

california

# educator

**THE  
BELT OF  
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FACING  
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ONE BREATH AT A TIME

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**"We can't control  
what happened at home,  
but we can control  
how we start school."**

MICHELLE BENNETT  
Jamestown Teachers Association

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# #WeAreCTA

OUR VOICE, OUR UNION, OUR PROFESSION

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

## MAGAZINE

### THE BELT OF CHAMPIONS

Fresno teachers introduce novel award for outstanding colleagues. **PAGE 61** [f](#) [t](#) [i](#) [g](#)  
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### A FIGHTER WINS

With CTA support, an educator clears his name after a five-year battle. **PAGE 54**

### LIT FROM WITHIN

Members' work to use in your classroom. **PAGE 58**

### THE SWETT LEGACY

CTA's founder John Swett set a course for advocacy that continues today. **PAGE 64** [cta.org/150](https://cta.org/150)

### WHY SOME SCHOOLS EXCEL

New report spotlights districts in Sanger, Chula Vista and more. **PAGE 56** [learningpolicyinstitute.org](https://www.learningpolicyinstitute.org)

### ENDING BIASED IQ TESTS

California's discriminatory assessments. **PAGE 44**

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### \$11 BILLION FOR SCHOOLS

...and public services. Get behind the Schools & Communities First initiative. **PAGE 35** [f](#) [t](#) [i](#) [g](#)  
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### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### CTA CONFERENCES

Sign up for these high-caliber trainings, conferences at [cta.org](https://cta.org):

### NEW EDUCATOR WEEKEND

South: Dec. 6-8, San Diego; North: Feb. 21-23, 2020, Santa Clara **#CTANEW**

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Jan. 17-19, 2020, Las Vegas **#CTAIssues**

### GOOD TEACHING CONFERENCE

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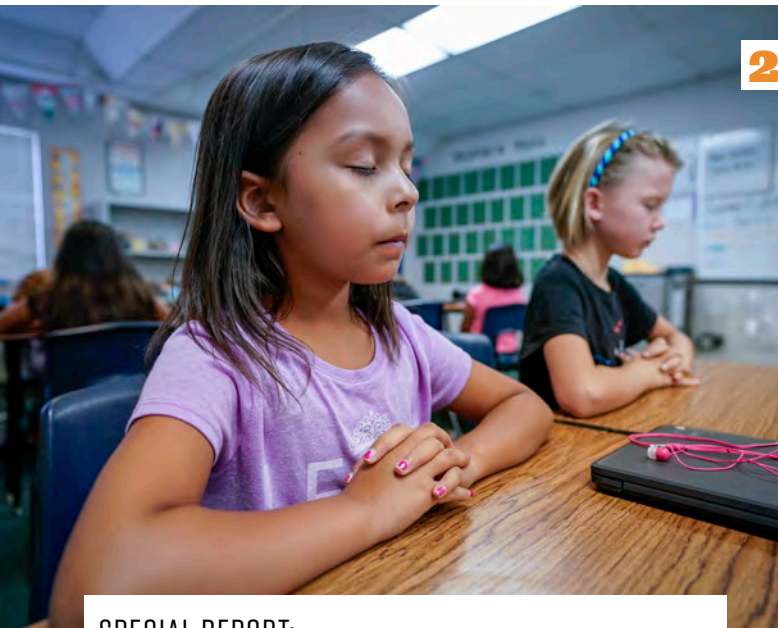
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**ABOVE:** One of the many student works of art that have won CTA Cesar E. Chavez Memorial Awards, which are celebrating their 20th anniversary this year. Story on page 51.



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Bruce D. Perry, MD, PhD, **Northwestern University**

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Nadine Burke Harris, MD, MPH, **Stanford University Medical Center**

### Brainstorm: Anxiety, Technology, and Mindfulness in the Teen Brain

Daniel J. Siegel, MD, **University of California, Los Angeles**

### The New Adolescence:

### Raising Successful Teens in an Age of Anxiety and Distraction

Christine L. Carter, PhD, **University of California, Berkeley**

### Proactive Solutions for Challenging Children:

### Moving From Power and Control to Collaboration

Ross W. Greene, PhD, **Virginia Tech**

### Ready or Not:

### Preparing Our Children to Thrive in an Anxious, Uncertain World

Madeline Levine, PhD, **Stanford University School of Education**

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Jessica Minahan, MEd, BCBA

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Christopher Willard, PsyD, **Harvard Medical School**

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### Community Violence Exposure on Urban Adolescents' Brain Development

Mary Helen Immordino-Yang, EdD, **University of Southern California**

### Beyond Behavior: Using Brain Science to Reduce Anxiety, Toxic Stress, and Behavioral Challenges

Mona M. Delahooke, PhD

### Trauma-Sensitive Mindfulness for Children

David A. Treleaven, PhD, **Brown University**

### Whole Child Development: Dynamics of Trauma, Stress, and Complex Skill Development

Pamela Cantor, MD, **Harvard Graduate School of Education**

### The Neuroscience of Adversity and Achievement: Implications for Education

Katie A. McLaughlin, PhD, **Harvard University**

### Establishing Classroom Greetings and Positive Teacher-Student Relationships

Clayton R. Cook, PhD, **University of Minnesota**

### Risk and Resilience:

### Helping Children Thrive in a World Focused on Success

Suniya S. Luthar, PhD, **Arizona State University; Columbia University; and Nina Kumar, BA**

### Rewiring the Anxious Brain:

### Using Neuroscience to Reduce Fear, Anxiety, and Worry

Catherine M. Pittman, PhD, HSSP, **Saint Mary's College**

### Notice, Note, and Disrupting Thinking:

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Kylene Beers, EdD, **Yale University** and Robert E. Probst, PhD, **Georgia State University**

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*"The more healthy relationships a child has, the more likely it is they will be able to recover from trauma and thrive."*

—Bruce D. Perry, MD, PhD

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**MISSION STATEMENT**

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

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Gov. Newsom signs AB 1505, while CTA President E. Toby Boyd (left) looks on. See full story on page 33.

# We Did It! Charter Bills Become Law

*After historic legislative session, focus shifts to school funding initiative*



**T**OGETHER, we made history! Across the state, CTA educators stood tall for all students and worked for much-needed changes to the charter school system. Our efforts came to fruition on Oct. 3 when Gov. Newsom signed AB 1505 and AB 1507 into law, bringing accountability and transparency to charter schools.

In March, Newsom also signed SB 126, which addresses a lack of oversight and transparency that has allowed fraud, corruption and mismanagement to flourish at charters.

This all wasn't possible without your tireless advocacy across the state. CTA members made more than 400 visits to state legislators, sent more than 1,300 emails and posted countless messages on social media to make this mission a success. Thank you all for powering this historic victory — the first change to charter school law in 27 years.

Local school boards will now be able to consider fiscal impacts when evaluating charter authorization; the State Board of Education will be removed from charter approval and appeal processes; and charter schools will only be allowed to operate within the boundaries of their authorizing districts. And in a major win for students, all charter schools are now required to have fully credentialed teachers.

This increased transparency and accountability helps not only students and parents, but also CTA members who work in charter schools, ensuring public funds are used to support students and pay charter educators a living wage — not pad the pockets of charter school administrators. We say “No more!” to rampant waste, fraud and abuse of tax dollars by the charter school industry.

*“This wasn't possible without your tireless advocacy. Thank you all for powering this historic victory — the first change to charter school law in 27 years.”*

Even with the largest education budget in our state's history, California is ranked 39th in the nation in per-student spending. But we have a chance to change that at the ballot box in 2020 with the Schools and Communities First (SCF) initiative, which would close a tax loophole in Proposition 13 that benefits corporations and generate \$11 billion for schools and public services.

