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educator

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EXPERIENCES TO ENGAGE, ENRICH AND EXCITE.

Disney Youth Education Series programs take place in the information-rich setting of the Disney Parks in Florida and California to give students – and their teachers – a hands-on, educational adventure. This collection of guided field studies, available in Science, Arts & Humanities and Leadership & Careers, is accredited, standards-based and specifically designed to reinforce your classroom lessons. Practice teamwork, critical thinking and problem-solving skills as your group participates in one-of-a-kind moments that use the magic of Disney to make learning even more impactful.

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FEATURES



School nurse Frank Rodriguez in Anaheim says ill-fitting football helmets contribute to concussions.

54 Making voices heard: CTA's Sesquicentennial

We're celebrating CTA's 150 years of advocacy for our profession, our students and our public schools this year. Read about our dramatic history.

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Changing the Concussion Discussion

Repeat concussions are now linked to long-term brain damage. Concussion rates skyrocketed in the last decade, especially in girls' sports. CTA members like Kim Sutton (above) are promoting new policies and procedures to protect students, making the "winning at all costs" concept second to athletes' health.

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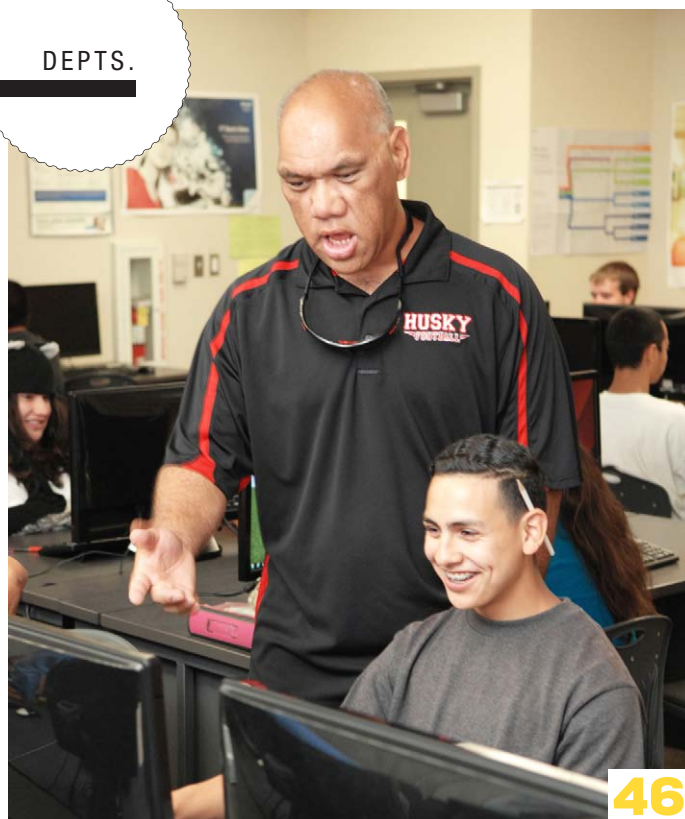
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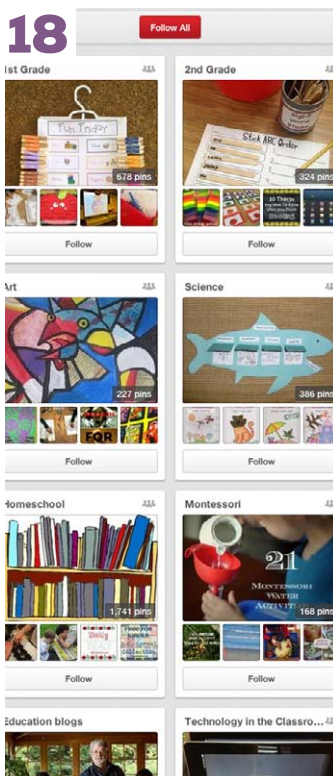
Preparing students for a dying industry

How to help others in their time of need is what CTA members teach students in Cypress College's Mortuary Science Department.



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Is CTA in favor of education reform?

CTA has been leading authentic education reform for years — 150, to be exact. Back in 1863, John Swett, California’s fourth superintendent of public instruction and our founder, brought 100 teachers together to help establish public schools and professional standards. And we’ve been about school improvement ever since.

So, when you hear the phrase “education reform” tossed around, it’s important to remember that the members of the California Teachers Association have consistently spoken out against the market-driven, corporate reform agenda that has monopolized the reform narrative over the last decade.

Today, we continue that work in much the same fashion by coming together to discuss reforms needed by our profession, our students and our schools, and then making them happen.

As I write this, in fact, two important bills are on the governor’s desk.

Governor Brown just signed AB 484. Sponsored by Assembly Member Susan Bonilla (D-Concord), it means a lot less stress for you and your students because it will suspend STAR testing for two years while we implement Common Core State Standards.

California has had some of the highest educational standards in the country for years. But CTA is going to make sure that as we change standards, the implementation will be done thoughtfully and will include teachers in the process.

AB 484 is an example of how CTA works collaboratively with others to

make things happen. I want to thank Governor Brown, Superintendent Torlakson, State Board of Education President Michael Kirst, and Assembly Member Bonilla for working so hard to get this bill passed. It was the right thing to do for students and educators.

An important bill waiting for the governor’s signature is AB 375. Authored by Assembly Member Joan Buchanan (D-Alamo) and co-authored by Sen. Alex Padilla (D-Pacoima), it is designed to streamline and shorten the teacher dismissal process. What was initially a punitive bill proposed in the aftermath of a horrific incident at Miramonte Elementary School has become a much stronger piece of legislation that offers immediate protections for students and families in our communities and a streamlined and shortened dismissal process to ensure charges against teachers are handled fairly and in a timely manner. The bill also clarifies the responsibilities of both school districts and educators with respect to the appeal process.

A companion bill CTA co-sponsored that is now law, AB 449, requires superintendents to report allegations of teacher misconduct to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Superintendents who fail to do so are subject to fines, discipline and misdemeanor prosecution.

We should be proud of the work done on these bills, and we should be proud that we continue to build on the work that was started over 150 years ago. Back then, John Swett said, “Let us organize and work together. Let us make our influence felt in leading public opinion in school affairs.”

I know that I am proud to be president of CTA while we continue to build on that legacy.



Dean E. Vogel
CTA PRESIDENT



DEAN ON THE ISSUES

We wholeheartedly support a safe learning environment for our students. Passage of AB 375 addresses our concerns of keeping students safe, safeguarding the integrity of the profession, and protecting the rights of educators.”

“Testing students on material they have never been taught makes no sense. Educators must have the professional development and resources needed to align curriculum and instruction with the new standards.”

“The economic downturn has significantly impacted California’s students at school and at home, and increasing the minimum wage demonstrates a true commitment to our families and communities.”



Do you have an issue or topic you’d like Dean to address? Let us know. Email editor@cta.org.



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California Educator is published for the information and edification of CTA members. The editorial philosophy is governed by the policies of CTA. Articles and advertising reflect that philosophy. Letters to the editor may be sent to editor@cta.org.

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CTA/NEA membership dues for the fiscal year, Sept. 1–Aug. 31, are \$826, including a \$20 voluntary contribution (see www.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.

California Educator (ISSN 1091-6148) is published monthly except January, July and August by:

CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
 1705 Murchison Dr., Burlingame, CA 94010-4583
 650-697-1400; fax 650-552-5002
editor@cta.org, www.cta.org

Postmaster: Send change of address to *California Educator*, P.O. Box 4178, Burlingame, CA 94011-4178.

Periodicals Postage Paid at Burlingame, CA, and additional mailing offices.



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Use this hashtag in your tweets and we'll select our favorites for each issue of the *California Educator*.

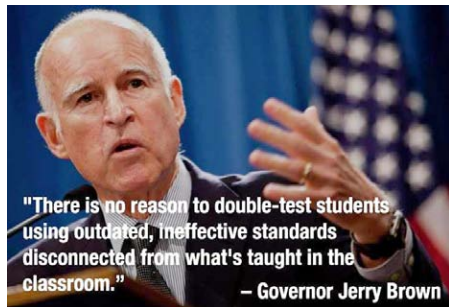


Viral video 🎥



CTA's 150th anniversary As seen on TV, our latest commercial highlights our union's 150 years of making a difference that lasts a lifetime. www.cta.org/adcampaign2013

Most popular post 📌



Sept 10 270 likes 196 shares

Favorite comments 💬

Geri Coats | Sept 16

A testing reprieve is sensible and necessary. In addition to the reprieve, the budget sense and all that, it gives me TWO MORE WEEKS to actually teach! Or three if you calculate in the week prior to testing that goes into test strategies instead of content. Weeks! Not days, weeks!

Joanne Sheehan | Sept 13

Lindevald Education is not a competitive race, with the winner judged by test scores! It's a journey of discovery. When children live in poverty, it's much harder for them to succeed. This is not the fault or failure of the education system. We need to work together, not compete against one another, to lift everyone up.

More top tweets 🐦

@docdcc | Sept 15

Students benefit from an experienced teacher who is not worried about losing a job.

@FinEdChat | Sept 6

Ed reform should bring teachers, kids, and communities together. Sadly, competition for dollars influencing policy, discussion.

@amy_spade | Sept 5

Why is public school choice the main solution for failing schools? How about fixing the failing schools? #RealEdTalk

@gardengn0me | Sept 6

My public school teachers didn't charge \$50,000 a day to put students first. @MichelleRhee does.

What's new at cta.org

1

cta.org/breastcancer

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is a time to learn about the strides made in battling cancer, don pink ribbons, cheer the survivors, and remember the fighters who are no longer with us.

2

cta.org/150

150th Anniversary materials

We're having a huge celebration! Check out the newest posters, fliers, Facebook covers, and much more on CTA's 150th Anniversary Resources webpage.

3

cta.org/ccss

Preparing for the Common Core State Standards

Learn where CTA stands on the new standards, get tips on implementation, take a practice test, view videos, read FAQs, and much more.

4

cta.org/chavez2013visual

César E. Chávez Awards Program

See the winners of the 2013 César E. Chávez Awards. These heartfelt drawings and paintings by students of all ages honor the principles that Chávez lived by.

5

cta.org/family

Families can help kids stay engaged

It's a new school year, and families can help keep kids engaged in school by using the tips and suggestions in our Family Involvement section.

DEPARTMENTS

Know & Tell

Know & Tell introduces useful and fun tips and provides the latest on scholarships, grants and resources.

Perspectives

Perspectives amplifies members' voices and includes the ever-popular Point/Counterpoint series, plus guest columns, and book and movie reviews.

Advocacy

Advocacy showcases the great work of CTA members in the bargaining, member rights and legislative arenas.

Learning

Learning highlights members' best practices and practical advice and showcases education trends.

CTA & You

CTA & You covers all things CTA, including events such as State Council, trainings and conferences, plus member benefits and services.

Chock-full of stories

“Hold your breath!” whispered my daughter and her friends as we passed a cemetery. As an 11-year-old, Casey and her friends believed the superstition about holding your breath lest you breathe in the spirit of someone who recently died.

I think death is scary at any age. It takes empathy and sympathy to deal with the loss of loved ones. That’s why the story about Community College Association members teaching mortuary science (page 28) is so fascinating. They’re preparing students for a necessary career while learning so much about life.

This magazine is chock-full of provocative articles. High-stakes standardized tests, the ones you’ve spent way too much time drilling students for, are being shelved for the time being so you can prepare for the computer-based assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards (page 38). And how do locals bargaining accountability, instructional and bread-and-butter issues get the best settlement for students and educators alike? Coordinated Bargaining Councils empower them (page 34), as many chapters discovered.

Read about an Oakley teacher who is advocating for a law to promote breast cancer awareness (page 26). Perhaps you can help? Meet another member, a Republican in Santa Clarita Valley, and see how she promotes public schools (page 39). And see what members who are changing

the discussion on concussions (page 11) say about brain research. With high schools in the middle of football season, this topic is timely, and so important.

I hope you like the instructional topics this month. See advice for and from substitute teachers on page 50. And for you gamers, check out using Minecraft to teach geometry on page 46. I’m collecting questions about instructional issues and asking members of CTA’s Think Tank, which includes National Board Certified teachers, to provide counsel in a new column. The advice about dealing with challenging parents (page 21) is from a Palo Alto member. If you have topics, please email me at editor@cta.org.

You have emailed me about the redesigned magazine. Thank you. I’m pleased you find content easier to find within the five new departments and your topic suggestions are intriguing. You’ll see some of those topics in this month’s *Educator*. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome.

Cynthia Menzel
EDITOR IN CHIEF
editor@cta.org

Read about the rest of the story online!

Read behind-the-scenes stories in the *California Educator* at blog.cta.org, and see additional photos from stories in this magazine at cta.org/educator.

The new *California Educator* earns high praise

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 to editor@cta.org.

	<p>CaliforniaPTA @CaliforniaPTA 19 Sep Thanks @CATeachersAssoc for highlighting the critical importance of the arts! #artsed digital.copcomm.com/i/166026/0</p>
	<p>Julie White @ACSAMedia 19 Sep Kudos to CTA for launching mobile friendly resource for teachers @CATeachersAssoc</p>
	<p>Paul Hefner @phfner 19 Sep I'm loving redesigned California Educator magazine. Great resources, easy to read. Congrats @CATeachersAssoc</p>



The new look of the magazine is incredible. It made me even more proud to be a member of CTA. The vastly improved magazine will do wonders to unite us in advocacy, celebrate our work in the classrooms, and show the public at large that we are truly partners with the communities of California.

SCOTT A. LOPEZ
Arcadia Teachers Association

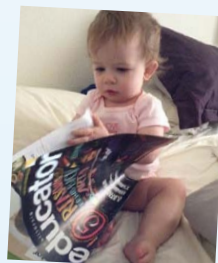
I want to commend the CTA communications team for creating such a relevant, exciting and fun-to-read publication. There are many, many positive attributes to this new format. The only criticism I might offer is that some of the very light-scaled fonts on pages 1 and 14 are simply difficult to read. They have a pleasing appearance, but utility trumps aesthetics in this case. Congratulations!

JOHN HOUCHIN
President, Santa Barbara Teachers Association

Editor's note: Thanks for the suggestion. See changes in this issue.

I just wanted to say that I like the new design and format of the *Educator*. Great job!

ELIZABETH MALONEY
President, San Juan Delta College Teachers Association



Allison reading the *California Educator*. We need to share the love our 15-month-old daughter, Allison, has for CTA already.

JEANNE MARKS
Eastside Teachers Association

This month's edition of the *Educator* was outstanding. I provided extra copies to our board members. I also used some of the quotes that you provided in my speech to the school board, and gathered further information from your articles regarding Common Core and QEIA for the content of my talk. I can't imagine that you would know the extent that our members are using this magazine, so I wanted to share that with you!

Also, I share an office with two other local chapters, and one of our presidents shared she is completely impressed with the development of our magazine. I thought that was important for you to know, as well!

ANN KATZBURG
President, San Ramon Valley Education Association

I am so impressed with the new format of the September *California Educator*. The formatting of the pages makes it easy for me to access the information I want to read. I also find the various department categories helpful in pulling together content that follows a theme.

I am most pleased to read the "Quotes & Numbers" page, as well as Tiffany Hasker's article about Twitter. The *California Educator*, I believe, strikes a nice balance between a professional education journal and a magazine that chronicles the important activities of the California Teachers Association. Well done!

GREG BONACCORSI
NEA Director, Fremont Unified District Teachers Association

Arts and the law

I was delighted to see in my September *California Educator* the feature article “5 reasons to bring back the arts.” There are two sections in the California Education Code that mandate that visual and performing arts be included in the school curriculum. There is also a section that requires local governing boards to enforce the Education Code, and another section that allows the board to opt out by being granted a waiver by the State Board of Education. Yet school governing boards have been allowed to treat the arts as optional.

I have learned that the state superintendent of instruction, the California Department of Education and the State Board of Education have no authority to enforce the code. This must be changed. To do this I have been meeting with staff of legislators, both from the Joint Committee on the Arts and the two Education committees, with the goal of getting enforcement legislation.

CARL SCHAFFER

Retired music teacher, *Ontario-Montclair*

Don't water down arts education

I was excited to read “5 reasons to bring back the arts.” While the reasons given are valid, the biggest reason for teaching art was missed: the study of art for art's sake. We are teaching students to value the aesthetics of art and music, and to value the artistic process. No other core subject has to defend or justify its content the way art and music teachers constantly do.

The article makes the arts seem peripheral; something to sprinkle into another subject to make it fun or engaging, or to keep students enrolled. We sell our arts courses, degrees and credentials short if we think and defend our classes this way.



More classes are given fine arts credit, but they are not being taught by qualified, credentialed art educators, and our students are the ones losing out. Students are not getting a true arts education, nor understanding the process of becoming an artist. Art is about more than making things; music is about more than singing songs.

The UC and CSU systems deem art classes so important to a high school student's education, they include a one-year arts course in their A-G requirements. California leads the way in careers based on the arts. If we really want to bring the arts back into schools, let's make sure we are doing it the right way — with true arts courses taught by experts in their fields.

Let's protect the arts in California schools from becoming watered down.

MOLLY PETERS

Hart District Teachers Association

There's no substitute for a good substitute!

Substitute teachers play a limited but very important role in your school year. With a little planning, you can ensure that your students don't miss out on a day of instruction, the job is rewarding for your sub, and when you return, everything will be in order.

Remember, they're called substitute teachers. Let them teach. Granted, this becomes problematic for advanced math, science or foreign language classes. Mastery of the subject matter is not, however, essential for encouraging and directing class participation. The best days subbing are the ones where teachers actually lead discussions. It's more rewarding than just showing a movie, and the kids love it.

