

educator

NOVEMBER 2015 VOLUME 20 ISSUE 4

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Features



High housing costs may force teacher Allison Leshefsky to leave her city and her job.



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Educators are increasingly being pushed out of the housing market in San Francisco and throughout the state. Why can't teachers make enough to afford to live where they work?

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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.

Prescription for Teachers and Students

Each month I read with interest issues of CTA and NEA publications and am always filled with two emotions: Awe of what a great job educators are doing daily in the classrooms, and sadness at the conditions students and teachers have to be subjected to.

My teaching experience started in Pennsylvania and ended in San Jose. Part of our “teacher training” was to be involved with subject and education organizations. Hence, many years in local, state and national associations.

“Reading, Respect and Responsibility” should be the new national slogan for our young future citizens of society. Maybe then students would take pride in themselves, follow a career goal, eat healthy, and exercise.

Maybe one day all teachers would benefit from four years of training and education, with classroom experience for at least six weeks in junior year and off campus six weeks in a different community. Then all teachers would be comfortable on the first day of school.

Marlene H. Greene
Retired

Picture This

The article “San Lorenzo Teachers Declare Impasse” in the October Bargaining Roundup was a big morale booster for our members. I was able to speak to the PTA of the school pictured in the article (below), so I brought a copy for the parents to see. They loved it and started taking cellphone photos of the article.

Donna Pinkney
President, San Lorenzo Education Association



Concussion Awareness

Editor’s Note: Our October 2013 cover story, “Changing the Concussion Discussion,” looked at skyrocketing rates of concussions among student athletes and the rules and procedures to protect against them and respond to students who sustain them. The story still resonates — and young people continue to get concussions, sometimes deadly. One reader’s son was luckier:

I’ve saved the cover of that edition, not only on my wall in my classroom, but also as a screensaver on my phone. I tell you this as I honor my son, who at the age of 16 as a junior in high school suffered concurrent concussions playing water polo. Four teammates spent hours asking themselves “What’s wrong with Landon?” while he was dazed and concussed.

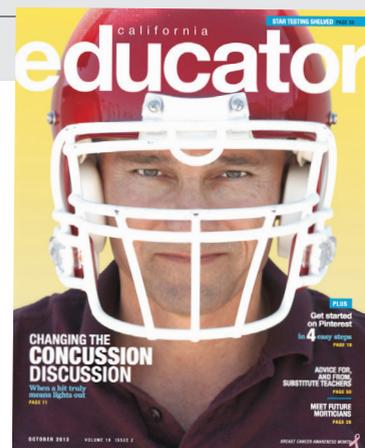
It took three years for him to be as he was before. The impact of the two concussions on my son, who was a 3.85 GPA honors math and chemistry student, was devastating. He never finished high school. It’s such a tragedy that he lost his high school years. But he’s alive, and he could have died, as kids have been doing lately.

Now 19, he finally has his life back to pre-concussion. He’s finally able to be in school full time at junior college.

I am currently working on my master’s degree. In a year’s time I want to strengthen state Education Code laws for all high school sports and require that athletes go through concussion awareness training. It is because my son’s teammates commented on his condition for hours after being concussed that I advocate this stipulation be required for athletes.

Thank you, CTA, for looking into and reporting on this topic. I was so glad to see your report.

Kai C. Kubota
Ventura Unified Education Association



Last Chance to Enter! See Me After School

Show us what you do after the last bell rings and you could be a winner. Do you spend your after-school hours as an ace tutor or coach, a prize-winning salsa dancer, a stalwart volunteer or a café bon vivant? Send up to three photos of you in action to editor@cta.org. Be sure to put “See Me After School” in the subject line. Include your name, your chapter and a description of the photos. Enter by Nov. 25. We’ll pick three winners based on creativity, photography and interest; each will receive a \$50 gift card for school supplies.





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President Eric Heins, left, at October State Council with legendary organizer Marshall Ganz, who spoke on the importance of storytelling.

It's Story Time

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, but I love to curl up with a good book — especially at this time of year, when the leaves are falling and it's getting a little cooler outside. There's just something about getting lost in a great story, connecting with the characters, and experiencing all the emotions that make it memorable and moving. I think reading is one of the greatest gifts we can give our students.

But not all great stories have to be written down to share. The art of storytelling goes way back, even before the written word. It was how history was first recounted, how civilizations were remembered, and how people shared experiences and values. For many groups and families, the stories handed down are what hold them together and define them.

CTA's story goes back more than 150 years, and there's plenty more to come. By the true nature of our union, the larger CTA story is the collection of all of our experiences. What led us to work in public education? What drives us to be an advocate for all students? What makes us embrace diversity in our classrooms, our ranks and our communities? The answers to these questions are what binds us together and makes up the fabric of our union.

I experienced this firsthand last month at the CTA State Council of Education meeting in Los Angeles,

sharing we reconnected with one another. Turns out we have a lot more in common than we thought.

I know you each have your own story about what motivated you to pursue a career in education. It's in the sharing of these stories that we find our shared values and common drives. That's why we launched a 3,000-conversation campaign at the October State Council meeting. This is the next step in implementing our strategic plan: listening to and engaging members in the work of the union. Many locals are already hard at work, meeting and talking with every member, hearing their stories. With each conversation we strengthen our union and build our capacity — and we're able to come together as a cohesive, powerful group to face the challenges ahead.

At the top of the list of challenges is the attack on our very right to come together and have a voice on the job and in our communities. I'm referring to the court case *Friedrichs v. CTA*, which will be heard before the U.S. Supreme Court early next year.

There's no time to lose. We need to harness the power of storytelling to promote meaningful change for our students and our profession. As Ben Okri, a Nigerian poet and novelist, said, "Stories are the secret reservoir of values: Change the stories individuals and nations live by and tell themselves, and you change the individuals and nations."

Together, we can and will lead the conversation about what works for our students. We will reach out into our communities to talk about the kind of support our neighborhood schools and colleges need. And we will advocate for the public education all California students deserve.

Eric C. Heins

CTA PRESIDENT
@ericheins



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**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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A Living Wage for Educators

WHAT DO YOU SPEND on housing? The old rule of thumb says you should spend no more than 30 percent of what you make on your rent or mortgage.

Tell that to the multitudes who shell out significantly more — particularly in pricey areas like San Francisco, where our cover story on page 22 focuses on the educator housing crisis — and they'll laugh in your face.

In fact, a new report from Harvard's Joint Center for Housing Studies and Enterprise Community Partners finds that more than one out of four Americans who rent now pays over 50 percent of their income on housing, and numbers are expected to continue to rise.

This is not a sustainable model for communities' well-being and future, and everyone suffers for it. Educators and other vital public service workers are priced out — their salaries are simply not enough to let them live where they work. Teachers are forced to move away; districts are caught short of skilled, experienced educators; students are denied the quality education, continuity and community that a stable faculty provides.

The solution, of course, is to pay educators a living wage. Specialized loans and housing reserved for teachers are Band-Aids that, while useful in the short term, do not address the real problem. Tell us what you think — [@cateachersassoc](#), [#teachershousing](#).

Educators remain an optimistic bunch, however, in the face of the housing crisis and other tough issues. For example, Muslim scholar Ibrahim Al-Marashi brings together students from the Middle East and veterans who have fought there in his history classes at CSU San Marcos, in an effort to understand the volatile region's history and current events — and each other (page 19).

And many educators are bringing students to the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles (page 48), whose

youth programs shed light on historical and contemporary consequences of prejudice and discrimination, from the Holocaust to segregation in California. Student participants become witnesses to history and are empowered to create respectful, inclusive communities.

Finally, the inspiring story of Coach Jim White's transformation of largely poor, Latino youth from the tiny rural town of McFarland into championship cross-country runners and college graduates is celebrated in a movie starring Kevin Costner that was released earlier this year. We catch up with several of the key players on page 28.

But back to solutions. Extending Prop. 30 and ensuring stable education funding through 2030 (page 41), battling billionaire Eli Broad's plan to privatize public education (page 40), raising educators' wages, and many other efforts will require strong commitment and collective action.

Fortunately, fighting the good fight has never been difficult for educators — and that's something to give thanks for.

Katharine Fong

EDITOR IN CHIEF
editor@cta.org

Coming Up in the *Educator*:

- **The Innovation Issue**

The December/January issue looks at creative thinkers and doers, cutting-edge modern architecture, and a model progressive school.

- **Friedrichs v. CTA**

What you need to know about the case, the stakes, and how the decision will affect students, educators and our schools.

- **Common Core**

Update on the implementation.

- **California Reads Kickoff**

A new year means new books to foster students' love of reading.

- **Tell us what you'd like to read**

Email editor@cta.org.

CALENDAR

BATMOBILES AND BATCYCLES

ACCELERATION

A flame-wielding power burst is a signature move of the Batmobile and the Batcycle. This rocket-thruster action gives Batman fast starts and quick accelerations. It always leaves the bad guys eating dust.

Your minivan may not have rocket thrusters, but some experimental cars do. The British rocket propelled car, Bloodhound SSC (Super Sonic Car), is designed to set a 1,000 mile (1,600 km) land speed record. It will use a jet engine to reach about 230 miles (370 km) per hour. Then it will fire a rocket to accelerate to more than 1,000 miles (1,600 km) per hour. At full speed, the engine will operate at about 80,000 horsepower. That's equal to the power of 95 Formula One race cars.



The British rocket car Thrust SSC can travel faster than the speed of sound. It currently holds the world record for the fastest car. In October 1997, it topped out at a speed of 763 miles (1,230 km) per hour.

The Bloodhound race team plans to test the car on a track in Halskepan in late 2013 or early 2014. This huge, dry, lake bed in South Africa is the perfect testing ground. Bloodhound will travel so far and so fast that no one is exactly sure where it will stop.

FACT:

ENGINEER JAMES WATTS COINED THE TERM HORSEPOWER IN THE 1780'S. IT MEASURES AN ENGINE'S POWER BY COMPARING IT TO THE AMOUNT OF WORK A DRAFT HORSE CAN DO.



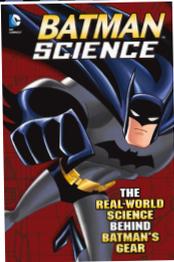
Native American Heritage Month

"Let us put our minds together and see what life we will make for our children."

—Tatanka Iotanka (Sitting Bull)

The effort to gain recognition for the significant contributions the first Americans made to the establishment and growth of the United States started in the early 1900s and is now honored with an official month. November is a time to learn more about the history and heritage of Native American peoples.

Educators can engage students any number of ways, including with Native American "pourquoi" tales, which explain why something in nature is the way it is. The Library of Congress, National Endowment for the Humanities, Smithsonian Institution and other government agencies have lesson plans and primary sources that educators can access, including images, manuscripts, maps, and sound files that bring historical and current events to life. See nativeamericanheritagemonth.gov.



Holy Science, Batman!

Unlike other superheroes with X-ray vision or webbing that shoots out from their hands, Batman conquers crime with brains, brawn, and high-tech gadgets and gear. *Batman Science: The Real-World Science Behind Batman's Gear* uncovers true-life connections to his wizardry, pairing full-color comic book-style illustrations with colorful photos. Students learn, for example, how that Batsuit and cape have parallels with breakthrough materials such as Kevlar and Nomex, which help keep soldiers and firefighters safe.

The brainchild of engineer Tammy Enz and science writer Agnieszka Biskup, the book explores other Dark Knight thrills such as manned and unmanned flight, ejection systems, shape-shifting, and all those cool tools and weapons in his utility belt.

Batman Science is a 2015-16 California Reads recommendation for kids in grades 6-8. For other picks, see cta.org/californiareads. Tell us your favorite books at [#californiareads](https://twitter.com/californiareads).



RA Reminder

The declaration of candidacy form for state delegates to the 2016 NEA Representative Assembly in Washington, D.C., will appear in the December/January *Educator*.

DECEMBER 7–13 EVENT

Computer Science Education Week

CSEdWeek is an annual program dedicated to inspiring K-12 students to get interested in computer science. Its focus is for students to participate in Hour of Code (a one-hour introduction to computer science and programming). Lesson plans are available for classrooms with or without computer access. Find out more: csedweek.org

JANUARY 5

NOMINATION DEADLINE

CTA Human Rights Awards

These awards promote the development of programs for the advancement and protection of human and civil rights within CTA. Any active CTA member, chapter, caucus or Service Center Council may nominate a member, chapter or Service Center Council. Find out more: cta.org/humanrightsawards

JANUARY 15 ENTRY DEADLINE

César E. Chávez Awards

The César E. Chávez Memorial Education Awards provide recognition for students who submit visual arts projects or written essays (no biographies) that show understanding of César Chávez's vision and guiding principles. Winners will receive recognition and up to \$550 for both students and sponsoring CTA members. Submitters of a group entry (up to three students) will share the prize. Find out more: cta.org/scholarships

JANUARY 15–17 CONFERENCE

Issues Conference *Rio Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada*

"We Are CTA — Strengthening Our Voices Through Advocacy, Organizing and Inspiration." This conference offers urban, rural and ESP educators the opportunity to learn about current education issues, collaborate, invest in lasting relationships, and acquire skill sets. Find out more: cta.org/conferences

FEBRUARY 1

APPLICATION DEADLINE

NEA Foundation grants

The NEA Foundation awards 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. Find out more: neafoundation.org

FEBRUARY 5

APPLICATION DEADLINE

CTA Scholarships

The 2015-16 CTA Scholarship Program offers up to 34 scholarships of \$5,000 for dependent children of CTA members, plus one \$5,000 scholarship for a dependent child attending a continuation high school or alternative education program. There are up to five scholarships of \$3,000 for CTA members completing college coursework, and up to three scholarships of \$5,000 for Student CTA members. Applications must be submitted online by Feb. 5. Find out more: cta.org/scholarships

FEBRUARY 19

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarships

Aimed at helping members of ethnic minorities in preparing for teaching-related careers in public education, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund is supported by voluntary contributions from CTA members and the CTA Foundation for Teaching and Learning. An applicant must be an active CTA or Student CTA member, or a dependent child of a CTA member. Past recipients have received up to \$6,000. Find out more: cta.org/mlkscholarships

FEBRUARY 19–21 CONFERENCE

CCA Winter Conference *Manhattan Beach Marriott*

The Community College Association's winter conference is dedicated to enhancing bargaining skills and coordinating bargaining strategies with other locals throughout the state. Bargaining teams are encouraged to attend. Find out more: cca4me.org

FEBRUARY 26–28 CONFERENCE

Good Teaching Conference South *Hyatt Regency Orange County*

The Good Teaching Conferences support excellent teaching and learning practices for K-12 teachers. They offer a variety of workshops in curriculum content areas, provide opportunities for professional development, and allow time to network with colleagues and experts. Find out more: cta.org/conferences

End Student Hunger

One in five kids in the U.S. doesn't get enough to eat. Educators know that if students are hungry, they have trouble concentrating and are vulnerable to emotional, behavioral and learning issues. If you or your local already buys snacks out of pocket for classes, sponsors food banks on campus, or has started an awareness campaign, the 2015 **Challenge to End Student Hunger** can help continue your efforts — or start new ones. NEA Member Benefits and NEA Healthy Futures in partnership with Bank of America will recognize 18 individuals and affiliates with awards of \$1,000 to \$5,000 in four categories. Winners will be selected based on application strength, need, project innovation and location. Applications, at neahealthyfutures.org, are due by noon on Dec. 4. Meanwhile, NEA members can help raise \$50,000 in support without spending a dime: Go to neamb.com/FightStudentHunger, sign in and hit the "click here" button to have B of A contribute \$1 on your behalf. **#FightStudentHunger**





JOIN THE CONVERSATION:

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Facebook.com/californiateachersassociation

For the latest news and stories, see cta.org/blog.