Intended as tax relief for homeowners, Prop. 13 has

become a tax haven for corporations, allowing them to avoid paying their fair share. Shockingly, corporations are paying less as a percentage than ever while private homeowners' share has increased. It's time for corporations to pay their share and stop shortchanging our students.

Please help spread the word about SCF and what it could mean for schools and public services, and be sure to sign the ballot petitions when they begin circulating through schools in November. Let's keep this momentum!

Thank you for your continued commitment to our union and the fight for the schools all students deserve.

**E. Toby Boyd**

CTA PRESIDENT

@etobyboyd



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



## Teaching Through Trauma

When I first read the headline (August/September), I laughingly thought whose trauma, the teacher's or the student's? But the sad reality is that many teachers have trauma in their own lives. Then they have to go to work and teach students who have experienced trauma.

**RONALD HANCOCK**

*Downey Education Association*

**Editor's Note:** Read all stories in our ongoing special report at [californiaeducator.org/teaching-through-trauma](http://californiaeducator.org/teaching-through-trauma).

## Bring on the Bags

Teaching addicts about the cultivation, distribution and chemical makeup of heroin is not an effective way to help them quit, yet that is precisely what Fernando J. Figueroa recommends when it comes to children and cellphones ("21st Century Digital Etiquette," August/September). Students already know that they are not supposed to be using phones when they interfere with classroom instruction — that is why they are hiding them under their books and in their laps. They are not struggling due to a lack of training in "digital citizenship" or "etiquette," but rather a lack of willpower and consequences. If a magnetically sealed bag helps young people break their dopamine-fueled addiction, bring on the bags.

**BRANDON CRIST**

*United Teachers Los Angeles*



## Gen Z and climate change

CTA's special report "Generation Z" (June/July and August/September) included very telling information about our nation's youth. Per the Harvard poll quoted in the article, two of every three Gen Z students demand urgent action on climate change. As an educator of the NGSS standards, which incorporate environmental literacy, human impact on our earth, and plain following science and current events, I am appalled that CTA has not yet divested retirement programs from fossil fuel funding. Do we wonder why our students are hesitant in trusting government? How can we, as dedicated educators and labor advocates, look our students in the eye and teach about the effects of carbon emissions due to human-related climate change while simultaneously benefiting by betting against their future?



**SHIVAUGN ALVES**

*Patterson Association of Teachers*

**Editor's Note:** CTA has worked with CalSTRS over the years to have one of the most environmentally conscious public pension plans in the nation. CalSTRS has been changing their investment portfolio to become more sustainable, but must also consider the long-term cost to the plan, which could impact the amount of contributions from school districts as well as how much new teachers contribute. CTA continues to work with CalSTRS and the Legislature on ways to maintain retirement security while preparing for the future.

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For our full social media directory, see [cta.org/social](http://cta.org/social).





# Read This

**MY TEENS READ**, mostly books and articles they're assigned by their teachers. But for fun they watch videos on TikTok and YouTube.

This is disconcerting to me, their ancient mother, who is still bewitched by the written word. For this I am indebted to educators who introduced me to "the dazzling beauty of language," as writer Pat Conroy puts it in the poster at right.

In the essay containing this quote, Conroy explains exactly how teachers expanded his world: "Because of them I rode with Don Quixote and danced with Anna Karenina at a ball in St. Petersburg and lassoed a steer in *Lonesome Dove* and had nightmares about slavery in *Beloved* and walked the streets of Dublin in *Ulysses* and made up a hundred stories in *The Arabian Nights*."

All educators know that reading transports and transforms. CTA celebrates its power with **California Reads 2019-20**, a list of teacher-recommended books for students at all levels (page 8), and with inspirational posters you can download and post in your classroom ([cta.org/californiareads](http://cta.org/californiareads)).

Elsewhere in these pages, you can jump into the war being waged in schools across the country, as educators confront the vaping epidemic ("**Risky Business**," page 26). Our story looks at how educators are conveying vaping's dangers to students and their parents, fighting back against deceptive advertising targeted at teens and the easy availability of e-cigarettes. The timing is critical, as more people, especially youth, succumb to illnesses tied to vaping.

This issue also offers useful tips. For one, who among us hasn't forgotten their password, what with rules dictating they "must contain 8-30 characters, a special character and a number"? Check out our recommended **password managers** (page 50). And don't miss "**Hone Your Teacher Voice**" (page 46), where broadcaster-turned-teacher Danny Hauger advises veterans and newbies alike.

In "**Battle of the Social Media**" (page 14), read excerpts of the many responses to our poll asking which social media platform you use the most for your work and professional development, and why.

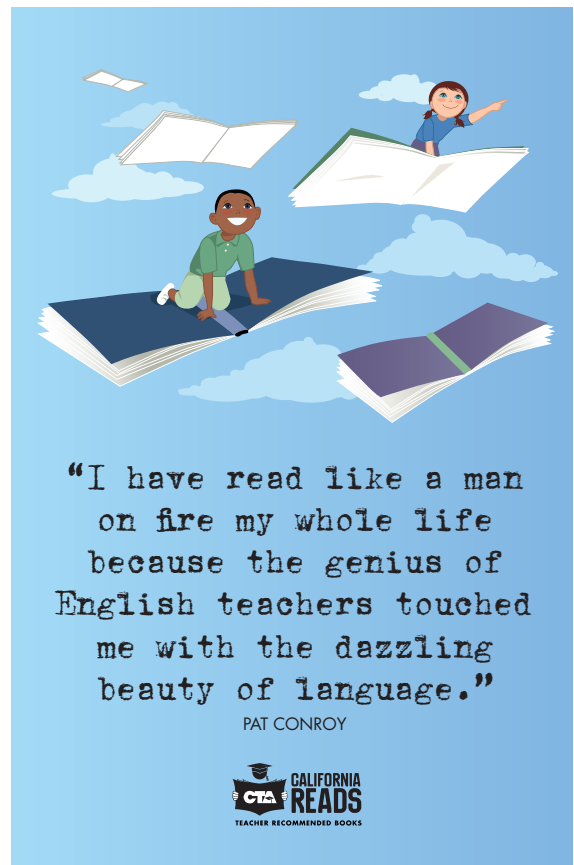
Perhaps most useful of all are **CTA professional development opportunities** listed on page 1 and at [ctago.org](http://ctago.org). Conroy credits his success to teachers, because he "soaked up every single thing those magnificent men and women had to give." Students and parents across the state (including my teens and me!) are grateful you give and give, but we know you need to be replenished as well.

Thank you.

**Katharine Fong**

EDITOR IN CHIEF

[editor@cta.org](mailto:editor@cta.org)



"I have read like a man  
on fire my whole life  
because the genius of  
English teachers touched  
me with the dazzling  
beauty of language."

PAT CONROY



Check out all nine inspirational reading posters available for download at [cta.org/californiareads](http://cta.org/californiareads).

## Teaching Through Trauma

### OUR SPECIAL REPORT

continues with "A Culture of Compassion," page 20, which features trauma-informed schools that recognize and respond to students with trauma, and educators who keep them on the path to achievement. Youth-care expert Charles D. Appelstein offers strategies for educators on page 39, and teacher Judy Her Duran describes her experience on page 18. Read more at [californiaeducator.org/teaching-through-trauma](http://californiaeducator.org/teaching-through-trauma).

October/November 2019

# CALENDAR

For our full listings, go to [californiaeducator.org/calendar](http://californiaeducator.org/calendar).



Related lesson plans and classroom activities at [cta.org/californiareads](http://cta.org/californiareads).

## CTA Scholarships & Grants

CTA can help further your or your dependent's education with its scholarship programs, provide grants for school projects, and give recognition to your artistic students with awards. Learn more on page 52 and apply at [cta.org/scholarships](http://cta.org/scholarships).