Your lesson plan should contain enough material to challenge students, and your instructions

should be thorough, yet concise. If you can't explain the assignment without a lot of verbiage, chances are your sub will have a hard time interpreting it for your students.

Do your subs and your students a favor: Make your assignments count. If students know that there is no weight attached to the work the sub gives them, they will definitely act accordingly.

If you have a good experience with a sub, ask that teacher back. Your return business may be the only acknowledgement a sub gets for a job well done. If your sub goes above and beyond, let your office manager, principal and HR know about it.

JOHN LADD

Substitute teacher, *Burbank*

Editor's note: See more tips for and from substitute teachers on page 50.



Just asking...

Dale Kennedy said [in the September point/counterpoint], “The Pledge of Allegiance must be recited daily in school classrooms in order to celebrate the United States of America. Otherwise our republic may not stand the pressures of time.” Makes me wonder how the nation survived the 100-plus years before the pledge was invented.

ALAN HASKVITZ

Walnut Valley Education Association

Correction:

The September article about the Alview-Dairyland Teachers Association's bargaining experience implied the superintendent's resignation was a result of the association's actions. Many factors contributed to the resignation. In addition, two pink-slipped members were told during their duty-free lunch period they were going to receive layoff notices; they did not receive the notices at that time.

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS OUT

Changing the concussion discussion

BY SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN

The marching band hails the home team's arrival on the field. Cheerleaders feverishly hurl themselves into the air. Excitement builds and the game begins. After a long wait, football season has finally arrived.

The roar of the crowd is deafening, and it drowns out the noise of two helmets colliding. A player falls and the crowd goes silent. The injured player is removed and the game continues.

Coaches worry that the student may have sustained a possible concussion, but don't know for sure. The symptoms — dizziness, nausea and headache — could happen instantly upon impact on a Friday night, or they might creep up on a student Monday morning while sitting in algebra class. There's just no telling.

One thing is certain: Concussion rates in school sports are skyrocketing, having doubled in the last decade. Once considered a minor injury, repeat concussions are now linked to long-term brain damage. They happen more in football, but occur in other contact sports, too. Women's soccer, for example, has the second-highest concussion rate. Then there's lacrosse, volleyball, basketball and wrestling.

And that's where our story begins — with Jake Forgy, a young man who got his "bell rung," as they say, during a wrestling match last year.



IT STARTED LIKE ANY OTHER WRESTLING MATCH, before things took a bad turn. The coach didn't see it, but Jake Forgy was severely head-butted by his opponent. Both boys were wearing helmets.

"I blacked out for a moment. I thought, 'It's no big deal,' and kept on. Afterward, I felt weak. My head hurt. I felt dizzy and had to sit down. Then they took me to the ER," recalls Jake.

After being diagnosed with a concussion, Jake was sent home to rest. His doctor advised him not to attend school, exercise, read, watch television or use a computer for a few days.

"It was hard. I wanted to stay in the competition. I wanted to go to school the next day. But I definitely knew I had the symptoms of a concussion."

Now in his senior year at Montgomery High School in Santa Rosa, Jake feels fine. His goal is to play on the football and wrestling teams — and avoid more blows to the head, since research shows that multiple concussions affect how the brain functions.



Dave Contreras

Today, concussions are taken seriously, says Contreras, a member of the executive committee of the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF), which governs high school sports. That's because studies show repetitive head trauma can lead to permanent decrease in brain function, including memory loss, early Alzheimer's disease and movement disorders. Getting back in the

CONCUSSION REPERCUSSIONS

A decade ago, Jake's situation would have been handled differently.

"We'd say, 'You just got your bell rung. Get back in the game when you feel better,'" recalls Dave Contreras, longtime football coach and the athletic director at Wheatland High School.

game is dangerous: A subsequent concussion before the brain recovers from the first one can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of an athlete having long-term problems.

There's also a link to emotional disturbances. Some NFL players who committed suicide, including Junior Seau, suffered from chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a type of brain damage from multiple unhealed concussions.

WHY THE SURGE?

High school athletes sustain 300,000 concussions a year — and concussions doubled in the last decade, reports the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Football has the most, followed by girls' soccer, where concussions mostly occur from colliding, not bumping the ball on one's head. Hockey, basketball, wrestling, volleyball and lacrosse also pose risks.

"I think the increase is happening for a wide range of reasons," says Contreras, Wheatland High Education Association. "Athletes are bigger, faster and stronger. They are more competitive, too."



Trista Forgy with her son, Jake, who got a concussion during a wrestling match.



CLASSIFYING CONCUSSIONS

NFL players bargained to eliminate “live contact” during off-season practice to reduce the risk of brain damage. The NCAA has been urged to follow suit.

- A concussion is caused by a blow to the head causing the brain to move rapidly inside the skull.
- A repeat concussion before the brain recovers from the first concussion slows recovery and may cause long-term or permanent brain damage.
- Repetitive head trauma/concussions can lead to permanent decrease in brain function including memory loss, nervous system problems and emotional problems.
- No helmet is concussion-proof. Proper fit is imperative.
- The cure is rest, abstaining from school, reading, TV, computer or exercise until a health care professional clears a student for activity.

Frank Rodriguez, a school nurse and former high school football player, believes outdated, ill-fitting helmets, drills causing blindside “hits” to the head, not enough neck-strengthening exercises, and dehydration are factors, along with the public’s demand for extreme sports.

“Football is the ultimate warrior team sport, and it’s a collision sport,” says Rodriguez, Anaheim Elementary Education Association. “The athlete is mentored to think ‘Winning isn’t everything, it’s the only thing.’”

Students are starting sports at younger ages, and thanks to Title IX, many girls are participating in sports. Girls are more susceptible to concussions than boys.

Athletes are also to blame: Half of high school football players say they would continue playing, even if they thought they had a concussion. Nearly half say they wouldn’t report symptoms to their coach, despite knowing there are serious risks.

NEW RULES PROTECT ATHLETES

“When in doubt, sit them out.”

This means athletes showing signs of concussion should be removed immediately from play and not allowed to return until they have written clearance from a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and brain injuries. After the CDC adopted that motto, the CIF passed Bylaw 313 in 2010 with that exact language.

The mandate is being taken seriously.

“You send kids to the doctor, that’s my bottom line,” says Tyrone Brown, athletic director at Silverado High School, where he has coached girls’ basketball and volleyball for years.



Outdated, ill-fitting helmets, drills causing blindside “hits” to the head, and not enough neck-strengthening exercises are some of the reasons for increased numbers of concussions, says Frank Rodriguez.

During a warm-up last year, one of his students was hit by “friendly fire” when a volleyball player spiked a ball at her head. When the girl remained lethargic, Brown urged her mother to take her to a doctor. The diagnosis: concussion.

Under AB 1451, passed in 2012, high school coaches receive online training every two years on how to recognize signs of concussions and respond appropriately. The training is important, says Brown, but doesn’t diminish the importance of health care professionals, since educators are not medical experts.



PHOTO BY MATT HARTUNG

Reducing hits during practice is a priority for Tulelake High School Football Coach Shane Wood. “Winning at all costs is secondary to athletes’ health.”

“The online training is helpful and makes you more aware of what’s going on, but we are not trained to diagnose concussions, and if we misdiagnose the situation, we could be blamed for acting as a doctor,” adds Brown, Victor Valley Teachers Association.

Targeting a defenseless opposing player and making contact above the shoulders are grounds for ejection under an NFL ruling two years ago, and the ruling has filtered down to the collegiate and high school levels. So has the rule stating if a player’s helmet

comes off during play, the player must leave the field of play for one down, which reduces the threat of intentional bumping.

NFL players recently bargained to eliminate “live contact” during off-season practice to reduce the risk of brain damage from cumulative

hits, and NFL players are not allowed to wear pads during off-season workouts. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) has been urged to follow suit. Rules limiting preseason contact have not filtered down to high schools, but CIF officials say they may eventually. The policy has been adopted at Fresno Unified School District and a few others.

Girls are more susceptible to concussions than boys.

“We’re all trying to be proactive with sports, and it’s an ongoing process,” says Contreras.

Reducing hits during practice is a priority for Shane Wood, a football coach at Tulelake High School for 22 years.

“On occasion there needs to be some full impact, but that doesn’t need to happen frequently in practice.”

Wood’s players perform daily exercises to strengthen the neck, and they wear state-of-the-art helmets purchased two years ago with grant money. He also makes sure they drink plenty of water. None of these things guarantee a concussion won’t happen, but they can reduce the odds.

“We take a different approach now,” says Wood, Tulelake Basin Teachers Association. “We put more attention on taking care of the kids, and winning at all costs is secondary to athletes’ health.”

SETTING A BASELINE

The best way to determine whether a concussion has occurred is having athletes take a “baseline” test, a preseason exam to assess balance, reaction time and brain function. Comparing post-injury reactions to baseline test results helps determine when a player can return to school and participate in sports.

Sometimes baseline tests are administered by a doctor or



Educators are not medical experts, says Tyrone Brown. “You send kids to the doctor, that’s my bottom line.”

athletic trainer during an exam that clears students for eligibility. A player may be asked to count backwards, stand on one foot or perform other skills to assess cognitive and reaction levels.

A baseline test administered by Jake’s physician determined that he had a concussion, says his mother, Trista Forgy, a teacher at Strawberry Elementary School in Santa Rosa and president of the Bennett Valley Teachers Association.

“He had a perfect score during his physical, but after the concussion he couldn’t recite the months of the year backward or balance on one foot. It was shocking. We were blown away that he couldn’t do these things.”

Baseline tests are not yet mandated by the Collegiate Interscholastic Federation for high school athletes, although some districts require them. Santa Rosa City School District, where Jake attends school, required athletes to undergo baseline testing this year. However, the *Press Democrat* reported that the testing hasn’t happened due to snags in hiring trainers to administer the tests and monitor students.

Online baseline tests are now required by the NCAA for college sports teams.

“They are very helpful,” says Kim Sutton, head coach for women’s soccer at CSU Chico and a California Faculty Association member. “The tests give feedback on reaction time, and when students retake them, we know how severe a concussion is. We make students retake the test repeatedly until it shows they are able to play. You can’t base your decision on what an athlete tells you, because they are not honest.”

Baseline testing can’t determine if students have had concussions in different schools. Sutton recalls a freshman who did not share information that she had one or more concussions before arriving at Chico.

“She displayed signs and symptoms of a concussion after a morning training session. On some days she couldn’t focus.



Baseline tests are not yet mandated for high school athletes, although some districts require them “They are very helpful to see how severe a concussion is,” says Kim Sutton. “You can’t base your decision on what an athlete tells you, because they are not honest.”

She had severe headaches most of the time. She was nauseous, had physical discomfort, memory issues, and on some days was extremely depressed. Once we learned she had had multiple concussions, she saw a specialist. The doctor said she could not play contact sports ever again, because of the risk of injury. The student finished her freshman year and then returned home to seek medical care. She was only 18. It was heartbreaking.”

CHANGING THE CONCUSSION DISCUSSION

In addition to following the CDC guidelines, use common sense. Don't let athletes persuade you that they are "just fine" after a bump or blow to the head. Remind them that it's better to miss one game than an entire season. Talk to parents so they recognize the signs and symptoms, suggests "Heads Up," a free online course and resource toolkit offered by the CDC at www.cdc.gov/concussion.

Jake's mother is glad to see a new focus on safety. While sports are a great way for youths to stay active, learn leadership and be part of a team, they can also be dangerous.

"It rocked my world; there's nothing worse than seeing my incredibly active son hooked up to an IV and having a CAT scan," says Forgy. "It won't be easy watching him play football this year. He's a big boy, and I want him to live his life. I prefer that he not do things that risk his well-being. But I'm glad to see the sports community is learning how to prevent, recognize and respond to concussions."



CLASSROOM TEACHERS BE AWARE

YOU CAN'T SEE A CONCUSSION. Some athletes may not experience or report symptoms until hours or days after the injury. After a big game, check for these symptoms in athletes:

- Unequal pupil size
- Headache
- Nausea
- Dizziness, balance problems
- Fatigue
- Sleep disturbance
- Sensitivity to light and noise
- Mood changes
- Difficulty with memory and concentration

If there's a possibility that a concussion has occurred, the player should be removed immediately. A doctor, school psychologist or school nurse may advise when it is best for the student to return to school. It may be necessary to adjust academic demands until a student recovers completely.

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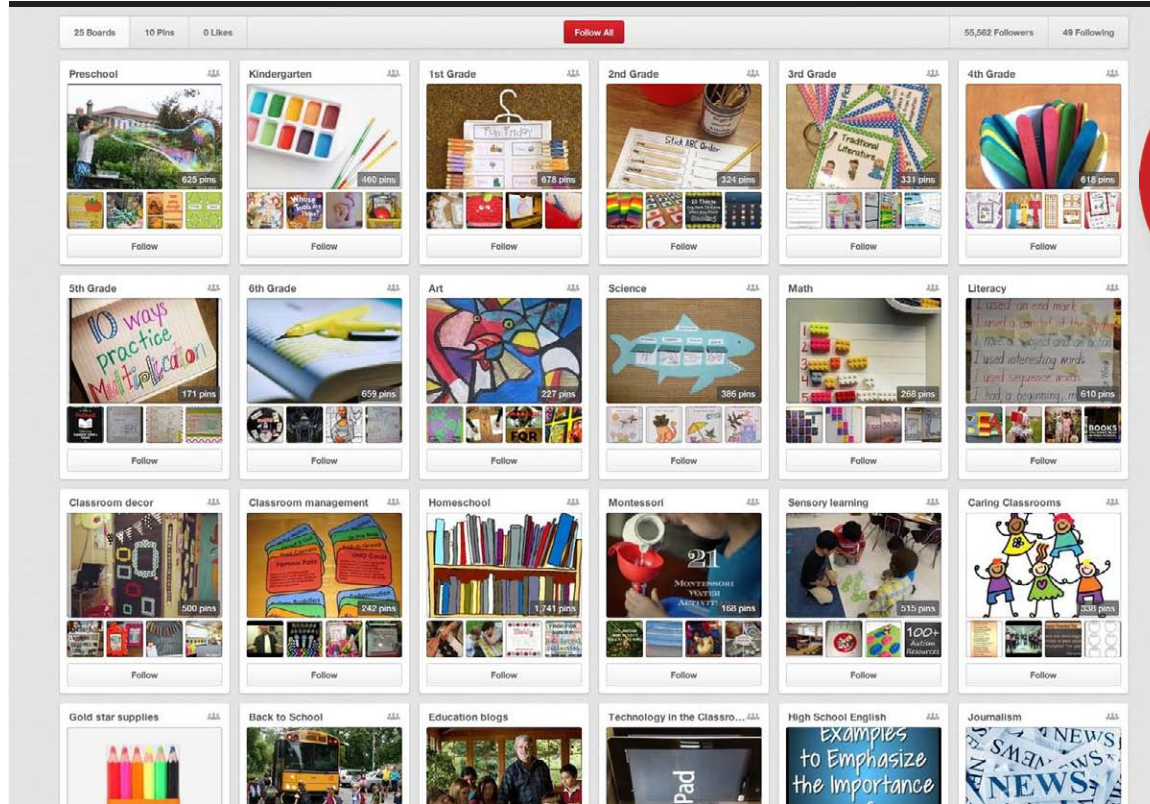
Know & Tell

Grants, awards, contests, resources and tips to share

To help **students be successful**, it's important for teachers to have a **positive relationship** with parents. Sometimes that's not easy. "When a difficult parent contact awaits you, **take a deep breath, slow things down**, and take a clinical approach to the problem."

THAT'S PART OF **DAVID B. COHEN'S** ADVICE ON PAGE 21. COHEN IS A MEMBER OF CTA'S THINK TANK, WHICH IS PROVIDING ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON INSTRUCTIONAL ISSUES FOR THE *EDUCATOR*. HAVE A TOPIC YOU'D LIKE ADVICE ON? EMAIL EDITOR@CTA.ORG.





Why Pinterest?



I like that I don't have to look through a website with hundreds of curricular sites. They are categorized, so hopefully you're looking at the best ideas or links in that category.

EMILY SMITH LINTS
Elk Grove Education Association

Pinterest Pinning 101

BY TERRY NG

WHAT IS PINTEREST? Pinterest (www.pinterest.com) is an online tool and social media site for collecting and organizing things that inspire you. More than 500,000 education-related ideas are “pinned” every day, making Pinterest one of the top five professional development websites for teachers.

Basic pinning 101

Pin: A pin starts with an image or video you add to Pinterest.

Board: A board is where you organize your pins by topic.

Follow: When you follow someone, their pins show up in your Pinterest home feed.

Home Feed: Your home feed is a collection of pins from pinners and boards you follow. It's updated every time someone you follow adds a pin.

Where should I start?

Teachers on Pinterest (www.pinterest.com/teachers) is a great starting point. In this hub you'll find everything from lesson plans for different grades to classroom decorating ideas, and topics like Fun With Phonics.

Who else is using Pinterest?

Star teachers from around the world. Here are a few to follow:

Megan Zachman, second-grade teacher — www.pinterest.com/minimeg

MrHughes, sixth-grade teacher — www.pinterest.com/mrjhughes

Jenaya Share, first-grade teacher — www.pinterest.com/lessonplandiva

How can I join the Pinterest movement?

