wendy McBroome**, still an educator at APL, president of APLEA; **Mark Youmans**, alternative education teacher in Anderson Union High School District. Not pictured: **Shana Seitz**, who has continued to work in Native American education. Photo by Timothy M. McBroome.

Bargaining Roundup

Details of these stories at cta.org/bargainingupdates

REDDING: ACADEMY OF PERSONALIZED LEARNING LOSES IN FEDERAL COURT

A federal bankruptcy judge slammed the Academy of Personalized Learning (APL) for “inappropriate gamesmanship” in a decision that stopped APL from using bankruptcy proceedings to get out of an unfair labor practice hearing before the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB).

At a formal PERB hearing last October, APL was to answer charges that it illegally fired nine teachers (see photo) in December 2014 because they formed a union. (The *Educator* reported about the firings in “‘Dream School’ Becomes the Nightmare Before Christmas,” April 2015.) The charter school hired noncredentialed staff to replace them. The teachers’ union, the Academy of Personalized Learning Education Association (APLEA), offered a cost-saving settlement that APL rejected. APL

filed for bankruptcy a week before the PERB hearing, insisting the hearing could not be held until the bankruptcy judge ruled.

In the May ruling, the judge refused to “countenance” APL’s conduct, and sent the case back to PERB for further hearings.

Candy Woodson, one of the fired APLEA members, is looking forward to the PERB hearing “so we can vindicate our rights. APL Executive Director Patricia Dougherty wrongly fired nine teachers and then blamed us for putting them into bankruptcy because we wanted to defend ourselves.”

Teachers at APL unionized in 2014 so they could advocate for their students without reprisal and improve teaching conditions. After a year of bullying tactics by Dougherty and APL, frustrating contract talks, and unfair labor practice charges filed by APLEA contending bad

faith bargaining, APL claimed money spent on “pending litigation” and legal fees made it file for bankruptcy.

Upon review of the parties’ conduct, the bankruptcy judge concluded: “The facts strongly suggest that the debtor [APL] simply wanted its cake and to eat it too; if the outcome of the hearing before the Board were satisfactory to the debtor, the debtor would keep quiet, whereas it would have the motion for contempt in its back pocket if the Board outcome was unfavorable. Simply put, this is

inappropriate gamesmanship and evinces a disregard for the availability of this court’s resources, and is a waste of the state’s administrative resources, as well as the debtor’s own resources and those of its opponents [CTA].”

“APL chose to spend massive amounts on legal fees — \$170,000 for three days of hearings — rather than adhering to the law and honoring the expertise of teachers,” says Jon Halvorsen, the CTA staff supporting the teachers. “CTA can’t and won’t stand by and see student learning endangered, public money spent shamefully, and the law broken.”

“Where is the accountability for the public funds? It’s like the wolf running the henhouse,” says Woodson. “Why is CTA the only one demanding accountability from public charter schools such as this? It’s important to stand up for the students in our schools, and that’s what we APLEA members did.”

Gateway Unified School District is APL’s sponsoring district, and Superintendent Jim Harrell has been asked to investigate allegations regarding its operations, including charges that the school engaged in “cherry-picking” students. Teachers are also concerned that state school monies designated for the classroom through the Local Control Funding Formula were given to a hedge fund in Palo Alto, apparently as collateral for a loan. The decision was never publicly discussed. There is record of a board resolution approving the decision, but no record of a vote.

UTLA: STUDENT-FOCUSED AGREEMENT REACHED

United Teachers Los Angeles and Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) reached an agreement, pending a ratification vote by members, focused on class size reduction and educator development and support.

“We made significant strides for students and our classrooms, and set a foundation for more improvements to public education in Los Angeles,” says UTLA President Alex Caputo-Pearl. “We are proud that this agreement addresses equity for our students with highest needs.”

“Where is the accountability for the public funds? It’s like the wolf running the henhouse.”

—Candy Woodson, APLEA member
and one of nine educators fired from charter school
Academy of Personalized Learning

Key improvements to class size include an additional full-time teacher at every secondary school for a new elective class or for reducing the class size of existing electives; an additional full-time teacher for high-needs elementary schools to be used for class size reduction; a cap on students in PE classes for secondary schools; and shortened district response time when special education caseloads are too large.

Key improvements to educator development and support include quicker turnaround from observation to feedback to educators in the classroom, and continuing the work of a UTLA-LAUSD collaborative committee on professional development and career-long growth.

The contract reopens are part of the current 2014-17 contract, which last year included a 10 percent salary increase.

RANCHO SANTA FE: TEACHERS’ CHILDREN NOT WELCOME

Rancho Santa Fe Faculty Association in San Diego remains in contentious negotiations, and the local superintendent has continued her effort to end a board policy that allows children of teachers in the Rancho Santa Fe School District (RSFSD) to attend a district school if an agreement is not reached.

RSFSD has a sunset clause on the policy that coincides with the contract’s expiration. Management stated that without a contract after June 30, the policy is void. Additional negotiation sessions are scheduled and teachers are making the policy a priority along with salary increases and comparable benefits that will help attract and retain the next generation of Rancho Santa Fe educators.

ORANGE COUNTY: SADDLEBACK VALLEY RALLIES TO PROTECT SCHOOLS

Saddleback Valley Unified School District’ teachers, whose salaries are among the lowest in the area, have been working almost a year without a contract. SVUSD’s offer of a 1.65 percent raise is inadequate and will make SVUSD less competitive and attractive in a time of increasing need for teachers.

Saddleback Valley Educators Association President Barbara Schulman says, “The way to value our hardworking, caring and dedicated staff is to continue to hire top talent. One of the ways is to offer a competitive salary. It is a disservice to the students, community and SVUSD that their teachers don’t feel valued.”

CTA President Eric Heins joined Saddleback educators at a “Rally to protect our schools” on May 12 to support a fair negotiated settlement.

By Cynthia Menzel, Mike Myslinski, Ed Sibby and Frank Wells.
#OurVoiceAtTheTable

Report: Charter Schools Siphon Off Millions From Traditional Schools

A **NEW STUDY** finds that traditional schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District lost \$591 million this year alone to unchecked independent charter school growth.

The report, titled “Fiscal Impact of Charter Schools on LAUSD” and released in May, was commissioned by United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) and conducted by MGT of America Consulting.

“The figure is staggering, and while specific to LAUSD, the findings beg for a hard look at how charter schools interact with school districts throughout California, as well as the nation,” says Donald Cohen, executive director of In the Public Interest, a research and public policy center specializing in privatization (the center

co-wrote with UTLA a policy brief based on the study). “When there is escalating competition for students and funding, both charter and district schools are faced with creating a situation where, if changes are not enacted immediately, the entire educational system in Los Angeles will be in a financial crisis.”

Financially strained LAUSD has more than 100,000 students in 221 charter schools — more charter schools than any other school district nationwide. The number of charter schools in Los Angeles, which currently enroll 16 percent of some 650,000 students in the district, has more than tripled since 2005.

The study focuses on LAUSD’s direct

and indirect costs related to enrollment, oversight, services to disabled students and other activities. UTLA President Alex Caputo-Pearl says the report is an important first step in understanding the fiscal impact of charters on the district.

“It took over 12 years of declining enrollment at LAUSD to get an accounting of the financial strain of charter school growth,” he says. “We cannot wait another 12 years to address the consequences it is having on public education and our students.”