## California Reads

A NEW SCHOOL YEAR means a new set of teacher-recommended books for CTA's [#CaliforniaReads](https://twitter.com/CaliforniaReads) ([cta.org/californiareads](http://cta.org/californiareads)). Selected books for all grade levels support teachers' literacy efforts (studies find that students who are not modestly skilled readers by the end of third grade are unlikely to graduate from high school). Highlights:

In *Save Me a Seat*, by Sarah Weeks and Gita Varadarajan (grades 6-8), Joe and Ravi couldn't be more different. Joe has lived in New Jersey his whole life. Sad because his best friends recently moved away, he keeps to himself. Ravi just arrived from India and is eager to make new friends. Both come together when the school bully makes their lives miserable. The book offers lessons about bullying, friendship, family and fitting in.

Former U.S. Poet Laureate Juan Felipe Herrera, a son of migrant workers who lives in Fresno, is the author of *imagine* (grades 1-2), a poem that uses his life experience to breathe magic into the hopes and dreams of all children searching for their place in life. Illustrated by Lauren Castillo.

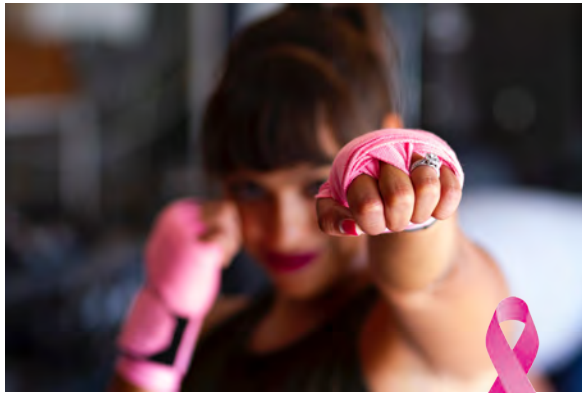
*Internment*, by Samira Ahmed (grades 9-12), tells a dystopian tale set in the near-future United States, when 17-year-old Layla and her parents are forced into an internment camp for Muslim Americans. With help from others, Layla begins a journey to fight for freedom.



## What Is the Meaning of Sacrifice?

HELP STUDENTS understand the significance of **Veterans Day** (Nov. 11), when we honor those who served and are serving in the U.S. military, and the meaning of sacrifice. PBS offers a lesson plan for educators that includes an interactive timeline of military history and studies issues facing veterans today ([pbs.org/newshour/extra/lessons-plans/veterans-day](http://pbs.org/newshour/extra/lessons-plans/veterans-day)). NEA also has lesson plans and activities for all grade levels ([nea.org/tools/lessons/veterans-day-activities-intro.html](http://nea.org/tools/lessons/veterans-day-activities-intro.html)).





\* OCTOBER IS

## BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

**ABOUT ONE IN EIGHT** women born today in the United States will get breast cancer at some point. The good news is that most women can survive breast cancer if it's found and treated early, and a mammogram — the screening test for breast cancer — can help. Fight back! Know the symptoms (go to [breastcancer.org](http://breastcancer.org)) and spread the word to colleagues, friends and family about the importance of mammograms.

### Voluntary dues contribution

**NOV. 1** OPT-OUT DEADLINE

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. ► [cta.org/contribution](http://cta.org/contribution)

### American Education Week

**NOV. 18–22** EVENT

American Education Week is celebrated the week prior to Thanksgiving week and includes special days to honor parents, education support professionals and substitute teachers. ► [nea.org/aw](http://nea.org/aw)

Teaching Tolerance



## MIX IT UP AT LUNCH

**WHILE OCT. 22** is the official day, many educators mix it up at lunch every day by opening their classrooms to students. Encourage all students to sit next to someone new in the cafeteria or yard instead of with their same group of friends. Positive interactions with other people can help reduce the prejudices that grow with separation — and that can lead to bullying.

Speaking of which, October is **National Bullying Prevention Month**. Educators should understand what bullying is, what their school's policies and rules are, and how to enforce the rules. Go to [stopbullying.gov](http://stopbullying.gov) for information and resources.

## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA – DON'T MISS!

### New Educator Weekend South

**DEC. 6–8** CONFERENCE

Sheraton San Diego. New Educator Weekend (NEW) South is for educators in their first three years in the profession. NEW has everything that you need to be successful in your first years of teaching, including sessions on classroom management, special education, Common Core and state standards, assessments, pedagogy, and more. Hotel cut-off: Nov. 21. ► [ctago.org](http://ctago.org)

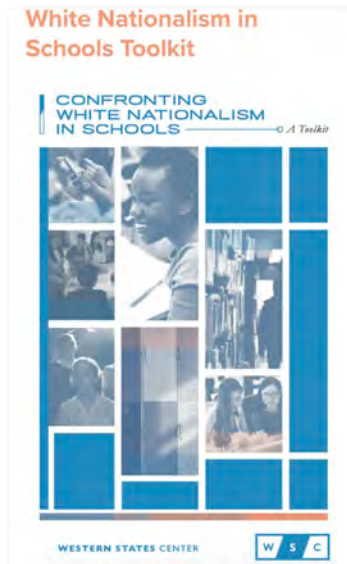
### LGBTQ+ Issues Conference

**DEC. 13–15** CONFERENCE

Hilton San Francisco Financial District. The LGBTQ+ Issues Conference is open to all CTA members and provides a venue to discuss a variety of issues affecting educators, students and the community. Hotel cut-off: Nov. 18. ► [ctago.org](http://ctago.org)



**RA Reminder** The declaration of candidacy form for state delegates to the 2020 NEA Representative Assembly in Atlanta, Georgia, will appear in the December/January *Educator*.



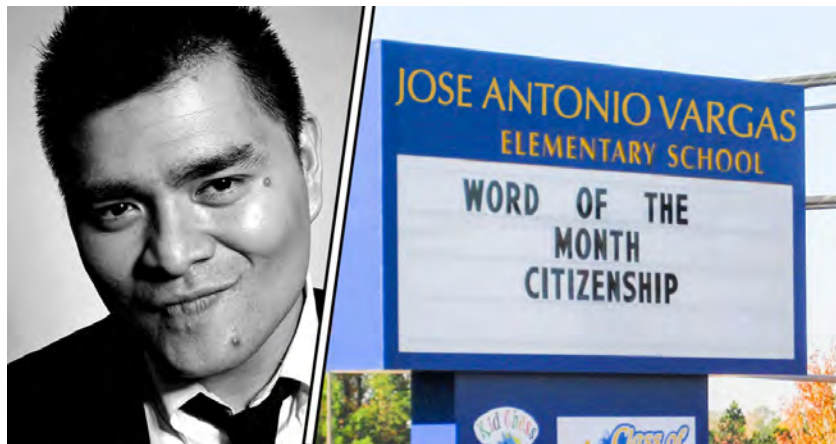
## UNITED AGAINST HATE

**AMERICANS ACROSS** the country report a rise in white nationalism and other bigoted extremism. Because schools are hubs of our communities, they have become battlegrounds for extremist organizing and recruitment.

Educators can learn how to push back with a new toolkit from the Western States Center, “Confronting White Nationalism in Schools.” It shares strategies to counter white nationalist organizing and narratives through sample scenarios that schools frequently encounter, and offers advice for the school and wider community.

The goal: to build schools where everyone feels valued, and where students grow to be engaged citizens of an inclusive democracy. Order your copy of the toolkit at [westernstatescenter.org/schools](http://westernstatescenter.org/schools). For more resources, go to [neeedjustice.org/unite-against-hate](http://neeedjustice.org/unite-against-hate).

Jose Antonio Vargas and the sign at the school bearing his name.