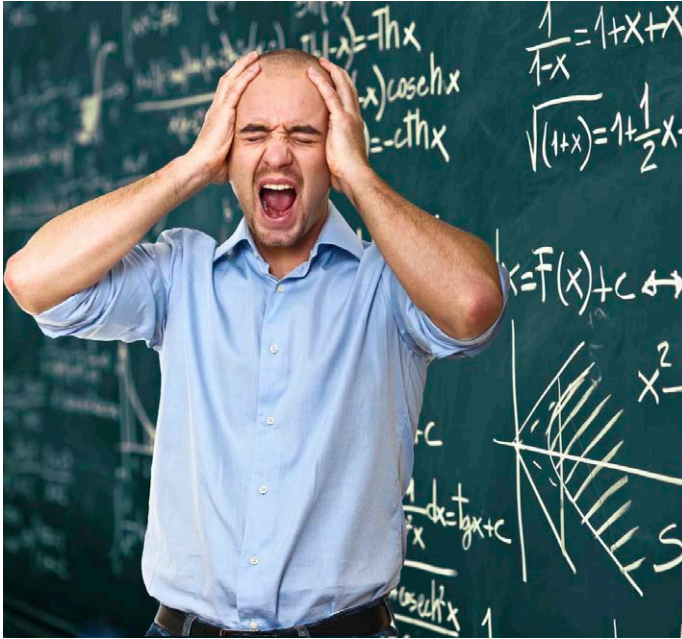
Follow Teachers on Pinterest (www.pinterest.com/teachers) to find and share creative ideas.

Personally, I love the sharing of ideas. Collaboration across schools is difficult for us, so Pinterest gives us a simple way to exchange ideas. Our teachers have the opportunity to share their pins, and know they can trust our BTA union to really help filter pins so that they get teacher- and district-approved Common Core pins.

BETSY NEWMAYER
Beaumont Teachers Association

Did you know?

BY SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN



It's probably no surprise to CTA members that stress levels of teachers are up these days. Half of all teachers say they're under greater stress several days per week, compared with a third of teachers in 1985, according to a new MetLife survey. The news is disappointing but not surprising, says NEA President Dennis Van Roekel, who links higher teacher stress with lower school funding occurring during the same time period.

3 TIPS FOR COPING WITH STRESS

- 1** Say no in a friendly way to extra responsibilities, such as serving on another committee or being in charge of the school fundraiser.
- 2** Strengthen relationships with supportive friends and family members.
- 3** Change your reaction. Decide not to get angry about everyday annoyances. Pick your battles.

IF YOU DISCOVER research you think we should highlight, send it along with your name and local chapter to editor@cta.org.

Informal style and sloppiness from texting and social media is having a not so gr8 influence on teen writing assignments, say teachers in a recent study by the Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project. Sixty-eight percent of 2,500 middle and high school teachers surveyed say students are taking "shortcuts" in writing due to texting and the Internet. However, 78 percent of teachers credit the Net and social media for bringing out "personal expression" among students.

Isaac Newton pondered an apple falling and discovered gravity. Today, curiosity is still the most valuable trait for success in a science classroom, says a survey of scientists, students and their parents in the Philadelphia School District. While student curiosity is stimulated from a hands-on approach to learning, notes the study, this presents a challenge for educators lacking microscopes, beakers and other science supplies in financially strapped districts.

There's little to justify the rapidly expanding growth of virtual schools. In the 2010-11 school year, only 23.6 percent of virtual schools made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), compared with 52 percent for traditional schools, report the National Education Policy Center (NEPC) and the Great Lakes Center for Education Research and Practice. Profits, rather than student outcomes, are the main driver behind the rapid growth of virtual schools, notes the study.

The economy may be improving, but families are making college choices driven by "fears" of tuition hikes and job losses, says loan giant Sallie Mae. Maybe that's because tuition at public four-year colleges is up 27 percent beyond overall inflation over the past five years. (Yikes!) The good news? Eighty-five percent of parents view college as an investment in their child's future. NOTE: Need help

with tuition? CTA offers numerous scholarships for members and their families. Check out cta.org/scholarships!

A new national survey shows once again that the public has a deep trust in our public schools, and that a majority of people feel unreliable standardized test scores should not be used to evaluate teachers, according to the annual Phi Delta Kappa Gallup Poll of 1,001 Americans about attitudes about public schools. The survey found that parents feel public schools are safe, support increasing mental health services in schools instead of hiring more security guards, and reject arming teachers and administrators.

Quotes & Numbers

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

“The Los Angeles Unified School District did the right thing by setting some new requirements for parent trigger petitions for school reform. But the small changes a local district can make don’t go nearly far enough to amend a sloppily written and poorly implemented state law.”

—From the Sept. 20 *Los Angeles Times* editorial calling on the Legislature and State Board of Education to fix the flawed, unfair parent trigger law.

35.9%

Percentage of unionized public sector workers nationwide, according to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

“After 33 years, I am still excited about going to school every day. I enjoy watching the light bulbs go on when students get it, and the personal connections I can make with them. The main goals I set for all my students are to become the best people they possibly can, show integrity and empathy toward others, and to lead a healthy and active life.”

—Barbara J. Kaufman, PE teacher and Mountain View-Los Altos Union High School District Teachers Association member, one of 36 Santa Clara County Teachers of the Year for 2013.

16.1 MILLION

Number of U.S. children living in poverty in 2012, which represents nearly 22 percent of all Americans under age 18, according to latest Census Bureau data. Total Americans living in poverty: 46.5 million.

“As a member of the California Teachers Association, founded in 1863, I know the teachers who came before me made a difference for every child at every level of California’s public schools and colleges.”

—Tracy Jimenez-Bedolla, a sixth-grade teacher at Sunnyslope Elementary in Hollister, speaking in a CTA radio ad launched on 89 stations in September.

“We have many schools, districts, and some counties in California that have no teacher librarians at a time in education history when our kids, our state, and our country desperately need them. Their expertise is crucial to the transformative implementation of both 21st century skills and Common Core State Standards.”

—Glen Warren, a certified teacher librarian and Orange Unified Education Association member, in a Sept. 30 news story about the California credentialed school librarian shortage affecting Common Core implementation.

\$877 vs. \$663

The weekly median earnings of U.S. union women employees versus nonunion women, based on AFL-CIO research.

\$12.3 million

The average total compensation in 2012 for CEOs of the companies in the S&P 500 Index. That is 354 times the average wages of rank-and-file workers in 2012, according to AFL-CIO research.

What's the best way to handle challenging parents?



David B. Cohen, a National Board Certified teacher and Palo Alto Educators Association member, answered this question based on his 18 years teaching high school. He is a member of CTA's Think Tank, which is comprised of passionate professionals who are examining the best practices of teaching and learning.

Have a question or need advice? We will share your issue with members of CTA's Think Tank. Email editor@cta.org.

It's a feeling most teachers know, which churns in your gut when you see a particular email or letter, or hear a voice mail, and realize that a tense, difficult parent contact awaits you. Take a deep breath, slow things down, and take a clinical approach to the problem. If it's really going to take a while to compose your thoughts or address concerns, let parents know promptly that you've heard their concerns and you're working on a response. Tell them when they should expect to hear from you again, and follow through!

KEEP IN MIND that as professional educators, our job is to understand all sides, work with parents and students as partners, and resolve challenging situations in ways that support students' learning and well-being. Parents and teachers generally have the same long-term interests in helping children thrive personally and academically; in the short term, misunderstandings, tensions and family situations can all lead to different interpretations of how to handle a given situation in a way that addresses those long-term interests.

If you are confronting a situation where students feel the short-term sting of an unpleasant outcome, be it academic or disciplinary, articulate exactly why your actions are consistent with your goals of supporting the student's overall long-term needs, and how your position squares with applicable policies. Offer flexibility when you can, and don't be afraid to change your mind as new information comes to

light; holding your ground is only a virtue in the face of unreasonable demands. And when you do make a mistake (yes, we do that sometimes), apologize, thank the parent for bringing it to your attention, and make amends.

Sometimes, despite your sympathy and professionalism, a conflict persists. A wise administrator once advised me that the longer a contentious situation lasts, the shorter and less detailed your contacts should become. At some point you may need to disengage from a situation rather than repeat a cycle of counterproductive bickering.

Try not to let a situation sap you of your time, energy and spirit. If that's happening, you should expect administrative support so that you can resume doing your best work for all your students. Absent that support, a conversation with trusted colleagues or your association representatives would be in order.



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Perspectives

Members' opinions and practical advice, plus guest columns and reviews



Football is an **academic motivator** and helps students learn skills that last a lifetime. The increase in **students' injuries** prompts some to say the benefits aren't **worth the risks**.

READ OUR POINT/COUNTERPOINT ON THE NEXT PAGE TO SEE WHAT MEMBERS JACQUELLA PAYNE AND GEORGE ZUBER HAVE TO SAY.

Is tackle football too dangerous for teens?

YES

Football is our nation's biggest pastime. Unfortunately, sometimes we are more concerned with winning than the safety and long-term well-being of students on the field.

Sometimes students are sent back into the game when there is the possibility they have a concussion, and sometimes students diagnosed with a concussion are allowed to play again before they have completely healed. Evidence shows repeated concussions can cause brain damage that affects academic learning and emotional development. Hopefully, the new concussion guidelines are being followed.

I didn't allow my son to play tackle football because I felt that the risks outweighed the benefits. He played basketball and was more of a "gamer," so it was not a big disappointment to him.

I am not a big football fan, but I attended my children's high school games. My daughter was in color guard and my son was in marching band, so I looked forward to half-time. When it was a championship or playoff game I got caught up in the excitement. But I also worried about the ever-present danger to young players. However, the potential for head injuries was not of primary concern to fans in the stands, based on comments made around me.

In addition to the competitiveness of the game and the excitement of potentially winning, perhaps there is something on a subconscious, primal level that makes watching people being physically aggressive toward each other during a game even more exciting.

When a serious injury occurs and 911 is called and the student is taken off the field, there's a jarring return to reality. People think, "Oh yeah, there is a potential for serious injuries," and they feel concern. But the game continues.

JACQUELLA PAYNE, *Mountain View Teachers Association*, has been a school nurse for 15 years and an RN for 32 years.



Want to read more?

See the concussion discussion on page 11.

NO

Teenagers — especially teenage boys — are naturally going to engage in activities that most of us would consider dangerous, such as skateboarding, wrestling, roughhousing, etc. Football is an excellent way to channel that energy (often fueled by increased testosterone) into an organized and supervised team-building activity.

There have been many recent rule changes in football at all levels, including the NFL, that have made the game much safer, including no helmet-to-helmet contact. All football coaches are required to take mandatory training to learn first aid and CPR, as well as how to recognize the symptoms of concussions. A mandatory doctor's release is required when there is even a suspicion of a concussion. Football players use advanced protective equipment worth hundreds of dollars to minimize the danger, while still maintaining the physical aspects that attract them to the sport in the first place.

All sports and physical activities involve a certain level of risk, and those risks must be weighed against the benefits. Football, in my opinion, is certainly a sport with enough benefits to far outweigh those possible risks. Many coaches and players feel it is the absolute best sport for teaching life lessons such as hard work, discipline, dealing with adversity and teamwork.

Football is a great academic motivator, especially for at-risk students. Many students are working hard in school to become qualified for an NCAA scholarship by taking more challenging courses. Even though few will earn a college football scholarship, many attend community colleges to play football. When their football days are over, they have some college courses under their belt that they wouldn't otherwise have. Football helped me get into a great college, but I think it was the discipline, work ethic and leadership skills I learned from football that have helped me the most in my career.

GEORGE ZUBER, *New Haven Teachers Association*, has been a football coach for 17 years.



REIGN OF ERROR

The Hoax of the Privatization Movement
and the Danger to America's Public Schools

REVIEW BY ANTHONY CODY

➔ **WHAT DANIEL ELLSBERG** was to the Vietnam War, Diane Ravitch has become to the battle raging over public education — a truth-teller with the knowledge that comes from decades on the inside of the education “reform” movement. This new book reveals a great deal about the nature of the epic struggle raging over the future of public education in America — and beyond.

Her prose is precise and accurate, and devastating. She does not mince words. The third chapter, “Who Are the Corporate Reformers?” provides a thumbnail portrait of the titans and their proxies. From Gates to Jeb Bush to Barack Obama, we see the web connected by the power of wealth.

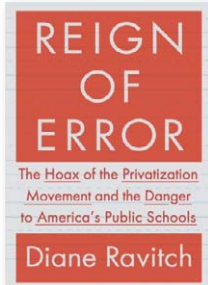
Some have suggested that Ravitch applies too broad a brush in her indictment. Ravitch is not vilifying. She allows for good intentions as well as selfish ones. We do not need to look into the hearts of corporate reformers to determine that they are wrong for our schools. We just need to look at the results of their policies.

And that is where *Reign of Error* is most useful.

True to the title, the book takes on the errors that are central to the corporate reform narrative.

- While we hear that schools are failing, the truth is test scores and graduation rates have never been higher.
- Poverty is not an excuse for low achievement. It is a significant obstacle which must be dealt with.
- Using test scores to identify and get rid of “bad” teachers will do more to harm students than help them.
- Merit pay for test scores likewise has never worked.
- Schools are not improved by closing them.

Ravitch's last book was faulted for not offering solutions to the problems she identified. The last third of *Reign of Error* is devoted to con-



crete policy solutions, and evidence that they are sound. Prenatal care, early childhood education, and, of course, a solid, well-rounded education for every child. Smaller class size and wraparound social services are also endorsed.

Educators feel that Diane Ravitch speaks for us in a way that few others do. That is clearest when she writes this, in bringing her book to a close:

“Genuine school reform must be built on hope, not fear; on encouragement, not threats; on inspiration, not compulsion; on trust, not carrots and sticks; on belief in the dignity of the human person, not a slavish devotion to data; on support and mutual respect, not a regime of punishment and blame. To be lasting, school reform must rely on collaboration and teamwork among students, parents, teachers, principals, administrators and local communities.”

Ravitch's own journey, which has taken her from inside the first Bush administration to standing alongside those protesting Obama's education policies on the National Mall, is remarkable. This book provides us with a definitive study of the state of education reform in the modern age. This is a living history written by someone willing to make it, not just write about it.

In the year to come there will be study groups gathering by the hundreds to talk over this book and better understand what is happening to our schools.

This book was not written simply to be read. Like the best books, it was written to be discussed, wrestled with, and acted upon.



Excerpted from **Anthony Cody's** *Education Week* blog. Reprinted with permission.

A National Board Certified teacher, Anthony Cody taught 24 years in Oakland schools, 18 of them as a science teacher at a high-needs middle school.

Read the full review at cta.org/reignoferror.

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Pink Plate Bill promotes breast cancer awareness

Member advocates for knowing your own body

BY SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN

 **BEING NAMED 2011** Contra Costa County Teacher of the Year was a proud moment for Deborah Bordeau. She was grateful to be honored, but even more grateful simply to be there, because one year earlier she was fighting the biggest battle of her life after being diagnosed with Stage III breast cancer.

“I was lucky. My cancer journey could have been much different,” says the Oakley Union Teachers Association member, who is now cancer-free. “I was able to fight back. For that I am forever thankful.”

Now her goal is to “pay it forward” and help others by creating a California breast cancer awareness license plate that will convey the message “Early Detection Saves Life” and serve as a daily reminder that mammograms and self-exams are critically important.

“I wasn’t aware of what to look for with my self-exams, so when I felt a lump toward my right armpit area, I ignored it,” says Bordeau. “I never knew that breast

cancer could form so high up. One of the things we promote with the plate is ‘Know your body.’ If something doesn’t feel right, get it checked.”

She and three other survivors (Heather Solari, Chere Rush and Heather McCullough) approached state Assembly Member Joan Buchanan (D-San Ramon)

with the idea, which resulted in AB 49. The Pink Plate Bill is making its way through the Legislature. Besides raising awareness, income from the sale of pink plates will provide access to life-saving exams for women throughout the state. For more information, visit www.pinkplate.org.

I was lucky. My cancer journey could have been much different.



Deborah Bordeau shows the proposed pink license plate she hopes will raise awareness of breast cancer in California.

REMINDERS

- Adult women of all ages are encouraged to perform breast self-exams at least once a month. While mammograms help detect cancer before a lump is felt, breast self-exams help women to be familiar with how their breasts look and feel so they can notice any changes.
- Men get breast cancer, too, and should do regular self-exams. Studies show men die at higher rates than women from almost every kind of cancer.
- Women should know how their breasts normally look and feel and report any breast change promptly to their health care provider. Breast self-exam (BSE) is an option for women starting in their 20s.
- Breast self-exams are best done while lying down so breast tissue spreads evenly over the chest wall and is as thin as possible, making it much easier to feel all the breast tissue.
- Yearly mammograms are recommended starting at age 40.

Source: American Cancer Society



In Deborah's words

Learning I had cancer...

was a shock. Anyone who has heard those three ugly words "You have cancer" knows what a roller coaster ride that diagnosis can be. A fellow cancer survivor told me "attitude is everything," and I quickly understood the importance of a strong, positive mindset. I decided to fight early on and not let cancer define who I was. I kept working through my treatments. Teaching became my salvation. It was not only healing for me, but also a life lesson for my third-grade students at Laurel Elementary, who learned: Setbacks in life are a reality, but they don't have to change who you are. They can serve to make you stronger.

Being named an American Cancer Society Hero of Hope...

was a huge honor. I refer to myself as an "ambassador of hope" rather than a hero. I don't consider myself a hero. I am just a grateful survivor trying to make a difference.

Money generated from the California Pink Plate...

will allow more women across California to get regular breast exams and mammograms, potentially saving the lives of countless women, especially minorities, who have a high mortality rate for breast cancer due to a lack of insurance and screening. All funds generated from sales will be deposited into the Breast Cancer Control Account, which funds the Every Woman Counts program, administered by the California Department of Health Care Service to provide free clinical breast exams and mammograms to California's underserved women.