Last year, a charter school expansion plan backed by the Broad Foundation, the Walton family and others proposed raising \$490 million in private money to put up to half the students in LAUSD in charter schools over the next eight years.

LAUSD Superintendent Michelle King and school board members will discuss the report in June. To read the full report and for more information, see thecostofcharterschools.org.

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RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Changing School Culture

IN MAY CTA hosted “Closing the School Discipline Gap,” a forum to discuss ways of providing meaningful restorative justice practices in schools, and ways to change school culture through the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). More than 40 teachers, administrators, and state Department of Education and legislative staff attended. They spoke of how CTA chapters can work with districts to address racial and other disparities in student discipline (the “discipline gap”), reduce suspensions, and provide all students a quality education. —*Len Feldman*



CTA President Eric Heins stresses the importance of schools finding alternative discipline models without suspensions, which have usually hit young men and women of color hardest.



Keynote speaker Eva Paterson, civil rights attorney and co-founder of Equal Justice Society, says it is critical to create a positive learning environment where all are treated fairly. “We need to tell every student ‘We see you.’ We need to see that child and figure out why that child is in that particular situation.”



Bakersfield Elementary Teachers Association president Michelle Johnson, Bakersfield City School District’s Tim Fulenwider speak of joint efforts to reduce suspensions, increase student performance.



Harold Acord, president of Moreno Valley Educators Association, with Judy White, superintendent of Moreno Valley Unified School District. MVEA and the district worked together to put alternative discipline and restorative justice practices in their LCAP.



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Task Force Calls for Multifaceted Accountability System

A TASK FORCE of the California Department of Education (CDE) is calling for a new system of accountability and continuous improvement, rooted in performance and equity, that “truly supports our students and those who serve them.”

The Advisory Task Force on Accountability and Continuous Improvement, convened by Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson in 2015, drew from the CDE’s strategic plan, “A Blueprint for Great Schools Version 2.0.” Co-chairs Eric Heins, CTA president, and Wes Smith, Association of California School Administrators executive director, and other task force members presented their report to the State Board of Education (SBE) May 11.

The task force reconfirmed efforts already under way, based on student success, high standards, more equitably distributed resources (through the Local

Control Funding Formula), and trust in local educators and communities to design educational structures and supports.

The task force’s proposals, coupled with SBE’s work to develop evaluation rubrics for the LCFF, give the state “the opportunity to develop a system of accountability and continuous improvement that aligns with and extends the provisions outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act to support a world-class education for every student in the Golden State.”

Heins stressed that adopting multifaceted accountability standards is critical. “It would be a grave mistake to rely solely on student test scores as an indicator of student and school performance,” he said.

The task force recommends that new evaluation rubrics include the following:

- Student test scores, the math and English language arts state

assessments conducted in grades 3-8 and once in high school.

- High school graduation rates.
- Progress of English learners toward English language proficiency.
- Implementation of state standards, to meet the ESSA requirement for additional academic indicators for elementary and middle schools.
- A school climate survey that considers breadth and depth of courses offered, social-emotional learning, parental involvement, working and learning conditions, access to school nurses, counselors and librarians, etc.
- Depth and breadth of access to college and career readiness activities and courses.

Read the task force report at bit.ly/1Wtbmfg.

—Len Feldman

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With Live Action Role-Playing (LARP), you can be whoever you want to be. "LARPing encourages creative self-expression," says educator Rob Cunningham, at right. Story on page 40.



Brian Davis and Patrick Mador cross swords as Cotate High School math teacher and LARPing Club sponsor Rob Cunningham looks on.



The world according to LARP

Live Action Role-Playing offers an inclusive fantasy world — and life lessons

By SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN
Photos by SCOTT BUSCHMAN

STUDENTS STREAMING ACROSS Cotate High School's quad at lunchtime do a double take at the strange fight scene unfolding before them. Some aren't quite sure what to make of the young men, who appear to be engaged in an ancient form of battle.

Has the school entered a time warp where medieval warriors fight to the finish? Have video game characters

come to life? Is the Drama Club seriously out of control?

Nope. It's just the LARPing Club, doing what it does best: LARPing.

For those unfamiliar with the concept of Live Action Role-Playing (LARP), it's a pastime where participants create safe "weapons" and padded costumes to engage in "battles" and games. It's been around for many years, and



Rob Cunningham and Patrick Mador battle it out with “weapons” — foam- and cloth-covered PVC pipes that do no harm.

“Through LARP, I gained confidence in myself. If you pretend to be confident and outgoing, you can apply that to life outside of LARP as well. There’s a lot you can learn from LARP.”

—Rob Cunningham

is affiliated with Amtgard, a worldwide organization dedicated to medieval and fantasy combat sports and recreation, whose members did a demonstration at the school last fall to spark student interest.

The club is sponsored by math teacher Rob Cunningham, a longtime LARPer who is practically indistinguishable from his students, which proves that LARPing is great exercise and a way to stay youthful.

“Remember when you were a little kid pretending to be someone you’re not?” asks Cunningham, Rohnert Park-Cotati Educators Association. “Well, when you are doing that without a script, you are LARPing.”

Civil War buffs who perform re-enactments are also LARPing. And the sport is more structured than it looks. There are rules about hitting people and what to do when you are hit. Ducking isn’t one of them.

“Turn the block into an attack,” Cunningham cheers his lunchtime LARPer. “Up and over. Yes, turn it into a Thor move.”

Lately, with the popularity of *Star Wars* and *Game of Thrones*, LARPing has become a hit in another sense, too, says Cunningham. It’s become cool. Students have put on performances for the entire school, receiving favorable response.

The costumes look authentic, as do the weapons, which have PVC pipes on the inside, surrounded by soft foam covered in cloth. They were created by members of the club, numbering 15 boys and three girls.

“Students can choose their own themes, and most, including our students, go for the medieval fantasy sort of thing,” explains Cunningham. “If they wanted to do a sci-fi theme, that would be fine, too. LARPing encourages creative self-expression.”

Cunningham belongs to an adult LARP club that meets on Saturdays in Rohnert Park, and has attended tournaments.

“LARPing took me to Europe,” he says. “I went to a Harry Potter-themed LARP in a medieval castle in Poland for three days. I was a wizard. We stayed in costume for 24 hours a day for three days. It was total immersion, an amazing experience.”

The LARPing Club at Cotate High School would love to compete with other clubs, but doesn’t know if any others exist. Club members say they don’t fit in with other groups on campus. LARPing has given them a newfound sense of belonging and uniqueness, they say.

For Brian Davis, a sophomore, it’s great exercise and an opportunity to make new friends.

“I’ve played a lot of video games, and this is like a real-life version,” says Davis, vice president of the club.

Patrick Mador, a sophomore, was inspired by the costumes.

“I saw members dressed up and said, ‘Whoa! Why are they wearing *that*?’ Then I wanted to do it.”

But there’s more than the outward appeal, says Mador.

“LARPing offers a sense of acceptance of all people, all races and all genders. You can be whoever you want to be. You can make up your own story — and your own past. It’s for awkward and nerdy kids who aren’t accepted by everyone else.”