\* OCTOBER

# Filipino American History Month

**IN AUGUST**, the new Jose Antonio Vargas Elementary School was dedicated in Mountain View — the second school in California and possibly the nation named for a Filipino American. While Itliong-Vera Cruz Middle School in Union City honors legendary labor leaders Larry Itliong and Philip Vera Cruz, Vargas Elementary honors the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and immigration rights activist.

In 1993, 12-year-old Jose Antonio Vargas arrived in the U.S. to live with a family in Mountain View. In high school he told his choir teacher and CTA member Jill Denny that he couldn’t go on a class trip to Japan because he was undocumented. (She immediately moved the trip to Hawaii, telling him, “We don’t leave anyone behind.”) School was always where he felt safe and accepted, Vargas said during his speech at the dedication.

“This school, our school, represents the power of community — how to treat people with respect, how to show gratitude, ... how to live your life with love, how to live a loving life of continuous education, that we can never stop learning, and we can never stop learning about and from each other,” he said.

Celebrate the month and Larry Itliong Day on Oct. 25 by teaching students about the work of Itliong and Vera Cruz (multiple resources are available for all grade levels), and Define American ([defineamerican.com](http://defineamerican.com)), which Vargas founded to use the power of story to help transcend politics and shift the conversation about immigrants, identity and citizenship.

\* NOVEMBER

## NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

FALL IS A GREAT TIME for educators to focus on Native Californians, who settled along the West Coast some 10,000 years ago. More than 300,000 people in 200 tribes populated the state. The California Indian History Curriculum Coalition ([csus.edu/college/education/engagement/indian-curriculum.html](https://csus.edu/college/education/engagement/indian-curriculum.html)) offers this map as well as multiple free, vetted resources and lesson plans for use in classrooms. (Just one example: a video showing how the Winnemem Wintu tribe — nonexistent in California's history books — is using technology to put itself back on the map.)

The annual **California Indian Conference** ([csuchico.edu/cic](https://csuchico.edu/cic)) takes place this year at Sonoma State University Nov. 14-16, bringing together California Indians, academics, tribal scholars, educators and students.



*California Indian Pre-Contact Tribal Territories*

Adapted from California Indian Library Collections

### Get a Copy of Your Story

STORIES IN THE *California Educator* are available to you as a PDF, which can be shared and printed. We can also print a copy of the story on paper suitable for framing. Send email to [editor@cta.org](mailto:editor@cta.org) with "story PDF" in the subject line and the headline (or link) of the story you want, along with the publication date.

### HUMAN RIGHTS AWARDS

KNOW OF A CTA member whose exemplary actions have promoted the advancement and protection of human and civil rights and social justice issues? The **2020 CTA Human Rights Awards** are now open for nominations. Any active CTA member may submit a nomination. The deadline is Jan. 10, 2020. Awards will be presented at the Equity and Human Rights Conference in Irvine on Feb. 29. Learn more at [cta.org/humanrightswards](https://cta.org/humanrightswards).



From OpenSciEd's seventh grade unit on metabolic reactions.



## Free Science Materials

Nonprofit OpenSciEd ([opensci.org](http://opensci.org)) offers educators high-quality, open-source, full-course science instructional materials that can be easily accessed, downloaded and adapted to your needs. Current offerings support implementation of middle school science instructional units. While units are slowly being rolled out, the long-term goal is to create an entire science curriculum from elementary to high school.

All materials align with the Science Framework and Next Generation Science Standards, and consist of videos, slides, handouts, assessments and activities. They're designed to be used with low-cost standard laboratory equipment.

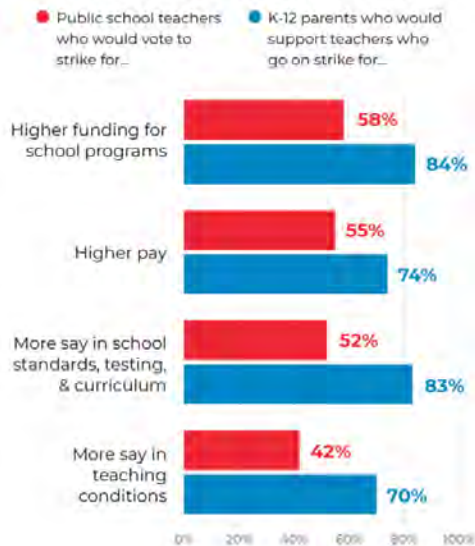
California, through the K-12 Alliance at WestEd, is one of 10 OpenSciEd partner states.

## PUBLIC'S ATTITUDES TOWARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

IN A MAJOR show of support, 74 percent of parents and 71 percent of all adults nationwide say they would support a strike by teachers in their community for higher pay. The results from the 51st annual PDK Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools show that even more — 83 percent of parents and 79 percent of all adults — say they'd support teachers striking for a greater voice in academic policies.

The poll also reveals that because of poor pay and underfunded schools, half of public school teachers nationally have seriously considered leaving the profession in the past few years. That rises to 62 percent among teachers who feel undervalued by their community, who say their pay is unfair, or who earn less than \$45,000 annually. Having considered quitting also peaks among high school teachers at 61 percent vs. 48 percent in the lower grades. See more at [pdkpoll.org/results](http://pdkpoll.org/results).

### Support for a teachers strike



## COMPARE THE CANDIDATES

NEA has developed an online presidential candidate comparison tool to see every candidate's position on education issues that matter. The nonpartisan tool is a part of the Strong Public Schools campaign, launched by NEA to provide insight and information about the 2020 presidential candidates and their education policies.

"It is the work of this union to be prepared to be powerfully engaged in the most important election in our lifetime," says NEA President Lily Eskelsen García. "Every election is about the future, but this one is to protect our democracy. We will need more information and more member engagement than ever before."

Visit [StrongPublicSchools.org](http://StrongPublicSchools.org) for candidates' positions, news and events, and a chance to submit your video questions to candidates.

—Julian Peoples

# Quotes & Numbers

Compiled by **Julian Peeples**



## \$664

### AMOUNT A

California public school teacher spends of their own money per year on classroom supplies, according to a study by the Economic Policy Institute. The amount is the highest in the country, more than \$200 higher than the national average of \$459.

**“IT’S TIME FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION TO MAKE OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE AGAIN. ... WORDS ALONE WON’T FIX ANYTHING; IT WILL TAKE ACTION. SOMETHING IS FUNDAMENTALLY BROKEN WHEN A TRIP TO THE MALL, A FESTIVAL OR A NIGHT OUT WITH FRIENDS COULD END IN A HAIL OF GUNFIRE.”**

—CTA President **E. Toby Boyd** in the wake of senseless gun violence in Gilroy, El Paso and Dayton.

**“We did this victory the old-school style, with solidarity. What happened was the most amazing and inspiring thing of our careers. I watched young teachers grow into leaders overnight. It changed their lives.”**

—Forestville Teachers Association President **Gina Graziano**, speaking at a Labor Day event about FTA’s successful strike in August.

## \$1.35

### COST PER STUDENT

to implement a simple 30-minute writing exercise that according to a recent study increases well-being, sense of belonging and academic performance for incoming middle schoolers. Researchers estimate that some of the most popular social-emotional interventions cost more than \$580 per student. Find out more: [edut.to/2m9nRlx](http://edut.to/2m9nRlx).

## 661

**NUMBER OF** loan forgiveness requests approved out of 53,523 submitted from May 2018 to May 2019 through the Temporary Expanded Public Service Loan Forgiveness program. The federal Department of Education has denied 99 percent of applications, according to the Government Accounting Office.