I am fighting...

for those who continue to fight, for those who lost their battles, for our sons and daughters, and for the 28 smiling faces I see in my classroom on a daily basis. I want to involve all Californians in the battle. Everyone jumps on the bandwagon in October, which is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, but the fight against breast cancer should be 365 days a year.

Gifted and Talented Education Certificate

UCSD Extension's Specialized Certificate in Gifted and Talented Education offers training for educators who want to teach and develop programs for gifted and talented students. The program meets training requirements for educators, counselors, psychologists, administrators, and others responsible for GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) program services.

The online program is designed for those new to gifted education and for experienced educators.

The GATE Certificate is:

- 100% online
- Offers a comprehensive examination of characteristics and identification, curriculum differentiation, teaching strategies, and program development for gifted and talented students
- Provides resources to build challenging curriculum and innovative instructional techniques

Required Courses include:

- Teaching the Gifted and Talented: Differentiating the Curriculum
- Teaching the Gifted and Talented: Recognizing Individual Differences
- Strategies for Teaching the Gifted and Talented
- Program Development for the Gifted

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

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"People don't always understand the greater good that you do until they have a loss in their family. Then, they get it," says Dave McCament, here showing students Stephani Olsen, Steven Jones and Lorraine Wiggins mortuary merchandise in the class showroom.





Classmates Jennifer Tarvis and Martha Rosales praise their teachers for preparing them for their new careers.

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR

A DYING INDUSTRY

BY SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN

When Jennifer Tarvis tells people what she is studying, they ask if she wears black every day. Or if she is a Goth. Or if she enjoys looking at blood and guts. Those who ask this kind of question are anxious about death, she explains. For years she was anxious, too. But now that she's surrounded by death her anxiety has vanished.

TARVIS IS PREPARING to enter the quiet, clinical and grief-stricken realm of the funeral business as a student in Cypress College's Mortuary Science Department. The three-semester program, taught by Community College Association members, offers classes in funeral service management and directing; thanatology (grief); ceremonies; anatomy, pathology and microbiology; embalming and restorative art.

Helping family members make final arrangements for loved ones is important work, says Tarvis. So is making the dead look lifelike and peaceful, which she accomplishes through embalming and "restorative art" with makeup and hair color.

"I want to make them look as good as possible. After all, it's the last time people will see them."

Classmates share similar stories of friends and family expressing revulsion and say it's a conversation ender at parties. Martha Rosales says her future mother-in-law leaves the room when she talks about school.

Their teachers warned them to expect this type of reaction, which is centuries old. During an embalming class, student Alisha Gratz points out that those who dissected bodies for mummification had stones thrown at them in ancient Egypt.

“The embalmers became a symbol for the survivors’ grief,” she tells classmates, who nod with understanding that not much has changed.

STUDENTS’ SUPPORT SYSTEM IS EACH OTHER

“I was scared to death my first day of embalming, but the teachers mentally prepared us to see a dead body. They helped us feel con-

fident,” says Rosales. “It’s a great program. Where else could you get a full-blown career in three semesters?”

The mortuary school looks and feels like the real thing. The reception area is modeled after a funeral home. Students and teachers dress the part, speaking in hushed, reassuring tones. The school even has a store stocked with coffins, grave markers and urns. In labs, students practice embalming and restorative arts on unclaimed bodies of indigents provided by the Los Angeles County Coroner’s Office, which occasionally receive a real funeral service from students.

“We take care of their remains and show them respect, providing them with a dignity they may not have had when they were

*We take care of their remains
and show them respect,
providing them with a dignity
they may not have had when
they were alive.*

—DAVE McCAMENT



Students learn thanatology (grief), anatomy, pathology and microbiology, and embalming. Here student Anthony Kim gives a presentation on his latest project.



Dave McCament specializes in teaching restorative arts. He teaches students to make death masks out of plaster, as a means for teaching facial reconstruction if there has been disfigurement.



“The profession is intrinsically rewarding,” says Jolena Grande as she helps Amber Carvaly.

alive,” comments Dave McCament, teacher and mortician. “They may be the unclaimed dead, but at one time they led very real lives and had a family.”

McCament specializes in teaching restorative arts, which he believes help families accept the “reality of death” and be assured their loved one is finally at peace. He teaches students to make death masks out of plaster, as a means for teaching facial reconstruction if there has been disfigurement. The masks are beautiful and pale as they lie drying in the art room.

McCament entered the business for three reasons. The first was to make a lot of money. But he found morticians earn low salaries, starting at about \$35,000 a year. The second was to impress people. People were impressed, but not in the way he imagined. The third was to help people. That has turned out to be true.

“People don’t always understand the greater good that you

do until they have a loss in their family. Then, they get it. It’s an emotional job. For me, it’s important to recognize what families are going through — but not become so involved that you enter into grief with them. There’s a difference between empathy and sympathy. This is what I teach my students.”

Jolena Grande, who teaches the business classes and works in a mortuary, says the profession is intrinsically rewarding.

“You can help others in their worst time of need. But it’s stressful. You may be dealing with families that are fractured, and death only exacerbates fractures in a family; members who haven’t communicated in years are now required to talk to each other. As a result, we do a tremendous amount of counseling. The altruism and commitment that every single one of our students and faculty has for serving others is something I am proud of.”



Above: Dummy heads hold wigs for practicing hairdressing skills alongside masks created to help students learn facial reconstruction for open caskets.

Left: Glenn Bower, shown here during a lecture, is proud that close to 70 percent of his students are employed in the funeral industry when they finish the program.



MORBID CURIOSITY OR COPING

Grande tells students people enter the profession out of morbid curiosity or to cope with an unresolved death.

For student Brittany Gatewood, it's the latter. In 2004 she was in a car accident that killed her brother and sister. While she was recuperating in the hospital, nobody told her they had died, fearing it would hinder her recovery. Learning the truth was devastating.

"They had closed caskets at the service, and it took me a long time to get over the fact that I wouldn't see them again. I felt like they might pop out and yell 'Surprise!' at any moment. It was surreal."

Gatewood believes she would have dealt better with the tragedy had she been able to see her siblings looking peaceful and ready for their eternal rest. She says mortuary school has helped with the healing process and coping with anxiety about death, and she anticipates helping others in similar situations when she graduates.

The classes at the Orange County community college are extremely challenging, and there are hours and hours of study, she says.

"It's definitely the most challenging thing I have ever done. It has pushed me beyond my limits."

Students must have a general education community college degree before enrolling in the rigorous program, which requires that students take 15 to 18 units at a time, says Glenn Bower, teacher and program director. Many are second-career students who lost jobs in a bad economy and are looking for a fresh start.

Students earn an associate degree in mortuary science and are ready to take state and national licensing exams upon graduation. Many already work part time as apprentices in local mortuaries. Bower is proud that close to 70 percent of his students are employed in the funeral industry when they finish the program. How many colleges, he asks, can make that claim?

Cesar Teran works in a funeral home after graduating in June. He's happy caring for the dead and comforting the living.

"I enjoy helping families. Sometimes, months later, they will come back and say thank you. For me, it is an extremely rewarding career."

Advocacy



News from the legal, legislative, bargaining and education policy fronts

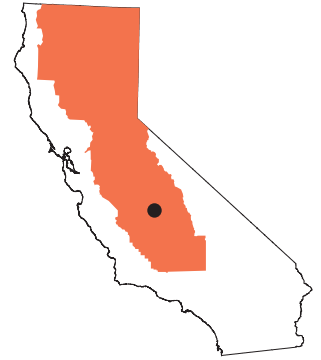


“**We’re just kids.** We want to be able to be **genuine** at school and **honest** with ourselves and everyone else. This makes it possible to be who we are without worrying about it. **It makes us more human.**”

ASHTON LEE AT MANTECA HIGH SCHOOL TALKS ABOUT AB 1266, A NEW LAW THAT ALLOWS TRANSGENDER STUDENTS LIKE HIM TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES. READ MORE ON PAGE 41.

Enhance your teaching and working conditions

Generally, that's why local chapters participate in Coordinated Bargaining Councils (CBCs). Local negotiations teams within a given geographic area, usually aligned with one of CTA's Service Centers, agree to mutual goals to be bargained in their individual negotiated agreements. CBCs work together to attain similar goals, to exchange information about district resources and settlements, or to organize joint actions to get better contracts. Specifically, local chapters participate in CBCs for many reasons, as you'll read here. CTA members say CBCs give chapters confidence at the bargaining table, support during good and bad times, shared resources and expertise, and opportunities for skill building.



Tulare and Kings: Knowledge is power

BY DINA MARTIN

♥ **GIVEN THE GREAT** distances between CTA chapters in the Great Central Valley and Sierra, it's not always easy for members to come together, let alone hammer out mutual goals for their contract negotiations. Yet, there are rewards for those who do.

Take the 38 chapters in Tulare and Kings counties, whose leaders gather four times a year to meet in a Coordinated Bargaining Council (CBC) and participate in bargaining workshops. During the past four years of state budget cuts, they maintained the status quo and hung on to their health benefits.

The group meets to talk about the economic big picture and determine the elements needed for a fair settlement. In recent discussions, the chapters assessed what may or may not be possible this year. For example, they may not reach a 10 percent salary increase this year, but a 2 to 3 percent raise is obtainable. From there, participants settle on benefit expectations, compare local salary settlements, set goals, and talk about ways to achieve those goals. This year, of course, chapter negotiators are adding discussions about the state's new Local Control Funding

Formula, Common Core State Standards and Smarter Balanced assessments.

In "traditional" CBCs, chapters make pledges to bargain together for the same salary increases and benefits. The Tulare-Kings CBC, however, acts more like a clearinghouse that provides tools, information and goals for local negotiators. Those chapters participating in the bargaining council tend to do better than those who don't, according to CTA staff.



Angelina Ogata

"I look at it as 'Knowledge is power,'" says David Bertles, president of the 200-member Tulare County Office of Education Teachers Association.

Participating in the sessions makes Bertles appreciate the relationship his chapter has with the superintendent, who works with and values the members of the association. Negotiations have been amicable over the years, and even in the downturn, members received fully funded benefits, Bertles says. If anything, other chapters can look to the Tulare County association contract to know what's possible.

"I think we give encouragement to others," says Bertles.

Angelina Ogata, co-president of the Dinuba Teachers Association, is convinced that without coordinated bargaining, her chapter of 311 members might have had seven days cut from the calendar and had cuts in benefits, bigger classes, and fewer teachers.

"Finding out what is going on in everyone else's district helps keep us all on the same page. We were all going through the same thing, but we had a goal and we were at least able to maintain the status quo," she says.

Now that Proposition 30 has been passed and the state is in better financial shape, Ogata is noticing members calling for a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).

"But COLA is really a small part of it compared to a salary increase," she says. "If we didn't go to the Coordinated Bargaining Council, we might have settled for a COLA, rather than looking for a raise in pay."



David Bertles

Bay Area: Networking is power

BY MIKE MYSLINSKI

♥ **FROM ORGANIZING LOCAL** communities to beating back school district demands for salary and benefit cuts, Bay Area bargaining coalitions are actively accomplishing union work that touches many classrooms and neighborhoods.

Teachers know that networking is power, says Brian Wheatley, president of the Evergreen Teachers Association in San Jose, whose members just ended an 18-month contract fight by ratifying a new contract on Sept. 26 that provides a 3 percent raise and protects a health benefits trust for retirees. Neighboring CTA chapter members helped close the deal by appearing at protest rallies and school board meetings as part of a coalition strategy of the Mount Hamilton Coordinating Council.

“Thanks to our coalition council, our school board trustees knew that the South Bay was watching their actions and that educators were concerned about the choices they were making,” Wheatley says. “The strategy of solidarity really works.”

His council meets regularly in Santa Clara County with educators from nine school districts, including Alum Rock, Berryessa, East Side Union High School District, Franklin-McKinley, Milpitas and Mt. Pleasant. As Evergreen’s fight escalated, other chapter members brought water and snacks to the Evergreen picket lines, and many attended a key June 13 school board meeting in a show of solidarity.

Other coalitions target entire communities. In addition to bargaining issues, the Cordelia Leadership Council tackles community building.

The council consists of educators from five school districts in Napa and Solano

counties — Vallejo, Fairfield-Suisun, Vacaville, Napa and Travis — that support a group called Common Ground to mobilize local cities around education and social issues, says Christal Watts, president of the Vallejo Education Association, which helped launch the community mobilizing effort.

Watts says the other Cordelia Council members are exploring whether to join Common Ground and pay dues for its community organizing staff, as Vallejo teachers do. The Common Ground group sent an organizer to a recent council meeting.

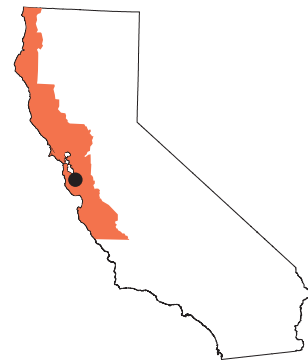
In recent years, council members shared furlough cuts strategies for collective bargaining purposes as school districts coped with huge cuts.



Evergreen Teachers Association members demonstrate at a joint rally in January to support their neighbors in the Mt. Pleasant Education Association.

Discussions about training needs at her council resulted in Vallejo educators planning a free Nov. 14 workshop about professional rights and responsibilities titled “Sex, Drugs and Rock ‘n’ Roll,” which is open to all educators in the council’s area. Location info is at myvea.org.

San Benito County educators find there is wisdom in CTA chapters meeting and sharing.



“Coordinated bargaining is a strategy that has proven effective in San Benito County over the past several years,” says Joyce Medeiros, president of the Aromas/San Juan Teachers Association, one of five CTA chapters working together in that area. The others are the San Benito High School Teachers Association, the Hollister Elementary School Teachers Association, the North County Teachers Association, and the Southside Teachers Association.

“Given the close proximity of these districts, it made sense for the associations to work together on their bargaining proposals in order to prevent the districts from playing one chapter against the other,” Medeiros says.

She recalls how this process paid off to stop districts from the unequal compensation of some teachers attending the same workshops offered by the San Benito County Office of Education.

“The superintendents had never experienced this type of increased bargaining strength by San Benito County local associations and could not justify to local presidents why some teachers were paid for 7.5 hours and others for 5 hours for attending the same training,” she says.

“Coordinated bargaining helped the local chapters with improved settlements that would be difficult to achieve if acting alone.”

Orange County: Chapters profit in good times and bad

BY BILL GUY AND DAVE BROWN



♥ **DURING THE DOUBLE-DIGIT** salary hikes of the early 2000s and the drastic cuts after the economic collapse of 2008, local CTA chapters throughout Orange County profited from participating in the work of active, successful Coordinated Bargaining Councils (CBCs).

Reaching parity in local chapter contract negotiations is the goal when chapter presidents, bargaining chairs and team members, CTA Negotiations and Organizational Development specialists, and primary contact staff meet. The meetings occur in January, May and August, timed around the governor's initial budget proposal, the May revise and the end of summer budget adoption each year.

"We know that superintendents talk to each other and compare notes on bargaining, so it only makes sense that we do the same," says Armon Akerboom, Garden Grove Education Association bargaining chair. "Sometimes another local will experience something for the first time and provide a heads-up to other members of the council."

"If you go back to 2000-01, when the state was flush with funding and Gov. Gray Davis repaid schools for deficits from statutory COLAs in the late 1990s, CBCs spearheaded concerted efforts to coor-

dinate bargaining that would place those dollars on salary schedules," says Kendall Vaught, Los Alamitos educator and CTA Board member, an active participant in the OC meetings. The vast majority of OC chapters negotiated double-digit raises that year, when "It's Double Digit Time!" buttons were common.

"During the last five years or so of the recent fiscal crisis, the coordinated CBC effort among Orange County chapters focused on maintaining the educators' daily rate of pay whenever possible. Now, we're aiming for a more coordinated strategy, taking a leadership role in the implementation of the Local Control Funding Formula [LCFF] and Common Core curriculum," says Michael Stone, Capistrano teacher and CTA Board member.

"Coordinating Bargaining Council has been an invaluable source of support. From informative state budget presentations to charts comparing local district settlements, it would have been a much more difficult time than it already was without our CBC meetings," says T.J. Prendergast, president of the Tustin Educators Association.

Geography favors good participation from many chapters that represent CTA members in the county's 28 closely clustered school districts.

“We know that superintendents talk to each other and compare notes on bargaining, so it only makes sense that we do the same.”

ARMON AKERBOOM

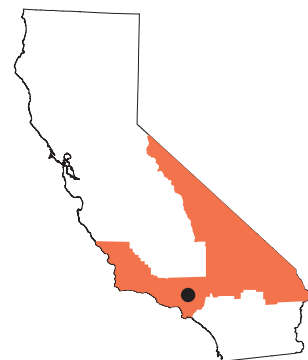
At a typical meeting, CTA Board members and staff provide an update of the current status of the state budget, followed by a Q&A and bargaining status reports from participating chapters. Then participants engage in facilitated dialogue to elicit a group consensus about which common goals can serve as guidelines for bargaining by individual chapters.

"Time is reserved at CBCs to ask questions specific to our local's circumstances, allowing us to fact-check information coming from the districts," says Anaheim Secondary Teachers Association President Joanne Fawley. "The knowledge CTA Negotiations and Organizational Development specialists share is crucial to our success."