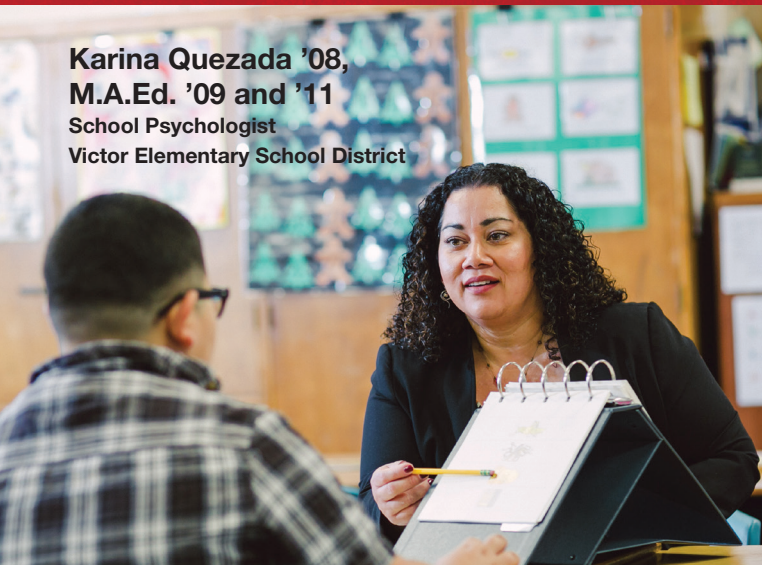
Cunningham identifies with his students who have found acceptance through LARP.

“As a high school student, I was socially awkward and terrible at interacting with people,” he shares. “Through LARP and pretending to be someone I wasn’t, I gained confidence in myself. If you pretend to be confident and outgoing, you can apply that to life outside of LARP as well. There’s a lot you can learn from LARP.”

For more information about LARP, see amtgard.com.

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Learning

Identifying Students With Special Needs

By STEVE CARSON

IN MY MORE than 30 years as a public school teacher, I always valued partnerships with special education teachers. I felt that welcoming students with special needs was important for *all* my students in understanding difference and diversity. Working with special ed professionals made me a better teacher for all my students.

How to recognize a student who may need special education services is a question every teacher will face. Then comes a greater challenge: How to pursue testing to see if the child qualifies for special services.

Sometimes administrators discourage referrals for testing. They may be concerned about the expense of funding special ed, or wary of lazy referrals. But no administrator can tell you not to refer — that's a violation of state and federal law.

That said, teachers need to be smart when making referrals. Here are some tips.

INDICATIONS & INTERVENTIONS

Things to look for: The student tries but does not succeed. This is the big one. Other indications include repeated low grades, significant behavioral distractions, and significant deficits in reading, writing and comprehension.

Interventions must be tried before referring, such as preferential seating, after-school help, peer tutoring, opportunities to redo or rewrite. There should be a Response to Intervention discussion where all teachers compare observations and assessments, and share samples of the student's work. Be sure to look at the cumulative folder for referrals, suspensions, previous testing or recommendations for testing. (Often testing can only be done within a certain number of years.)

Be sure to have a parent conference to explore such questions as how much time is spent on homework, whether the child experiences frustration with grade-level work, and whether the child expresses dislike or fear of school.

Sit down one-on-one with the student. Listen to them read grade-level text; assess comprehension. Ask questions based on material you think they should know. Have a conversation. Students are often good at hiding deficits. This is a win-win: You get info; they get quality time with the teacher.

MAKE THE REFERRAL

Realistically, paperwork must be submitted before the end of the school year; aim for January. (School psychologists get busy at the end of the year.) You should have enough documentation by then. Inform parents they can also request

Special Education Resources

- **CTA's Instruction and Professional Development** (IPD) site has latest legislation, policies and legal information; CTA presentations; and links to relevant sites and articles. ► ctaipd.org/ipd-special-education
- **Disability Rights California** is a parent advocacy website that is also useful for teachers. ► disabilityrightscalifornia.org/publications/special-education
- **Positive Behavior Interventions and Strategies** has step-by-step instructions. ► pbisworld.com

—Karen Taylor, CTA IPD

testing. While a teacher or a parent may refer for testing, frankly, a parent may get better results.

Once a written request for assessment is made, an assessment plan must be sent to the parent/guardian within 15 calendar days. Then, within 60 calendar days after receiving written parent consent, the assessment must be completed, the report written, and the initial IEP (individualized education program) meeting held.

Track paperwork. You may have to do follow-up.

Referral is not for issues within the normal range of grades or behavior. In many cases, testing is looking for a gap in ability and achievement, although this may depend on the situation. It will assess cognitive and/or behavioral issues that may be affecting student achievement. Special ed teachers and the psychologist can be valuable resources.

WHY IT MATTERS

Special ed entitles students and families to a range of services and adaptations, including tutorial help, or specialized classes, modified assignments and grading. (Note: Teachers should not modify assignments or grading without designated justification such as EL 1-3 or Sp. Ed. This will only delay addressing the problem.)

Often deficits manifest with the challenge of certain grades, specifically K-1, grades 3-4 (increasing reliance on texts and more complex reading), grade 6 (the transition to middle school with a more complex schedule), and grade 9 (an even larger setting and more complicated schedule).

It is never too late to begin to address this. Early school years often determine whether a student will drop out later on. Keep alert. Talk with other educators and with parents. Learn how to work this process. Students who qualify are entitled to services. It is often up to us to make that happen. ■

Steve Carson is newly retired after 25 years in South San Francisco Unified School District. He drew on experience to offer these suggestions to colleagues concerned about students who may have learning disabilities, but may never have been referred for testing.



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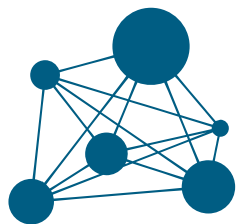
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Science for All

*The California Next Generation Science Standards
set up students for success*

ALL OF OUR students deserve to learn the most current science available, taught using the most effective methods. California's new science standards, the California Next Generation Science Standards (CA NGSS), will make that possible. Here's a quick primer:

What are the CA NGSS?

The CA NGSS are a new set of science standards for grades K-12 that were developed by teachers, scientists and science education experts. They embrace students' innate curiosity and engage them in the real-world practices of scientists and engineers. They are designed to foster deep knowledge of core scientific ideas, and broader conceptual understanding of connections across disciplines. The new standards are about making sure all K-12 students have the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the careers of tomorrow.

Why are they important?

The new standards will better prepare all students by improving the way science and engineering are taught in all public schools throughout the state. They focus not just on the most current ideas kids should know, but also on their ability to apply that knowledge to real-world problems. They also require that science be taught in every grade so students build understanding and skills systematically year on year.

By incorporating more hands-on activities and real-life applications, California's new science standards make classroom learning more relevant to kids' lives and encourage more diverse students to see themselves as having the talent and ability to be scientists and engineers. This helps address the opportunity gap for girls and Latino, African American and low-income students and others who have been historically underrepresented in science education and careers. Through these shifts, the CA NGSS will help ensure that all students receive the same high-quality instruction.

How do the standards work?

The structure of the CA NGSS gives teachers opportunity to use their skills and expertise in more innovative ways. They encourage teachers to facilitate more student-centered learning that enables students to think on their own, problem-solve, communicate and collaborate as they learn important scientific concepts. The standards are not a curriculum. Districts, school leaders and teachers determine their own curriculum and how it is taught.