**“THIS IS THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE REFORM IN CLOSE TO 30 YEARS. WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR MILLIONS AND MILLIONS OF KIDS.”**

—Gov. **Gavin Newsom**, after signing into law CTA-sponsored AB 1505, which increases accountability and transparency for charter schools.

## 74%

**PERCENTAGE OF** parents nationwide who support a strike by teachers in their community for higher pay, according to the 51st annual PDK Poll of the Public’s Attitudes Toward the Public Schools. See page 12 for related findings.

## \$97 MILLION

**THE TOTAL COST** to Los Angeles, Oakland and San Diego school districts due to privately managed charter schools disproportionately underserving special education students, according to “State of Denial,” a newly released report by CTA and United Teachers Los Angeles.

## 82%

**PERCENTAGE OF** public school special education teachers who are white, according to the most recent federal data. Only about half of students receiving special education services are white.

**“ Mom, if they don’t think you’re valuable enough for a raise, they must not know what you do.”**

—**Wyatt Shelton**, son of **Patsy Shelton**, member of Del Norte Teachers Association, which is at impasse with school district managers who refuse to negotiate a fair contract.

# BATTLE OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA

For professional development, is your go-to Pinterest, Instagram or Twitter?

By @samdemuro

Pinterest, a longtime favorite social media platform of educators for classroom ideas and professional development, may have some competition. In our recent poll, many CTA members still view Pinterest as their go-to site, but some shared that Instagram and Twitter are now their platforms of choice (see facing page).



## What about **FACEBOOK**?

**WITH A DECLINE** in Facebook usage, it had us wondering: Are educators still using Facebook for professional development? Survey says yes:

👍 "Facebook allows deeper conversations, and my networks post very interesting things. It also functions as my social-emotional support!"

—**JAYSON CHANG**, *East Side Teachers Association*

👍 "I like how Facebook provides the ability to engage on an issue and interact one-on-one but also in public, like a visual Socratic seminar if the inquiry is good. Others can observe the discussion happening and weigh in, which allows for leveled participation. Search functions better in Facebook too. Folks ask me about specific

projects, articles or topics, and even though I posted years ago, I can find them easily. I hashtag things as file labels, but the search is so usable this isn't even necessary. Metrics are also easy to monitor for admins, so I know which topics get which kind of responses."

—**ANGELA DER RAMOS**, *Alisal Teachers Association*

Which platform do you use most? Let us know by tweeting @samdemuro or using the hashtag #CaliforniaEducator.





## PINTEREST

👍 “I use it a lot. School counselors post great ideas on everything from newsletters to social-emotional lessons. I was stoked to implement a new way for students to request to see us using their phones and a QR code.” —**ERIKA ZAMORA**, *Alvord EA*

👍 “I’ve used it for creating anchor charts and specific-topic lesson plans. I have boards for every topic I teach and can refer back to other people’s ideas. As an elementary teacher with about 10 preps, it saves me time [and] also sparks my creativity. I research topics, age group, ability level, and it’s all visual (I’m a visual learner).”

—**LISA HICKMAN**, *Tustin EA*

👎 “For me Pinterest is a pretty, shiny time sink where every time I go there, I feel envious or inadequate. Plus, I’ve been bitten too many times by links that just want to take my money. I curate my own resources in Evernote and Google Keep instead.”

—**TERESA OZOA**, *Irvine TA*

👍 “I learned how to use Pinterest to create a personal learning community to share ideas and grow as a teacher. Pinterest continues to provide me with time-efficient visuals without me having to scour the web. Pinterest also curates additional resources that may be of interest based on related pins.”

—**SUSAN SUNG**, *Little Lake EA*

👍 “As a middle school teacher, I like to [post things] that cut down on management. The most helpful thing I found on Pinterest last year was a door sign that reads ‘Today You’ll Need’ [with] a series of pictures I post under it. For example, if I have a picture of their ELA notebook, students know to grab it on their way in.”

—**MICHELLE VOELKER**, *Sacramento City TA*



## INSTAGRAM

👍 “I get ideas related to curriculum, instruction, and even bulletin boards and classroom decor. Our local union also uses it to connect with members.”

—**NICOLE WILLIAMS**, *Salinas Elementary Teachers Council*

👍 “Instagram has more lesson and classroom ideas that are easily implemented. I prefer it over Pinterest as there is less reposting and more original ideas/credit to sources (depends on who you follow). It’s easier to find and follow teachers who are relevant to my practice/grade and teacher soul mates to be inspired by.”

—**LORA CAREY**, *Alisal TA*

👍 “I teach high school Spanish and use Instagram to expose students to authentic language and cultural traditions throughout the Spanish-speaking world. Inspiration from a post may lead me to develop a whole activity [around] it. My students had fun creating fake profiles of famous historical figures and [writing] posts and hashtags they may have used.”

—**SARAH ROBINSON**, *Redondo Beach Teachers Association*

👍 “I’m new to the profession and I benefit from reading about and visualizing classroom struggles and triumphs of my colleagues throughout the state. Their stories of classroom experiences [are] the most authentic resource I have.”

—**IRENE AMEZCUA**, *Student CTA*

👍 “I was an early elementary special education teacher with a mix of students with mild, moderate and severe disabilities, and no curriculum or training to support [them]. I used Instagram to find teacher communities for tips, lesson ideas, activities and moral support. I don’t think I would’ve made it through last year without [this].”

—**AVA MARINELLI**, *UTLA*



## TWITTER

👍 “[It] connects me to thousands of teachers across the country who do inspirational things for students every day. It gives me the opportunity to express my perspective and receive feedback that makes me a better educator.”

—**JON RESENDEZ**, *Irvine TA*

👍 “Twitter is my first go-to. If I need a lesson idea, tech help, app idea, etc., I have a great network of friends/colleagues that I can reach out to and tag. I usually have a response within an hour or so, sometimes in just minutes.”

—**NORA ALLSTEDT**, *Exeter TA*

👍 “I use Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest, but I find that people are more responsive over Twitter. For example, if I have a question, I usually get an answer or response. Also, I keep Twitter dedicated to work.”

—**BENJAMIN COGSWELL**, *Alisal TA*

👍 “As an AP English lang teacher, I find Twitter a great resource for nonfiction essays and news articles. It helps me bring current events into my classroom. Because it is so diverse and global, I find writing I might not have found in my local newspapers or online news outlets.”

—**MATT CORCORAN**, *Anaheim Secondary TA*

👍 “I’m a science teacher and I follow various Next Generation Science Standards accounts on Twitter. All offer great links, podcasts and curriculum. I also follow @PrincipalKafele, who does great motivational talks live most Sundays. When districts don’t pay for PD, I make do with the awesome, cheap offerings on Twitter.”

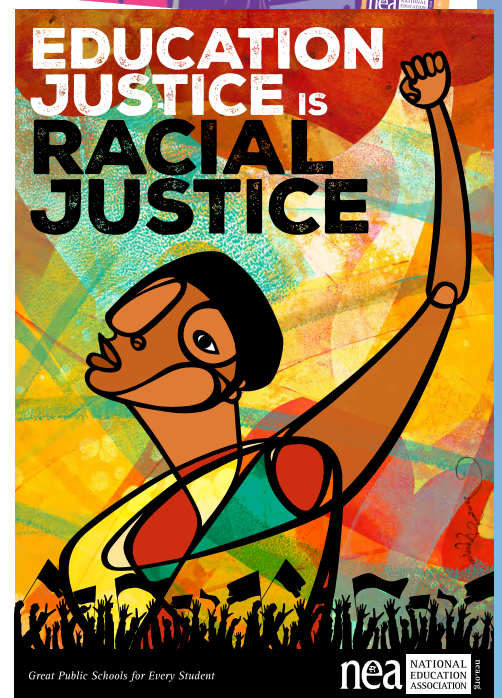
—**MICHELLE HETLAND**, *Sacramento City TA*

# Art to Move You

**AS ACTIVISTS HAVE** long known, creating art that accompanies a movement plays a key role in bringing people together and promoting ownership of the movement. Check out these inspiring posters made by NEA members at July’s Representative Assembly — the latest in a series of art builds across the country, supported by NEA and organized jointly by Wisconsin-based Art Build Workers and local unions. Art builds done with UTLA and the Oakland Education Association, for example, saw educators, activists and communities collaboratively produce powerful visuals that were integral to their **#RedForEd** actions earlier this year.