As California schools face implementation of the LCFF and the Common Core State Standards, Orange County's CBC conversations revolve around such topics as the right of chapters under California's Educational Employment Relations Act to consult with districts about issues of curriculum and instruction, how Common Core funding will be used for staff development to help educators meet the new guidelines, and how new LCFF funding for students of greatest need can be most effectively used to improve the instructional environment for students and educators.

Los Angeles: Mutual assistance, support and skill building

BY FRANK WELLS



♥ WE VISITED WITH Scott Miller, member of the Hawthorne Elementary Teachers Association, and John Petersen, president of the Association of Rowland Educators, to learn how the Coordinated Bargaining Council (CBC) that they co-chair is making a difference for local chapters in Los Angeles County.

How does coordinated bargaining work?

Scott: We try to meet with all the presidents and bargaining chairs in our local area and make sure we're all on the same page. We come up with standards we can agree on, and try to make sure one settlement doesn't adversely affect others. If someone has to take a significant cut or furloughs, we ask them to try and delay settlement, and conversely, if a chapter is going to do well, it benefits everyone if they settle early.

John: Right, we want to make sure nobody sets a bad precedent either financially or professionally. I'm chair of the CTA State Council Financing Public Education Committee, so I put a priority on budget analysis and helping our chapters with data crunching. If we can show a district is consistently way off in projecting its ending balances, it helps our chapters make the case for

putting the money they know is going to be there into the classroom or personnel. I've been working with a bandwidth analysis that rates districts on how accurate or inaccurate they are. We try and have some fun with the data, and hopefully get the districts to change their behavior if they're hoarding money.

Scott: We also provide training and staff support, especially to locals in crisis.

How widespread is regular participation?

Scott: It's good. We had about 35 locals at our first meeting last year, and we get participation from our classified and charter units in addition to K-12.

John: We have over three-fourths of the service center that are regular participants.

What are the bargaining priorities for this year?

Scott: We'll be meeting for the first time this year shortly, but a top priority is going to be making sure people understand the new Local Control Funding Formula. The new flexibility is an opportunity to make up for some of the losses of the past several years.

John: We'll be comparing notes about our respective districts and how management is approaching the LCFF, while we set our own standards and priorities. We'll also be looking at the bargaining implications connected to the new Common Core State Standards.

How do the locals keep up with each other throughout the year?

Scott: We're constantly communicating. In addition to the CBC meetings, the same locals meet at Service Center Council meetings. We schedule CBC meetings after the January state budget and the May Revise. Our CTA Board member is helpful with communication and making sure locals get assistance if they need it.

John: We're good about staying in touch between meetings — keeping email threads going with the latest info on settlements or answer questions about what's happening in our districts. There's overlap on other issues because we also have coordinated organizing teams that support bargaining and we keep each other apprised of endorsed school board candidates so members who live in locals where they don't teach know what that local chapter is doing and who they are recommending for board seats.

Do you find the CBCs effective tools?

Scott: Absolutely. Without them, we'd be operating in a vacuum to a certain extent.

John: It's a great opportunity for mutual assistance, training, and building skills.



Scott Miller



John Petersen

High-stakes STAR testing shelved

Students, educators prepare for Common Core

BY CLAUDIA BRIGGS

♥ **TEST!** A word that often sends chills up the spine of a young child, knowing that a big one is coming later this week or next. Well, there's good news for California students, because those high-stakes STAR tests are not coming at all this school year.

Earlier this year, CTA members led the National Education Association in demanding a moratorium on high-stakes testing until the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are in place, curricula are developed, and educators have opportunities for professional development.

Thanks to Assembly Bill 484, authored by Assembly Member Susan Bonilla (D-Concord), co-authored by Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento), and sponsored by Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson, outdated tests mandated under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) are immediately suspended so students and educators can prepare for the new computer-based assessments aligned to the CCSS.

As signed by Gov. Jerry Brown, AB 484 immediately suspends the current Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program and allows students and educators to fully prepare to transition to the state's new assessment program, the Measurement of Academic Performance and Progress (MAPP).



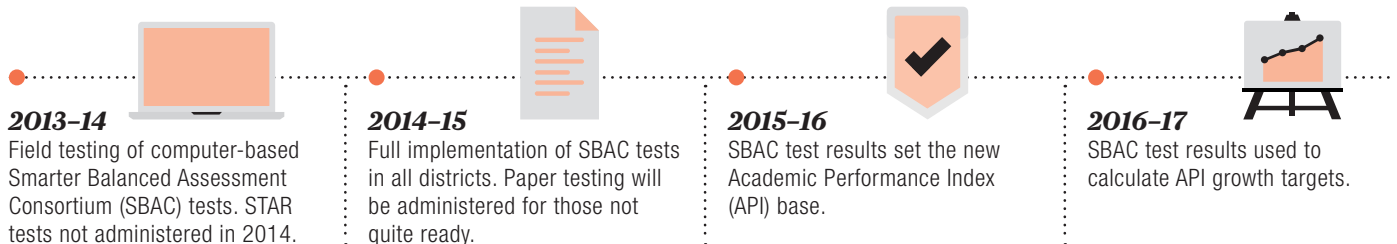
“AB 484 gives students an opportunity to do a practice run this school year on the new computer-based tests. It makes no sense to test students on material they haven't been taught or to force them to take two tests,” says CTA President Dean E. Vogel. “Although our students are always more than a test score, the tests they do

take must be relevant and meaningful. This law helps ensure we have an accountability system that works for California.”

Field tests of the Smarter Balanced assessments will be given in 2014 and are expected to reveal how prepared schools are to administer the new assessments and how students respond. The tests will be given to students in English-language arts and mathematics in grades 3-8 and grade 10. AB 484 lifts the state requirement of testing second-graders, which was never required under ESEA.

Because the transition will leave a lack of comparable data, AB 484 authorizes the state superintendent of public instruction to suspend the Academic Performance Index (API) for the first two years of the assessment, 2013-14 and 2014-15. The bill also restricts the use of data from field tests for development purposes only. This accountability holiday is in place to accommodate the needs of all school districts as they work toward full implementation of the CCSS.

AB 484 TIMELINE



California is committed to implementing CCSS and the required assessments correctly, even if it means upsetting U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan. Based on evidence and research, the new state standards are aligned with college and work expectations, and are more rigorous. They require critical thinking skills and are internationally benchmarked for comparison with other countries.

The Common Core State Standards completely change how teachers teach and what students will be expected to learn, and therefore require training, professional development, textbooks and instructional materials, along with time to get used to the new computer-based assessments in order for students to succeed under the new modernized standards.



What are others saying about AB 484?

"Faced with the choice of preparing California's children for the future or continuing to cling to outdated policies of the past, our state's leaders worked together and made the right choice for our students. These new assessments represent a challenge for our education system — but a lifetime of opportunity for students. As a teacher, I'm thrilled to see our state and our schools once again leading the way."

TOM TORLAKSON, *Superintendent of Public Instruction*



"Supporting a transition plan for the new state assessment system is just common sense. Our current testing system is limited, measuring only rote memorization of facts, but the new assessments will actually measure how students apply knowledge and solve complex problems. As co-sponsors of this bill, we know that this is what the business community needs in order to have a trained and skilled workforce that will allow us to compete in a global market."

DAVID RATTRAY, *Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce*



Go Online

cta.org/commoncore

CTA provides support, training and resources on all issues surrounding new standards and testing.



Meet Linda Valdes

INTERVIEWED BY LEN FELDMAN

♥ Linda Valdes is a "blue card" member of the state Republican Party. That means at the state party's conventions, she has the right to cast a vote. Not all delegates have that authority. A sixth-grade teacher at Rio Vista Elementary in the Santa Clarita Valley, she is a member of the Saugus Teachers Association.

Why did you get involved in politics? I am the daughter of immigrants who became small business owners. I am involved in politics and the Republican Party so that I can educate party members and elected officials about the significant issues impacting our students daily.

How did you become more involved in the party? I was appointed as a state delegate by former Assembly Member Cameron Smyth.

What positions have you held in the Republican Party? I have served on the executive board of the Republican National Hispanic Assembly, and I am a member of the local Republican Congress and Assembly.

Are you also active in your local union? I have served on the Saugus Teachers Association's executive board and as the chapter's representative to the Bay Valley Service Center Council in previous years.

Advice? It is important for CTA members of both major political parties to be involved in ensuring that policymakers recognize every child has a right to a free and appropriate education.

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6th Grade Math and ELA Teacher



A new law accommodates transgender students

BY SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN

AB 1266 says transgender students will be entitled to use rest rooms and locker rooms of the gender they identify with, regardless of the gender on their birth records.

♥ **IN AUGUST**, Gov. Jerry Brown signed AB 1266 into law. This groundbreaking legislation will allow transgender students in public schools to participate fully in all school activities, sports teams and programs that match their gender identity beginning Jan. 1. Transgender students will also be entitled to use restrooms and locker rooms of the gender they identify with, regardless of the gender on their birth records.

The law, the first of its kind in the U.S., was introduced by state Assembly Member Tom Ammiano (D-San Francisco). Several teacher and parent organizations — including the California State PTA and CTA — supported it.

This bill coincides with a landmark lawsuit. In July, the U.S. Justice and Education departments jointly determined that the Arcadia School District in Southern California violated Title IX, which prohibits sex discrimination, by barring a transgender student from gender-specific facilities and activities.

Barriers were also broken in September when transgender student Cassidy Lynn Campbell was elected homecoming queen at Marina High School in Huntington Beach.

The new legislation is designed to make schools welcoming and inclusive for transgender students. State law already prohibits discrimination in education, but transgender

students are often excluded from physical education classes, sports teams and restroom facilities.

The California Interscholastic Federation, which oversees school sports, amended its bylaws to allow athletes to participate in sports based on gender identity, leaving it up to school districts to determine a student's eligibility to play sports in a gender that may differ from birth records.

AB 1266 will change business as usual at many schools, but Los Angeles Unified and San Francisco Unified school districts have had policies in place for years to accommodate transgender students. CTA members in those districts say their policies provide students a safe place to learn — and have not presented problems. It's important, they say, to engage the student and family in conversation to devise a plan that will work best for individual transgender students at each school site.

Removing the barriers

A student stops to chat with Wellness Coordinator Kate Baker at Downtown



Susan Kitchell

High School in San Francisco. The student, who looks relaxed and cheerful, is a female who has adopted the clothing and haircut of a male.

"I have two identified transgender students," says Baker, United Educators of San Francisco (UESF). "Both are females that identify as males."

At the beginning of the school year, Baker asks whether they prefer the pronoun "he" or "she," along with which bathroom they

prefer. One transgender student prefers the men's room; the other hasn't reached that comfort level yet. SFUSD students have been allowed to use facilities based on gender identification since the 1990s.

"I ask without judgment and without curiosity," says Baker, who has a master's in social work. "I let them know that I will share their information with school staff, so they won't get stopped from using a certain bathroom."

Schools need to remove barriers to education, she says. "If not being able to use a certain bathroom is a barrier to coming to school, let's remove that barrier so our students can be as successful as possible."

She adds that recent self-report data shows LGBT students are still more likely to be bullied and harassed and stay home from school. "I let students know that if they want to talk, I'm there for them."

Susan Kitchell, a school nurse at Galileo High School in San Francisco and UESF member, says privacy is not an issue, "because bathrooms have locking stall doors, allowing for privacy in the chosen restroom. And we do not have students showering after PE, so that has not been an issue here."

The school nurse is sometimes the first person a student confides with about being transgender. Her response is always the same: "Thank you for trusting me."

Transgender students may be confused and traumatized at identifying with a gender they weren't born with, so she provides health care information about "different ways of being" along with referrals to community support organizations for LGBT youth.

Los Angeles Unified has had policies in place similar to the new state law since 2005, and it's been working just fine, says Judy Chiasson, the district's diversity and equity coordinator. Often there are transgender students on a campus and nobody knows it. While the district allows students to use restrooms based on gender identity, if there is nudity (showering) or shyness, a separate facility or time of facility use is provided.

Stephen Schaffter, a physics and chemistry teacher at Daniel Pearl Magnet High School, is proud of the way his campus accommodates transgender students.

"It works well," says the United Teachers Los Angeles member. "We have a gender-neutral bathroom that some students prefer. In time, they may transition to using another gender bathroom, and that's fine. It's based on a student's comfort level, and that may happen incrementally."

Concerns about the law

Some educators support diverse students but still have concerns about the law and



Schools need to remove barriers to education, says Kate Baker. "If not being able to use a certain bathroom is a barrier to coming to school, let's remove that barrier so our students can be as successful as possible."



Samantha Carr fears transgender students might be harassed in the restroom.

how it will work. They include Samantha Carr, a teacher at Arroyo High School, who serves as adviser for the Gay-Straight Alliance.

“Overall, I think it’s a good thing, but we need to make sure that students identifying as a different gender are not harassed or bullied in any way,” says the El Monte Union Education Association member, who fears transgender students might be harassed in the restroom.

There are some transgender students at her school, she says, but none have shown a desire to use the restroom of the gender they identify with. But that may change under the new law.

Carr also questions how the new law will affect sports teams.

“Physical strength is an issue. Boys sometimes have more strength and speed, and it could be difficult for girls to compete against [a male-to-female athlete] with a physical advantage like that.”

The law doesn’t set guidelines for determining a student’s gender identity. Some critics fear that boys pretending to be transgender will visit the girls’ bathroom or locker room to catch a glimpse of undressed females. But that has not happened in San Francisco or Los Angeles, say CTA members. They point out that laws against voyeurism already exist, most students use stalls, and students won’t risk family alienation or rejection by their peers just for the possibility of getting a sneak peek.

READ MORE ON PAGE 44. ➤➤



From a student’s perspective



ASHTON LEE, a junior at Manteca High School, says AB 1266 allows him to be just like any other boy on campus. He is contemplating joining the boys’ wrestling team or playing baseball.

Until recently, Ashton went by the name of Kimberly. His earliest memories are of feeling “different” from other children. During his sophomore year, he realized that he was a transgender male. With the support of his mother, he came out. He is one of four openly transgender students at his school.

During sophomore year, Ashton wanted to take a PE class with boys. Instead, a counselor assigned him to an aerobics class with girls. He never complained to administrators, but he was unhappy. When he heard about the introduction of AB 1266, allowing students to participate in classes and sports and use facilities based on gender identification, he became an ardent spokesman for the bill, traveling with his mother to the state Capitol and lobbying legislators and an aide to Gov. Brown.

“I think it’s impressive, especially for a teenager, to be so determined and involved in the political process,” says one of Ashton’s favorite teachers, Chris Burr, a Manteca Education Association member. “It shows a tremendous amount of character and maturity to actually take action through democratic measures. I am proud of him and his conviction, not only for standing strong in his beliefs, but also for having the initiative to put those beliefs into action to bring about concrete change.”

Californians may have been taken off guard when the bill passed, but Ashton knew it would happen.

“I had a lot of faith it would go through. It wasn’t a surprise to me. It was something I celebrated.”

Ashton wants educators to know they have nothing to fear from the new law, and that taking showers, using bathrooms, and pretending to be transgender will likely not be an issue.

“We don’t have time to shower after PE. And honestly, who wants to go through the hassle of talking to administration pretending to be transgender? It’s not an easy road, and nobody is going to choose a hard road just to get a sneak peek at a girl. When it comes to the bathroom, well, you just go in, do your business and walk out.”

When asked to make a statement to CTA’s 325,000 members, he had this to say.

“We’re just kids. We want to be able to be genuine at school and honest with ourselves and everyone else. This makes it possible to be who we are without worrying about it. It makes us more human.”

Glad for the clarification

Staff members in the Arcadia Unified School District, where a transgender student's parents filed a federal lawsuit, were confused when it came to treatment of a female-to-male student, says Patrick Tierney, Arcadia Teachers Association president. He believes staff made wrong choices, such as having the student use a staff bathroom, but tried to do right by the student. With a new law in place, things will be easier.

"Teachers and administration were struggling with how to deal with this young person and trying to determine where he would fit in best. They decided, on an overnight field trip, that it would be best for the student to room with one of the male adults. The student's parents were upset and felt it was exclusionary for the boy to be with a chaperone and not the other students. What was missing in this was communication. Once we spoke with the parents and the student, it became clear that separating him wasn't the answer. Separation called attention to the student, which was not what he needed. Students began to talk about him because of the special treatment, which is to be expected."

Tierney is glad the federal lawsuit happened along with the new legislation, because his district now understands appropriate ways to be inclusive.

"Our district is working with an expert as part of the settlement and consulting with other districts that already have policies in place. Last year this student was in middle school, and this year he started high school. The principal and staff want him to feel comfortable and supported at his new school, and are doing everything they can to help him succeed."



When a transgender student's parents filed a federal lawsuit, staff members were confused about the treatment of a female-to-male student. Things will be easier with a new law in place, says Patrick Tierney, Arcadia Teachers Association.

Q & A

with

Lindsey Garzajohanson



LINDSEY GARZAJOHANSON is a school psychologist for the Alvard Unified School District. Born a female, Garzajohanson identifies with the male gender. The Alvard Educators Association Member has worked with transgender students in his school district and has some advice for other educators who may not know what to do and say when a transgender student enters the classroom.

Should I ask about a student's gender?

The first question to ask yourself is "Do I really need to know?" As educators, there may be times when you do need to know or understand something about a student's gender. An appropriate question might be "What is the respectful pronoun to use for you?" or "Is there anything we can do to make school a more comfortable place?"

What are some "do's" for working with transgender students?

Educators should be allies to all students, not just the ones they understand. Educate yourself on the topic via educational journals and conferences. Keep in mind that even transgender people have different identities, experiences, needs and interests, and are not all the same. Allow students to express their gender identity and take them seriously, even if their presentation does not conform to your own ideas of gender and sex. Consider using gender-neutral terminology such as "students and peers" instead of "boys and girls." Provide emotional support to transgender students by creating a support system that accepts them as they are, such as a Gay-Straight Alliance.