The CA NGSS are also aligned, grade by grade, with California's new standards for mathematics and English language arts, so science and engineering instruction can support and enhance what students are learning across the curriculum.

What is the timeline?

The CA NGSS were adopted by the State Board of Education in fall 2013. Schools are expected to be fully transitioned to teaching based on the CA NGSS for the 2018-19 school year. Between now and then, the California Department of Education (CDE) will be releasing new guidance to aid educators in developing curriculum and selecting instructional materials.

New science assessments are also under development and will be designed to assess the depth of students' understanding and how well they can apply their understanding to analyze scientific phenomena and solve problems. The state has committed to developing a system of assessment that will support classroom instruction, with resources to help teachers assess progress and adjust instruction throughout the year. (See "Timeline" sidebar.)

Timeline

2016-17:

- Science curriculum framework
- Assessments pilot test

2017-18:

- Assessments field test

2018-19:

- Instructional resources
- Assessments operational

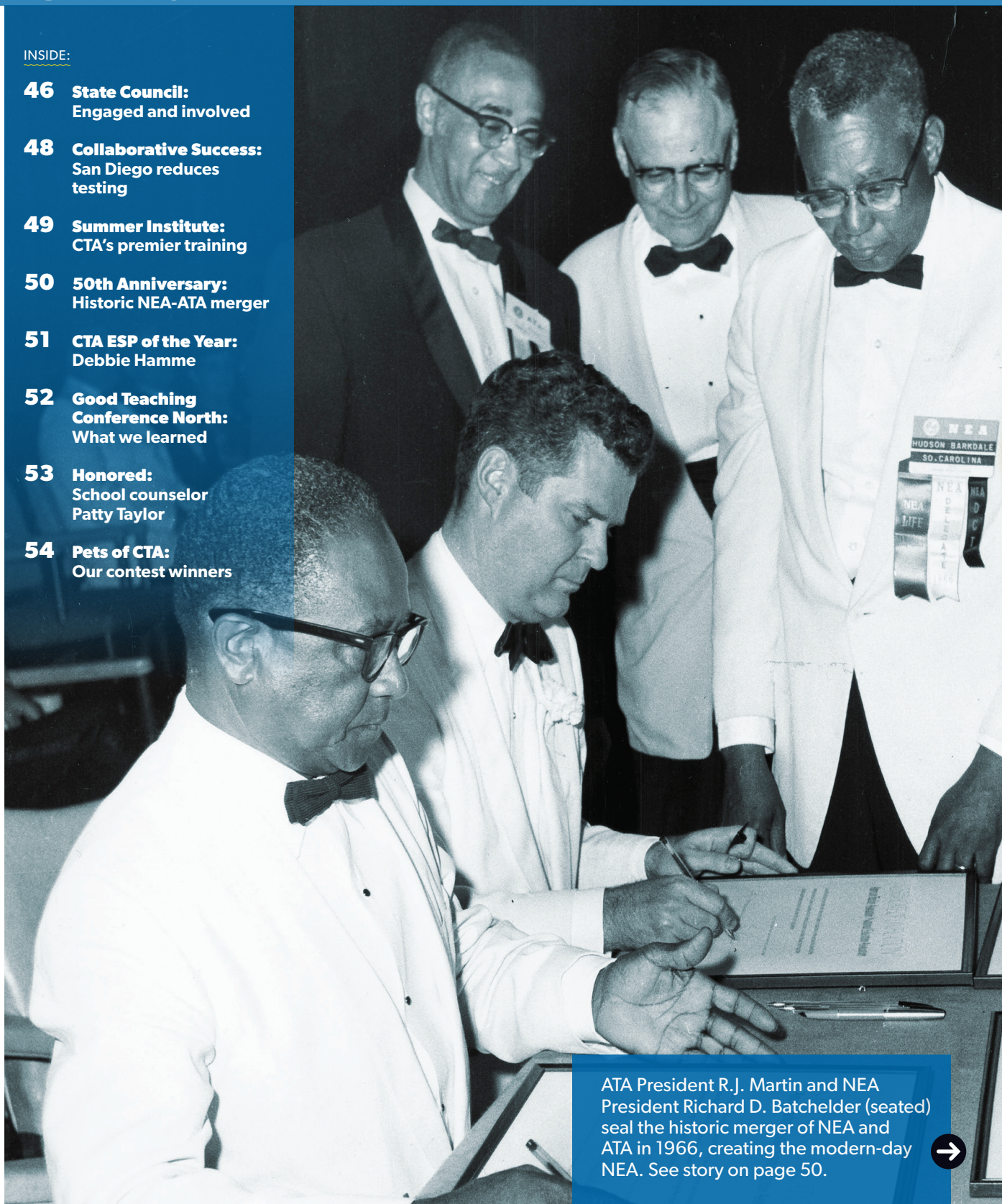
Where do I start?

Now is a good time to seek out professional development and to begin experimenting. Take a look at the standards by visiting the science curriculum section of the CDE website and exploring some of the introductory videos available online. Talk to your school and district leaders to find out what district plans and resources may be available, or try incorporating one of the new standards into an upcoming lesson. You can find links to more introductory information and instructional resources at CA4NGSS.org.

Adapted from California Alliance for Next Generation Science Standards (CA4NGSS)

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ATA President R.J. Martin and NEA President Richard D. Batchelder (seated) seal the historic merger of NEA and ATA in 1966, creating the modern-day NEA. See story on page 50.





UTLA's Cecily Myart-Cruz accepts the Jose Colmenares Memorial Award on behalf of the chapter.



Left to right: Teachers of the Year Daniel Jocz, Doug Green, Ann Park, Michelle Cherland and Mitch Bahr.



For story on ESP of the Year Debbie Hamme, see page 51. More State Council stories and social media posts at bit.ly/AprStateCouncil.

Engaged and Involved

Report From April's State Council

CTA'S STATE COUNCIL meeting April 8-10 in Los Angeles was an upbeat affair. President Eric Heins started the proceedings by noting the U.S. Supreme Court's March 2016 decision in *Friedrichs v. CTA*, which upheld the constitutionality of Fair Share fees.

Stripping public employees of their collective bargaining rights in the workplace is wrong, he said, and he called it a victory for millions of students in California and across the country: By having the ability to join together to make our voices heard, we ensure that public schools and colleges remain strong and students get the quality public education they need and deserve.

Heins warned that the fight is not over, and we must carry on the work of engaging our members and educating the public on the importance of standing up to those who would shut out our voice.

He praised CTA's member engagement efforts, which "help build and redefine our union so that we are more inclusive, more interactive, more communicative, more responsive, more relevant, and yes, more influential."



#TigersRiseFive from Fremont High School were presented with a Youth Activist Award by the CTA Peace and Justice Caucus.

Recent research shows that more than 85 percent of CTA members who have been educators for less than 10 years say someone from the union contacted them in the past year.

Heins presented the Jose Colmenares Memorial Award to United Teachers Los Angeles, in recognition of its communications work, outstanding leadership and organizing approach that unified and transformed the local. In the past two years, UTLA settled a new contract, became a fully merged local chapter with CTA/NEA and CFT/AFT, took on Eli Broad and the school privatizers, started organizing charter schools, and voted to restructure and raise member dues.