Read more about the art build process and see all of the NEA posters at [tinyurl.com/NEAposters](http://tinyurl.com/NEAposters).

CTA also offers multiple social justice posters in both English and Spanish; go to [cta.org/forallstudents](http://cta.org/forallstudents).



**\* ADVICE**

# GET YOUR STUDENTS INTO SOCIAL SHAPE

By **Jaleh Donaldson**



*“It goes without saying that patience, empathy and a few words of kindness go a long way. The student will not only be motivated to try again if they fail, but will also learn the value of compassion.”*

**SOMETIMES THE PRESSURE** of fitting in with peers, dealing with an unstable home environment, or developing individuality becomes too much for kids in their impressionable years. Those who have a particularly difficult time at school are often seen having an underdeveloped skill set for academic and social success. Just like anything else in life, children are not born with social skills; they need to be taught.

Help your students develop social skills and manage their behaviors and actions through these tried and tested ways.

## DISCUSS FEELINGS

Give students language for their feelings. With my students, I present a story or video to help generate a discussion about how the characters are feeling. Then I help them describe what the feeling looks like and how their body may feel when they experience it.

## TEACH THEM “I” MESSAGES

I have noticed that kids who misbehave often don’t have the words to communicate what is on their mind. Have your students practice communicating what they feel and want. For example, one student might say to another, “I feel sad when you don’t share the basketball. I want us to share the basketball.” This exercise will help students feel more comfortable expressing themselves to others.

## INVOLVE FAMILIES

Educate families about the different feeling words and how “I” messages can empower their child. Encourage families to use “I” messages and brainstorm solutions to different situations that arise. Having a positive family role model can increase a child’s chances of succeeding in school.

## PROVIDE POSITIVE VERBAL FEEDBACK

When you see a student make good social choices, give them positive verbal feedback to help further encourage the behavior. For example, Matthew bumps into Ryan. Ryan falls and expresses pain. Matthew then asks, “Are you OK? Is there anything I can do to help you?” Soon after their interaction, you can point out to Matthew how you liked the way he asked Ryan if he needed help.

## ACKNOWLEDGE DIFFERENCES

Some students take longer than their peers to employ the social tools they are provided within their daily lives. During this process of learning, it goes without saying that patience, empathy and a few words of kindness go a long way. The student will not only be motivated to try again if they fail, but will also learn the value of compassion.

## CREATE A SOCIAL CLUB

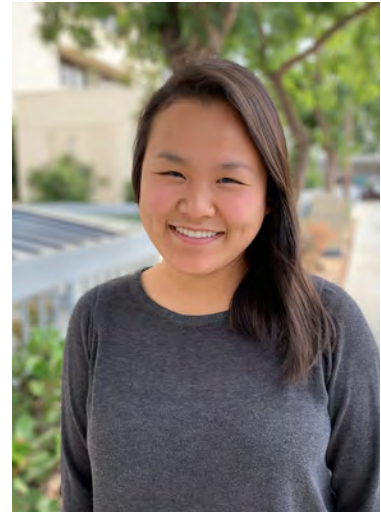
With the help of a few students, create a social club where kids can play games, create projects and take on leadership roles. Working with each other inculcates a sense of cooperation in young adults and provides them a medium through which to develop communication and teamwork skills. The social club can take place during or before lunch, or after school.

## CONNECT WITH APPROPRIATE RESOURCES

It is important to connect your student to the appropriate resources if you feel they need more help than you can provide. For instance, I had a student who displayed anger toward other students and had trouble focusing at school. After talking with her, I learned that she had been dealing with the loss of her mom. I got her connected with a school counselor, and over time, she improved at school. ■

*Jaleh Donaldson is a member of San Juan Teachers Association. She is an educator and author of various magazine articles and a published book on marriage.*

Judy Her Duran



# Talking About Trauma

Digital storytelling helps students tell what they've lived — and be heard

By **Judy Her Duran**

**THESE PAST COUPLE** of years, I have been working on being an effective storyteller, for myself and for my students. Telling stories connects us to one another, sustaining our humanity. Our stories are snippets of moments in our lives, helping us understand ourselves and those who dwell in them.

As I think about my stories, I am inevitably reminded of the traumas from my childhood. I have an image of my mother sitting against the door, helpless, her head bleeding, as my father loaded us into his pickup truck, taking us to one of his relatives after an evening brawl with my mother. I still feel the held-back tears inside our white Chevy Lumina as we were on our way to my elementary school, when my mother told us that one day we were going to come home from school, and she would not be there anymore. These images of violence and feelings of fear often flicker through my mind, like an old reel running through a film projector.

This past year of teaching middle school to mostly English learners, I heard the many traumas in my students' lives. One student came to school afraid

that her single mother might be put in jail, and she didn't know what would happen to her and her siblings. Another shared why he was so exhausted: He had been in the ER all night because his uncle got shot.

I contacted the school counselor because another student had been coming into class feeling sick, feeling like he needed to throw up, because of the stress at home. In a writing piece, which I also sent to the counselor, he wrote: "When I was little everything was better [no] one was mad at each other everything was good. Until my mom cheated. ... When they got [divorced] everything went [down spiral] when my dad got a new girlfriend she would always say that I'm not normal, and that [would] make

me sad. When my mom got a new boyfriend he was nice to me but sometimes get mad at me. Till this day everything is still bad. the end"

My lesson for the day becomes minute and diminished in the midst

of these situations. How do I expect a child to "learn" when they are physically, mentally and emotionally overwhelmed by all that is going on outside of my classroom?

*"As educators, we must provide the space and time in our curriculum to 'witness' the difficult stories that our students bring with them into the classroom."*

## The Digital Stories Project

The project uses the writing process to construct personal narratives, and then employs a video editing application (such as iMovie) to visualize these stories with images, voice and music. The goal is to empower students to share their stories and to learn from one another through these stories. To view samples of student work, visit [bit.ly/wams-digital-stories](http://bit.ly/wams-digital-stories).

Pediatrician Nadine Burke Harris, the first and current surgeon general of California, has discussed the negative effects of persistent childhood trauma: "Children are especially sensitive to this repeated stress activation, because their brains and bodies are just developing. High doses of adversity not only affect brain structure and function, they affect the developing immune system, developing hormonal systems, and even the way our DNA is read and transcribed."

As educators, we must provide the space and time in our curriculum to "witness" the difficult stories that our students bring with them into the classroom. The Digital Stories Project, a unit I created for students to share personal narratives, validates students'



Several examples of student work from the Digital Storytelling Project; for more, see [bit.ly/wams-digital-stories](http://bit.ly/wams-digital-stories).



emotions and lived experiences. The project compels students to reflect on their lived experiences and acknowledges their perspectives without making judgments. It asks teachers to embody a reflexive stance in using digital video technology to represent sociocultural realities. By being reflexive, we are evaluating our positions of privilege and our implicit biases, which helps us develop an asset-based approach to learning without patronizing our students or pathologizing their lived experiences.