What are the "don'ts"?

Do not ask an individual about their medical history or if they are transitioning, because that's confidential information. Do not assume that transgender students will choose one gender over the other; some transgender individuals only cross-dress and do not want to alter their physical appearance, or they may not identify with either gender. Do not assume that because someone is transgender, they are confused, emotionally disturbed or having problems. Being transgender in itself is not a problem for anyone except those who are ignorant on the subject. Do not question the transgender individual's thinking or identity about themselves with your own belief system. Do not assume transgender students are victims of abuse or circumstances. Transgender identities are not environmentally created or triggered. If a student comes out to you as being transgender, never out that student. Students need to come out at their own pace and their own discretion in their own time.

Learning



Members' best practices, teaching ideas and education trends



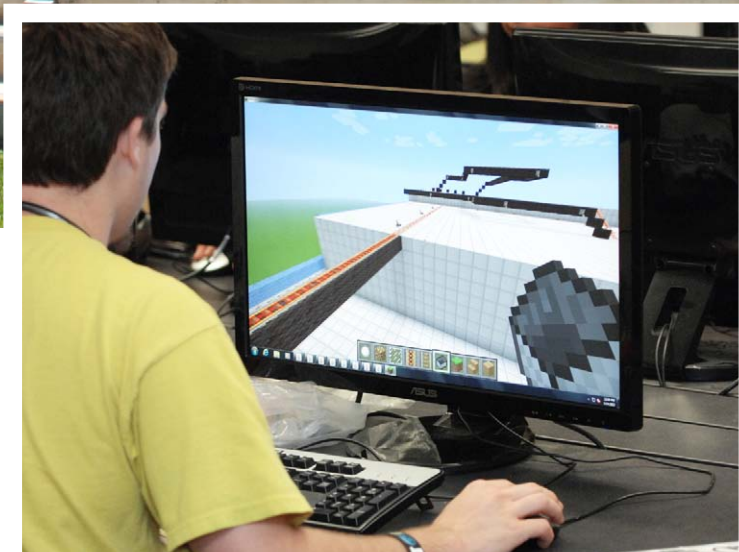
“If you call for society to **have innovation**, you have to **teach in a way** that keeps kids interested. And if we don't keep them interested, we might miss out on **a lot of talent that's out there.**”

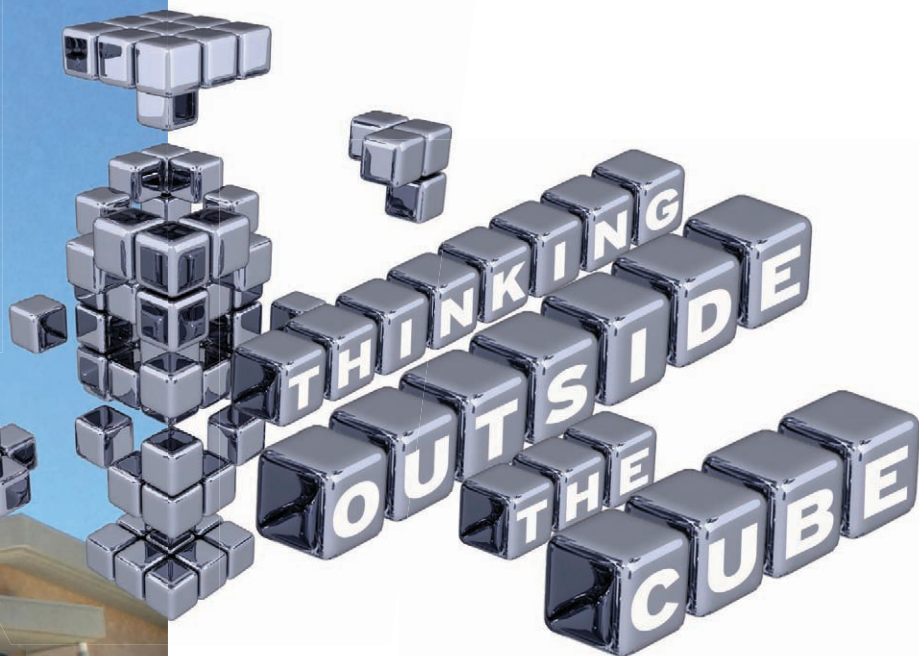
BRIAN KENNEY, WORKING HERE WITH **JOSHUA GUNTER**, LOVES VIDEO GAMES LIKE MINECRAFT. HE STARTED AN EXPERIMENTAL CLASS LAST YEAR USING POPULAR, NONVIOLENT VIDEO GAMES TO TEACH GEOMETRY. TURN THE PAGE TO SEE HOW STUDENTS ARE LEARNING GEOMETRY THROUGH VIRTUAL CONSTRUCTION.



Carlos Lopez and Blake Keyes measure buildings on campus to get accurate scales for the video game Minecraft.

Through virtual construction, students are learning geometry from a teacher who thinks “outside the cube.”





Video games, virtual construction build confidence and geometry skills

BY SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN

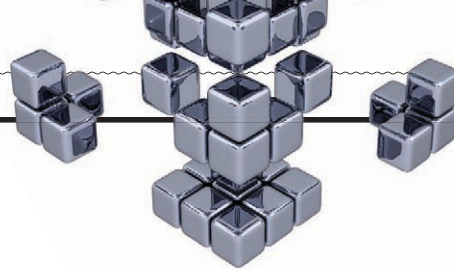
“**P** EOPLE SAY, ‘Oh, they’re just playing video games,’” says Tristan Grandy. “But it’s much more than that.”

He logs in to a computer and enters what he calls “a world without limits that holds infinite possibilities.”

He is playing Minecraft, one of the hottest video games on the market, where anything can be built with cubes.

Grandy shows off a virtual, three-dimensional replica of their school’s gymnasium he and classmate Aiden Lawrence are building, while other student teams construct virtual classrooms, locker rooms or other areas of their Centennial High School campus in Corona. A shared drive allows a panoramic view of the entire “campus” under construction by teams, or the ability to focus on a single area.

Through virtual construction, students are learning geometry from a teacher who thinks outside the cube. Brian Kenney, unlike most adults, doesn’t consider video games to be a waste of time. In fact, Kenney teaches video game design classes at beginning, intermediate and advanced levels at Centennial, in a program that connects with nearby Norco College. He hopes to have “feeder” programs soon at the middle school.



Years ago, he taught algebra to ninth-graders who had failed the subject in eighth grade. He realized that his students did not like math but loved playing video games.

They did not enjoy the drill-type games mostly available on educational software, which they considered boring. “Why not use games they already like? A happy worker is a productive worker. They want to play some games over and over that have a lot of math in them. So I did some research and wrote a grant.”

As one of three teachers in the U.S. to receive a \$40,000 grant from the Entertainment Software Association Foundation, he started an experimental class last year using popular, nonviolent video games to teach geometry. Half of the students enrolled have “mild-to-moderate” learning disabilities, and the other half are “peer tutors” from his video game design classes. Students meet twice weekly and sometimes on Saturdays.

The virtual construction fosters students’ geometry skills. For example, they post signs on different types of angles in what they are building, such as right angles, congruent triangles, supplementary and complementary angles, and isosceles triangles.

If you call for society to have innovation, you have to teach in a way that keeps kids interested. And if we don’t keep them interested, we might miss out on a lot of talent that’s out there.

Brian Kenney

It’s so much fun, they may not be aware they are learning math.

“They can’t get enough of it,” says Kenney, Corona Norco Teachers Association. “Their buy-in makes my job so much easier. One special education student dropped out, and he was persuaded to come back to school because of the video game design program and playing Minecraft. He said, ‘I don’t want to miss this.’”

Before venturing into the virtual world, students walk around the campus and measure buildings and distance between buildings with tape measures, convert to meters, and then scale their measurements to a 2:1 ratio before recreating what they have measured with virtual blocks. The hands-on math adds another dimension to their learning, as does the teamwork and collaboration that develops.

His students say the innovative class

makes geometry, well, real.

“Geometry was a little bit hard, before,” explains Ivette Ochoa, busily building a virtual locker room inside the gym. “But I get it now. I’ve learned how to measure the width and length of a triangle and the area on a building using the building blocks.”

Samuel Rios says building the school’s outdoor area near the tennis courts helped him to understand concepts of angles and triangles.



Ivette Ochoa, Corey Griffin, and Brent Gilson work as a team developing video games as they learn math. Here they are flanked by Kunane Burns, left, and Brian Kenney, right.

“I don’t know how to explain it, but I can do it,” he says of figuring out ratios and measurements in a virtual world.

Kenney and special education teacher Kunane Burns assess students every few weeks to see whether the strategies are paying off. They say it’s early, but they’ve seen improvement.

Overall, the effectiveness of off-the-shelf video games in teaching academics has not been heavily studied, according to research scientist H. Chad Lane, who specializes in educational games and artificial intelligence at University of Southern California’s Institute for Creative Technologies. Some studies show they improve creativity, spatial awareness and cognition; others show they hurt academics because students spend more time playing instead of studying.

When Burns first became involved in the pilot project, he had no idea of what Minecraft was.

“I liked the idea of doing something outside the box,” says Burns. “We are taking geometry concepts learned in my class-



Top: Brent Gilson, Ivette Ochoa and Corey Griffin measure buildings on campus to get accurate scale.

room and applying it to a game in a way that’s three-dimensional, engaging, and based on something they are interested in. Why not take a chance on something new?”

The games may progress to a new level this year, as peer tutors go beyond Minecraft and use games they created in Kenney’s video game design classes for teaching geometry and algebra. Aiden Lawrence is proud of a game he designed giving players “rewards” for right answers, with special effects like doors opening into mystery rooms or caverns.

Kenney encourages teachers to embrace technology students enjoy, such as video games and smartphones, because they have applications for learning — and fighting them may be a losing battle.

“If you call for society to have innovation, you have to teach in a way that keeps kids interested. And if we don’t keep them interested, we might miss out on a lot of talent that’s out there.”


Video

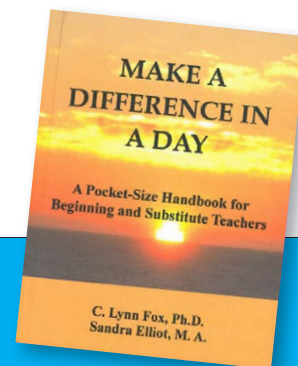
Students Tristan Grandy and Aiden Lawrence explain a new video game they created that will help fellow students learn geometry. Players are given rewards in the form of cool visuals for right answers.



See the video at cta.org/minecraftmath or scan the QR code below.



 **With a little preparation and a few of the right ingredients**, being out of the classroom can be healthy and productive for you and your sub. Here are tips from Sandra Elliot and C. Lynn Fox, authors of *Make a Difference in a Day: A Pocket-Size Handbook for Beginning and Substitute Teachers*.



Tips from the book!

Advice from substitute teachers

- 1** **Keep a complete Emergency Substitute Folder** containing updated lists of any students who need special attention and teachers who can help if needed.
- 2** **Leave teaching guides or any needed materials** in one place that is easy to find.
- 3** **Leave some extra reading materials** or other available materials for students who finish early.
- 4** **Give feedback (a simple email)**, so subs can improve their performance.
- 5** **Leave a clear list of class rules**, or specific guidelines about unacceptable student behavior.
- 6** **Work with your class** about having a positive attitude toward subs.
- 7** **Provide some or more effective training** in teaching skills through the district.
- 8** **Leave a list of suggested appropriate “rewards”** that would positively reinforce good behavior.
- 9** **Be clear about where a sub can send a student for a time-out** — a neighboring classroom, office, etc.
- 10** **Give a list of interventions you use** that would help stop misbehaviors.

MEMBERS WEIGH IN...

Lavette Ashley-Williams

If you know as the lead teacher that you are going to be out long term, please try to contact your sub ahead of time. If you like the results of the sub, request them again.

Marete Slater Buchanan

When I subbed, the teacher left me a photo class list! It was great, as she taught junior high. When I became a teacher I did the same. The kids really take you much more seriously (and I had less issues to come back to) when you know their names!

Jordan Drevdahl

If you work at a high school with two lunches, let the sub know which one you have!

Jennifer Kay Lackey Sanfacon

PLEASE stop using acronyms to describe where and how we should use curricula or to define classroom processes.

About the book!

The top 10 tips for and from subs below are based on the *Make a Difference in a Day* handbook, which is literally a cookbook of ideas covering classroom management, talking to teens, lesson planning and delivery strategies, understanding motivation, and students with special needs. Authors Elliot and Fox wrote the handbook for substitutes and beginning teachers. For more on the handbook, go to substituteteacherhandbook.org. Find resources for substitutes at nea.org/substitute.

Advice for substitute teachers

ON CTA'S FACEBOOK PAGE.

Terry Pesta

I have always told the substitutes: "Feel free to vary the plans to fit your needs, especially if you have a special skill or lesson that you would like to share." Over the years this led to my students being taught skills or lessons that I could not teach. It also let the visiting teachers know that they were respected as professionals.

JoAnne Clark

I regard the behavior of the kids to be a reflection of their esteem for the teacher. I try to prepare a sub for the dynamics of those classes that can easily get out of control, and I let them know my policies re: bathroom passes, requests to see the nurse (don't ever refuse!) or other teachers/counselors.

Jeff Hicks

Advocate for higher pay for subs. Some districts have been paying subs the same daily rate for 20 years. Speak to your union president about the need to raise sub pay.

Ruth McLean Eller

I have found most subs to be very conscientious. Thanks for all your hard work!

- 1** It's important to stick to the lesson plan.
- 2** Return my classroom the way you found it.
- 3** Please enforce my classroom rules.
- 4** Be clear with the class about your expectations and be consistent in enforcing them.
- 5** Use professional behavior with students and school personnel. Be aware of appropriate language and appropriate dress.
- 6** Don't try to be the students' friend.
- 7** Don't accept assignments which are beyond your academic abilities or comfort zone.
- 8** Leave some contact information in case I do need to call or email you.
- 9** Don't overreact or underreact.
- 10** Get enough training in classroom management to keep the class under control.




David Kirp autographs books after talking to United Educators of San Francisco members.

Improbable scholars?

Researcher validates what teachers know about learning, quality public schools

STORY AND PHOTO BY MATTHEW HARDY

 **OVER THE PAST** several years, UC Berkeley professor and author David Kirp observed firsthand how the people of Union City, N.J., a low-income community with mostly English learner students, turned their school district around. What's so astounding about this turnaround? It isn't based on the latest research or policy debated in Washington, D.C., or in state capitals across the country, but on wisdom that most classroom teachers and staff already know.

Kirp shared his findings and his new book, *Improbable Scholars: The Rebirth of a Great American School System and a Strategy for America's Schools*, with teachers and paraprofessionals of the United Educators of San Francisco (UESF) Assembly last spring. Here are some of his conclusions.

1. The best teaching in the world is great preschool teaching. A community school is a great preschool that is age-appropriate.
2. Evaluation of teachers should contain a focus on grade level achievement, fostering cooperation and mentoring among staff.
3. Professional development works best when it brings mentors and master teachers into the classroom, rather than pulling teachers off-site in a conference style setting.
4. Data can be a valuable tool, if used correctly, to pinpoint the help students need and to discover where teachers need assistance. Instead of focusing on punishment, assessments should be used to boost performance.

5. Stability matters. Low turnover of administrators, principals and teachers makes it possible to build a culture of trust. Stable teaching is the result of people in a school district developing strong relationships.
6. Supporting community and families is essential. Liaisons in schools who know the parents and can offer access to support services to families make it much more likely that parents will get involved.
7. School districts with large low-income and English learner student populations should focus on three main goals: a strong bilingual education program, a focus on literacy and preschool, and a broad and robust curriculum.
8. Though there are local differences, there is consistency among school districts that outperform expectations. All of them have carefully built pillars of support based on a sense of trust between administrators, teachers, staff and parents.

UESF members agree. President Dennis Kelly says, "Kirp's research validates what we as professionals have known all along." He adds that it may be a great gift for local administrators. Says elementary teacher Cathy Sullivan, "His push for a developmentally appropriate and word-rich curriculum for elementary school students is exactly on target."



Safe schools trend

Cleaning, sanitizing and targeted disinfecting

SCHOOLS ACROSS THE country are adopting comprehensive cleaning programs that help prevent the spread of infectious diseases as well as protocols that help reduce asthma triggers and improve indoor environmental quality.

School and buses are prone to the spread of colds and the flu. Schools athletic facilities pose a special risk for spreading infectious diseases such as MRSA (Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) because of the potential for skin-to-skin and surface-to-skin contact among students and athletes.

While healthy environments are everyone's business, custodians and maintenance staff play a significant role as the

frontline guardians in the prevention of infectious disease outbreaks.



Jerry Bender

"You can't sanitize enough," says lead custodian Jerry Bender, who is involved in risk management meetings. The Redlands Education Support Professionals Association member says, "You can disinfect a door, and when a few students walk through, there are more germs. Just keep using sanitizer and wiping off doors and desks."

Comprehensive cleaning programs should include an Infection Control Plan (ICP) that presents a clear protocol for routine cleaning, sanitizing, and targeted disinfecting, including steps to take in the event of an infectious disease outbreak.