WHAT'S NEW AT CTA.ORG

cta.org/budget

SCHOOL FUNDING AND BUDGET STABILITY ACT

CTA State Council recently approved a new ballot measure that would temporarily extend Proposition 30's tax increases on the wealthiest income earners.

cta.org/espaward

NOMINATIONS OPEN FOR ESP OF THE YEAR

If you know an education support professional whose activities promote public education, nominate him/her for ESP of the Year before Dec. 4.

cta.org/esp

ESP DIGITAL GUIDEBOOK

Speaking of education support professionals, check out the new ESP Digital Guidebook. Thank you, NEA, for this valuable resource.

cta.org/getinsider

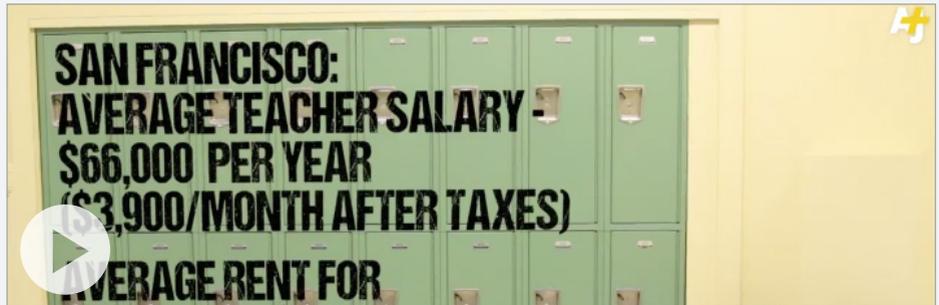
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Get the scoop on upcoming events and news of interest to educators. Join the thousands of CTA members who receive the CTA Insider e-newsletter.

Videos 🎥



Actor Bradley Whitford, proud member of SAG-AFTRA, warns of "big money interests" on the attack against public services, specifically in the upcoming Supreme Court case. *Friedrichs vs. CTA*. "Firefighters, nurses, teachers ... all could see their right to unite diminish," he says in a new video by coalition partner Alliance for Justice: youtu.be/MPquglI2R8E; americaworkstogether.us.



Our feature on the housing crunch's impact on educators and students (page 22) is brought to life in a video by AJ+ that focuses on a school in San Francisco's Mission District, at on.fb.me/1Rw6MXi.

Social Buzz 🗨️



First-year teacher Jess Sanchez owes \$91,000 in student loans.

It will take him 25 years to pay them off.

It's time for Degrees Not Debt.

Join Sanchez in signing NEA's petition to Congress.



NEA Higher Education
@NEAHigherEd Oct 28
First-year teacher Jess Sanchez @cateachersassoc asked Congress for #degreesnotdebt — You can too: bddy.me/1O80qzE



▲
Juan Del Toro @1DELTORO Oct 9
Thank you @CATEachersAssoc for the knowledge. #r2lc2015

Christina Martinez
@christinaixchel
@CATEachersAssoc Thank you for your piece "A Nurturing Education" in the recent California Educator magazine. Support = Success. CA districts need to reinstate Cal-SAFE programs. Support for parenting students positively impacts multiple generations. #noteenshame

SJ Teachers Assoc
@SanJoseTeachers Oct 2
Jennifer Thomas @SJTPres Overjoyed that @JerryBrownGov signed @NCamposAssembly AB 375, family leave for teachers. An amazing accomplishment on behalf of 300,000+ educators in CA.

Know&Tell

INSIDE:

- 12** Tech Tips: Best messaging apps for text, voice, video
- 13** Quotes & Numbers
- 14** Your Whole Life: Beat the winter blues, plan now for summer travel

Holidays mean scrumptious foods — and too many opportunities to overindulge. Check out smart ways to handle that holiday buffet, page 15.

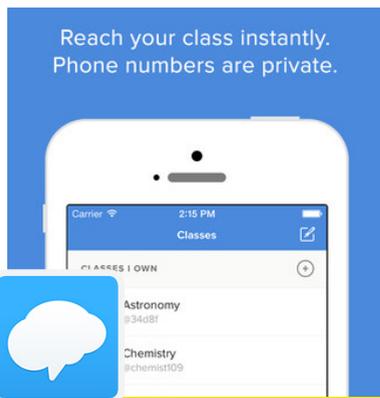


Text Messaging Grows Up

By TERRY NG

WHERE WOULD WE BE without text messaging? Once favored by teens only, it's now universally embraced by youth and adults alike. Running late to a meeting, or need a quick answer to a simple question? It's easier to text than make a call.

The standard text messaging app that comes with your phone is great for short messages, but now there's a bevy of other apps with additional functionality. These super apps allow instant messaging over the Internet as opposed to a phone network, and make your native messaging app dull in comparison. Here are some of the most popular.



Reach your class instantly. Phone numbers are private.

▲ Remind

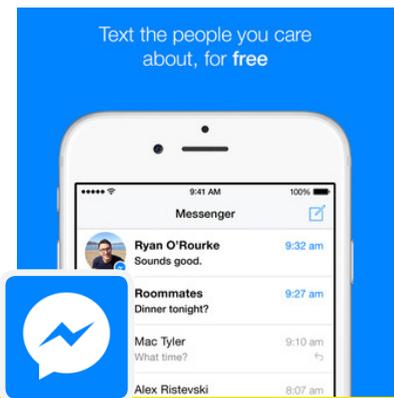
Looking for a free, simple and safe way to instantly text students and parents? Try Remind. Send reminders, assignments, homework, assessments or motivational messages directly to students' and parents' phones while keeping your phone number (and others' numbers) private. Even students/parents without smartphones can use it too.



Group Chat with hundreds of friends!

▲ WeChat

It's the all-in-one communications app for free text via SMS or MMS (Multimedia Messaging Service), voice and video calls, moments, photo sharing, and games. The app also lets you pay for products and services, including everything from personal loans to fitness tracking.



Text the people you care about, for free

▲ Facebook Messenger

Instantly reach the people in your life — for free. Not just for Facebook friends. Send messages to people in your phone book and enter a phone number to add a new contact.



◀ SnapChat

Enjoy fast and fun mobile conversation! Snap a photo or short video, add a caption, and send it to a friend. They'll view it, and then the Snap disappears from the screen — unless they take a screenshot.



◀ WhatsApp

A free messaging and calling app that allows you to connect easily with family and friends across countries. It uses your phone's data connection to avoid SMS (Short Message Service) and long distance charges. You can create group chats and send unlimited images, video and audio media messages.



◀ Skype

An old standby. Say hello to friends and family with an instant message, voice or video call on Skype for free.

Quotes & Numbers

Compiled by MIKE MYSLINSKI

"I wouldn't teach anywhere else but at a Title 1 school because I want to show people that these kids can do well. They can achieve. They can have high-level discussions. From my experience, the kids can definitely handle whatever you give them; you just have to have high expectations for them, so the kids will rise to them."

—**Ann Park**, an Oakland Unified teacher at Greenleaf Elementary, in a Nov. 3 *Contra Costa Times* story about her being named one of five 2016 California Teachers of the Year.

"Tests should not occupy too much classroom time, or crowd out teaching and learning. Tests should enhance teaching and learning."

—**President Obama**, announcing on Oct. 24 in a White House Facebook video his administration's surprising plan to reduce testing in schools to no more than 2 percent of classroom time.

"To have a politician say the only thing wrong with schools are the unions, or if we could get rid of unions, schools would be able to flourish — what does he know about what my union is doing to make sure your kid and his teachers have what they need? They should be thanking us instead of kicking us."

—NEA President **Lily Eskelsen García**, in an Oct. 29 *Washington Post Magazine* story about her recent tour of Southern states to discuss toxic standardized testing and the flaws of NCLB.

"The idea is working with people to enable them to come together, decide together, stand together, act together, do together, and pursue their common interests. That is really where organizing comes into the picture."

—Harvard lecturer and legendary union organizer **Marshall Ganz**, speaking about leadership to CTA State Council delegates at their October meeting. Watch highlights of his speech at cta.org/mediacenter.

"Stories are the secret reservoir of values: Change the stories individuals and nations live by and tell themselves, and you change the individuals and nations."

—Nigerian poet and novelist **Ben Okri**, quoted by CTA President Eric Heins in his Oct. 24 speech to State Council delegates about the need to harness the power of storytelling to promote change for students and the teaching profession.

112

Average number of mandatory standardized tests that an American public school student takes through 12th grade, according to a survey of 66 urban U.S. school districts, released in October by the Council of the Great City Schools.

9

Number of hours per day, on average, that U.S. teenagers spend using various media for entertainment and social interaction, according to an October study of more than 2,600 youths by Common Sense Media of San Francisco. Using media for homework was not included in the estimate.

22.7%

Percentage of California children living in poverty in 2014, according to new U.S. Census Bureau data in a September report by the California Budget and Policy Center.

\$350 MILLION

Amount per year in additional state funds that the San Diego Unified School District estimates it would need to provide an adequate education for its 132,000 students, allowing it to extend the school year, lower class sizes, and add counselors, nurses, language specialists and other staff.

\$49.3 MILLION

Average amount in the largest retirement accounts of 100 CEOs among Fortune 500 CEOs. An Oct. 30 *Mother Jones* magazine story about a study by the Center for Effective Government and the Institute for Policy Studies also notes that, in contrast, the U.S. median balance in 401(k) accounts at the end of 2013 was \$18,433.

YOUR WHOLE LIFE

Tips and trends for a smarter, healthier you

Car-Buying Tips

In the market for a new or used car? The end of the year is considered the best time to make a deal. But what to buy?

Educators seem to have their favorites. The Iceology buyer survey found that “Education/Teacher/Professor” is the No. 1 occupation held by Subaru owners. “Our cars and our brand appeal to educated professionals and also people who do a lot of research into which car to buy,” explains Alan Bethke, CMO of Subaru of America. “Educators fit right into that category.”

Members should use the NEA Auto Buying Program, a free service offering guaranteed savings on new cars (an average of \$3,221 off manufacturer’s suggested retail price) and discounts on used cars through local, prescreened dealers. See bit.ly/1wUDTs4 for details.



- **CONSIDER YOUR NEEDS**, including car usage, desired features, fuel economy, safety, reliability, purchase and maintenance costs, and resale value.
- **NEW OR USED?** Do the math. Not all used cars are the same when it comes to depreciation, warranties, repairs, etc. It’s usually easier to get a lower interest rate loan on a new car.

- **KNOW THE VALUE OF YOUR TRADE-IN.**
- **PLAN TO NEGOTIATE.** Invoice shows what the dealer paid for the car. The Monroney sticker on the car window shows the base price, manufacturer’s installed options, MSRP, etc. Sticker price is the dealer’s suggested retail price. Dealers may be willing to bargain 10 to 20 percent on their profit margin — usually the difference between MSRP and invoice price.
- **FIND THE RIGHT FINANCING.** The loan offered by the dealer may not be the right one for you.
- **SHOP AROUND.**

BEAT
THE
WINTER
BLUES



Stay mentally and physically strong with these tips, courtesy of NEA Member Benefits at bit.ly/1XKiwcy.

1

GET YOUR D.

Vitamin D boosts immunity and helps outmaneuver depression and Seasonal Affective Disorder.

2

TURN ON A COMEDY.

Laughter increases feel-good endorphins, reduces stress levels and boosts immunity.

3

STRIKE A POSE.

Falls are more common when it’s cold outside, so stretch muscles to help prevent injury.

8 Ways to Prep Your Home for Bad Weather

Record El Niño looms this winter

Make sure you're ready — California Casualty (calcas.com) provides this checklist:

- Have your heating system inspected and cleaned.
- Inspect ceilings, windows and outer walls for cracks.
- Change air filters.
- Check your pipes and plumbing.
- Inspect your roof for wear or damage and clean the gutters.
- Install weather stripping and caulk around windows and doors.
- Seal up foundation and driveway cracks.
- Check your fireplace and chimney for cracks or leaks.



In addition, clean and store your outdoor furniture and flower pots, turn off sprinkler systems, trim trees and shrubs, fertilize lawns, and mulch gardens. For details, see bit.ly/1GK2IYO. To prep your car for winter, see bit.ly/1MaEYVO.



How to Handle the Holiday Buffet

- **DON'T load up on a little of everything; DO tour the table first, and choose wisely.** Fix yourself a plate heavy on fresh vegetables and light on the fattening stuff. Enjoy a modest serving of dessert.
- **DON'T skip meals; DO plan indulgences.** Eat a handful of almonds beforehand to curb your hunger. Then focus on what you like best, enjoy it in moderation, and leave the rest.
- **DON'T use multiple plates for multiple trips; DO follow the one-plate rule.** It can be a full-size dinner plate, but fill it up once and only with food you really want. Then step away so you don't keep grazing.
- **DON'T blow all your calories on drinks; DO plan your drinks like you plan your food.** Soda and alcoholic drinks are loaded with calories, as are eggnog and hot chocolate, and should be planned indulgences.

For healthy holiday recipes, see bit.ly/1kxFq8V.



PLAN NOW FOR SUMMER

It's not too early to figure out what you'll be doing over summer break. Whether it's lazing on a beach or supplementing your instructional expertise, ideas to consider include **teacher tours** that combine sightseeing, history, culture and school visits with fellow educators; **leading educational tours** (bonus: you travel free and often earn CEUs); **home exchanges** with other teachers; **teachers hosting teachers**; and **teacher travel grants** for those seeking specialized experiences. Plus, educators can get discounts on rental cars, hotels, restaurants, museums and other sights. Start at ctamemberbenefits.org and learn more at bit.ly/1RLmcqj.

4

MOISTURIZE.

Apply emollient lotions and creams while skin is still damp — and don't forget your hands.

5

GET VACCINATED.

Get a flu shot every year. Ask your doctor if you qualify for the pneumonia shot as well.

6

MEDITATE.

Practice relaxation — even closing your eyes for five minutes and breathing deeply helps.



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Perspectives

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Is CAHSEE necessary?

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A historian caught up
with current events



Mideast expert Ibrahim Al-Marashi's history classes at CSU San Marcos bring together students from the Middle East and military veterans who have served there. His goal: to give students historical perspective and knowledge, inspire appreciation for other cultures, and dispel myths about Islam. Turn to page 19.



Should the high school exit exam be required to graduate?

YES **THE CAHSEE SHOULD** have been a high school *entrance* exam, not an exit exam. Students should be able to pass this test easily. If they can't, they should not graduate from high school. When it comes to math, everything on the test meets eighth-grade standards or below. Perhaps the reading level is a bit higher. Really, when it comes to passing the test, it's mostly about caring. The exit exam is so low in its level of difficulty that if a student makes an effort, he or she can usually pass.

I teach at a continuation school where most of the kids can't succeed in regular high school. And most of our students passed the CAHSEE. Of those who didn't, the vast majority were purposefully absent much of the time. Many of these students didn't care about school and weren't on track to graduate.

I think it's good that the state is updating the test to reflect Common Core. The current CAHSEE is multiple choice, and nowhere in life have I ever seen multiple-choice tests except for the DMV, which is another measure of the lowest common denominator.

Actually, my preference would be that students have to demonstrate a certain level of proficiency on the Smarter Balanced test to exit high school. But until that happens, I would like to see the CAHSEE in place. I don't think you should suddenly take away all the rules and requirements while you're in flux.

I agree with the governor about giving diplomas to Class of 2015 students who planned to take CAHSEE during the summer. They were unable to take the test through no fault of their own because the state canceled the test. But I don't have a whole lot of sympathy for them. They were allowed to take the test four to six times a year in high school and didn't pass. I definitely don't agree with changes making students who flunked the CAHSEE dating back to 2006 now eligible to receive diplomas. You don't want to go around gifting people with diplomas just because requirements are different now.

If everyone who flunked the exam since 2006 gets a diploma, it makes a mockery of the test. It's not fair to other students who put in the time, effort and hard work to pass.



Fred Kloeppe, Paso Robles Public Educators president, teaches math at Liberty Continuation High School.



The California High School Exit Exam is no more.

The governor signed SB 172, which suspends the test over the next three years so the state can consider an alternative way to assess student achievement. Now students who did not receive diplomas because they failed the CAHSEE — going all the way back to 2006 — are eligible for diplomas, and can ask their school districts for one. While some CTA members are rejoicing, others think the CAHSEE's elimination is a bad idea. Here are two opposing views.

NO **I'VE READ THAT** the CAHSEE has been shelved because it is no longer in sync with the Common Core. Personally, I thought it should have been shelved anyway, and that passing the required courses should be enough to measure a student's achievement.

I have known quite a few students who have not passed the CAHSEE and several who tried multiple times to pass. Some were just poor test takers. They had to take CAHSEE preparation classes, and while the classes were awesome, students gave up elective periods for it.