The first time I facilitated this project in Selma during summer school, I witnessed the transformation of Ricardo. Ricardo struggled with writing and did not complete the written narrative before we started voice recording. Instead, he told me he had a story about how bullying has affected him, and I told him to go outside with his laptop to record it. On presentation day, he requested to go last. The lights were off, the room was dark, all eyes were on the screen, and then Ricardo's voice became audible: "Always being called stupid, sometimes you feel like you are. And you don't want to try anymore. I still have nightmares about it, being called retarded. It's the reason why I can't sleep. I tried taking medicine for it, but I can't. It doesn't work. My mom thinks that it's just that I don't want to sleep. And I don't want to tell her the truth. And if I told my dad, he'd probably make

fun of me about it. ... I want to be treated like I matter. Like I actually exist."

The moment his video finished, one of his classmates walked over and embraced him. I saw a shift in how others saw Ricardo and, most importantly, in how Ricardo saw himself. Toward the end of the day, Ricardo slipped me a handwritten letter, which read: "Thank you Mis. D. you help me get out of my shell and help me improve. Thank you you are one of my fravrit teacher."

Students leave this project and class knowing that their voices matter and their stories are valuable. The project brings people together because as we get to know each other's stories, we learn to be more empathetic. One student wrote in her reflection, "I enjoyed making a spoken narrative because it feel good to let everything out, it also help people because then they will know how to handle the same situation you been through. Also what I really like about doing this is, when you open your mouth, you are also opening your heart, and knowing that someone truly hears what your feeling." ■

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*Judy Her Duran, Sanger Unified Teachers Association member, is an English language development teacher at Washington Academic Middle School in Sanger.*

▼

This story is part of **"Teaching Through Trauma,"** our special report on how educators are handling students who are coping with the impact of traumatic events in their lives. The second installment of the series appears on page 20. Read more at [californiaeducator.org/teaching-through-trauma](http://californiaeducator.org/teaching-through-trauma).



At Jamestown Elementary, students get a peaceful start with yoga during PE.



# A Culture of Compassion

## Trauma-sensitive schools focus on student well-being

By **Julian Peeples** Photos by **Tony Avelar**

“HEY, WHAT’S UP?” Barry Roth says, offering a fist bump to a student in one of the halls at Encina Preparatory High School in Sacramento. “Are you doing all right today?”

It’s a scene that plays out over and over throughout the school day as Roth keeps a keen watch for students who might need some extra support. He spots a girl with a dour look on her face sitting outside a classroom, stopping mid-sentence to approach her and determine whether something is amiss. Every adult at Encina High is hyperfocused on supporting their students’ mental and emotional well-being, so they have the space they need to learn.

“There are so many kids that could go all day without any meaningful interaction with adults. The whole staff is focused on the kids and helping each other,” says Roth, coordinator for community schools at Encina High and member of San Juan Teachers Association (SJTA). “To work here, you have to be willing to love these

kids as if they’re your own, because that’s what they deserve.”

Encina High is a trauma-informed school, which means that its staff, students and community are focused on recognizing and responding to the impacts of traumatic stress on students and staff. Trauma-informed schools show empathy to students, resist punitive responses, and provide support to manage traumatic stress and build a positive culture. Having embraced the trauma-informed approach for a decade now, Encina High has put a lot of effort into creating a culture of compassion, but it is still a work in progress, Roth says.

“Our job as educators is to do everything we can to help our students succeed. It might be a little optimistic to say we are there, which hurts to say. But all of the leaders are on board that this is the right path.”

According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN), one in four school-age children has been



Barry Roth



Students at Encina High School do breathing exercises before taking a test.



Roth checks in with a student.

exposed to a traumatic event that can affect their learning and behavior. The research shows that adverse childhood experiences can cause physical and emotional distress in children, impairing learning and impacting school performance. These experiences include being subjected to or witnessing violence or abuse, accidents and natural disasters, bullying, having close relatives incarcerated, witnessing police activity or community violence, and living in chronically chaotic environments where housing and financial resources are not consistently available.

At Encina, where 98 percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, the likelihood is high that a substantial number are impacted by these and other traumatic experiences. That's why trauma-informed practices like schoolwide meditation, a campus "wellness room," wraparound services for students and their families, and restorative disciplinary practices are so important, Roth says.

"How do you support that kid who you hand out a test and he flips over a desk? Because he needs some help, not discipline," Roth says. "How else can we combat the school-to-prison pipeline? It's extra work, but our school believes in it so much."

### Nurturing a community of trust

The giggling never quite stops as seventh and eighth graders try to maintain their balance on one leg with their hands together above their heads in the yoga tree pose. It's physical education



Michelle Bennett

**"We can't control what happened at home, but we can control how we start here."**

—Michelle Bennett, Jamestown Teachers Association

time at Jamestown Elementary School just after morning bell, but instead of tetherball and laps around a track, the activity is a circuit of yoga poses intended to give these students a little space before the day of learning starts.

"We like to start them off in the morning in a positive place. We can't control what happened at home, but we can control how we start here," says Jamestown teacher Michelle Bennett, explaining that the school day is crafted with a trauma-informed lens. "We looked at what these kids need, and we built the schedule to best support them."

It is part of Jamestown School District's mission to be a trauma-sensitive school system (the small district also includes a 30-student school in nearby Chinese Camp). With about 350 K-8 students in rural Gold Country, Jamestown Elementary has cultivated a community of support and trust that has been rooted in trauma-informed practices for a decade. Now, the collaborative focus of every adult at the school is trained on the well-being and safety of their students and "post-traumatic growth."

"It was a big paradigm shift at the beginning. We just took bite-size pieces until it was part of who we are. It takes years to build a culture," says third and fourth grade teacher Melissa Miotti, a member of Jamestown Teachers Association (JTA). "It's all about the connections with the kids, because if we don't have connections, we can't work together. Helping students means supporting them in all aspects of their lives." →

Trauma-informed practices are so important to the Jamestown community, they're included in the district's Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP). All educators and education support professionals are provided with trauma-informed professional development. Additionally, the district's family resource center provides wraparound services to the Jamestown community, including a recent series of family engagement events funded in part by a grant from CTA's Institute for Teaching. District Superintendent Tessa Pelfrey says being a trauma-informed school is not a destination, but a constant effort to best support their students and each other.

"You have to begin with the why. Everyone needs to know why you're taking a trauma-informed approach," says Pelfrey, previously a Jamestown classroom teacher for 21 years. "That's how you create a cohesive strategy focused on a safe, respectful learning community."

Their mission accelerated four years ago when Mark Dyken, director of the Jamestown Family Resource Center, took a team of educators including Bennett and Miotti to a conference in Los Angeles on trauma-informed practices. Serving a community where 20 percent of families live below the poverty line, 76 percent qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, and a staggering 20 percent are homeless, the Jamestown team was ready to change the way they worked with their students.

"We needed to change the lens so it's not 'What's wrong with this child?' but 'What happened to this child?' As we've come to understand, the vast majority of these behaviors have some trauma behind them," Dyken says, emphasizing that this trauma includes



the poverty that affects one-fourth of all children in California. "Poverty charges interest. It compounds daily on itself, and it only gets worse. The way we deal with that cost is to address the source of it, which I believe is trauma."

### Many ways to help

"Does anyone have a question for Felix?" asks sixth grade teacher Adrian Nickols, prompting numerous hands to rise.

"Do you still play football?" Rigo asks his classmate.

"No, because we had to drive to San Jose to play and it was too far," Felix responds.

"I didn't know that about you, so I really like that you shared this," Nickols tells Felix, who smiles. "It's always fascinating to learn about our classmates."

The morning meeting in Nickols' class sets the tone for the day and allows students to connect with each other, Nickols and the school. This helps build a community of respect, where students feel safe and supported.

There are many ways to be trauma-sensitive, and Jamestown classrooms are filled with different practices meant to

"It's all about the connections with the kids. If we don't have connections, we can't work together. Helping students means supporting them in all aspects of their lives."