“They accomplished much of this ... by getting into school sites and having real conversations with members,” Heins said. “They put together a plan with targets and goals ... and they held each other accountable to meet them. They identified new leaders to be chapter chairs and area reps. And they engaged the broader community.”

OPPORTUNITY TO LEAD

Executive Director Joe Nuñez spoke about the work of implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act and developing rubrics for the Local Control Funding Formula and local accountability plans (LCAPs).

He noted that many decisions are being pushed down to the local and state levels, creating important opportunities for educator involvement — and as outlined in

CTA’s strategic plan, the opportunity to lead and transform the education profession.

ESSA recognizes that parents can excuse their children from testing in states like California that have opt-out laws, Nuñez said, and CTA has produced new resources for educators and parents regarding their rights (cta.org/optout). He said the committee that is reviewing and negotiating with the U.S. Department of Education (ED) on proposed regulations for sections of ESSA “has some really tough issues to be resolved.”

One of the most significant regulations being decided: “supplement-not-supplant” — how federal dollars for low-income students must supplement, not supplant, state and local school funding. The ED is already trying to write more restrictive rules, and NEA is warning this approach could overstep the intent of the new law.

This could end up having a significant impact as it transitions to states. Nuñez reminded us how: “In California, we continue to have school districts that seem to think supplemental and concentration grant money under LCFF cannot be used for teacher salaries,” he said. “As these laws allow states and local districts to make decisions, you need to demand to be part of these decisions.”

In other actions, State Council...

- Honored the 2016 California Teachers of the Year Daniel Jocz (finalist for National Teacher of the Year), Mitch Bahr, Michelle Cherland, Doug Green and Ann Park.
- Honored Debbie Hamme, CTA’s ESP of the Year.
- Elected to the CTA Board of Directors Mike Patterson (District D), Margie Granado (District L), and Roberto Rodriguez (District P); and re-elected Terri Jackson (District C), José Alcalá (District O), and Susan Green (District Q).
- Elected to the CTA/ABC Committee Amanda Fanning (District N); and re-elected Laura Finco (District C), Chris Aguilar (District F), Wendy Eccles (District K), Madeline Shapiro (District L), Chris Prokop (District P), Joan Sholars (District Q), and Juan Caballero (At-Large).
- Elected Dorothy Kim as NEA Alternate Director, Seat 1.
- Established the new statewide seat of NEA Director, District 16.
- Recognized Women’s History Month.
- Supported the Hispanic Caucus Observance.
- Supported the CTA Peace and Justice Caucus’s 12th annual Youth Activist Awards.

Nuñez referenced the final report on CTA’s Quality Education Investment Act, which came out in March and outlines seven lessons learned that would be helpful in building your LCAP, including:

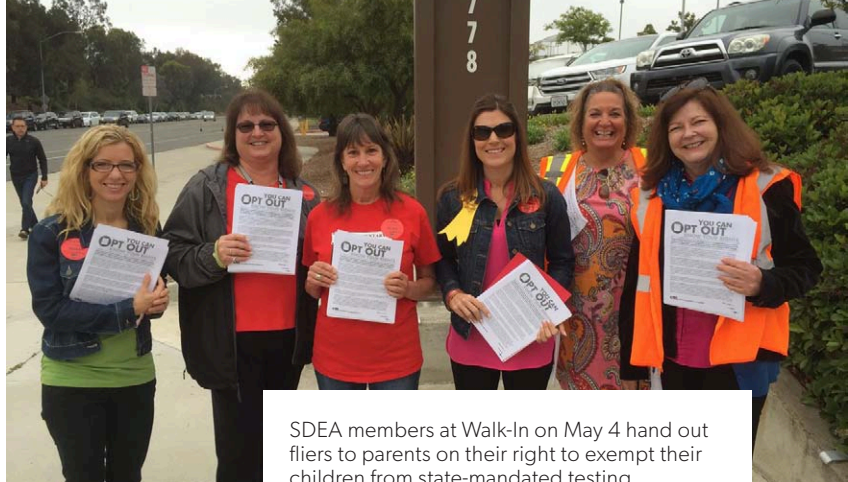
- Strengthening professional development that is teacher-driven.
- Cultivating teacher collaboration with sufficient time and resources.
- Expanding class size reduction.
- Empowering teachers.

COUNCIL CONSIDERS LEGISLATION

CTA State Council reviewed approximately 200 bills and took a position on most, on topics ranging from the teacher pipeline to affordable housing to teacher evaluation and dismissal. For more information, see cta.org/statecouncil.

Passing the Test

San Diego educators help convince district to reduce testing



SDEA members at Walk-In on May 4 hand out fliers to parents on their right to exempt their children from state-mandated testing.

ON MAY 4, the San Diego Unified School District announced a “significant reduction” in high-stakes standardized testing at local schools. The move allows classroom educators to focus more time on teaching and learning, and rely on more meaningful measures of student progress.

“San Diego’s educators are thrilled that the district listened to the concerns of nearly 7,000 educators who have said the current system of high-stakes testing is broken,” says **San Diego Educators Association** (SDEA) President Lindsay Burningham. “[This] shows the power that educators and parents have when we stand together to support the true needs of our students.”

SDEA has been working on the issue since early last year. It passed several chapter resolutions calling on legislators in federal government and the district to eliminate unnecessary, irrelevant high-stakes testing. “There’s been a big shift in the past year and a half or two years, educating the district, trying to include parents as much as possible,” Burningham says. “Our members continued to pressure the district with our resolutions presented at school board meetings.”

SDEA also commissioned a survey that

found that approximately 90 percent of district educators believe students are being harmed from overuse of standardized tests. It showed that students lost up to five weeks of instruction every year due to test preparation, taking and analysis.

“Meaningful and useful assessments are by teachers on a daily and weekly basis,” Burningham says. “The focus has been on educators being able to use their time in ways that are going to best meet the needs of their students.”

CTA President Eric Heins agrees: “The focus on standardized testing has narrowed expectations and learning. CTA believes teachers need the freedom to use a variety of teaching techniques that are culturally relevant to the diverse students they teach.” He adds, “SDEA and SDUSD have taken a bold step in challenging educational policies that adversely impact California’s 9 million students.”

Several months ago, SDEA intensified its outreach to parents. “At the Reclaim Our Schools event on Feb. 17, teachers and parents did the walk-in in support of their schools spending less time testing and more time teaching and learning,” Burningham says. “Parent conversation [about overtesting] started then. We leafleted

parents using CTA’s opt-out fliers. Many parents are unaware that they have the right to opt out, and [unaware of] what tests are used for. For example, the SBAC [Smarter Balanced assessment] isn’t used in any meaningful way.”

Effective at the start of the 2016-17 school year, SDUSD will:

- **Stop districtwide collection of interim assessment data** and Developmental Reading Assessment test results (teachers won’t waste classroom time entering/uploading data).
- Replace irrelevant districtwide data collection requirements with **real-time reporting on student progress** for teachers to use as they need it to support learning.
- **Empower teachers to analyze student learning results**, and revise lessons to meet individual student needs.
- **Support schools in developing common formative assessment plans**, identifying relevant measures that give insight and information about how students are developing.

Burningham is pleased with the changes but knows that sustaining them and working for more change requires continued collaboration. “I see it as a three-pronged partnership between the union, the school board, and district leadership,” she says.