For those who were unable to obtain their diplomas due to not passing the CAHSEE, it has meant missed opportunities for better-paying jobs, missed opportunities for furthering their education at trade school and college, and missed opportunities to receive financial aid or enlist in the military. Some students have come back years later to take prep classes and retake the test hoping for a diploma, but in the meantime their time may have been wasted and their spirit broken.

In my own household there are four children. My 2007 graduate struggled in math from the time she entered school, and ended up taking the math portion three times. The first time she was just shy of passing; the second time she was so stressed over the test she did even worse; and the third time, after lots of praise and relaxation exercises prior to the test, she passed just fine. She has ADHD and is an absolutely horrible test taker. Another of my children is a highly functioning student with autism, and even though he completed classwork, he was not able to pass either one of the CAHSEE tests, so he earned his Certificate of Completion.

I believe that the CAHSEE is not a fair or accurate way to determine what a student is capable of. Furthermore, I feel that as long as students pass all the coursework that is required, they should get their diploma. I am glad that the requirement of having students pass an exit exam was eliminated, because those who couldn't pass were denied more than just a diploma. They were also denied a chance to better their future. It's only right that they are finally eligible to receive their diploma under the new law.



Kendall Griffin, Ventura Education Support Professionals Association, is an attendance technician at Ventura Adult and Continuing Education.



Member spotlight

Mideast Historian a Hit With Students

By SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN Photography by SCOTT BUSCHMAN

Where can you find students from the Middle East — and military veterans who fought there — sitting side by side trying to understand the world's most volatile region?

It happens in Ibrahim Al-Marashi's Middle East history classes, which are standing room only at CSU San Marcos. The campus, known for being friendly to veterans, also has a large student population of Middle Eastern descent.

Classes taught by the Muslim scholar are extremely popular, covering a wide range of subjects including military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the rise of ISIS, Middle Eastern art and architecture, the politics of oil, roles of women in Muslim nations, and religions that clash or collaborate. He incorporates current events or history in the making, such as the exodus of Syrian refugees, the nuclear agreement between the United States and Iran, and a Republican presidential candidate stating that he doesn't believe a Muslim should ever be elected president.

Al-Marashi's goal is to provide students with historical knowledge and perspective, as well as inspire an appreciation for other cultures and dispel myths that surround Islam.

His father, a neurologist, and his mother, a diabetes specialist, fled Iraq and moved to the U.S. in the 1970s, before he was born. Growing up in Baltimore, he became fascinated with the history of his people, and studied Middle Eastern history at UC San Diego, then transferred to UCLA. He earned his Ph.D. from Oxford University in England and taught in Spain and Turkey before arriving at CSU San Marcos four years ago.

The charismatic Iraqi-American speaks at conferences around the globe. He has taught officers at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey. He has shared his insights on "60 Minutes" and Al Jazeera news.

But he is best known for his unwitting role in the war against Iraq. The British government plagiarized his 2002 research about Iraq's security and intelligence agencies, changing a passage that said the Iraqi Intelligence Service aided "opposition groups in hostile regimes" to one that said it aided "terrorist groups." The altered version was cited in Secretary of State Colin Powell's speech to the United Nations, and influenced the U.S. decision to declare war. Later, he received an apology from British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

The California Faculty Association member, described as a "rock star" by colleagues at CSU San Marcos, sat down with the *California Educator* recently to answer some questions about himself, the Middle East, and what it's like teaching about the hot spot of the world.

When did you first visit Iraq?

My family left in the '70s, and I couldn't go back until I was an adult in 2003 because Saddam Hussein was in power. I could have gotten in trouble before that because of my research about the history of the Iraqi secret police and military.



Describe your experience at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey.

It was interesting for me. It was before the Iraq War. Many of the officers were older than me. Many of them were questioning the rationale of going to war against Iraq and spoke frankly. Many of them predicted that chaos was going to ensue.

What was it like to have your research distorted to justify the Iraq War?

It had a long-term impact on my life. At the time I was living and teaching in Istanbul, and the Turkish media said I had masterminded the Iraq War. Protesters were screaming outside my classroom. My students were screaming back at the protesters. It was very traumatic. I left Turkey. When Tony Blair issued a belated apology, it was a nice gesture, but it was only because the government was pressuring him to do so.

What is the most important thing you want your students to know about the Middle East and its people?

That it is an extremely complex and diverse place, and that most Middle Easterners have simple desires when it comes to everyday life. What most Middle Easterners want is as banal as what anyone wants — enough food, a secure job, and a safe place for their children. I want my students to have a better understanding of today’s reality and a better understanding of a faith — and a region — that defines their presence.

Do you dispel myths about Islam in your classes?

My entire course is geared toward dispelling myths and learning the reality behind the myth. One of the biggest myths is that a suicide bomber will see 72 virgins in heaven. That is not in the Quran and comes from a poorly sourced religious text that most Muslims have never read. It says more about ourselves as an overly sexualized society and what we fixate on than it does about Muslims.

Why is there so much instability in the Middle East — especially now in Syria?

A lot of what’s happening in the Middle East, including the Syrian civil war, has to do with abuse of the environment, overpopulation, and mishandling of natural resources. These things and climate change have created the perfect storm for a war in Syria.

The drought in Syria caused people to move from their farms to cities that could barely handle them due to overpopulation and unemployment. They were dispossessed of their land and income, and then ISIS comes along and says, “We’ll give you a gun *and* pay you.” The long-term future doesn’t look good in the Middle East. But there is always hope. Governments are beginning to realize that if they suppress the population and don’t respond to the demands of the people, they will fall.

Is America also to blame?

We look at the role of the U.S. in my class, but we don’t play the blame game. As good historians, we look at documents from American administrations about Iraq and other areas, so we can see the cause and effect relating to events that happened in the past and events that are unfolding now. And we talk about Iraq, which made certain choices after the war. The Iraqi political elite, in a rush for power, certainly made mistakes.



Should the U.S. sign a nuclear agreement with Iran?

Any failure to sign the deal would only prolong a decades-long policy of confronting and isolating the Islamic Republic of Iran — a policy which has failed to curb instability in the region or the actions of the state, and has only created stronger animosity toward the West and established powers within the Middle East. This deal offers the first real chance to see whether U.S.-Iranian engagement will in fact produce cooperative opportunities for stability throughout the Middle East.

In your class you have a wide range of students, including those of Middle Eastern descent and U.S. veterans who served in region. Do discussions ever get heated?

There’s never any tension. In fact, there’s a certain synergy and sharing of personal knowledge. They have all been affected by the instability of the Middle East, whether they were deployed there or fleeing from there. Together, they learn from each other.

How do you keep up on what’s happening in the Middle East with so much changing day to day and challenges for journalists covering the area?

It’s overwhelming, but I keep up on sources from the Internet, satellite TV and social media. I also learn a lot from my students. I taught a course in Prague over the summer, and I had many students from [the Middle East]. They learn from me, but I also learn from them.

What do you like best about teaching Middle East history?

When I get evaluations back and students tell me how much they learned — and that they now realize history is something that applies to their daily lives. ■

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SPECIAL REPORT:

Priced OUT

Housing costs outpace educators' salaries

By SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN



Teachers Frank Lara, Maribel Chavez and David Johnson in front of a home for rent near their school in San Francisco's Mission District. A neighbor's sign warns would-be renters about the landlord. Skyrocketing housing costs are driving many educators out of the cities where they work.

Photo by Scott Buschman

Educators are being pushed out of the housing market in an increasing number of cities and metropolitan areas. The result is that many communities cannot attract and retain quality teachers, and students and school districts suffer. The problem extends throughout California: Teachers' wages are not enough to let them live where they work.



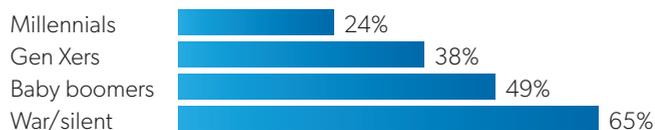
Housing Confidence

Percentage of adults who are “very confident”
in their ability to afford desired home in next five years

Think you’ll be able to buy?



Greater Bay Area generation



A new study finds only 40 percent of Greater Bay Area residents are “very confident” that they will be able to afford the type of home they want in the next five years, compared with 56 percent of people in similar metro areas nationally. The study found the least confidence among millennials (ages 18-36) at 24 percent, compared with 49 percent of baby boomers. In fact, 74 percent of millennials surveyed say that they plan to move in the next five years. The implication: Younger educators, wary of the Bay Area’s pricey housing market, may leave.

Source: Urban Land Institute, “Bay Area in 2015”

THE PROBLEMS:

Teacher turnover, student loss

Allison Leshefsky loves teaching and living in San Francisco. But after being evicted from her rent-controlled apartment, she is afraid she will have to leave both her job and the city.

The PE teacher at Paul Revere K-8 School must vacate her apartment by Dec. 1. In a city where the median rent of a one-bedroom is \$3,620 a month — the highest in the country — she worries she won’t be able to afford anything else. She barely survives now after paying for student loans, car payments, cellphone bill and groceries.

“I’m very scared,” says Leshefsky, who has lived in her apartment for 10 years. “It’s not only my home, but it’s my community and the school I love.”

She’s not the only educator unable to afford a high-priced area. CBS News recently listed the 10 most expensive places to live in the United States. San Francisco was fourth; San Jose, sixth; and Orange County, ninth. Teachers, with their middle-income but relatively low salaries, must often choose less costly places in which to live and work. College professors and lecturers are also feeling the heat: A recent poll by the California Faculty Association shows 60 percent of faculty can’t afford to live in their own campus community.

The fallout includes students and school districts, too.

The housing crisis has caused a teaching shortage in San Francisco Unified School District, which scrambled to fill 400 positions last year and 465 this year, says United Educators of San Francisco (UESF) President Lita Blanc. Leshefsky’s school had a nearly 25 percent turnover last year because many educators were driven out by high prices. Several other SFUSD schools have high turnover rates for similar reasons.

Patchwork solutions are at hand in San Francisco and other cities, including housing complexes and home loan programs reserved for educators. But the larger issue that often remains unaddressed is this: Teachers are highly skilled workers integral to their communities and their children’s education and future, and they should be able to live where they work. Educators’ salaries should be high enough so they do not have to live in dorm-style complexes or require special loans.

“The bottom line is that educators should be paid a living wage,” says CTA President Eric Heins. “They should be paid a salary that reflects their value as teachers to our students and leaders in our schools and communities.”

Leshefsky turned to UESF for help when she was first threatened with eviction. In addition to providing referral services, UESF members rallied outside the home of her landlord, who has been accused of unlawful intimidation of tenants and wrongful evictions to raise rents, and UESF leadership is lobbying for systemic changes that will provide teachers with affordable housing.

She is paying an attorney out of pocket to see if she has recourse to fight the eviction, which her landlord says is due to needed capital improvements.

“It’s sad when teachers can’t afford to live in communities they serve,” Leshefsky says.





Educators from Paul Revere Elementary in San Francisco rally around colleague Allison Leshefsky after she is evicted. Leshefsky, above and in the center at right, may have to leave the city and her job.



Photos by Matthew Hardy

Schools, communities hurt

A “For rent” sign hangs in the window of an apartment a half block from Buena Vista Horace Mann K-8 School (BVHM) in the Mission District, a low-income neighborhood of San Francisco that is becoming upscale. A sign on an adjacent unit has an arrow pointing to the “For rent” sign accusing the landlord of evictions and refusing to make repairs. A phone call reveals that the price of the three-bedroom unit is a whopping \$7,000 per month.

UESF members at BVHM, which also had a 25 percent turnover rate last year, say increasing rents and evictions are a constant challenge for teachers who need affordable housing near school.

Recently a student asked fourth-grade teacher Frank Lara, “Why are so many teachers leaving? Don’t they like the students here?” The student named all of the educators who were no longer at the campus. It was a lengthy list.

“I told him, ‘No, that’s not the reason. It’s just that teachers can’t afford to live here,’” says Lara, who was pushed out of San Francisco by high rents and now lives in Daly City, a suburb to the south.

Many students in the neighborhood come from struggling households, says Lara, and look to teachers and paraprofessionals for stability. When there’s a revolving door of staff, students lose that. It takes time to learn about the community and student population they teach.

David Johnson, sixth-grade language arts and social studies teacher, was born and raised in San Francisco and has taught at the school for 10 of his

16 years in the profession. He lives in a rent-controlled studio apartment the size of his classroom, and worries about what will happen should he decide to move. He’s thought about commuting from Oakland, but figures paying bridge toll or for public transit would be just as expensive. So he’s staying put.

Maribel Chavez resides in a tiny apartment shared by three roommates who converted the living room into a bedroom. At BVHM, she enjoyed collaborating with other first-grade teachers, but they recently moved away due to housing costs. So Chavez, a fifth-year teacher, is now the “lead teacher” with two new hires.

“I have lived in San Francisco for six years and have had to move eight times, because landlords have raised the rents,” says Chavez. “It’s not easy to be a teacher here. And it isn’t easy for the kids, because there’s no consistency in the faces they see each year. We are a community school, with the goal of helping each other and being involved with all grade levels. But it’s hard to build community with constant turnover.”

Indeed, the housing crisis destabilizes schools, which ultimately hurts students, agrees Blanc.

“It can take years for a faculty member to learn the ropes and hone their craft and contribute to the broader

“It’s not easy to be a teacher here. It isn’t easy for the kids, because there’s no consistency in the faces they see each year. It’s hard to build community with constant turnover.”

— Maribel Chavez

Coping With the Housing Crunch



SHELBY ADAMS

*Santa Ana Educators Association
Teacher at Esqueda Elementary School*

High rents have forced my son and me to move three times in six years. I am committed to keeping my son in Costa Mesa, because the schools are excellent and I cannot uproot him anymore. My standard of living at 42 with a master's degree is not what I envisioned. My parents both taught and retired from the same district I teach in. They were able to afford a large home, take family vacations and send all three children to college on teacher salaries. The current cost of living in Orange County has made that nearly impossible for teachers like me on a single income.

How about a sufficient salary for teachers based on the cost of living in a given area — and changing the rules so teachers can move to different districts without professional and financial penalties?



DEBBIE MERRELL

*San Jose Teachers Association
Teacher at Los Alamitos
Elementary School*

Our house was underwater, and we owed more than it was worth. We almost lost our house. We have slowly been trying to climb out of debt. Our credit is pretty much ruined, and we're just surviving. We have thought of moving many times. But I was born and raised here, all my family is here, and I want our children to know their relatives.

Teachers should make more money. Our country pays six to seven figures to someone who creates technology for the next iPhone, app or computer, but pays just a fraction of that to individuals who inspire love of learning in children. It doesn't seem right.



MONICA ALLEN

*California Faculty Association,
San Jose State University
Assistant professor of health sciences*

I live in an apartment in Richmond, 50 miles from where I work. I looked for a place in San Jose that was comparable, but it would have cost twice as much. I wanted to buy a house in San Jose, but my salary isn't even enough to qualify for a loan. Whether I drive or take public transportation, it takes me two hours to get to and from work each way. I'm exhausted by the time I get there. But I'm not alone. In my department we have six permanent faculty, and only one lives in San Jose.

There is some housing for teachers on campus, but there is a two-year wait, and I was told it is very expensive. But I'm going to get on the list.

school community," Blanc says. "Many leave before that happens, driven out by the high costs of housing."

Among the reasons for San Francisco's high rents: an influx of tech workers willing to pay huge prices; a "sharing economy" where landlords make more profit renting to tourists than locals; and developers building luxury condos instead of affordable housing. The average cost of a home or condo in the city is now over \$1 million.

"Twenty-five years ago, I was able to raise a family on a teacher's salary," Blanc says. "But for many teachers and paraeducators, that is no longer possible today."

Not just San Francisco

According to research by the National Housing Conference, teachers can't afford median-priced homes in one-third of the 200 metro areas they surveyed. Even so, the Bay Area stands out for its high costs.

Ben Ravey has taught social studies at Gunderson

High School in San Jose for 11 years. The single dad and San Jose Teachers Association member rents a one-bedroom apartment in Fremont and commutes 40 minutes each way. He has considered moving, but needs to stay in the Bay Area where he shares custody of his daughter.

In the current economy, his \$82,000 annual salary doesn't come close to letting him buy anything in pricey Silicon Valley. Turnover is high on his campus, especially in the math department, because teachers are lured by tech companies that pay more.