HEADSHOT BY SCOTT BUSCHMAN

Best practice:

- The Infection Control Plan should include the following information:
 - Areas considered high-risk (e.g., bathrooms, athletic areas, cafeteria/kitchen, health room/nurse's office) and high-touch points (e.g., gym equipment, push bars, lockers) that may require sanitizing and targeted disinfecting in addition to routine cleaning.
 - Procedures for cleaning high-risk areas and high-touch points throughout the school, including which school-approved products should be used and which tasks should be completed only after students are excused for the day.
 - A list of products that are approved and supplied by your school's custodial/maintenance department for cleaning, sanitizing, and targeted disinfecting of athletic areas.
- Refer to the ICP for special precautions and correct handling procedures if there is an incident involving blood or other bodily fluid.
- Be familiar with the products used in your area. Consult the material safety data sheets (MSDS), which should be readily available in your office, the front office, or the custodial/maintenance office.
- Encourage students to wash their hands with soap and water thoroughly after they exercise, use gym equipment, play outside, use the bathroom, etc.

Source: NEA Health Information Network

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This year, we're celebrating CTA's 150 years of advocacy for the teaching profession and education excellence. As part of the sesquicentennial activities, a commemorative publication illustrating CTA's history will be available online at www.cta.org/ctahistory. This is an excerpt from that publication.



MAKING VOICES HEARD

A Brief History of CTA's Founding

.....

BY CRAIG COLLINS

Despite the riches that had drawn many Americans to California in the mid-19th century, the new state, admitted to the Union in 1850, had far to go in establishing a free and comprehensive school system. The rudiments were there – the first state constitution called for a “system of common schools” and an elected state superintendent – but for years there was no state source of funding for these schools, aside from income from public lands. In urban areas, such as those in San Francisco, voters imposed their own local taxes to fund schools. In rural areas, the few schools that existed were paid for directly by the parents of children who attended them. Three years after California had become a state, fewer than 20 percent of its white school-aged children were enrolled in school.

The state legislature, ignoring the entreaties of church groups and other reformists, repeatedly failed to establish a state tax to fund its “system of common schools.” In his 1859 annual

report to the legislature, Superintendent of Public Instruction Andrew Jackson Moulder introduced a comparison that remains a bone of contention in state politics: California, he pointed out, was spending three times as much to support criminals in prisons as it was to support students in schools. Slightly more than a quarter of the state’s school-aged children were attending school, he wrote, raising the prospect of a state with a majority of “benighted men and women ... to control the vote of the State, and, in consequence, to shape its legislation and its destiny.”

It was not just California’s students who suffered neglect – public school teachers belonged to a profession that remained largely ignored by most citizens and their state institutions. Most teachers – if they were trained at all – were inadequately prepared and paid meagerly, about \$50 a month. Local school boards, often comprised of well-meaning but poorly qualified decision-makers, imposed



arbitrary teacher hiring practices and evaluation regimes. Teachers could be fired for virtually any reason or for no reason at all and worked under one-year contracts: Literally, all teachers were dismissed and re-hired annually through local school board examinations, a process fraught with abuse, caprice, and intrigue.

After much hard lobbying, Moulder was able to convene the first state-funded professional meeting for educators, the State Teachers Institute, in May of 1861 – just days after the Civil War had begun at Fort Sumter in South Carolina. About 100 teachers attended, and agreed to look into publishing their own educational journal, but little of substance was accomplished. Californians – like most Americans – were preoccupied with other matters. Campaigns for all state offices, including the superintendency of public instruction, tended to be consumed by the divisive issues of slavery and secession. In 1862, the National Union

Snapshots of early California school life: a late 1800s classroom filled with students; students from Placentia ride in a horse-drawn school bus to reach Fullerton High School in the early 1900s; the Lincoln School House in San Francisco, pictured in 1866; and the one-room, rural Highland School near San Jose pictured in 1876.

(Republican) Party nominated John Swett, a San Francisco schoolteacher, as its candidate.

The man known today as “the father of the California public school system” and the “Horace Mann of the Pacific Coast,” John Swett was a New Hampshire native who was lured to Gold Rush California in 1852, at the age of 22, to seek his fortune. After a few profitless jobs in mines and on farms, he took a teaching position in San Francisco, and it was there he found the excitement and adventure he’d been looking for. His career blossomed as he overhauled the curriculum at his Rincon Point grammar school and extended learning opportunities to adults. He became a highly regarded community leader, and his experience led him to develop a passionate regard for the profession – and the professionalization – of teaching.

In his 1862 campaign for the state superintendency, Swett emphasized two main issues: the establishment of professional standards for

teachers and free schools for all children. In his public appearances, he tied these issues to the only issue anyone cared about: the Civil War and national union. The rebellion of Southern states, he implied in a San Francisco speech, was perhaps due to a lack of educational opportunity in the South; in other parts of the nation, public schools had been “the great nurseries of patriotism and constitutional liberty.”

Swett easily defeated his rivals; in a re-election campaign held the following year, he won 70 percent of the vote. In May of 1863, he presided over the third State Teachers Institute in San Francisco – which would become one of the most important meetings of educators ever held in California.

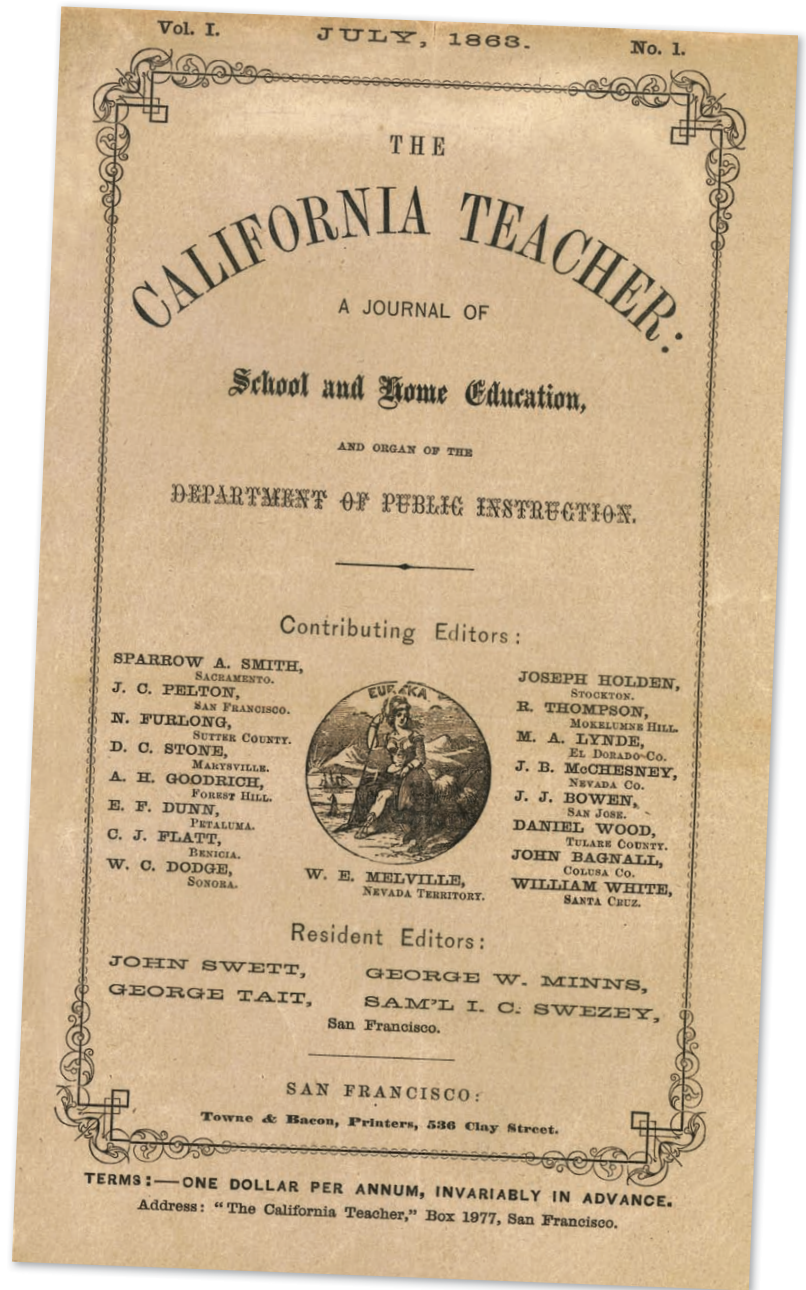
The California Educational Society

The members in attendance at the State Teachers Institute voted not only to establish a state school journal, *The California Teacher*, but also to form a statewide association of teachers that would elevate teaching to the rank of a profession. This state association, founded in a voluntary session held after the close of the Institute’s official business, consisted of fewer than 100 educators – all of them men – who called themselves the California Educational Society.

The Society’s first activity was to publish its journal; about 330 subscribers received their first copies of *The California Teacher* in July. Its second order of business was drawing up its own constitution, which contained the following provision:

Qualifications of members shall be: A good moral character, three years of successful experience, one of which must have been in this state; and ability to pass thorough examination in Reading, Spelling, Penmanship, Drawing, Object-Teaching, Geography, Grammar, History, Arithmetic, Algebra, Physiology, and Natural Philosophy.

At the Institute, Swett devoted most of his effort and rhetoric to increasing state school revenues, in order to extend the educational



The first issue of *The California Teacher*. The journal was established at the same time that the California Educational Society, predecessor of CTA, was founded.

opportunities of its urban children to those living in rural areas; his petition, circulated among educators at the Institute, and then among California voters, called for a state school tax. As co-editor of *The California Teacher*, Swett advocated for what he believed to be issues of common interest, such as curriculum

“Literally, all teachers were dismissed and re-hired annually through local school board examinations, a process fraught with abuse, caprice, and intrigue.”

development, salaries, professional standards, and procedures for teacher certification. In 1866, the Society’s petition, and a barnstorming tour in which Swett delivered a speech titled “Duties of the State to Public Schools,” led to passage of the landmark California law establishing free public schools – funded by a state-wide tax measure – for all the state’s children, no matter where they lived. That same year, *The California Teacher* became the official organ of the State Board of Education, funded through state appropriations.

In 1867, the California Educational Society, following the National Educational Association’s lead, admitted women to membership, and charged women members annual dues (\$5) half those of their male colleagues – a tacit recognition of the fact, decried by Swett in his final report as superintendent, that while public school teachers were generally paid inadequately, women teachers, despite often equal or better qualifications and experience, were paid less than their male colleagues.

The State Teachers Association

While it established a solid precedent as an advocacy organization for students and teachers, the California Educational Society achieved little compared to the latter-day California Teachers Association (CTA). An exclusive club of mostly male administrators, the Society found it increasingly difficult to maintain a statewide influence, and in 1871 the legislature withdrew financial support of *The California Teacher*. The annual State Teachers Institute was replaced by a series of county conventions, keeping teachers within widely separated regional groups. For nearly two decades, there were no statewide teachers’

conventions, and by 1876 the California Educational Society had ceased to exist.

The body that replaced it, the State Teachers Association, was formed from a core group of teachers from the San Francisco Bay Area who, over the next quarter-century, combined with colleagues from other regions: Los Angeles/Southern California, the San Joaquin/Central Valley, and the Sacramento Valley. These affiliations, however, remained weak until the turn of the 20th century; most of the State Teachers Association members were Northern California school administrators. In 1891, at a joint convention in Riverside, the four regional organizations established a State Advisory Council to lead, and report on, the effort to secure reforms in educational legislation and practice.

The Council, which included none other than John Swett – now a retired teacher and honorary lecturer in the Department of Education at the University of California – helped breathe life back into the organization. In 1900, Swett was appointed to the committee assigned to revise the association’s constitution, and he was a member, also, of the committee that made its

A banquet at the 1910 CTA convention held at the University of California Berkeley campus, just three years after the organization filed for incorporation.





Left: State Sen. Albert S. Rodda (far right) and CTA officials worked together to pass the collective bargaining bill known as the Rodda Act of 1975.

landmark report at a meeting in Berkeley in December 1905.

The report recommended that the association:

- be incorporated as the California Teachers Association;
- employ a paid executive secretary; and
- function and speak as a single statewide organization, composed of four closely coordinated regional units.

These regional units, under a later reorganization, would become known as Sections, and would elect representatives to CTA's largest governing body, the State Council of Education, which would meet periodically to set organizational policy, collect dues, adopt a budget, recommend expenditures, and elect officers. The Advisory Council accepted these proposed articles of incorporation and filed them with the state in January of 1907.

Under the organization's new democratic structure, California's classroom teachers – now speaking with one increasingly powerful voice – began assuming leadership roles, as more were elected to the State Council on Education. In 1910, CTA held its last big convention on the University of California's Berkeley campus, marking an historic turning point: From then on, the organizational preeminence of university professors and school superintendents would decline. Within a year, the Association had established a state headquarters in San Francisco.

From the start, CTA maintained close ties to the National Education Association (NEA), whose 1888 convention in San Francisco had been its first national meeting west of Chicago. In 1911, to emphasize this solidarity, Ella Flagg Young, NEA's first president, again led its national convention in CTA's newly designated headquarters city.

The Modern CTA

The Association, through its State Council, immediately began to exercise its collective power, lobbying to establish a statewide system of community colleges in 1911 and persuading the legislature to print free school textbooks for all students in grades 1-8. The following year, CTA finally succeeded in doing away with the practice, so abhorrent to Swett, of annual recertification; the state's first "continuing contract" law provided for teachers to be automatically re-employed unless notified otherwise. And in 1913,



John Swett

FATHER OF CTA?

• • • •

"Association in some form is the soul of modern progress. We constitute the advance guard on the shores of the Pacific, cut off from the main body of American teachers. Let us organize and work together. Let us make our influence felt in leading public opinion in school affairs."

– John Swett

Today, there isn't much argument when John Swett, California's fourth Superintendent of Public Instruction, is referred to as "the father of California's Public Schools." The state tax, funding public schools for all the state's children, was clearly Swett's chief cause from

the moment he took office, and was won – with the help of the forbear of the California Teachers Association (CTA) – in 1867.

Swett was also an early proponent of the belief that teachers should be the agents for everything that happens in a classroom – and that they should work together to elevate their status and ensure the success of their students. But Swett’s role in establishing the California Educational Society on May 9, 1863 – the event to which CTA now traces its origins – is less obvious.

According to the account given by Roy W. Cloud, a former CTA state executive secretary, in his CTA-sponsored book *Education in California: Leaders, Organizations and Accomplishments of the First Hundred Years*, Swett himself, in the first issue of *The California Teacher*, attributed the California Educational Society’s launch to several other people.

The 1863 state conference over which Swett presided as superintendent, the third State Teachers Institute, had officially concluded when the California Educational Society was founded; attendees voted for its establishment in a follow-up session, suggested and chaired by Mr. Theodore Bradley, principal of San Francisco’s Denman Grammar School. During this meeting, a committee was appointed to draw up the new Society’s constitution. In addition to Bradley, this committee included:

- Samuel I.C. Swezey, a professor and former trustee of the State Normal School (California’s first state teaching college) in San Jose

- George Tait, superintendent of San Francisco City Public Schools and former principal of Denman Grammar School

- Ahira Holmes, the State Normal School’s first principal

- John C. Pelton, a veteran teacher who established the first free city school on the Pacific Coast, and who also served as San Francisco’s first Superintendent of Public Instruction

- Bernhard Marks, a Polish-born miner, teacher, and principal of San Francisco’s Lincoln Grammar School

The committee also laid out the conditions they believed necessary for a person to be a professional teacher. Unfortunately, despite the generous legacy of each, none

“
Swett deserves
credit as one of
CTA’s most influential
founders – a passionate,
eloquent, and visionary
advocate for California
students and
teachers.”

of these committee members was forward-thinking when it came to the role of women in shaping the teaching profession; the society was, until 1867, explicitly limited to “male members only.”

It was only after the California

Educational Society had been established that Swett – who apparently had little to do with its formation – was elected its first president. In 1875, after the Society’s influence had declined steadily, it became the State Teachers Association – a largely regional association of Northern California educators.

It’s worth noting that among the leaders who helped author this organization’s resurgence – and its rebirth, in 1907, as the statewide CTA – John Swett played a prominent role. He was appointed to revise the association’s constitution, and was also a member of the committee that issued the landmark recommendation for its incorporation as the California Teachers Association.

Today it’s easier, of course, to simply remember one name than to learn the intricate history of a 150-year-old organization – but it’s no more accurate to call John Swett the sole “Father of CTA” than it is to claim George Washington singlehandedly created the United States of America.

Still, Swett deserves credit as one of CTA’s most influential founders – a passionate, eloquent, and visionary advocate for California students and teachers. On Aug. 25, 1913, the day of Swett’s funeral, nearly every school in the state closed for the day, in honor of his contributions. John Swett – the man who came to California in 1852 seeking gold, and who found something much more valuable and enduring – probably would have urged those schools to remain in session. 🎓

CTA helped win establishment of the state teachers' retirement system – now CALSTRS – providing retirement salaries to public school teachers who planned to retire from the California state school system. CALSTRS is today the largest teachers' retirement fund in the nation, with a membership of 856,360 and assets of \$154.3 billion.

For the next several decades, CTA was an inclusive organization, with members representing every type of certificated personnel throughout the state – including counselors, school librarians, social workers, psychologists, and nurses – and gradually becoming more unified in purpose and identity. Throughout the first half of the 20th century, each of the organization's six regional sections had its own culture and governing structure, including its own board of directors. Some regions focused on professional and student advocacy, while others functioned more as professional associations, offering seminars and other opportunities for collegiality and growth.

But the 1960s and 1970s were an era of turmoil, with strikes and contract disputes flaring up throughout the state; the obstacles to success for students and teachers alike could only be overcome by a unified state organization. With a nudge from key CTA leaders, the Association's regions voted to dissolve and consolidate themselves into a larger, stronger statewide union – a process that began in 1971.