Opt Out

CTA has resources on opting out of state-mandated testing, including a handout for parents on their right to exempt their child from testing, and information to help educators understand state regulations governing what they can say to parents and families. See cta.org/optout.

SUMMER INSTITUTE

Get With the Program

CTA's Summer Institute offers chapter leaders essential training and professional development

CTA'S SUMMER INSTITUTE, July 31-Aug. 4 at UCLA, is the premier training of its kind. It offers six content strands and numerous concurrent tracks that prepare members for leadership roles in their chapters and help them meet professional development goals.

Instruction and Professional Development (IPD) Strand:

Noted keynote speakers, education experts and teacher-led sessions for grades K-12 highlight a week focused on instruction (including ELA/ELD and the new state standards), assessment and school culture. Educators learn various ways to support student learning that is innovative, engaging, interactive and rigorous — taking into consideration cultural, social, economic and equity issues. Speakers: Rick Stiggins, founder of the Assessment Training Institute; Anthony Muhammad, expert in school culture and organizational climate; Patricia Gándara, UCLA research professor and co-director of the Civil Rights Project; Gary Orfield, UCLA distinguished research professor of education, law, political science and urban planning.

Communications Strand: Learn why, when and how to use various communications tools for PR and member engagement campaigns, as well as state and local elections. Skills-building sessions on writing for print and digital media, working with news media, creating and maintaining social media sites, public speaking, and photography.

Community Engagement Strand: Learn and practice the skills of identifying, recruiting and developing leadership; building community around leadership; building power out of community; and bringing members and community stakeholders together and challenging them to act on their shared values and interests.

Legal Strand: Two introductory content areas: Group Rights, about participants' rights as CTA members serving in various leadership, advocacy and problem-solving positions; and Individual Rights, which provides an "issue spotting" overview of statutory laws and rights important to a bargaining unit member's employment.

Member Benefits Strand: Assists participants in coming up with unique approaches to continually engage members, and provides plans and tools to help build and maintain a strong local. Learn how to use new Member Benefits tools for organizing, and develop an annual organizing plan to promote Member Benefits.



Scenes from last year's IPD Strand at Summer Institute. Photos: Karen Taylor



Negotiations and Organizational Development (NOD) Strand

offers six tracks:

- **Charter Educators:** For charter union leaders and activists to build strong and effective local unions and increase coordination and expertise around bargaining and organizing strategies.
- **Emerging Leaders:** Provides faculty/site reps, association committee members and education advocates with resources and skills needed to become effective organizers and future leaders.
- **Essential Bargaining Skills:** Teams bargain an agreement using real-life issues and work through extensive coaching and debriefing sessions to determine successful strategies.
- **Advanced Bargaining Skills:** For negotiators who have completed the Essential Bargaining Skills and School Finance tracks at Summer Institute and have at least one year of experience on a local bargaining team.
- **School Finance:** For chapter leaders and bargaining team members to gain knowledge about school finance and school district budgets. Prerequisite: Essential Bargaining Skills track.
- **Tax Fairness:** Helps leaders become knowledgeable, persuasive advocates for the profession; provides overviews of growing socioeconomic inequality in the U.S. and the state school funding system, and how they're connected.

To learn more and to register, see ctago.org. #CTASI16



Participants in the Communications Strand at the 2015 Summer Institute. Photo: Cynthia Menzel



Golden Celebration

NEA and ATA's merger strengthened commitment to public education and students

THIS YEAR MARKS the 50th anniversary of the historic merger of the National Education Association and the American Teachers Association in 1966. The milestone is cause to celebrate NEA and ATA's unique and distinct legacies, and the strength and richness they brought to bear on the evolution of public education and the profession of teaching.

NEA, formed in 1857, and ATA, formed in 1904 as an association of the nation's African American teachers, began working together on issues of educational equity in 1926. Four decades later, as racial desegregation advanced in the wake of the civil rights movement, the organizations combined forces to become the modern National Education Association.

"No one knew whether the new melting pot would be successful, but one America meant one America," said E.B. Palmer, former executive director of the North Carolina Teachers Association (an ATA affiliate), recalling the merger. "By merging, NEA and ATA were way ahead of the rest of the country — paving the way for businesses and government to follow their example. By merging with ATA, NEA set the tone for the social fabric of America."

ATA and NEA's work over the years encompassed critical social justice and human and civil rights issues in U.S. history. The work continues today.

Happy Anniversary!

NEA is making the anniversary a central theme in this year's Representative Assembly July 2-7 in Washington, D.C.

You can join in the celebration by watching the video "Honoring Our Legacy of Inclusion: The NEA-ATA Merger" at cta.org/nea-ata-merger.

The video uses historic photos and footage, as well as interviews with key figures, to chronicle the organizations' important work in serving students and supporting public education.



TIMELINE

- **1870–1890:** Independent black teacher associations form in several mostly Southern states.
- **1904:** Following the U.S. Supreme Court's *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling (1896) upholding "separate but equal" segregated schools, J.R.E. Lee convenes black educators in Nashville, Tenn., to found the National Association of Colored Teachers (NACT). NACT would change its name several times, eventually becoming ATA in 1937.
- **1910:** NEA's Representative Assembly (RA) elects Ella Flagg Young as the first female NEA president — a full decade before Congress passes the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote.
- **1926:** A joint committee between the two organizations is formed to study accreditation problems of Southern black high schools and the quality of black education. The committee's work continues for decades. It advocates equal school funding; collects data on the status of black education; promotes fair treatment of blacks in textbooks; urges NEA to include black speakers at Representative Assemblies; and recommends NEA meetings be held in cities where all delegates are treated with respect.
- **1930s–1950s:** ATA and state affiliates provide funds, plaintiffs, reports, and expert witnesses for numerous legal cases on teacher salaries filed by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). They assist in NAACP's cases challenging inadequate and discriminatory classroom conditions, school funding policies, and school transportation systems. NEA helps by giving NAACP access to its records on black and white teacher salaries. In 1940, the U.S. Supreme Court lets stand an appeals court ruling that dual salary schedules based on race are unconstitutional.
- **1954:** The Supreme Court rules in *Brown v. Board of Education* that racially separate schools "are inherently unequal" and reverses *Plessy*. One year later, the modern civil rights movement is born, sparked by Rosa Parks' refusal to sit in the back of a bus in Montgomery, Ala., and the Supreme Court orders public school systems to desegregate. Though NEA does not publicly support *Brown* until 1961, a number of ATA and NEA state affiliates merge in the next few years.
- **Late 1950s:** When school districts in 17 states use court-ordered desegregation as an excuse to dismiss hundreds of black teachers, NEA establishes a \$1 million fund to "protect and promote the professional, civil, and human rights of educators." This fund and the joint committee help support black teachers who are fired for participating in voter registration drives that are central to the civil rights struggles of the 1960s.
- **1963:** NEA RA asks the joint committee to report to the 1964 RA about a possible NEA and ATA merger. The following year, NEA passes a resolution requiring racially segregated affiliates to merge.
- **1964:** President Lyndon B. Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act, outlawing racial discrimination in public accommodations, public education, employment, apprentice programs and union memberships, and to some extent, voting. In 1965, Johnson addresses NEA RA; he also signs the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the Higher Education Act, providing critically needed federal funds for low-income and ethnic minority students.
- **1966:** NEA and ATA vote to merge. A ceremony takes place at NEA RA in Miami Beach, Florida. After the signing, the assembly sings the chorus "Glory! Glory! Hallelujah!" from "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

Inspired Leadership

Debbie Hamme honored as CTA ESP of the Year

ASK A QUESTION at El Rincon Elementary School in Culver City, and invariably the answer is “Ask Debbie, she’ll know.” That would be Debbie Hamme, winner of the 2016 CTA ESP of the Year Award in honor of Paula J. Monroe.