Carol Emerson, a special education teacher at Luther Burbank Elementary School in San Jose, will turn 60 soon. Her rent continually goes up. She just received a salary increase and considered "splurging" on something for herself, but then her rent increased and the impulse vanished.

"I never thought I'd be 60 years old and forced to take a roommate," she muses.

"We're definitely losing teachers in San Jose Unified School District,"



Carol Emerson



THE SOLUTIONS:

says San Jose Teachers Association President Jennifer Thomas. “It’s getting harder to recruit and retain folks here, and the cost of living is the No. 1 reason across the board.”

She notes that the city of San Jose’s Teacher Homebuyer Program was very successful during the decade it was in place, assisting more than over 700 teachers. In fact, more than one out of 10 teachers in San Jose received a THP loan to buy a home. But the program was shut down in 2011 — about the same time that housing costs began to soar, rivaling those of San Francisco.

Housing for educators

UESF leadership has been meeting for months with representatives from the Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development and SFUSD to consider housing assistance for teachers and par-educators, and its efforts are beginning to pay off. On Oct. 21, the mayor and SFUSD announced a plan that would provide stable housing for some 500 educators by 2020. The plan includes building a 100-unit housing complex on district property, and investing in programs over the next five years to help educators buy homes and take advantage of rental subsidies.

Specifically, the plan aims to provide 200 forgivable loans through the Teacher Next Door down payment assistance program, which started in 2009, ran out of money last year, and will now be renewed since voters approved a \$310 million bond measure on the November ballot. The plan will also provide \$250,000 in housing counseling services that connect educators with below-market rate housing programs and eviction prevention services.

Brick and mortar housing for teachers already exists in some districts. For the past 15 years, the Casa del Maestro (“House of the Teacher”) apartment complex in the city of Santa Clara has offered 70 one- and



What Cities Can Teachers Afford?

In many American cities, teachers don’t make enough to live.

SOURCES: Boston Teachers Union, Dadeschools.net, Illinois State Board of Education, National Council on Teacher Quality, NYC Dept. of Education, Realtor.com, School District of Philadelphia, Transparent California, Washington Post. All salary data from 2012–2013.

Lowest salary  Highest salary
Cost of living

0 \$40k \$80k



Three California cities top the list of the least affordable big cities for educators. Credit: AJ+

two-bedroom units built on district-owned land to new Santa Clara public school teachers at reduced rental rates ranging from \$1,110 to \$1,805 a month for a maximum of seven years.

Los Angeles Unified School District has planned three such apartment complexes for its teachers. Sage Park Apartments next to Gardena Senior High School has already opened and features 90 units. The 29-unit Norwood Learning Village near the University of Southern California is expected to open late next year, and construction has started on the 66-unit, four-story Selma Housing project scheduled to open in 2016. Low-cost housing for teachers is also under consideration in San Mateo County to help stem the teacher exodus.

Leshefsky says she would gladly take advantage of any affordable teacher housing with reasonable rent. Ravey, on the other hand, says he doesn’t believe in “teacher segregation” and thinks it is important for teachers to live in a mix of residential housing, fearing the creation of “teacher ghettos.”

Valuing educators

Many believe the real issue is valuing teachers enough to pay them a livable wage. Starting tech workers earn more than \$100,000, with bonuses and stock options. Public school teachers often start at \$40,000, with gradual salary increases. This disparity is unfair, especially when you consider that close to 86 percent of school-age children in the heart of Silicon Valley attend public school.

“No wonder teachers are often lured from the classroom to tech jobs,” asserts Ravey.

The soaring cost of housing in San Francisco means that SFUSD coffers are rebounding from lean years. With contract reopeners on wages set for fall 2016, UESF leadership has already put the school board on notice that it should prioritize paying educators a wage that gives them a fighting chance to live in the city.



Ben Ravey

Educators have also stood with fellow tenant activists to help rein in landlords unfairly evicting tenants in pursuit of profits. Recently the San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed legislation to make it harder for landlords to evict tenants for “nuisance” violations such as hanging laundry on a balcony or taking in a roommate.

“What’s happening isn’t fair,” says Leshefsky. “Educators and the middle class deserve a fighting chance to live in California. I am not sure what’s going to happen or where I’m going to go. But I’m not going to give up the fight any time soon — and I’m not going to go quietly.”

The ballot box

Earlier this month, San Franciscans went to the polls to vote on several ballot measures designed to help alleviate the housing crunch. All were recommended by UESF.

Most contentious was **Proposition F**,

which targeted private, short-term housing rentals such as those offered through Airbnb. It sought to restrict them to 75 nights per year, and ensure that private rentals pay hotel taxes and follow city code. Prop. F lost.

Housing advocates say the practice of renting out rooms, apartments and homes to short-term visitors removes rental units from the market, while opponents say that on the contrary, it provides extra income for residents to continue to live in the city.

“The ones who are profiting from the ‘sharing economy’ are not families, as the opposition would have you believe, but wealthy landlords who turn units into short-term rentals,” argues David Johnson, the Horace Mann teacher.

Proposition I also lost; it sought to establish an 18-month moratorium on construction of housing projects larger than five units in the Mission District, bringing

a temporary halt to the proliferation of luxury condos and conversion of other buildings into pricey condos.

On the winning side was **Proposition A**, which authorizes the city to issue up to \$310 million in bonds to fund affordable housing programs, including support for educators.

Proposition D also won; it paves the way for a mixed-use development project called Mission Rock with 1,500 residential units, including 40 percent affordable to lower- and middle-class residents.

“San Francisco stands at a crossroads, with educators and the students we serve rapidly getting forced out of the city,” Blanc says. “But we don’t have to sit by while real estate speculators carve up San Francisco, displacing the communities and families that make our city so incredible in the first place.” ■

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Natasha Burrell

7th Grade Honors Math Teacher



Johnny Samaniego, Coach Jim White and Danny Diaz in front of the McFarland High School gym's "champ" signs. White coached Samaniego, Diaz and other runners to the school's first cross-country championship in 1987.

Hometown Heroes

McFarland, USA tells the true story of unlikely winners

By SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN Photography by SCOTT BUSCHMAN

DDANNY DIAZ, a counselor at McFarland High School, drove by the campus on a recent Saturday morning and saw people standing in the parking lot staring at the school sign. He asked if they needed help. A woman burst into tears, exclaiming, "Oh my God, it's Danny Diaz!" Overcome with joy, she continued crying as he posed with her for a photo.

"I hugged her, told her to calm down, and that I'm nobody special," says Diaz.

Out-of-towners are drawn to McFarland these days. The agricultural town with a single stoplight may be an unlikely tourist destination, but recently a family from Argentina drove up in a rental car and asked if they could peek inside the school. Then there's the family from

Before the closing credits of *McFarland, USA*, Jim White, left, is shown with original members of the 1987 championship team running in back of current cross-country runners from McFarland High School. As in the movie, White used to ride alongside runners on a rickety bike.



Photos by Ron Phillips / Disney Enterprises



In *McFarland, USA*, Kevin Costner plays Jim White, who despite a rough start coaches a group of boys to victory.

“Coach taught us that it wasn’t just about being a champion on the playing field — it was about being a champion in life. And education is the way to be a champion in life.”

— Danny Diaz

Malaysia who saw the movie on the plane ride to America and took a detour to McFarland.

People all over the world have found inspiration in *McFarland, USA*, a true tale of a high school cross-country team (including Diaz) that overcame huge obstacles. The running team instilled pride in a town challenged by poverty and gangs, and put the San Joaquin Valley farming community on the map.

The movie, released in February, stars Kevin Costner as Jim White, the teacher and coach who changed students’ lives — and the town — forever.

During a recent visit to McFarland, the *California Educator* caught up with White, now retired, and two of the team’s actual runners portrayed in the film, Diaz and Johnny Samaniego, who are now educators in McFarland. Samaniego took over White’s job as a PE teacher at McFarland Middle School. White is a former McFarland Teachers Association member; Diaz and Samaniego are current members.

“Hey, Blanco,” Diaz and Samaniego call in unison as White strolls into the gym, using the nickname that they found ironic as teenagers. The men embrace, and sit down to recall events that seem like yesterday, but happened nearly 30 years ago.

Unlikely heroes

White taught at McFarland Middle School and coached at the high school. Most McFarland school staff commuted from Bakersfield, but White, his wife Cheryl and their daughters chose to live in McFarland, where they embraced the Latino community.

Many of the students woke up at 4 a.m. each day to work in the fields before school. They worked there after school, too. Most were not considered athletic. But White saw how fast several of them ran on their way to work, and thought they’d make a good cross-country team. Their families were too poor to afford running shoes, so White used his own money to buy them.

He told his students that he believed in them — and that they could become champions if only they would believe in each other.

“You are superhuman,” he told them before an important meet. “I’ve seen how hard you work every day in the fields,





The water tank at the entrance to McFarland depicts the runners and lists the champs' names.

then you go to school, and then you practice running. Nobody can do what you do. We can win this.”

Some parents objected to their children being on the team, fearing it would reduce time working to support the family. White visited their homes, asked them to reconsider, and discussed the importance of education and how sports can lead to scholarships. Eventually parents became huge supporters of the team. Diaz’s mother sold 200 dozen tamales to raise money for competitions, and White personally delivered the orders.

“I ate a few of them along the way,” he smiles.

White arranged team practices around students’ work schedules, sometimes holding two practices a day. There were times when White picked crops in the fields alongside students, so he could better understand them and they could finish in time for practice.

In one poignant scene in the film, White asks students how much they are paid an hour. When he is informed they are paid not by the hour but per field, his jaw drops in surprise, as he looks out at the seemingly endless rows of crops fading into the horizon. White recalls now what a revelation that was.

Because McFarland is flat, students ran uphill on giant mounds of almond husks to get in top condition. They ran in intense heat while White rode alongside on his daughter’s bicycle, urging them on.

There were personal challenges, too. One night, runner Thomas Valles’ parents got into a huge fight, and he ran out of the house and found himself on the overpass looking down on Highway 99. “I didn’t want to go home,” he told the *Los Angeles Times* in a 1997 story. “I can’t say I was going to jump, but I was thinking about my life and why some people would jump. All of a sudden I saw these headlights, and it was Mr. White in his ’59 Chevy.

“I don’t know how he found out I was there. ... I remember



From left: Thomas Valles, Victor Puentes, Damacio Diaz, Johnny Samaniego, Jose Cardenas, Danny Diaz, Coach Jim White; not pictured: Luis Partida.

he said, ‘Come here, Thomas, let’s talk.’ I got in and I realized at that point that the Whites were the ones who were going to get me through this.”

It wasn’t easy, but eventually the McFarland students pulled together as a team, demonstrating emotional and physical endurance that the “rich kids” from competing schools just couldn’t match. Much to the surprise of coaches from around the state and even *Sports Illustrated*, the cross-country team became state champs in 1987, and went on to win eight more state championships over the next 14 years.

The team moved into adulthood and faded from the public eye. But when the Disney movie was released, team members and Coach White were surprised to find themselves modern-day heroes once again.

Going the extra mile

It’s all about attitude, White told his runners repeatedly. He explained that someone might not be able to control the circumstances in their life, but they can always control their attitude and how they deal with things.

Actors Sergio Avelar, Rafael Martinez, Michael Aguero, director Niki Caro, and actors Kevin Costner, Johnny Ortiz, Hector Duran, Carlos Pratts and Ramiro Rodriguez at the Santa Barbara Film Festival in February.



Photo by Jesse Grant / Getty Images

Just the Facts

HOW THE MOVIE DIFFERED FROM REAL LIFE, PLUS A FEW TIDBITS:

- Coach Jim White was never fired from his previous job, nor did he ever throw a shoe at a student.
- Danny Diaz was overweight in the movie, but in reality he was thin. However, as in the movie, he was the seventh runner and instrumental in helping the team become champs in 1987.
- The school, unlike in the movie, is not across the street from a prison. But there is a prison just down the road.
- The movie was filmed in McFarland, and many of the town's residents were extras in scenes.
- Coach White taught at the middle school and coached at the high school, while the movie portrays him as teaching at the high school.
- Runner Jose Cardenas became a writer for the *Los Angeles Times*. He is now in the U.S. Army.
- Life didn't turn out perfect for everyone. Runner Victor Puentes developed a drug problem and served time in prison. But he continued his education and is now back on track.
- Kevin Costner met with White to learn more about the role. Costner grew up in nearby Visalia in the Central Valley, and was excited to be part of a story about an underserved population that he had observed laboring in the fields as a youth.
- Just as in the movie, the team's first uniforms had the mascot misspelled: *Cougars* instead of *Cougars*.
- Coach White and former students were bused to Hollywood by Disney for the premiere. While Disney took a few liberties with their story, White and his team members feel positive about the film and are proud of the message it sends about doing your personal best.

Today, he urges educators to go the extra mile if they truly want to make a difference in young lives. This includes coaching sports, tutoring, offering extra encouragement and simply caring.

"Don't be afraid to take a little extra time," says White, who does motivational speaking around the world. "Some kids just need a helping hand."

Diaz decided to become a counselor at his old school so he could give back to the community he loves. He coached basketball for a decade. He doubts he would have become a teacher if he hadn't met Coach White.

"Coach taught us that it wasn't just about being a champion on the playing field — it was about being a champion in life," says Diaz. "And education is the way to be a champion in life."

Two of Diaz's brothers were portrayed in the film. One of them, David, became a teacher in the McFarland School District and is now a vice principal for Kern Valley State Prison school; he also coaches the girls' cross-country team at McFarland High School. All seven of the Diaz children were coached by White, and they all graduated from college. Five earned their master's degrees.

Diaz's father was so inspired by his children's accomplishments that he earned his GED, or high school equivalency credential. "He gathered us in the living room while we older ones were in college," recalls Diaz. "He wanted to set an example and show us that if he was going to preach the importance of education to us, then he had to also walk the walk, so he took GED classes at night after spending 10- to 12-hour days in the fields. That truly inspired us to give it our all."

Samaniego believes his experiences on the cross-country team played a key role in his success.

"I'm indebted to the McFarland community, so the least I could do is become a teacher and give back to the kids. To me, it's basically about capturing kids' hearts and treating them like your own son or daughter. You show up at their games. You work to build a relationship with them — and

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God First Since 1899



Photo by Ron Phillips / Disney Enterprises

you build a relationship with the parents. And sometimes you have to be a parent, a counselor, and give of yourself 110 percent.”

Samaniego was thrilled to replace his former coach. White, in fact, insisted upon it as a condition of his retirement, proving that in a town like McFarland anything can happen.

Students still face hardships

Life in McFarland is not all that different for teenagers today. Many start working in the fields when they turn 16 to help support their families. Most of the town's families are still poor and struggling.

But thanks in part to the McFarland runners and the movie, going to college is seen as an attainable goal. After the movie, local churches raised money for scholarships. Diaz, the school counselor, says he “preaches, preaches and preaches” to students about the importance of education, and uses himself as an example to prove to students that if they work hard, they too can succeed.

“Some kids just need a helping hand.”

— Coach Jim White

Sometimes the high school shows *McFarland, USA* during assemblies. After seeing the movie, students approach Diaz and ask, “Are you *that* Danny Diaz?” They are amazed to learn there's a famous person right in their very midst, who comes from a background just like them.

“What we want people to take away from the movie is if you try your best, you can overcome obstacles,” says Diaz. “And champions can come from anywhere, even a little town like McFarland.” ■

Costner's Coach picks crops, as did the real White, to understand his runners and get them to practice on time.



Spinning out of control: Robin Lefkovits, Oxnard Educators Association president, has seen seven superintendents come and go since 2008.



SUPERINTENDENT

Shuffle

District chiefs' dizzying turnover rate affects students, educators

By SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN *Photography by* SCOTT BUSCHMAN

“SOMETIMES I FEEL like I’m on a merry-go-round,” says Oxnard Educators Association (OEA) President Robin Lefkovits. Her district has gone through superintendents at such a rapid rate it makes her head spin.

The Oxnard School District has had seven superintendents since 2008, including three interim superintendents and one who left after just five months. The most time that Lefkovits has spent working with any superintendent is two years, and she has been president since 2008.

“When we have a merry-go-round of superintendents, it blurs the direction we are going in, which is not good for students,” she says. “Each superintendent had a big impact on us.”