Still heavily influenced – and in some local chapters dominated – by administrators, the organization gradually became better known as an association of classroom teachers. This trend continued until the membership of administrators came to an abrupt end in 1975, when the Rodda Act established collective bargaining for California's public school teachers and made the inclusion of administrators impracticable. Ralph Flynn, CTA's executive director from 1976 to 1995, was the first executive director who was not a state superintendent of education.


These legislative and organizational changes redefined the profession of teaching – and CTA itself, which immediately launched a campaign to become the exclusive representative of local affiliates. Virtually every CTA chapter filed for

Did you know?
.....
CTA established schools for children of migrant workers in 1967.

recognition as the exclusive representative of local educators; in less than 18 months, 600 of 1,000 local organizations statewide had secured collective bargaining rights.

From the mid-1960s to the mid-1990s, membership in the organization more than doubled; by 1996 there were 270,000 members in CTA. As it has grown in size (its membership stands at 325,000 on its 150th anniversary), CTA has become both more powerful – it has been the leading voice behind some of the state's most important educational reforms – and more inclusive. In 2006, the Association extended membership to Education Support Professionals, welcoming about 5,000 school paraprofessionals, office workers, and custodians to the organization.

In its present size and configuration, CTA remains, more than ever, entrusted and empowered to fulfill the uncannily prescient vision articulated by its founder, John Swett, in his last report before leaving the office of superintendent in 1867:

It was my sanguine hope, for many years, that in this new State teaching might aspire to the dignity of a profession; that teachers might learn to combine their strength, respect themselves, command the respect of others, and honor their occupation. I have lived already to see the promise of the future. It has been and is my highest ambition to elevate the profession of teaching; for I well know that in no other way can the public schools be made the great educators of the State and the nation. 

Below: Delegates to the State Council, CTA's largest governing body.



Restoring a Landmark

IN 1960, THE CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION AND CALIFORNIA'S SCHOOLCHILDREN STEPPED IN TO SAVE THE STATE'S FIRST BRICK SCHOOLHOUSE.

By Craig Collins

On March 27, 1850, a Dr. Thaddeus Hildreth, of Maine, along with several other prospectors, stumbled across \$4,860 worth of gold in a Sierra foothills gulch about 50 miles west of what is now Yosemite National Park. Within a month, the tent-and-shanty settlement known as Hildreth Diggins had sprung up out of nowhere, with around 5,000 fortune-hunters erecting wood-frame buildings to house the miners and support their efforts. More than 150 stores, shops, saloons, and other businesses had been established by 1852; at its peak, the settlement – later given the more permanent-sounding name of Columbia – was home to about 6,000 residents, making it the second-largest city in California. It was considered, briefly, as a site for the state capital.

The problem with hastily built wooden buildings, Columbians soon learned, was that they burned. Two fires, in 1854 and 1857, destroyed much of the town, and many new buildings were built with bricks, formed from local clay and dried in the sun. By 1860, the Columbia Gold Rush was spent, and the town's population began to decline.

The Columbia schoolhouse, made of red brick, sat high on a hill overlooking the rest of the town.

Unlike many of California's pioneer settlements, however, Columbia did not become a ghost town; a core group of citizens, intent on making their homes there, invested in public buildings and projects including a schoolhouse that was, in its size and prominence, unheard of for a Gold Rush town. The Columbia schoolhouse, made of red brick, sat high on a hill overlooking the rest of the town, with two floors – one each for elementary and secondary students. The building was completed in October 1860 at a cost of \$4,890 – just a few dollars more than the placer deposit that launched the town – and opened its first session with 368 students, two teachers, and a principal.

The problem with brick buildings, as many Californians learned, was that they crumbled in earthquakes. While Columbia was spared this fate, its schoolhouse did not measure up to the building codes gradually phased in after San Francisco's 1906 earthquake. It remained in continuous use until 1937, when a newer, up-to-code Columbia school opened nearby. The old building sat abandoned for

10 years, and then was purchased by the State of California for \$1.00.

As California's first two-story brick schoolhouse neared its 1960 centennial, CTA helped launch a fundraising campaign to restore it to its former glory; across the state, hundreds of thousands of

schoolchildren donated their spare change, raising literally \$40,000 in pennies, nickels, and dimes. CTA's board of directors, upon learning this



The Columbia schoolhouse pre- and post-restoration.

amount was still about \$30,000 short, voted to commit CTA funds and finish the job.

Today, thanks in part to CTA's continuing sponsorship, visitors to the cluster of 30 Gold Rush-era buildings within Columbia State Historic Park – including frequent busloads of area schoolchildren – can visit the restored schoolhouse and learn what school was like in 1860s California; on display in each classroom are the old wooden desks and inkwells, slate blackboards, and potbellied heat stoves from back in the day. 🎓

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Supporting new teachers. Online education. Transitioning to the Common Core. These projects are funded by a National Education Association grant, which is helping CTA members **expand their leadership roles** as advocates in improving instruction and **professional practices**. There's more good news. NEA renewed its grant so a second cohort of CTA teacher leaders will be chosen soon.

TURN TO PAGE 65 TO SEE WHAT COLLEAGUES ARE DOING WITH THE GRANT. IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT ABOUT THIS AND OTHER GRANTS, CHECK WWW.CTA.ORG.

Timeline

1991-2004



THE 1990S USHERED in a period of increased political activity. Having flexed political muscle to pass Proposition 98, the minimum funding guarantee for grades K-14, CTA now faced protecting it from state officials who wanted to use the money to balance the state budget.

Meanwhile, conservative forces began to circulate petitions for a school voucher initiative that would siphon off funds from public schools.

By 1991, CTA was alerting members to the possibility of this “hostile takeover” of public education and launched a campaign urging voters not to sign petitions to place the initiative on the ballot. The campaign was successful, but a similar initiative drive was back on the streets again the next year, this time qualifying Proposition 174 for the ballot in the November 1993 special election. Again, CTA mustered its members to get the word out that Prop. 174 was bad news for public schools. CTA’s well-organized campaign paid off. Prop. 174 was defeated with a 70 percent no vote. As Del Weber, then CTA president, said, “We won in every single one of California’s 58 counties, a real rarity in this fractious state.”

In 1995, CTA kicked off a class size reduction TV campaign that changed the debate in Sacramento. Prodded by the hard-hitting campaign and the association’s hard-nosed, passionate lobbying efforts, the Legislature approved \$1 billion in funding in 1996 to reduce class sizes in grades K-3.

Within another year, CTA went on to defeat an initiative that would have restricted political participation by unions. That was followed by CTA’s successful efforts to defeat another voucher initiative, Proposition 38, in 2000 and win the passage of \$25 billion in state school bonds by 2004.

CTA’s growing power at the ballot box and within the Legislature prompted then-Gov. Pete Wilson to refer to the organization as a “relentless political machine.” CTA members reacted to the governor’s comment by sporting lapel buttons that read “RPM.”



1993

CTA leads the successful campaign to defeat Prop. 174, the school voucher initiative.



1995

CTA begins its effort to win class size reduction, which leads to passage of legislation the following year.



1997

CTA launches its own weekly TV show, “Quest,” which focuses on the positive things happening in California schools.



1998

CTA defeats Proposition 226, a “paycheck deception” initiative, and wins passage of a statewide school bond.



Add this to your timeline.

NEA grant funds Teacher Leadership Cohort

Members get a little TLC for projects that improve instruction and professional practices

BY BILL GUY

“THE TEACHER LEADERSHIP Cohort is the most exciting and rewarding project I have had the privilege of participating in during my 12 years as an educator,” says Ashley Cooper.

The Conejo Valley biology and health teacher is one of 23 CTA members statewide involved in professional development projects funded by a \$40,000 grant from the National Education Association. Facilitated by CTA’s Instruction and Professional Development Department, the

grant helps members assume new or expanded leadership roles as advocates in improving instruction and professional practices.

TLC participants, chosen based on their interest and potential as leaders with passion for instruction and professional practice, participated in a CTA leadership academy over the summer. Since then, the participants have been meeting in four regional subgroups aligned with CTA’s four geographic regions,

engaging in individual or team projects focused on advocacy.

Participants are also learning how to connect their advocacy to the work of their union, ultimately enabling CTA to strengthen its capacity to support learning.

At press time, NEA agreed to fund a second cohort of CTA teacher leaders. Check www.cta.org for details.

Here are four TLC participants who currently have projects under way.

STACEY WIRE WARD, *Palm Springs Teachers Association*

“Everything in the educational literature says you need to put the best teachers in the toughest positions, but if that’s the case, what are you going to do to keep them there?” asks cohort member Stacey Wire Ward, a consulting teacher working with Palm Springs Unified’s Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) induction program.

Working with seven of her colleagues, Ward’s goal is to create a cohort of teacher leaders who will address the challenges of poverty as it impacts student and educator success.

“We’re meeting regularly to discuss the book *Professional Capital: Transforming Teaching in Every School*, by Andy Hargreaves and Michael Fullan (Teachers College Press), which touts the premise professional capital is essential to teaching. Professional capital equals human capital plus social capital plus decisional capital. We’re testing the theory that a small group of committed individuals can make a big difference.”

ASHLEY COOPER, *Unified Association of Conejo Teachers*

Professional Capital is also the focus for Thousand Oaks High School’s Ashley Cooper, who is developing an online study around the book, including discussion forums and a detailed reflection guide to highlight the main points of the book, with the cooperation of her chapter and her school district. “The online format will allow educators across the U.S. to join these discussions, and I think that is valuable professionally,” says Cooper. (Her online site can be found at mymoodle.vcoe.org.)

The Palm Springs group studying *Professional Capital* is using the beta version of Cooper’s study guide in their work, an example of how TLC members are collaborating across the state.

BARBARA RANSOM,

Santa Monica-Malibu Classroom Teachers Association

“Teachers Make the Best Teachers of Other Teachers,” say teachers utilizing the expertise of Santa Monica middle school math teacher Barbara Ransom, who also works with the AVID college readiness program and with Spark programs (workplace apprenticeships for students).

“We’re focused on best practices while we transition into teaching the Common Core Algebra 1 standards,” says Ransom, “basically trying to put professional development in the hands of educators in order to make it more relevant and useful.” (See Ransom’s Common Core Cohort blog at commoncorecohort.wordpress.com.)



Stacey Ward, Palm Springs Teachers Association, Adriana Perez, Inglewood Teachers Association, and Ashley Cooper, Unified Association of Conejo Teachers, brainstorm ways to take a leadership role in improving instruction.

GABRIELA OROZCO-GONZALEZ, *Montebello Teachers Association*

An emphasis on professional development around the Common Core standards is also the emphasis for Gabriela Orozco-Gonzalez, teacher leader and Common Core facilitator at Montebello Gardens Elementary.

Through a technology-based community of practice called the Common Core Café, Orozco-Gonzalez is bringing together educators and administrators to improve student achievement. “The goal is to develop a core of master teachers who can inspire others, modeling the connections between the Common Core standards-based curriculum and technology, as we strive to create a community of practice with high expectations for student achievement,” she says.

Calendar

See our upcoming events at cta.org/calendar

NOVEMBER 1 *Opt-Out Deadline*
Voluntary dues contribution

Voluntary annual contributions by members support CTA Foundation's grants/scholarships and CTA's advocacy efforts. New members are automatically enrolled in the default contribution of \$10 for the CTA Foundation and \$10 for advocacy. Members may change their allocation or opt out. New members have 30 days from the date of enrollment; previously enrolled members have a window from Aug. 1 to Nov. 1. Find out more: www.cta.org/contribution

NOVEMBER 14 *Webinar*
Creating Critical Thinkers in the Common Core Classroom

This is the third in a six-part series presented by the Secondary Literacy Partnership, of which CTA is a partner. All webinars are free and take place from 3:30 to 4:45 p.m. (PST). Find out more: schoolsmovingup@wested.org.

NOVEMBER 20 *Application deadline*
GLBT "Guy DeRosa" Safety in Schools Grants and Scholarships

This program provides grants to support projects and presentations that promote understanding and respect for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons, as well as scholarships for members enrolled in a teacher/counseling credential or graduate program who understand the importance of GLBT educators as role models. Find out more: www.cta.org/scholarships

Math Challenge solution

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How are you celebrating school success?

Did you know the NEA and the American Legion first co-sponsored American Education Week Dec. 4-10, 1921, to generate public support for education? A year later, the U.S. Office of Education joined the effort as a co-sponsor, and the PTA followed in 1938. Find out more: www.nea.org/aew

Conferences

NOVEMBER 15-17

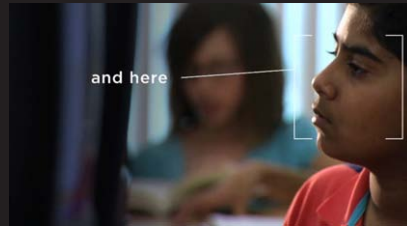
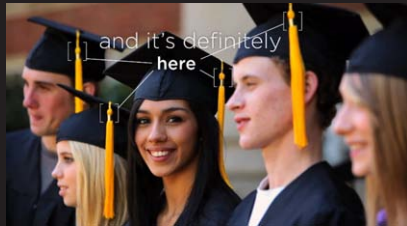
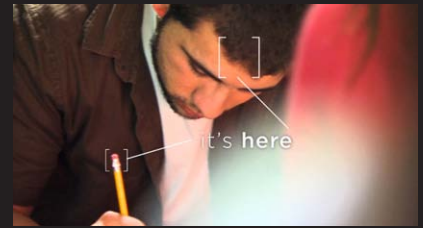
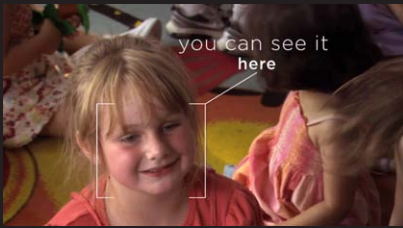
GLBT Conference
Riviera Hotel, Palm Springs
CTA's Gay, Lesbian and Transgender (GLBT) Conference features workshops on reducing the risk of teen suicide, workplace bullying and how to handle genderless children in the classroom. The keynote speaker is Cleve Jones, an American AIDS and GLBT rights activist who conceived the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, which has become, at 54 tons, the world's largest piece of community folk art. Find out more: www.cta.org/conferences

NOVEMBER 16

AMAE 2013 State Conference
Carson Community Center, Carson (Los Angeles County)
"Building Empowered Community Leaders." The Association of Mexican American Educators conference includes workshops on Culturally/Linguistically Responsive Pathways to the Common Core, Parents as Leaders, and Chicano Youth Leadership. Keynote speakers are Gary Soto and Dr. Victor Reyes. Find out more: www.amae.org

NOVEMBER 22-24


High Desert SCC Fall Leadership Conference
The New Tropicana Hotel, Las Vegas
The Fall Leadership Conference provides new tools and information issues impacting children, families and school districts. Workshops range from transitioning to the Common Core and understanding school finance to training for local treasurers and hi-tech resources for improving instruction. Find out more: www.cta.org/conferences



It's about you!

See your achievements touted in CTA's media campaign

BY MIKE MYSLINSKI

 **THE INSPIRING, CARING** commitment and dedication of California's educators over the 150 years of CTA's advocacy for students and public education is highlighted in a statewide television and radio ad campaign.

The back-to-school advertising campaign airing this fall includes Bay Area and Sacramento educators in radio spots and sums up the legacy of the 325,000-member CTA with the tag line that ends all the spots: "The California Teachers Association: 150 years of making a difference that lasts a lifetime." The ads continue this year's celebration of CTA's 150th anniversary and the union's dedication to student learning and the teaching profession.

Airing in every major television market in the state, the 30-second "Lifetime" ad shows students as they grow up, reading a story in preschool, writing in an elementary classroom, working through the middle school years, standing together as

they graduate, and moving on to college and the workforce. The success of students comes from educators and their inspiration, caring, commitment, enthusiasm, creativity, and many more traits they bring to their profession, the spot stresses. The TV ads also air in Spanish.

"Educators are all about making lasting changes over generations," says CTA President Dean E. Vogel. "These new ads remind us all about that commitment as we start another inspiring new year in our classrooms."

The 60-second radio spots, airing in English and Spanish on 89 stations across California, include Tracy Jimenez-Bedolla, a sixth-grade teacher at Sunnyslope Elementary School in Hollister. She says in the ad, "As a member of the California Teachers Association, founded in 1863, I know the teachers who came before me made a difference for every child at every level of California's public schools and

colleges." She says it's the inspiration and "love of learning" by classroom educators that is making the difference.

The Spanish radio ad features Maria Lopez de Howard, a teacher at Kennedy High School in Sacramento, offering the same messages about commitment and how a teacher's hard work to make a difference starts early in the lives of students. "Estas diferencias se ven cuando nuestros niños preescolares se sientan por primera vez a leer un cuento," she says in the ad — "We see that difference when our preschoolers first take a seat on the floor and experience reading at story time."

Watch all the new TV spots, listen to the radio ads, and get learning tips for students at www.cta.org/adcampaign2013.

Math Challenge



A math challenge is a group of numbers formed in a block with the operations addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Each number from 1 to 9 is used only once. Each row is a math equation with operations performed left to right. Each column is a math equation with operations performed top to bottom. Your challenge is to fill in the missing numbers. Compliments of www.wuzzlesandpuzzles.com

**EDUCATORS,
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Solution on page 66.

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Program Evaluation & Improvement	2 units
Student Discipline, Intervention & Support	2 units
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Bullying: Issues of Gender and Race	2 units
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Bullying: Prevention	2 units
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