Hamme knows all because she has worked as a school secretary in the Culver City Unified School District since 2001, and for the past 10 years has served as president of the Association of Classified Employees, Culver City, a chapter representing some 350 noncertificated employees.

“Debbie is a wise counselor, a standard bearer of integrity and civility, and is highly respected,” said CTA President Eric Heins at the April State Council meeting, where he presented Hamme with the award. “Her powerful voice has made her a visible proponent of equity and fairness for education support staff in her district and community.”

In accepting the award, Hamme was quick to give credit to her fellow ESPs.

“Always remember, for at least one child, their interaction with you will be the high point of their day. Be patient, be kind, and be inspiring.”

—Debbie Hamme

ners.” She has provided input on ways to positively impact students, enhanced skills and knowledge of school support staff, and helped shape the course of the school district.

For her work, she was named the district’s Rotary Club Classified Employee of the Year in 2015, and more recently was honored at the annual Tribute to the Stars Gala at Sony Pictures.

As recipient of the 2016 Paula J. Monroe ESP of the Year Award, Hamme will be CTA’s nominee for NEA ESP of the Year next year.

“We go to work every day and give 110 percent of ourselves in hundreds of ways, because that’s what support staff does, and in doing so we make valuable contributions to the educational day,” she said.

Colleagues describe Hamme as an outstanding professional, mentor, role model and activist. Superintendent Dave LaRose publicly thanked her “for her leadership and deep belief that the best thing we can all do for our kids is to work together and operate as true part-



CTA President Eric Heins introduces Debbie Hamme to State Council in April.

A Special 10-Year Anniversary

In June, it will be 10 years since CTA changed its bylaws to include education support professionals. The change allowed 5,000 ESPs to become full, active members of CTA, and has enriched our union and its activities considerably.

The CTA ESP of the Year Award is named in honor of Paula J. Monroe. Monroe, the 2013 award winner and 2014 NEA ESP of the Year, was a driving force for an inclusive CTA, and lobbied tirelessly for the bylaw change. She made history as the first education support professional to be nominated by State Council for NEA Executive Committee member. She was also a founding member of the National Coalition of Classified Employees, which is a voice for 1 million ESPs.

See stories and social media posts from **#CaliforniaESP Day**: bit.ly/ESPDay2016





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(for professionals working with middle and high school girls)

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9am-4pm

The STAND UP! SPEAK OUT!™ 2-Day Curriculum Training

(for professionals helping girls navigate their friendship worlds)

Thursday & Friday, July 21-22, 2016
9am-4pm

Mindfulness Tools: Helping Children & Teens Stress Less and Connect More

Saturday, July 23, 2016
9:30am – 3:30pm

Learn practical tools you can use right away.
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Meet colleagues and build collaborations.



Register now at
www.InstituteForGirlsDevelopment.com
Pasadena, CA

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Good Teaching, Good Learning

CTA'S Good Teaching Conference North took place in San Jose in April, with more than 1,200 educators in attendance. Led by classroom teachers, participants discussed latest education trends and research-based practices for the classroom. They networked with colleagues and experts. And no doubt they made significant and immediate impacts on students when they returned home after an intense but rewarding two days. See stories and social media posts from **#CTAGTC** North: bit.ly/GTCN2016 —Mike Myslinski

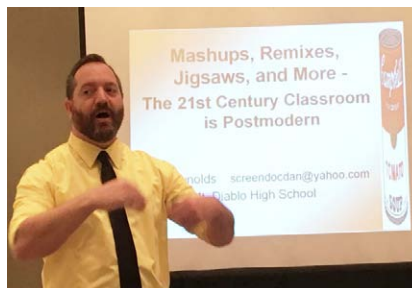


Highlights:

Liz Miller, Curtis Creek Faculty Association, talks about the value of her CTA Institute for Teaching grant project. Celebrating the 150th anniversary of her elementary school in Tuolumne County in 2015, it included murals, a two-day community fair of student work, and archaeological digs. "We had some wonderful responses from past teachers, past staff that had worked at our school, that they were just real proud to be part of our organization."



CTA President Eric Heins speaks to attendees about union values and goals that unite educators. "We have to be able to speak up and tell our stories to the broadest reaches of the profession. Go back and talk to your colleagues and connect with them about what's important in your local district, what's important to you, and what's important to them as an educator. And listen to why."



Leading the workshop "Postmodern Approaches to Learning and Teaching," Dan Reynolds of Mt. Diablo Education Association says: "The postmodernists, they're not going to give up — they're also going to be playful — in the face of a scientific truth that says we can destroy ourselves by pushing a couple of buttons."



Lisa Fogg and daughter Leanne Fogg, both members of Cloverdale Teachers Association and first-timers at GTC. "It's good to be surrounded by other people who share the same goals and interests as you do," says Leanne. "The energy here is just real powerful," says Lisa.



"I love the kids we work with," Taylor says. "The turnarounds are fewer and farther between, but when you get them, they're great."

Good Counsel

Patty Taylor in Hall of Fame

PATTY TAYLOR, a counselor for San Bernardino City Unified School District and a veteran CTA activist, was inducted into the H.B. McDaniel Foundation Hall of Fame in late April. The recognition, according to the foundation, celebrates the ongoing contributions of leaders in the field of counseling who have "significantly influenced the ... profession in the State of California through dedicated service, research, writing, and helping others become counselors through mentoring, and advocating for the profession."

"I'm shocked and honored," said Taylor, who is also past president and current assistant executive director of the California Association of School Counselors. "I didn't know enough about this award — it's all pretty new to me. And my job is a little different."

That job, which Taylor has been at for 11 years, is counselor on the Youth Services hearing panel for the district, "which means I do expulsions. But our district is PBIS (positive behavioral interventions and support) and restorative justice. Once we expel the kids, we serve as school probation officers, which is where counselors come in. It's youth court instead of traditional expulsion."

Previously, Taylor worked as a first- and second-grade teacher, then as an elementary school counselor for 14 years. Born into a union family, she served as president of the San Bernardino Teachers Association for four years and has been very involved with CTA and NEA.

"At State Council I needed to find like-minded people so counselors couldn't say, 'I don't know why we came to this, CTA doesn't do anything for me,'" Taylor recalls of her early days as a delegate and new school counselor. "I formed a caucus, and then a standing committee — the Student Support Services Committee. It made a place where counselor, psychologist, nurse, librarian, social worker issues can go. And it can coordinate with professional organizations, so those organizations now see CTA as more of an ally."

Taylor finds counseling at Youth Services enormously satisfying. "I love the kids we work with — they're just great. The turnarounds are fewer and farther between, but when you get them, they're great."