The high turnover in Oxnard reflects a state trend: Two-thirds of superintendents in the state’s 30 largest districts

have been in their posts for three years or less, according to EdSource. Nearly a dozen have been in their posts for less than a year. Only three superintendents in large districts — Long Beach, Fresno and Chino Valley — have been on the job for more than five years, reports EdSource.

A short leadership reign typically occurs in districts facing budget shortfalls or under intense pressure to raise test scores. The job can be tremendously stressful and vulnerable to potshots from all sides. Superintendents answer to school board members and the community at large, while working with administrators, teachers, classified staff and bargaining units. Meeting all stakeholders’ expectations can prove difficult if not impossible.

Abrupt departures and dismissals leave districts





scrambling for replacements, and many appoint interim superintendents, often retired superintendents, to fill in. Partially implemented plans are frequently halted for a brand-new plan from a different superintendent with an entirely new vision, say educators.

Benefits of longevity

Unfortunately, most reforms take more time for successful implementation than the superintendent's average stay, asserts Marshall Smith, former dean of Stanford Graduate School of Education. Indeed, research and practice in the CTA-led Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA) school turnaround program, funded over eight years (2007-2015), proved the benefit of long-term "exemplary administrators," among other key components. Support for strong leadership that builds mutual respect and trust with educators is essential to develop and implement plans and hire and retain quality teachers necessary for reforms to take place and performance to be raised and sustained.

Andy Hargreaves, an influential scholar on U.S. public education policy, says, "'Sustainable' leadership goes beyond temporary gains in achievement scores to create lasting, meaningful improvements in learning," and goes beyond the individual. "The systems in which leaders do their work must make sustainability a priority."



Chris Steinhauser

The advantages of superintendent stability can be seen in Long Beach, where Chris Steinhauser has served as superintendent for 13 years. While he and members of the Teachers Association of Long Beach (TALB) don't always see eye to eye, educators respect him, says TALB President Barry Welsch.

"We disagree on a lot of things, but as a general statement, we have a positive relationship," Welsch says. "He works hard to reach out to teachers. For

example, tomorrow, he's doing a question and answer meeting with our TALB Rep Council. We invite him, and he comes and answers all of our questions, even the hard ones. We don't always like the answers, but he's standing up there and not afraid to face the teachers."

Steinhauser's long tenure has given the district consistency and continuity. And the superintendent is part of the community; his wife and son both teach in Long Beach public schools.

"Chris went to school in Long Beach, started teaching in Long Beach, was a principal in Long Beach, and then went on to become superintendent," Welsch says. "He lives here. And even though he lives in East Long Beach, which is the affluent part of town, he took his kids to a school in a totally different part of town because



Susan Mercer, president of the Santa Ana Educators Association, in front of a chart she created showing the multiple comings and goings of district administrators.

he wanted to show that all schools are good in Long Beach. He's not here for the quick in and out. He's here for the long haul."

Turn, turn, turn

EdSource notes there has been "surprisingly little research" about the impact of superintendent turnover on academic outcomes. But CTA members say the lack of consistency is disruptive, takes a toll on employee morale, and hurts the ability to make meaningful changes.

When abrasive and controversial superintendents play musical schools, they wreak havoc wherever they go. In 2013, Oakland Unified School District Superintendent Tony Smith — proponent of charter schools, privatization, school closures, downsizing and union busting — left Oakland "before he could be held accountable for his failed reforms," says Oakland Education Association President Trish Gorham. He was recently hired as the new Illinois schools chief.

Former Los Angeles Unified School District Superintendent John Deasy's iPad program cost the district \$1.3

"We invite him, and he comes and answers all of our questions, even the hard ones. We don't always like the answers, but he's standing up there and not afraid to face the teachers."

— **Barry Welsch**, Teachers Association of Long Beach president, of Superintendent Chris Steinhauser

Nomadic and traumatic times *for local superintendents*

- After five years, Millbrae Elementary School District Superintendent **Linda Luna** resigned this year to become superintendent of Washington Unified School District in Sacramento. Luna had a tumultuous relationship with the Millbrae Education Association, which passed a vote of no confidence in her performance in 2014.
- Rowland Unified School District Superintendent **Ruben Frutos** resigned in May 2014 after 20 months on the job. His tenure was marked by hundreds of people attending school board meetings and picketing the district office to demand his ouster.
- **Pauline Winbush**, assistant superintendent of Palmdale School District, was fired in February for child abuse and her role as head of a dog fighting ring. She and her boyfriend were charged with four felony counts of dog fighting, 17 counts of animal cruelty, one felony count of child abuse, and health and safety violations.
- Members of Burbank Teachers Association opposed the hiring of **Matt Hill** as superintendent of the Burbank Unified School District last spring, asserting that Hill had never worked as a teacher or a principal, and was involved in the much-maligned iPad rollout at Los Angeles Unified School District.
- Parlier Unified School District Superintendent **Gerardo Alvarez** came under fire in July for wasting hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars, including excessive pay hikes for administrators, trips for school board members, and unnecessarily hiring consultants. He was put on leave after a scathing report issued by the Fresno County Grand Jury. Edward Lucero is now acting superintendent.

billion, and was eventually canceled after students found a way to hack into the tablets. After a rocky three-and-a-half-year reign as chief of LA's schools, Deasy resigned. He landed at the Eli Broad Academy, training future superintendents in Broad's management style, which dismisses teachers' rights and pushes unproven reforms such as evaluating teachers on test scores, or "value-added measures." Broad recently announced a highly publicized plan to move half of all LAUSD students into unregulated, non-union charter schools. (For story, see page 40.)

Deasy's severance package was \$60,000, roughly equal to two months of his salary. But many departing superintendents receive much more in compensation and exit pay. (See sidebar, page 36.)

Ramon Cortines, 82, came out of retirement in October 2014 to replace Deasy, but announced in June that he would retire in six months. He had served as superintendent of LAUSD twice before, and also served as

superintendent in San Francisco, Pasadena and San Jose, as well as New York City schools chancellor.

Revolving door in Oxnard

In Oxnard, superintendents exited for various reasons. Superintendent Rick Miller, who Lefkovits says was the most labor-friendly, left after five years for a higher-paying job in Riverside, and now is the superintendent in Santa Ana. Lefkovits adds that some of the "interims" were difficult to work with, and some were downright hostile to teachers.

In 2010, the district hired Anthony Monreal from the California Department of Education. He was put on administrative leave and ousted after just seven months, receiving a settlement of \$116,629. He became superintendent of the Delano Union School District, but was fired from that position in May 2015. Next was Julian Lopez from Montana, an interim superintendent who lasted a year and was replaced by Jeff Chancer, who retired after less than two years. Some say Chancer was planning on a short stay so he could retire at a higher pay scale. Current Superintendent Cesar Morales has been with the district for nearly two years.

Lefkovits says, "Each superintendent has had his own agenda," such as changing graduation requirements, altering school discipline policies, redoing the English Learner Master Plan for the second time in four years, switching intervention strategies for struggling students, and changing timelines for school construction.

"All we want is somebody good who cares about students, and who will treat school employees with respect."

Superintendent shuffle in Santa Ana

A bulletin board inside the Santa Ana Educators Association (SAEA) office, decorated with names inside squares, looks like somebody's family tree going back generations, but it's actually a chart showing the many superintendents and other high-ranking administrators who have come and gone in recent years.

"Since I became president in 2009, Santa Ana has had three superintendents, two interim superintendents, three assistant superintendents of human resources, two deputies of educational services, and three deputies of business services," says Susan Mercer, president of the association and creator of the chart.

When Jane Russo retired as superintendent in 2011, the school district hired Thelma Melendez, whom Mercer describes as a "marquee" superintendent because she served as the principal adviser for U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan. She was not a good fit in Santa Ana and left two

"All we want is somebody good who cares about students and treats school employees with respect."

— **Robin Lefkovits**,
Oxnard Educators
Association





Sacramento City Teachers Association President Nikki Milevsky holds up a news story about yet another new superintendent.

years later. Mercer says Melendez was responsible for the departure of many good administrators, got rid of successful programs, and made changes without a thorough analysis or long-term plan on how changes would impact students and staff.

With the constant shuffle of top administrators, there's no historical understanding of the programs in place or the programs that were tried and didn't work, says Mercer.

For example, one superintendent ended a successful English language development program. Another tried in vain to bring it back. Elementary schools have had three different types of report cards in six years.

"Nothing is tried long enough to see if it's successful or not," says Mercer. "It's very hard for people to have buy-in or show fidelity to programs, due to the history of changing all the time. Teachers are the only consistency in the district and the ones who work very hard so students can continue to improve."

Current Superintendent Rick Miller is busy picking up the pieces left by Melendez, says Mercer.

Shifting sands in Sacramento

During the 13 years that Sacramento City Teachers Association (SCTA) President Nikki Milevsky has worked in her district, she's had seven superintendents, including three interims. In 2013, Jonathan Raymond left after four and a half years on the job. He was replaced by interim superintendent Sarah Noguchi, who was in turn replaced by former Seattle Public Schools Superintendent José Banda one year ago.

Raymond launched the Priority Schools program in the spring of 2010 to help low-achieving students. Under this change, eight schools lost QEIA funding they were entitled to receive under CTA-sponsored legislation to improve low-performing schools. They lost funding because class size was increased.

"Because of Mr. Raymond, we turned down free QEIA money that

Big bucks for going bye-bye

WHEN SUPERINTENDENTS voluntarily quit before their contract expires or get fired, some districts offer huge payouts — sometimes six figures — as a parting gift. The hefty severance packages cost districts and taxpayers money that could be better used in the classroom.

However, the state has recently placed limits on cash settlements to outgoing superintendents. Assembly Member Luis Alejo (D-Watsonville) wrote AB 215, recently signed by Gov. Brown, which caps severance pay at 12 months — down from 18 months — for new superintendents beginning Jan. 1. (See profile of Alejo on page 39.)

One Bay Area school leader — Kari McVeigh, former superintendent of New Haven Unified School District in Union City — collected a \$600,000 payout in 2013.

The highest buyout on record went to Jose Fernandez, the departing superintendent of the Centinela Valley Union High School District, who amassed \$663,000 in compensation in 2013. With a base pay of \$271,000, his other benefits amounted to nearly \$400,000. On top of that, the district provided Fernandez with a \$910,000 loan at 2 percent interest to purchase a home in an affluent neighborhood, reported the *Daily Breeze*, which won a Pulitzer Prize for the story.

could be used to lower class size and offer high-quality professional development," says a frustrated Milevsky, who describes the Priority Schools plan as a top-down program — unlike QEIA, which was teacher-driven.

Raymond, an Eli Broad-trained superintendent, drove away competent people and created new jobs for his own people, one of whom led the plan to switch teachers to an inferior health care plan, says Milevsky. He also led the city in applying for a No Child Left Behind waiver that required the district to evaluate SCTA members on student test scores. After a long battle, SCTA successfully eliminated the waiver.

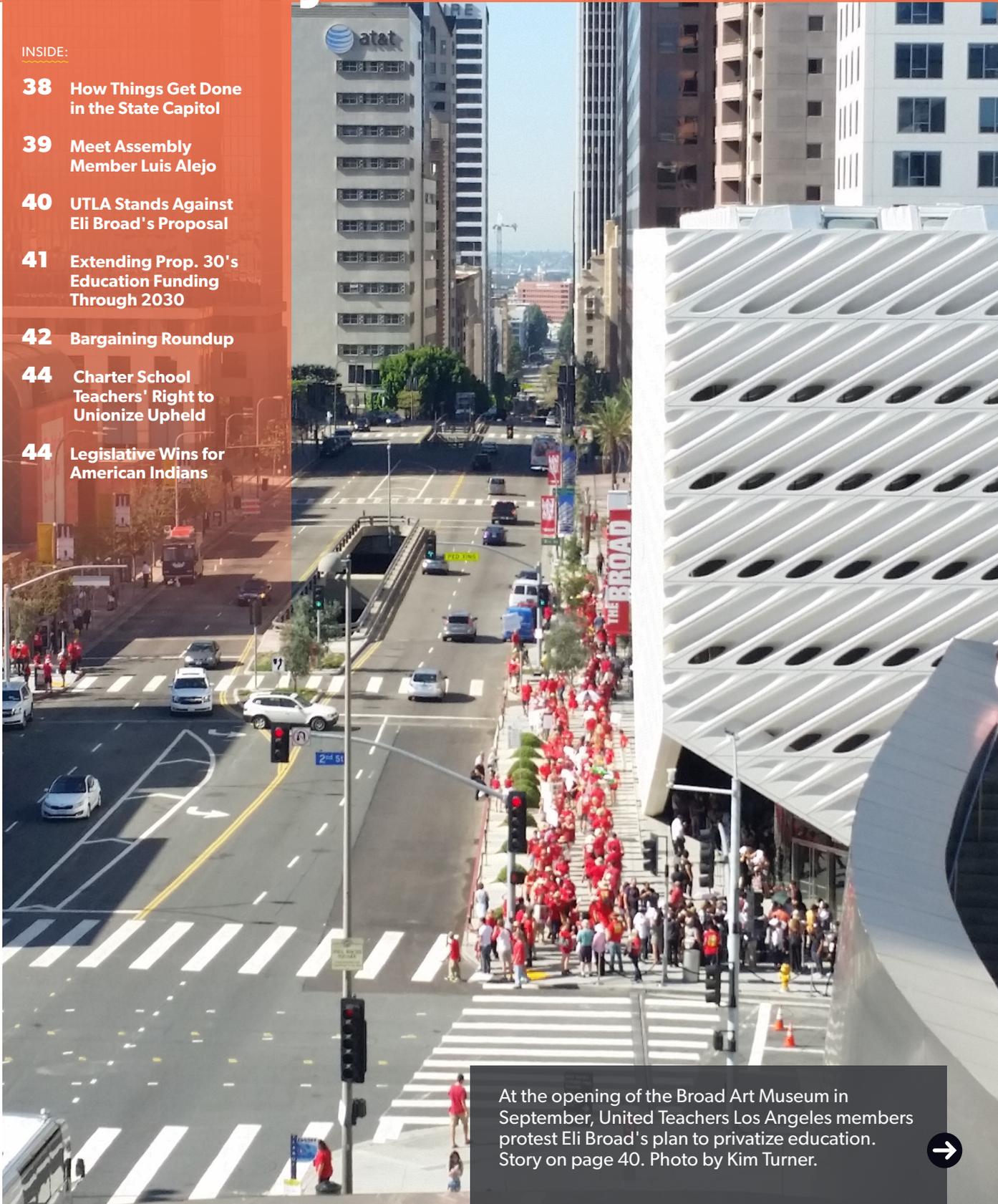
Current Superintendent Banda has also created some new, high-paying positions. He was not effective in negotiating a health care package that is fair for school employees, and failed to get rid of abusive principals in some Sacramento City Unified schools, says Milevsky.

"Sacramento City Unified School District deserves a really good leader," she adds. "Our students deserve it. Our teachers deserve it. And our community deserves it." ■

Advocacy

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At the opening of the Broad Art Museum in September, United Teachers Los Angeles members protest Eli Broad's plan to privatize education. Story on page 40. Photo by Kim Turner.





LEGISLATIVE PRIMER

How and when do things happen in the State Capitol?

By LEN FELDMAN

EVER WANT TO KNOW how legislation becomes the laws that help or hinder our efforts to educate our students?

With the Legislature in recess until January, now is a great time to look at how things work in the state Legislature. So here's a two-minute briefing.



▲ THE STATE BUDGET

By Jan. 10 every year, the governor has to unveil his proposed spending plan for the fiscal year that begins on July 1. His plan is based on then-current estimates of state revenues.

His preliminary spending plan (including education appropriations) is incorporated in two bills, one in the Senate and one in the Assembly. Each house's budget committee begins examining the proposals, primarily in subcommittees of its budget committee.

By mid-May, the governor submits an updated plan, based on newer estimates. The "May Revision" becomes the basis of legislative actions that move each bill to its house floor. By June 15, the two houses must craft a single spending proposal that they send to the governor for his review.

He has until June 30 to sign the final measure into law. He also has the power to make line-item spending reductions prior to signing the budget.

During budget deliberations in May, CTA members receive briefings from CTA budget experts and advocates. Using this information and training, the educators later meet with their lawmakers in support of higher appropriations for schools.



During an Education Committee hearing, CTA members who work at charter schools testify from their personal experience about the need for increased accountability and transparency at the state's charter schools.

◀ EDUCATION LEGISLATION

To become law, bills must gain the approval of both the Senate and Assembly and then secure the governor's signature. Often prompted by constituents, including CTA representatives, legislators introduce bills in January.

All bills go through at least one policy committee. Generally, bills affecting public schools move through the Assembly Education and the Senate Education committees. In some instances, a bill may also head to a second policy committee, such as Judiciary or Public Employees, if other issues are involved. If the Education Committee approves a measure, the bill will usually head to the Senate or Assembly Appropriations Committee if its implementation would include some significant costs.

From these committees, bills that gain approval move to the floor of their house of origin. If passed there, the bills go through a similar process in the other house. The version passing the second house, if different from the original, must go back to the first house for "concurrency." From there, it heads to the governor. His signing "enacts" the bill. His veto "kills" it. The Legislature can overturn a governor's veto, but it takes a two-thirds vote in both houses. It has been known to happen — but only rarely.

GET INVOLVED

▼ WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR YOUR STUDENTS AND YOUR CLASSROOM?

Telling your story to your lawmakers makes a big difference. It can spell the difference between a good bill that passes and one that fails. It can help win schools more funding — and it can help defeat measures that would undermine public pensions and weaken academic freedom.

Contact your chapter officers and ask them how you can get more involved. For more, see cta.org/legislation.

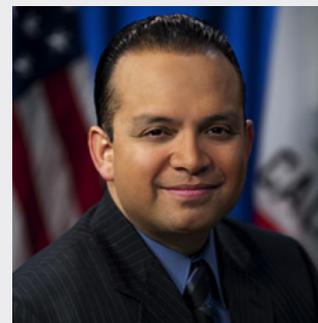


CTA members meet with Assembly Member Jacqui Irwin (D-Thousand Oaks) to advocate for school funding and CTA-supported legislation.



CTA Board member Jim Groth, at left, and member Reagan Duncan talk with Rick Simpson, ranking education aide to Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins, about how funding shortages harm our students.

Meet Assembly Member Luis Alejo



ASSEMBLY MEMBER Luis A. Alejo (D-Watsonville) authored a key CTA-backed bill that Gov. Brown recently signed into law, AB 30 — the California Racial Mascots Act. The new law stipulates that as of January 2017, all public schools will be barred from using the R-word, a term widely recognized as a racial slur targeting Native Americans, for team names, mascots or nicknames (see story on page 44).

“This bill is about respect — respect for every culture and every person,” Alejo says. “Native Americans should not be left out.”

It was his latest effort to serve the disadvantaged and underrepresented in a changing state. His legislative work has also assisted students and dealt with educational issues. “California has one of the largest and most diverse student populations in the country,” Alejo says. “I am proud to have authored numerous pro-education bills in 2015 that aim to better serve our students in the classroom, and better prepare them for the diverse workforce.”

The son of agricultural workers in Watsonville, Alejo graduated from Watsonville High School. He was a champion wrestler in high school and at Gavilan College. He graduated with honors from UC Berkeley with a dual major in political science and Chicano studies.

Alejo taught special needs students and at-risk youth, and then earned a J.D. from the UC Davis School of Law and a master of education degree in administration, planning and social policy from Harvard University. He has worked at the California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation and the Monterey County Superior Court, defending the rights of those without power.

His interest in laws that could help working and disenfranchised Californians led him to become a legislative fellow for the Assembly in 2002. Later he served in several posts before being elected mayor of Watsonville.

Voters elected him to the Assembly in November 2010. In addition to this year’s AB 30, legislation he has authored includes AB 60, the Safe and Responsible Driver Act, which allows undocumented immigrants to apply for driver’s licenses, and AB 10, which provides dignity and equality for the state’s minimum wage earners. In October he was named Legislator of the Year by the League of California Cities.

Education remains a key issue for Alejo.

“As California diversifies, it is increasingly important to ensure that our students and teachers build knowledge of the various racial and ethnic groups in our state,” he says. “The purpose of these bills is to enhance student achievement as an essential component of a culturally diverse education.” — *Len Feldman*

Activists and coalition partners join the Broad Art Museum protest along with UTLA President Alex Caputo-Pearl, far right.



Not For Sale

UTLA stands against billionaire's proposal

By FRANK WELLS Photos by KIM TURNER

HUNDREDS OF United Teachers Los Angeles members showed up on an early September Sunday morning to protest at the opening of the new Broad Art Museum in downtown Los Angeles. While not a salvo against the museum itself, the protesters were there to draw attention to the museum's namesake, billionaire Eli Broad, and the Broad Foundation's recently revealed plan to enroll up to half the students in Los Angeles Unified School District in privately run, largely unregulated, non-union charter schools.

The plan, initially exposed in a document obtained by the *Los Angeles Times*, would cost an estimated half billion dollars and open 260 new charter schools in a school district that already has more charter schools than any district in the country. It would devastate LAUSD's current public schools, harm thousands of students, and gut thousands of teaching and education support professional jobs. Although Broad could fund the takeover himself, he is soliciting backing from additional charter funders such as the Walton Family Foundation, run by the family that owns Walmart.

UTLA President Alex Caputo-Pearl sees the plan as an effort by the wealthy to take down educator unions and set the stage for broader deregulation of public education. "Deregulation has not worked in

What's at Stake

- Eli Broad's plan would place half of current LAUSD students in 260 charter schools by 2023, at a cost of \$490 million. LAUSD's current K-12 enrollment is 664,000; it already has more charters than any school system in the U.S., representing 16 percent of total enrollment.
- Charter schools are independently run and publicly financed. In addition to being exempt from some rules governing traditional schools, most are non-union.
- Per-pupil funding goes to whatever public school students enroll in, including charters. The Broad plan would create parallel, potentially unequal education systems and have substantial financial implications for LAUSD.

our economy, has not worked in health care, has not worked in housing, and it is not going to work in public education," he said at a news conference following the museum protest. Caputo-Pearl urged all Los Angeles elected officials to oppose the Broad plan. He has challenged Broad to a public debate over the future of education in Los Angeles.

Although Broad admits he has no expertise in education, it has not stopped him from putting his stamp on schools and districts across the country. His controversial and unaccredited Broad Academy for superintendents has churned out a series of "Broadies" who often share his vision for greater encroachment of the private sector on public education and have a top-down approach to school administration.

Among them are John Deasy, who was fired as LAUSD superintendent last year after engineering an



More than 700 UTLA members march to protest Eli Broad's attack on public education.

iPad purchasing debacle that was ultimately investigated by the FBI. Deasy, who testified for the plaintiffs in the *Vergara* trial attacking professional rights for teachers, has taken a job as an adviser to Students Matter, the organization that brought that suit.

The proposed expansion of "private" charter schools is not new territory for Broad. His foundation has been a major investor and key player in the post-Katrina charter school incursion into New Orleans, making it the only city in the nation where the majority of schools are privately run charters. In fact, the foundation hired one of the architects of that expansion, former Louisiana Superintendent of Education Paul Pastorek, to oversee the LA effort.

UTLA has made fighting this attack on public schools and its students a top priority. Additional protests have been held, and at CTA's October State Council meeting Caputo-Pearl urged members to join in the fight. "We look forward to going into battle with Eli Broad and Walmart," he said. "While this is a threat, we think it's an opportunity" to expose the real agenda of those behind the privatization of all public schools. He reminded delegates that Broad secretly funded a "dark money" attempt to kill Prop. 30, the 2012 initiative that saved California schools from more devastating cuts, and to pass the anti-union Prop. 32.

UTLA/NEA Vice President Cecily Myart-Cruz stresses the need to hold elected officials accountable on the Broad plan. She wants to make clear that it is the raiding of public schools for financial gain and the exploitation of non-unionized workers in Broad-style charters that are problematic, and not the existence of all public charter schools (UTLA represents and continues to organize many charter school workers, as does CTA).

"This is about more than just LAUSD and UTLA," says Eric Heins, CTA president. "This is a fight to save public education as we know it and let the billionaires know our schools aren't for sale." ■

Keep Education Funding Steady

Extending Prop. 30 would avoid devastating budget cuts

In October, CTA's State Council endorsed a 2016 ballot measure to temporarily extend Proposition 30's income tax increases on the wealthiest earners, an effort to stabilize the state budget and protect school funding.

As a result of Prop. 30, passed with considerable educator effort in 2012, this year's state budget for public education saw the biggest single funding increase in the history of California. The funding has partially offset catastrophic cuts made to public education during the recession.

Prop. 30's income tax rates expire at the end of 2018. The Alliance for a Better California (ABC), a coalition of labor, school, community and public safety groups including CTA, submitted earlier this fall the School Funding and Budget Stability Act, the ballot measure to temporarily extend those taxes on some of the wealthiest residents.

The measure would continue to boost income tax rates on couples earning more than \$500,000 a year for 12 years, with the proceeds supporting K-12 schools and community colleges. Prop. 30's quarter-cent sales tax increase would expire as planned at the end of 2016.

"Temporarily extending these critical revenues will help keep our state budget balanced, and prevent devastating cuts to programs affecting students, seniors, working families and health care," says Gale Kaufman, ABC spokesperson.

The initiative, which would generate \$8 billion to \$9 billion a year and run through 2030, was unanimously approved by CTA State Council in October. Prop. 30 taxes have so far provided \$24 billion for California's classrooms.

During the recession, California cut more than \$56 billion from education, health care and other vital state and local services, triggering thousands of teacher layoffs, larger class sizes, higher college tuition fees, and reductions in essential public services. The state ranks 46th in per-pupil funding, according to an *Education Week* study released earlier this year and based on 2012 data.

CTA President Eric Heins points to projections from the California Department of Finance showing that the state could see the return of budget deficits in the near future if Prop. 30's tax increases on the wealthiest residents are not extended.

"We would once again run the severe risk of our public schools and critical services being slashed," Heins says. "For the sake of our students, seniors, communities and working families, we can't afford not to pass the School Funding and Budget Stability Act." ■

Bargaining Roundup

Details of these stories at cta.org/bargainingupdates



Grossmont Education Association executive board member James McFarland with several educators affected by the school district's new maternity leave policy: Bridgett Desonia, Michele Frens (with children Maverick and Maddox) and Kelsey Beeman (with children Londynn and Brooklynn).



LTA members engage with parents and encourage their district to choose students first at a recent event.

OH BABY — GROSSMONT SCHOOL BOARD OKS PAID MATERNITY LEAVE

It's a first for a school district in California: On Nov. 2, the Grossmont Union High School District board in San Diego County voted to approve six weeks of paid maternity leave, retroactive to July 1, 2015. The move benefits families and students as it will do much to attract and retain qualified educators.

It's clear that with statewide demand for teachers intensifying, strategies that seek to attract and retain young professionals are beginning to take shape at negotiating tables in California.

The 2015-16 contract agreement between the **Grossmont Education Association** and the district also includes a 5 percent increase in salary.

BAY AREA CHARTER TEACHERS HELP BOOST ESP MEMBERS' PAY

In a show of solidarity to raise the salaries of their education support professional colleagues, teachers at unionized **Mare Island Technology Academy Education Association** in Vallejo in Solano County negotiated to give their 3 percent raise for the 2014-15 school year to the ESP workers — boosting their pay by 17 percent.

"We decided we were going to stand with our ESP members," says Ryan Cole, president of the 55-member association. "We really are like one big family."

The bargaining unit is wall-to-wall and covers all employees. A new contract was ratified in October for the independent charter school covering grades 6-12. All employees will also get a 5 percent raise for this school year as well.

LAMMERSVILLE TEACHERS AT ODDS OVER CURRICULUM, COMPENSATION

Lammersville teachers in San Joaquin County are at odds with the school district on curriculum and compensation issues in contract talks, but that did not prevent **Lammersville Teachers Association** (LTA) members from sharing parent advice during a Halloween event.

Members and stakeholders wore signs encouraging the school board to choose students first when making decisions. Educators held a public demonstration about contract talks in early November. Teachers also engaged attendees at a recent parent-teacher event, handing out reading lists, advice on learning and updates on what's happening to teacher morale with limited support for programs.

The school board eventually held a special meeting about teacher morale as contract talks entered their seventh month. See updates on the LTA Facebook page: Facebook.com/LammersvilleTeachers.

REDDING CHARTER FILES BANKRUPTCY DESPITE SURPLUS

The Academy of Personalized Learning (APL) in Redding filed for Chapter 11 reorganization in October, less than four weeks after showing a \$225,000 surplus in the latest financial reports to its chartering district.

The charter school is also facing charges that it illegally fired nine highly qualified teachers, three of whom served on the executive board of the **Academy of Personalized Learning Education Association (APLEA)**, the newly formed teachers union. Teachers at APL unionized last year to advocate for their students without reprisal and improve teaching conditions.

“APL is now running up exorbitant legal fees and contemplating bankruptcy to defend its actions in terminating highly qualified teachers, rather than meeting the needs of students, conducting themselves within the law, and treating its teachers fairly and respectfully,” says Candy Woodson, one of the teachers who was fired. During negotiations, APL claimed money spent on “pending litigation” and legal fees was contributing to financial difficulties.



The SDTA bargaining team, from left to right: Lisa Jack, Barb McIsaac, Penny Cronin and Susan Broscow.

SAVANNA TEACHERS, DISTRICT REACH SETTLEMENT

On Oct. 27, the **Savanna District Teachers Association (SDTA)** ratified a settlement reached in contract negotiations with the Savanna School District (SSD) in Orange County. The terms of the three-year agreement include a change in the evaluation procedure for permanent employees. Changed from an every other year cycle to every three years, it also allows administrators to focus their energy on sorely needed support for new teachers who are being hired in increasing numbers.

The agreement includes a retroactive pay increase of 3 percent, beginning July 1, 2015. This pushes teachers’ top earnings to \$109,224 and keeps SSD salaries competitive near the top of the 12 comparable elementary districts in Orange County.

“By putting the needs of students and teachers in the forefront of the process, our two teams have done their

part to help us promote educational excellence here in the Savanna School District,” says SDTA Co-President Penny Cronin.

SDTA credits the district’s financial philosophy in helping to reach a competitive settlement. By rejecting the stockpiling of district funds, and following a practice of retaining no more than 6 percent reserves, SSD was able to effectively meet the needs of all stakeholders in the community.

EASTSIDE TEACHERS IN LANCASTER PROTEST

Eastside Teachers Association (ETA) members in Lancaster turned out in force Oct. 26 to rally before a school board meeting on the eve of state mediation. The Eastside Union School District’s last offer would extend the work year by three days and provide a modest salary schedule increase — which would be negated by the extra days.

ETA objected, arguing their salaries still lag behind neighboring Los Angeles County districts while administration costs remain high. Although no settlement was reached through the next day’s mediation, the organizing efforts are having an impact at the table. Another mediation session is scheduled for Nov. 30.

“Although the mediation has led to some productive discussion, we have some school board members who have since been tremendously disrespectful, suggesting that teachers who are unhappy here should just leave,” says ETA President Stephanie Price. “That’s not what our members want, it’s certainly not what the community wants, and we’re going to keep up the pressure and achieve a fair settlement.”

VISTA TEACHERS CAST STRIKE AUTHORIZATION BALLOTS

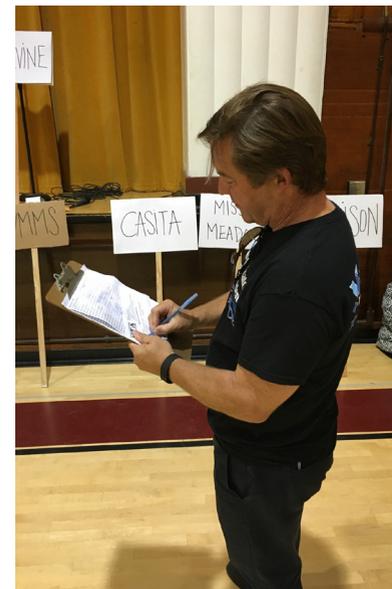
Vista Teachers Association (VTA) members are fighting to maintain their health benefits.

They’re also pressing the Vista Unified School District (VUSD) in San Diego County to make teacher salaries competitive so that Vista will be able to retain its highly qualified educators and attract needed new ones.

Early this month, more than 500 VTA members gathered for a strike authorization vote. The balloting came in response to district officials’ obstructionism that has resulted in two failed state mediation sessions.