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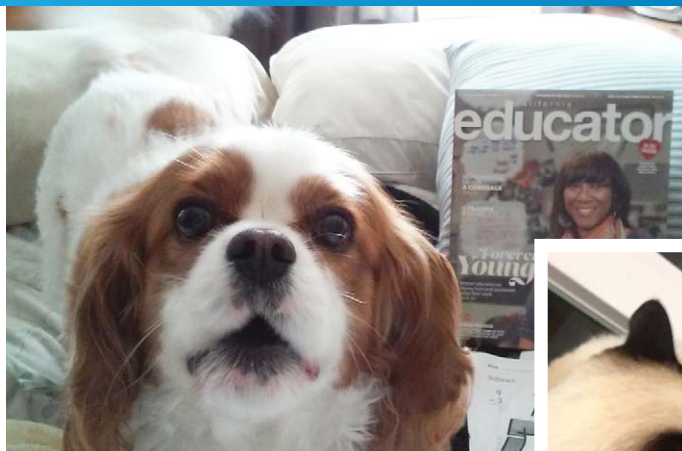
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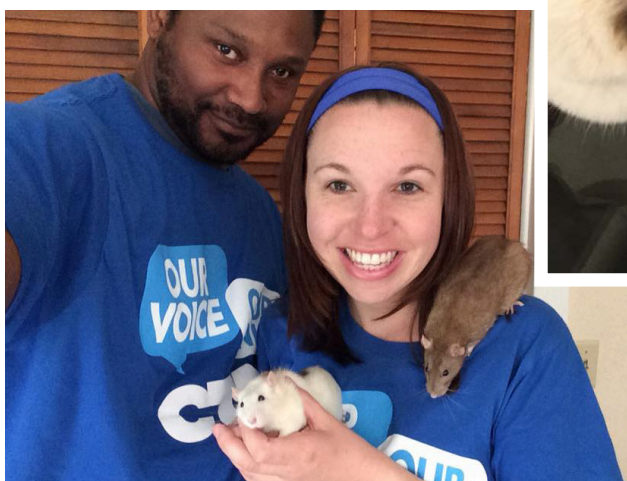
KUDOS TO WINNERS OF OUR PETS OF CTA CONTEST



◀ **DONNA BASMAJIAN**, Fresno Teachers Association — Six-year-old Spencer the Cavalier King Charles spaniel with bedtime reading.



▲ **JOHN DENT**, Santa Barbara Teachers Association — Cat Reagan and dog Dobbie discuss who gets the issue first.



◀ **KAREN KEMP**, United Teachers of Richmond — Mocha and Snoopy approve of the humans wearing appropriate T-shirts.

Your Pet, Your Health



Pets can decrease:

- Your blood pressure.
- Your cholesterol and triglyceride levels.
- Feelings of loneliness.

Pets can increase:

- Opportunities for exercise and outdoor activities.
- Opportunities for socialization.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

The Pets of CTA

Everyone's a winner when it comes to our best friends

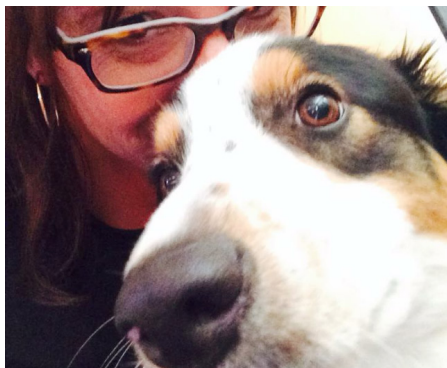
AFTER A LONG, stressful day at school, there's nothing better than coming home to — unconditional love. Your pet is so darn happy to see you and spend time with you that life is brighter and better.

Pets, in fact, are good for you. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in addition to providing companionship, pets can lower your blood pressure, elevate your mood, and often help you get a little exercise (see sidebar).

So it was no surprise that when we put out a call for photos of Fido and Fluffy, you responded with great enthusiasm. So much so that we were stumped: We learned that it's *waaaay* too hard to judge which pet pix are cutest, or most deserving, or most artfully shot. In the end, it came down to the extra points we awarded for showing your animal friends with the *Educator* or, in the case of Karen Kemp, while wearing team colors.

Each of our three winners receives a gift card for \$50 to purchase school supplies.

HONORABLE MENTION:



Best nose — mini Australian shepherd Griffin with **LOUISE ARJAEV**, United Teachers Los Angeles.



Best lounge act — Hannah (**VANESSA SHELDON**, Desert Sands Teachers Association) relaxes after a long day of grading papers.



Most affectionate — Lois, with **DON STAUFFER**, Washington Teachers Association.



Best impersonation — Maurice, with **KRISTIE IWAMOTO**, Napa Valley College Faculty Association, at AT&T Park in San Francisco.



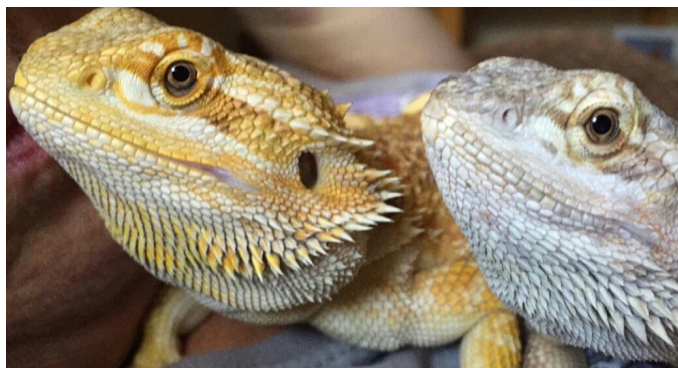
Good works — Molly (**TARA RAZI**, San Marcos Educators Association) is a therapy dog who volunteers at hospitals.



Most regal — Registered American Quarter Horse and weekend competitor Colby, with **EV NUSIC** of Mountain Empire Teachers Association.



Most tenacious — three-legged Trifecto's spirit and sense of humor inspire **PERSIA WIRTH**, United Teachers of Santa Clara, who suffers from chronic pain.



Best sentinels — Two of three bearded dragons owned by **MICHELLE EFFRON** (San Diego Education Association); their names are Corndog, Stretch and Feather.



Best hug — Thing One and **ANGIE MARKLE** of Napa Valley Educators Association (yes, there is a Thing Two).



HONORABLE MENTION:



Great paws — Diesel (**KARLA STEVENSON**, Unified Association of Conejo Teachers).



Best party animals — Peanut, Mia and Gracie (**CHRISTY NERIA**, Covina Unified Education Association).



Best PDA — **ROBERTO RODRIGUEZ**, president of Sweetwater Education Association, with Josie, the South County Teachers United UniServ mascot.

FOR MORE Honorable Mentions and the full gallery of pets (many terrific photos were submitted!), see cta.org/petsofcta.

Remember that NEA Member Benefits (neamb.com) offers outstanding pet insurance to help you best care for your best friend.

Enter our **Educators Are Everywhere** contest! Take us on your travels and shoot a pic of you holding the *Educator* in an interesting/famous/exotic locale. You may win a gift card for school supplies. Email editor@cta.org (with "Educators Are Everywhere" in the subject line) or post [#WeAreCTA #EducatorsAreEverywhere](https://twitter.com/WeAreCTA). Include full name, chapter and photo description. Deadline: July 25.

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Erin Kurtz, English 6
Robert Louis Stevenson Middle School, CA

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