District officials “have made virtually no movement in their offer since last year,” says VTA President Tod Critchlow.

Official vote totals were not available at press time, but Critchlow says straw polling indicates “overwhelming support for our bargaining team and their work thus far.” VTA will hold a third mediation session with VUSD on Dec. 14. ■



VTA President Tod Critchlow checks the meeting roster before the strike authorization vote.

Rights Upheld

Recent charter school rulings put students first

STUDENTS WERE the winners in a series of recent rulings on for-profit charter school operators.

Earlier this month, the state Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) found in favor of online educators working with California Virtual Academies (CAVA), who asserted that they should be recognized as one bargaining unit.

Back in May 2014, teachers representing approximately 750 CAVA educators working across the state filed for union recognition with PERB, the state's labor oversight board. They sought representation to more effectively advocate for students and to address a range of problems at the school through the collective bargaining process with CAVA administration and its parent company, K12 Inc. (K12 Inc. is one of the largest publicly traded educational tech corporations in the United States, with nearly \$1 billion in annual revenues.)

CAVA/K12, which provides online learning for nearly 15,000 students in grades K-12 across California, insisted that CAVA operates as 10 different independent schools and not as a single entity — a claim belied by its centralized structure and systems. Over the past 17 months, CAVA/K12 tried to derail the PERB proceedings with delay tactics, legal maneuvers, harassment and intimidation — including illegal terminations.

Teachers applauded the board's decision.

"Now that we are union, frontline educators will have a real voice in decisions that impact our students," says elementary school teacher Rebecca Flynn from the East Bay. "This is a big step forward in our effort to improve CAVA to better serve California's kids."

Given CAVA/K12's actions during the PERB proceedings and its likelihood to exploit its high teacher turnover rate (over 40 percent) to undermine the unionization effort, some educators fear CAVA/K12 might try to prolong the process by appealing the board's decision.

Alliance charters can't interfere

On Oct. 19, PERB announced it would file for an injunction to prohibit Alliance College-Ready Public Schools from interfering with efforts to unionize teachers. The temporary restraining order was issued days later by the Los Angeles County Superior Court.

PERB agreed with United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) that Alliance illegally intimidated employees, denied organizers access to school buildings, and blocked emails.

Continued on page 55



From left: David Garcia, Mary Levi and CTA Board member Marty Meeden.

Legislative Victories for Native Americans

AT CTA STATE COUNCIL'S meeting in October, more than 100 members joined the American Indian/Alaska Native Caucus to celebrate two key legislative victories, capped by a presentation by Chumash storyteller David Garcia.

Caucus Chair Mary Levi recounted the CTA-supported bills:

- AB 30 by Assembly Member Luis Alejo (D-Watsonville) makes California the first state to bar schools and colleges from naming teams and mascots with the R-word, a racial slur for Native Americans.
- AB 163, by Assembly Member Das Williams (D-Carpinteria), creates the American Indian Language-Culture Credential, a new certification that supports teaching of heritage and/or language, particularly to Native American students.

AB 30 affects four California high schools in Merced, Calaveras, Tulare and Madera counties. The new law championed by Alejo (see profile on page 39) is the culmination of an effort begun by former Assembly Member Jackie Goldberg, who in 2002 introduced a measure that would have ended the practice of using caricatures of racial minorities as athletic team and school mascots.

At the time, a few states and the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights had issued resolutions condemning the practice, but no state has banned it outright until now.

"We wouldn't tolerate a team called the New York Jews or the North Carolina African Americans. So why do we have Indian mascots?" Goldberg told the *Chigago Tribune*. "People [who want to retain the mascots] think if you don't mean any harm you don't do any harm. That's not the case."

During his presentation, Garcia told traditional stories, including ones that drove home the importance of maintaining courage in the face of adversity.

Garcia and Levi both addressed the caucus's next legislative target: getting California to change the official name of the Oct. 12 holiday to "Indigenous People's Day."

—Len Feldman

Learning

INSIDE:

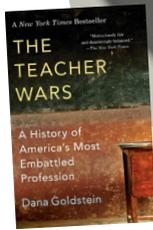
46 Ending the Teacher Wars

48 Museum Helps Teach Tolerance



Students explore one of many interactive exhibits that expose the dynamics of prejudice and discrimination historically and today, at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. See story on page 48. Photo courtesy Museum of Tolerance.





Ending the 'Teacher Wars'

Author Dana Goldstein sheds light on new and old debates

By LISA GALLEY

SOMETIMES, IT JUST DOESN'T MAKE SENSE. Why is teaching — a profession admired by so many Americans — reviled by so many?

In her best-selling book, *The Teacher Wars: A History of America's Most Embattled Profession* (Doubleday, 2014), Dana Goldstein explains that while the controversy surrounding teaching may seem like a recent development, it is deeply rooted in our nation's history. Educators have long been expected to solve societal problems that are clearly outside of their control, such as racism, poverty, or the complications that arise from the influx of non-English-speaking immigrants. And when schools are — not surprisingly — unable to address these issues single-handedly, it is the teachers who get the blame. This vicious cycle of high hopes followed by disappointment, coupled with inevitable attacks on the profession, leaves many of us feeling utterly dejected.

But there are reasons for optimism. After Goldstein's study of 200 years of public school teaching, she presents a path forward to creating a profession that receives the prestige it deserves. She will speak about her book and its recommendations at CTA's Issues Conference, Jan. 15-17, 2016, in Las Vegas.

Goldstein is a staff writer at The Marshall Project and a contributor to *Slate*, *The Atlantic* and other magazines. Previously, she was an associate editor at *The Daily Beast* and reported on education news for *The American Prospect*. She comes from a family of educators (her father, grandfather and both stepparents were teachers).

The Teacher Wars has been praised by those inside and outside of the teaching profession as a well-researched and balanced look at teaching and the education reform debate.

What drew you to this topic? Why write a book about it?

A lot of authors say that they wish they could have read the book that they write. That's how I felt when I was covering the 2008 Democratic primary. I noticed that education was a flash point among candidates (Obama, Clinton, Edwards) who generally agreed on things. I was curious why we were arguing so much about teachers, even at the presidential level.

When I did some research about the history of teaching, I found there was lots of information, but it wasn't all in one place. I wish this book existed when I started out as an education writer. And I love history — that's what my dad taught.

Why is teaching both idealized and resented?

We have really high hopes for teachers. Over time we've expected them to close cultural and racial gaps and solve problems related to the clash between native-born Americans and immigrants. Today we expect them to close socioeconomic gaps. We have a romantic idea of the amount of impact a teacher can have. When it turns out that teachers alone can't close gaps as quickly or completely as we hoped, disappointment sets in. It becomes convenient for people to blame teachers because it lets them off the hook.

This doesn't mean we can't expect a lot from teachers; for example, it is crucial that teachers work for social justice. But we can't become overly focused on teachers to the exclusion of other solutions. To do so shows a failure of political will and a lack of understanding of the social science and economics of poverty.

You note that education has always been seen as a solution to inequality in America, but teachers know they can only do so much. Can we ever have a productive national conversation about the effects of poverty on student achievement?

Having a great teacher can help a kid dream bigger, and that's something you can't measure.

But it's depressing that we talk a lot more about accountability than we talk about raising the minimum wage of the parents. Teachers are rightly frustrated.

One of the early components of No Child Left Behind was a plan to address chronic absenteeism. It has been proven that reducing chronic absenteeism can be effective in efforts to improve student achievement. But this is work that social workers and support staff must do. Teachers can't add this to their plates.

What was the most surprising thing you learned when researching and writing the book?

I was surprised to find that certain reform ideas that are presented as innovative are actually not new. Merit pay based on student achievement gains is an idea that started in the early 20th century, re-emerged in the '60s, the '80s, and again today. The concept of "value-added" is also not new.

Policymakers and the media routinely criticize teachers, yet they also want to draw top college graduates to the profession. Why don't they see the disconnect?

It's been going on since the 19th century. There is a lack of data showing that graduates of elite colleges make better teachers, yet many policymakers think this is the answer. Fixing working conditions for teachers is the only way to change the system.

Speaking of working conditions, you write quite a bit about the abundance of paperwork, especially with regard to teacher evaluation. Why do you think this is such a problem?

When we overburden teachers and administrators with paperwork, it takes focus away from improving instruction. When observers need to document 60 indicators in a single class period, they don't take it seriously. It's really mind-boggling. We need an evaluation system that is sustainable.

Why does the public equate firing teachers with a more successful system of public education?

Some very prominent people have made that argument. Yes, we should get rid of bad teachers and attract and retain good ones. But this is a super simplistic argument. Improving the quality of teaching will come from a greater focus on collaboration within the profession and teacher leadership. This will help us replicate excellence and best practices. We need to replace the conversation about firing teachers with one about skill building.

What do you see as the proper role of standardized testing in education?

Research generated from test scores can show trends among large groups of teachers and students. It can help identify problems in the system. But we have to be careful what policies we tie to the research. Campbell's Law* tells us that when we tie incentives to a measure, the measure becomes less valuable. When we focus too much on test scores, teachers are going to change the way they teach and test questions become the de facto curriculum. Harvard professor Daniel Koretz has shown in his research that tests have limits. It's a flawed argument to say that it's OK to teach to a high-quality test.

One of the recommendations you make is to "keep teaching interesting." Can you explain this?

I've interviewed hundreds of teachers. I'm so impressed and wowed by what teachers are doing on their own, especially in an environment of scarcity. But for most of them, year 20 looks a lot like year 3 in terms of how they spend their day. We know that by year 7 or 8 they are ready for a challenge, yet in most cases teachers are unable to move forward or be recognized for their successes.

Other countries allow good teachers to write curriculum, mentor and work on education policies. We haven't made it easier for teachers to move to leadership roles. If the excellent teacher doesn't have time to share knowledge with colleagues, it's difficult to replicate their best practices, and the system suffers for it.

What would you say to a career educator who feels vilified in today's reform debates?

I understand why you feel discouraged right now, but I've seen some changes in the reform debate even since I finished [the book] in 2013.

For example, the Obama administration speaks far less about how teacher accountability policies will fix poverty. Also, the idealization of the Teach for America model has receded. That has happened within Teach for America itself.

These changes stack up. If we're becoming more realistic about the quick fixes that have been advocated in the past, there's an opportunity to make real changes.

How do we end the teacher wars?

One thing we must do is acknowledge the many, many factors that impact children's lives. The child poverty rate is higher than before the recession. It's unacceptable to say that doesn't matter.

We need to look at schools, but also beyond schools. We need to look at the idea of integrating our communities and making sure disadvantaged schools aren't clustered. Our kids should be growing up around kids who are different than themselves.

There's no one-size-fits-all solution in education. I think the whole conversation about career and college readiness is not realistic. There are some really good career and technical options for kids who may need more time to decide if they are going to continue their education. This is a forgotten group. It's incredibly important that we focus on providing them with a curriculum that serves them.

Lisa Galley is editor of the New Jersey Education Association Review, where this story originally appeared (September 2015).

**From social scientist Donald Campbell: "The more any quantitative social indicator is used for social decision-making, the more subject it will be to corruption pressures." Campbell's Law is used to explain why high-stakes testing promotes cheating, teaching to the test, and other negative behaviors.*



Students participate in interactive, high-tech exhibits that inspire them to learn from the past, engage in the present, and take responsibility for the future.

Teaching Tolerance

Museum offers immersive experiences for students and educators

By KATHARINE FONG

EVENTS AND TRAGEDIES over the past few years have shown that American society is still far from tolerating and accepting differences in others — increasingly important as the world becomes ever more diverse and cultures, perspectives and peoples must coexist and work together.

Educators looking for ways to teach students about historic and contemporary ramifications of prejudice and discrimination should consider the Museum of Tolerance, based in Los Angeles. The museum, which is the educational arm of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, features interactive exhibits and customized programs that let visitors become witnesses to history and explore the dynamics of bigotry and discrimination, from the Holocaust to segregation in California. It is open to everyone, but makes a concerted effort to reach students.

“With our high-tech, engaging environment, we have

youth in mind,” says Liebe Geft, museum director. “We can discuss and address thorny, touchy current events and issues in a safe and respectful way. Several exhibits are perfect for dialogue suited to younger audiences.”

The museum offers a robust series of youth programs, especially focused on middle and high schoolers. Tools for Tolerance for Teens, for example, is a full-day group program that educates and empowers students to create respectful and inclusive communities. It can be customized to explore themes such as the power of words, lessons from history, and going from bystander to ally.

“Personal and social responsibility are underlying themes in all we do, and scenarios are selected by teachers,” Geft says. “Students learn about diversity inclusion and cultural competencies, and it’s linked to their curriculum and the Common Core.”



The museum aims to create an experience that challenges people of all backgrounds to confront their most closely held assumptions.



Free professional development for educators

The Museum of Tolerance's **Tools for Tolerance for Educators** are one- or two-day programs designed to advance anti-bias education and the creation of inclusive and equitable schools.

Programs are customized to groups of 30 or more, and can include such workshops as promoting a positive campus climate, Common Core through a social justice lens, and media literacy.

CEUs are available. A special grant allows the museum to provide travel, accommodation and meals to 3,600 qualifying educators from beyond the Los Angeles area before June 30. (Qualifying educators are Pre-K-12 public and private school educators, student teachers, teacher candidates, staff at California's schools and school districts, and educator organizations.)

The museum also offers Open Enrollment Institutes for individuals, in collaboration with partners. For example, **Perspectives for a Diverse America** is a two-day workshop sponsored by the museum and Southern Poverty Law Center's Teaching Tolerance project. Scheduled for several dates in 2016, it is a literacy-based, anti-bias, social justice curriculum aligned to the Common Core language arts and literacy standards.

Details are at museumoftolerance.com.



Younger children take part in a bullying prevention workshop, which can include hearing personal testimony from a Holocaust (or other genocide) survivor.

Complex issues such as human rights abuses and the plight of refugees and displaced persons are presented in age-appropriate and relevant ways. "We have a dialogue on free speech vs. hate speech, constitutional rights and who bears the greatest responsibility," Geft says. "Historical episodes are linked to student experience."

Specific program workshops can focus on bullying and violence prevention, cultural awareness and youth leadership. In addition, students can hear powerful personal testimony from Holocaust or other genocide survivors. The museum provides educator materials for preparation and discussion.

Among the museum's other youth programs:

- **Service Learning** — advanced civic engagement over a three-month period.
- **Teen Court Program** — youth juror training over five days in the summer.
- **Finding Our Families, Finding Ourselves** — connects students with their heritage and community.

While the museum endeavors to reach diverse audiences, it strives to show our connections to the greater whole. There is a 42-foot-long wall exhibit on American history called "We the People," which showcases the themes of diversity from the 1500s to present times, intolerance and discrimination, and the struggles for a more just society. "It breathes life into the Constitution — in depth and across time," Geft says. "Every student can find themselves in this history."

For more information, see museumoftolerance.com. ■

How do you teach tolerance? Let us know [@cateachersassoc](https://twitter.com/cateachersassoc) [#teachersteachtolerance](https://twitter.com/teachersteachtolerance)



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*National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Digest of Education Statistics, 2011.

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INSIDE:

- 52** Recap: October State Council
- 54** Community College Association Fall Conference
- 55** CTA Board Expenses



Veteran organizer Marshall Ganz spoke to CTA leaders at State Council in October about the power of storytelling. Stories can inspire us to act, and forge deep connections with others by communicating shared values through the language of the heart — our emotions. Each of us, Ganz said, has a compelling story to tell that can move others. For more, see page 52.





At left, members practice telling stories that convey their values and create shared values with others, with a goal of building strong relationships.

Below left, CTA Vice President Theresa Montaño and President Eric Heins listen to Marshall Ganz speak to Council.

Below, members show solidarity with the students and faculty who were killed and hurt during the shooting at Umpqua Community College in Oregon.



President urges member engagement

Opening the meeting, CTA President Eric Heins challenged members to master new skills to organize members, colleagues and communities in support of our students.

“I want to thank you all for having the foresight and the courage to reimagine Council to meet our changing needs,” Heins said. “CTA and its locals are putting renewed energy into organizing, membership recruitment and engagement. In fact, CTA has set a goal that every local will have a membership engagement plan in place by the fall of 2016.”

Heins spelled out the challenges that CTA has taken on, including boosting funding for public education by extending Prop. 30 — an effort to stabilize the state budget and raise California from its dismal 46th national ranking in per-student funding. (Council members endorsed a new ballot measure that would temporarily extend Prop. 30’s income tax increases on the wealthiest earners.) He also cited ongoing battles to beat back legal suits aimed at silencing the voice of teachers, including *Friedrichs v. CTA*.

STATE COUNCIL

Gearing Up for Challenges Ahead

Story and photos by LEN FELDMAN

VARYING FROM ITS usual format, the October meeting of CTA’s top governing body focused on establishing an organizing culture at all levels of the association, a major goal of CTA’s strategic plan.

Master class from Marshall Ganz

Marshall Ganz, who dropped out of Harvard to fight for voting rights in the South and worked with César Chávez to organize the United Farm Workers, provided inspiration and new tools to Council members to help build an even stronger union.

Ganz, who now teaches at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, urged members to build strong relationships with one another and communities of interests in support of public schools and human rights.

On both days of the meeting, Council members practiced using the tools, which included:

- Telling your own stories and using them to share your values and connect with others.
- Building relationships and forging mutual commitments to work together.
- Creating a shared team leadership structure that integrates local action with statewide, national or even global purpose.
- Creating a shared strategy.
- Creating shared, measurable action.

These practices, Ganz says, can help CTA leadership organize people to build the power to make change and achieve the broader goals of engagement and activism. Council members will bring these tools and mission to organize stronger locals back to their chapters.

Executive director on CTA successes, challenges

CTA Executive Director Joe Nuñez reminded State Council members of the major successes by CTA members, including the 1866 victory that entitled all the state's children to a free public education. Having created a secure retirement system for educators and defeated former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's attacks on education and unions, CTA is now challenged by legal attacks that threaten the foundation of unionism.

He cited the potential for *Friedrichs v. CTA* — underwritten by the anti-union Koch Brothers — to undermine “fair share” and force CTA members to pay the costs of protecting their non-union colleagues. This and other attacks reflect opponents' recognition that they can't beat CTA at the ballot box or on the floor of the legislature.

“You're the strength of CTA,” Nuñez told Council. “Your willingness to go back to your chapters and have conversations with your colleagues and lead a campaign for hope will make the difference. We must apply the tools Marshall gave us. We must use what we've learned not just to tell our stories but also ... to elicit others' stories and values and build relationships ... and develop more leaders and organizers in our union.” ■



Educator Ximena Zamosc has the courage to stand up in front of 800 colleagues while Marshall Ganz coaches her on telling her story.

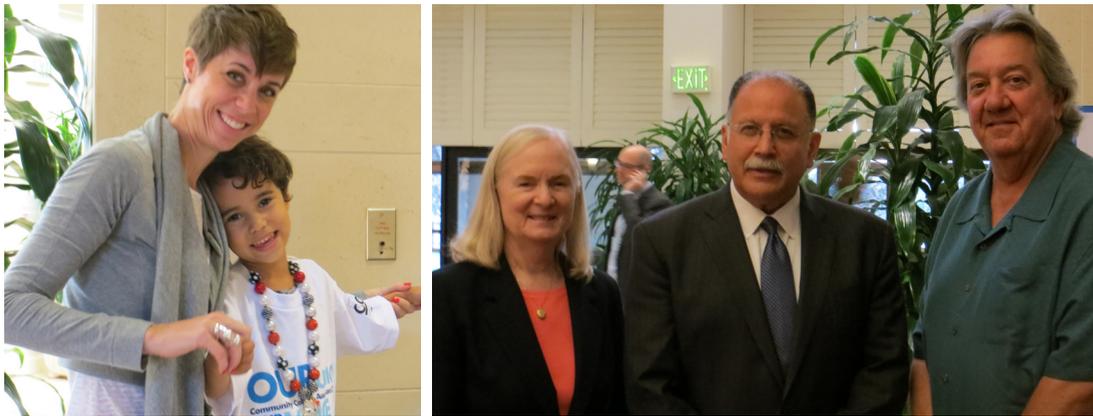
Council backs initiative to extend Prop. 30

In other actions, State Council:

- Elected Barbara J. Dawson to the CTA Board of Directors, District N.
- Elected Robert Ellis as NEA Director, District 3.
- Elected Telly Tse as NEA Alternate Director, Seat 3.
- Elected to the CTA/ABC Committee Wendy Eccles (District K) and Luciano Ortiz (District G).
- Rejected a proposed amendment to Article VI of the bylaws governing election procedures for the Board of Directors.
- Voted unanimously to support the School Funding and Budget Stability Act of 2016, a ballot initiative that would extend Proposition 30's tax increases on wealthy Californians to provide K-14 public education about \$2 billion annually and non-Prop. 98 programs about \$4 billion annually. Council also voted to allocate up to \$3 million to support CTA ballot positions in the 2016 election.
- Approved the CTA Women's Caucus request to create a bargaining advisory to help chapters craft contract language implementing AB 375, which allows sick leave to be used for parental leave.
- Adjourned in memory of the students and faculty murdered at Umpqua Community College and supported efforts to raise funds for the victims. Council members individually contributed more than \$2,000 for victims of the campus shooting.

At its previous meeting in June 2015, State Council:

- Honored outgoing President Dean Vogel and Secretary-Treasurer Mikki Cichocki-Semo, and swore in the new officers.
- Elected to the CTA Board of Directors Greg Bonaccorsi, District B; Erika Jones, District J; Susan Green, District Q; and re-elected Elana Davidson, District F; Kendall Vaught, District M.
- Elected Heather Mumy to the CTA/ABC Committee, District B.
- Honored winners of CTA awards for political activism and journalism, and honored winners of Service Center Council State WHO (“We Honor Ours”) Awards.



Far left: Lisa Lopes, psychology instructor and member of San Joaquin Delta College TA with daughter Pilar, 5. Near left: CCA President Lynette Nyaggah, Assembly Member Jose Medina, and CCA Vice President Brad Reynolds.

Recommitting to Union Values

CCA's fall conference strengthened faculty, student voices

By DINA MARTIN

The 50th anniversary of the federal Higher Education Act provided the opportunity during the Community College Association's fall conference in October to recommit to the union values that have strengthened and supported faculty teaching and student learning conditions.

Signed by President Lyndon Baines Johnson on Nov. 8, 1965, the landmark Higher Education Act provided access to scholarships, loans and work opportunities for millions of students who might never have had the chance to attend college. In signing the legislation that would become the cornerstone of his anti-poverty Great Society program, Johnson said prophetically, "It is a truism that education is no longer a luxury. Education in this day and age is a necessity."

In the years since, community college faculty — and CCA — have been at the forefront of promoting access and support for students to higher education. Attendees were reminded of this as they participated in weekend sessions aimed at strengthening the voice of faculty and their students. With the decision by the U.S. Supreme Court to hear *Friedrichs v. CTA* in early 2016, the need to strengthen that voice has become even more urgent.

CCA took advantage of the conference to hold two emergency sessions that introduced ways to reinvigorate members through one-on-one discussions, giving them the opportunity to express what is important to them. Other workshops were

devoted to such topics as helping campus leaders develop membership engagement plans, using storytelling to organize members, and connecting with members by using negotiations successes.

Assembly Member Jose Medina (D-Riverside), chair of the Assembly Higher Education Committee, was presented with CCA's Legislator of the Year Award. Medina stayed on to participate in a panel with California Community Colleges Vice Chancellor Vincent Stewart on dual enrollment and its challenges, as increasing numbers of students enroll in community college classes while still in high school.

Medina, a longtime history teacher, CTA member, and adjunct community college faculty at Riverside and San Bernardino community colleges, has been a stalwart advocate for higher education since his election in 2012. In the past legislative session, he authored bills to provide increased employment stability for part-time faculty and to help students stranded by the abrupt closure and questionable practices of Corinthian Colleges.

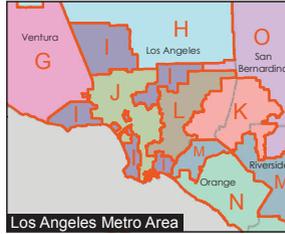
Though AB 1010, the part-time faculty legislation, failed to pass this time around, Medina vowed, "I won't give up fighting for part-time instructors if you are still behind me. To be out there year after year and not know whether you will be back is not acceptable. We look forward to reintroducing the bill to give part-time faculty what they deserve."

For more, see cca4me.org.



CTA

DIRECTORIAL DISTRICTS



ALCALÁ (O)	3,840.91
BILEK (G)	5,263.44
BONACCORSI* (B)	275.03
BOYD (E)	4,286.17
CABELL (L)	5,109.95
CICHOCKI*	3,791.53
DAVIDSON (F)	3,784.82
DAWSON* (B)	2,204.22
DILLON (D)	4,694.17
EATON (A)	3,600.63
GOLDBERG	3,137.39
GREEN* (Q)	3,292.82
GROTH (P)	3,315.99
HEINS	6,271.83
JACKSON (C)	2,035.16
JONES* (J)	2,028.25
LITTMAN (I)	3,949.91
MARTINEZ (K)	5,083.39
MARTIN-SOLIS (CTA/NEA Coordinator)	3,129.76
MEEDEN (At-Large)	4,879.18
MELENDEZ (H)	5,282.32
MONTAÑO	5,579.21
STONE* (N)	3,927.10
VAUGHT (M)	3,009.68
VOGEL*	3,826.78
WASHINGTON (At-Large)	2,282.97

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Two At-Large Directors – Statewide

CTA Board Expenses

Amounts represent a monthly average for fiscal year 2014-15. During the reporting year, the normal and statewide activities include CTA Board meetings, State Council, Service Center Council meetings, Equity and Human Rights Conference, Good Teaching Conference, various task force meetings and other business related functions. Some differences in expenditures may be due to the widely varied geographical sizes of directorial districts, distances traveled for Regional, Service Center and other meetings, and the varied number of functions CTA Directors are responsible for attending. Expenses of Board members with partial-year service are averaged based on months served and delineated with an asterisk.

Rights Upheld

Continued from page 44

UTLA is currently trying to unionize the teachers at Alliance, which is LAUSD's largest charter school organization with 27 schools and approximately 700 teachers who are not represented by any union. In general, charter schools are publicly funded, privately managed and non-union.

At press time, all parties were expected in court on Nov. 17 to argue why a preliminary injunction of 90 days should not be issued.

No Rocketship in Contra Costa County

On Oct. 21, the Contra Costa County Board of Education refused to allow Rocketship Education to create one of its charter schools in Contra Costa County.

The Mt. Diablo Education Association had fought the expansion of Redwood City-based Rocketship since the prominent private operator of charter schools submitted its petition to the Mt. Diablo Unified School District (MDUSD) in July. The MDUSD board rejected the petition in August, and the county board upheld its objections. These included concerns about adequate staffing to educate English learners, its use of noncredentialed teachers, and insufficient clarity about its finances and board representation.

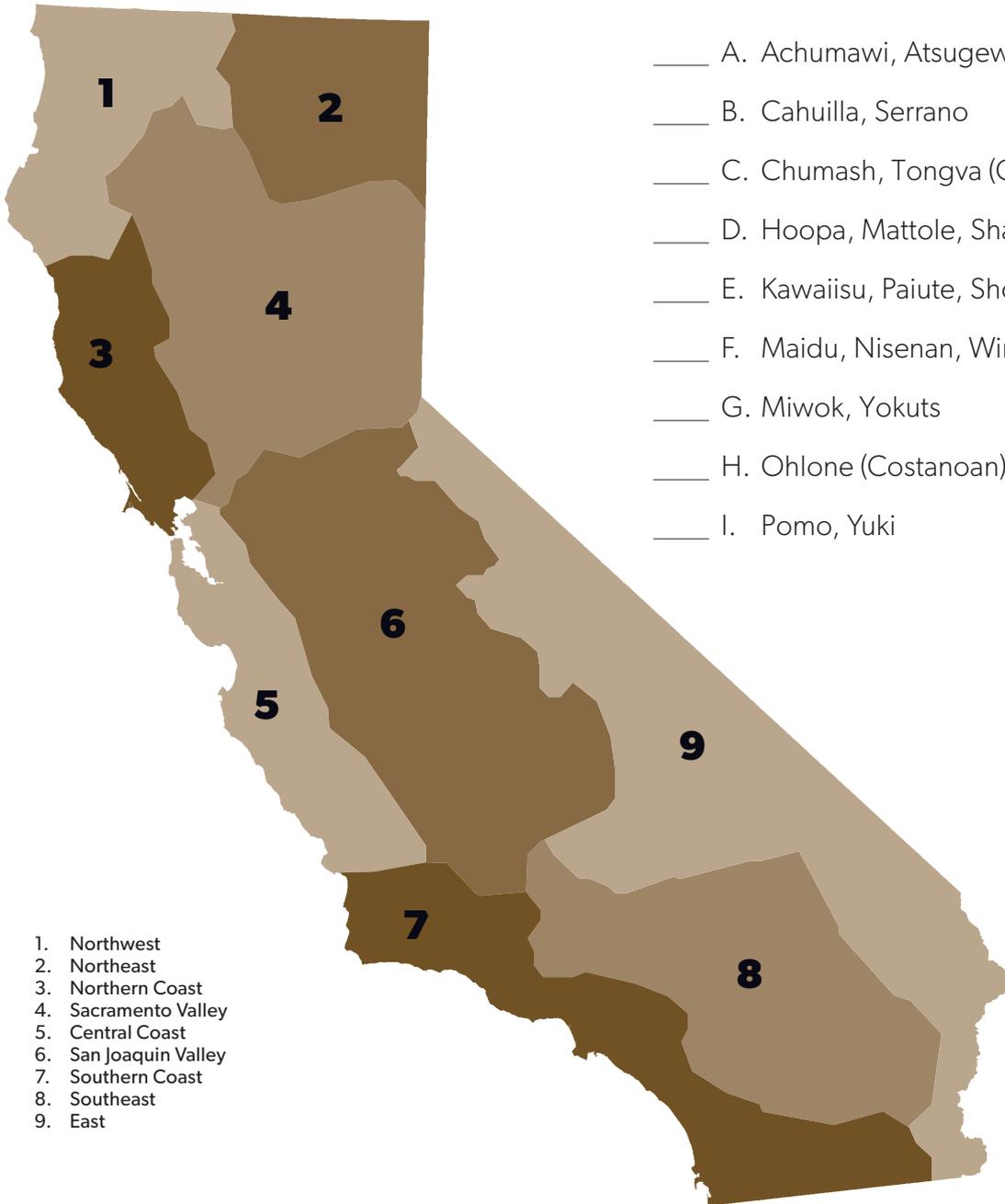
At the public hearing prior to the vote, MDEA members and parents warned that a Rocketship school would drain support from the district's public schools. Rocketship is expected to appeal. ■

Extra Credit Answers

1-D, 2-A, 3-I, 4-F, 5-H,
6-G, 7-C, 8-B, 9-E

Native Californian Tribal Areas

WITH OVER 100 federally recognized tribes and nearly 80 petitioning for recognition, California has the largest Native American population and the greatest number of distinct tribes of any state. Match the areas of California (1–9) with the American Indian peoples (A–I) who have tribal territories there. (Note: Not all Native Californian peoples are included here.) Answers on page 55.



1. Northwest
2. Northeast
3. Northern Coast
4. Sacramento Valley
5. Central Coast
6. San Joaquin Valley
7. Southern Coast
8. Southeast
9. East

- ___ A. Achumawi, Atsugewi, Modoc
- ___ B. Cahuilla, Serrano
- ___ C. Chumash, Tongva (Gabrielino)
- ___ D. Hoopa, Mattole, Shasta, Yurok
- ___ E. Kawaiisu, Paiute, Shoshone
- ___ F. Maidu, Nisenan, Wintu
- ___ G. Miwok, Yokuts
- ___ H. Ohlone (Costanoan), Salinan
- ___ I. Pomo, Yuki

Map adapted from the Smithsonian Institution's *Handbook of North American Indians: California*.

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Protection Facts*

Serving Size 365 days per year

Average Savings:	\$495
Rates Locked In:	12 Months
Summer or Holiday Payments:	Skipped
ID Defense:	FREE
Deductible Waiver:	\$0
Discounts:	Up to 42%
Claims Service:	24 / 7
Towing & Roadside Assistance:	Minimal Fee
In-School Advocates:	Daily

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