—Melissa Miotti, Jamestown Teachers Association

lower students' stress and anxiety, as well as help them learn the skills to do it on their own. Miotti's classroom has a "Peace Corner" — a small area, screened off from the rest of the class, containing manipulatives, a glitter jar, books and a timer — available for any student who needs a couple of minutes to themselves. She uses color-based emotional scaling to teach her students to be aware of their feelings, how to identify when they don't feel quite right, and what they can do to get back to a place where they feel ready to learn.

"They know they're not in trouble for how they're feeling," Miotti says. "I try to model it while I teach, too, by telling them when I'm feeling a bit off."

In addition to environmental trauma-informed practices, like using dimmers to soften harsh classroom lights and essential oils to freshen classroom atmospheres, Jamestown takes a deliberately



Mark Dyken



Melissa Miotti leads her students on a mindfulness exercise to give them some space between recess and class time.



restorative approach when it comes to student behavior and discipline. The school's former detention room is now the "Reflection Room," stocked with pages to color, books to read, timers and quiet corners with beanbags. There is even an empty cabinet for students who have experienced security-related trauma to hide in and feel safe. Any student can ask to go to the Reflection Room or walk the labyrinth painted on the blacktop just outside when they feel particularly frustrated or need some space.

The restorative approach to discipline means less punitive measures to change unwanted behaviors and more time spent understanding why these behaviors are occurring.

"We don't send kids to the office anymore. That just doesn't happen," says Bennett, also a JTA member. "We're building trust and relationships. We want them to know we are here for them and they can go to adults when they need help."

Restorative approaches to discipline engage students in repairing situations and relationships harmed by their behavior, showing them that they are valued members of the school community. The first year that Jamestown implemented the restorative practices, suspensions dropped more than 40 percent.



Adrian Nickols

"You're valuing the kids," says teacher Greg Haney, president of JTA. "If they're not in class, they're not learning."

This restorative approach played out during an incident that would traditionally mean an immediate referral to the principal's office and likely out-of-classroom discipline, when a student admitted to urinating in the restroom sink. The student was escorted to custodian Jim Kasper, who engaged the boy about what happened and why before asking him to make amends by donning rubber



## WHAT IS A TRAUMA-INFORMED SCHOOL SYSTEM?

**IN TRAUMA-INFORMED** schools, all educators, school staff, administrators, students, families and community members recognize and respond to the behavioral, emotional, relational and academic impact of traumatic stress on those within the school system.

These schools address impacts of trauma exposure on students and educators directly, resist punitive responses, and provide practical skills and support to manage traumatic stress reactions. Ways to integrate trauma-informed approaches into schools include strategic planning, professional development, direct intervention with traumatized students, and building knowledge and communication focused on creating and supporting environments that best enhance educational achievement.

The 10 core areas:

- Identifying and assessing traumatic stress
- Addressing and treating traumatic stress
- Teaching trauma education and awareness
- Having partnerships with students and families
- Creating a trauma-informed learning environment (social-emotional skills and wellness)
- Being culturally responsive
- Integrating emergency management and crisis response
- Understanding and addressing staff self-care and secondary traumatic stress
- Evaluating and revising school discipline policies and practices
- Collaborating across systems and establishing community partnerships

Source: *National Child Traumatic Stress Network*



Above, Jamestown's labyrinth; left, essential oils freshen a classroom.



Encina High teacher Mary Reardon Hackman welcomes every student at the door.

gloves to clean the sink. After some elbow grease to right his wrong and a heart-to-heart to talk about his choices, the boy returned to class to continue the day's learning.

Bennett shared another story about Kasper, a member of the California School Employees Association (CSEA), that illustrates the culture of compassion at Jamestown. One of Bennett's students became particularly anxious about homework, so she asked him to take a moment outside and practice some breathing exercises while she got the class working on an assignment. When she came outside to help him, Bennett learned that Kasper had encountered the distraught boy and taken him to the office for assistance.

"Our custodian took care of this kid. Not me. Not a teacher," Bennett says. "This is how it is supposed to be — that any adult on campus can see a student in need and get them help."

### The calming power of mindfulness

Encina High teacher Mary Reardon Hackman welcomes every student by name and with a smile at the door of her classroom. The students in her English language development class are returning from lunch, bringing with them an active but unfocused energy. Before they take a planned reading test, Reardon Hackman asks the class to practice a short mindfulness session to create some space between outside and the



Two minutes of breathing exercises changes the room



rest of the school day.

"So we're going to do some breathing exercises before we do well on our test," she says, bringing the room to a peaceful silence, broken only by her soft instructions. "Breathe in through your nose, deeply and slowly. Out through your mouth. Stretch your arms up and try to touch the ceiling. Reach high, as if you could touch the sky."

After five minutes of deliberate breathing and stretching, the atmosphere feels different. Reardon Hackman, a member of SJTA, asks her students to raise their hands if they feel calmer, prompting nearly the entire class to thrust them into the air.

"It feels amazing," exclaims Yasir Salarzai. "This is why we're studying so well!"

"It makes me feel normal and ready to learn," says Julian Castro.

"Now that I'm relaxed, I'm ready for the test," says Hasina Shams.

## BRINGING TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICES TO YOUR SCHOOL

**IT TAKES A** collaborative and deliberate effort to build a trauma-informed culture at school, but you don't have to wait to start building empathetic and compassionate communities. We asked trauma-informed educators Barry Roth and Phe Bach for their advice to educators who want to bring these practices to their students.

Roth: "Begin working with people who are like-minded. You're going to find colleagues who are doing trauma-informed practices on your site. Then go to the district and ask to have trauma-informed trainings added to your professional development. Start with the willing, work with your site leadership, your district admin, your local association and other educators to focus your efforts on the kids."

Bach: "Some schools have a culture of fear, so it's very important for us to cultivate compassion and kindness in our classrooms. Ask your fellow teachers about professional development opportunities to learn more about mindfulness and other trauma-informed practices. Give yourself an opportunity to experience it yourself. Take the initiative to bring this lens to your school."

For more resources, visit the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, [nctsn.org](http://nctsn.org).



In chemistry class at Mira Loma High, an International Baccalaureate school, Phe Bach creates a peaceful environment.

“To practice mindfulness, you have to take care of yourself first. If you want to teach trauma-informed, you have to live it. You cannot give anything you don't have.”

—Phe Bach, San Juan Teachers Association

as it is for the students.

“To practice mindfulness, you have to take care of yourself first. If it weren't for mindfulness, I wouldn't still be in teaching. Before, I stressed out a lot, but now I

haven't written a referral in years,” says Bach, a member of SJTA. “If you want to teach trauma-informed, you have to live it. You cannot give anything you don't have.”

While it might seem that all the focus is on the needs of students, self-care for educators is an integral piece of the success of any trauma-sensitive school. Educators who work directly with traumatized children are particularly vulnerable to secondary traumatic stress, or compassion fatigue, which can cause educators to feel worn out or overwhelmed by students' traumas.

“Self-care is an obligation for people who work with traumatized people or kids,” says Dyken. “We have to teach them by example and show them it's really important to take care of ourselves.”

Self-care can take many forms, including going to a peaceful place on campus to relax for a moment. In Jamestown, Miotti, Bennett and Justine Jordet, a behavior and attendance support assistant and CSEA member, created such a place this summer when they gave the teachers' lounge a serene makeover. What was previously just a drab break room is now a colorful, restful haven for educators to grab a quiet bite or sit on the couch with a cup of coffee. JTA keeps the lounge stocked with snacks and refreshments.

“It's a safe space — a place where you can come and just be,” Miotti says. “We have to take care of each other. We need self-care to help our students deal with their trauma.” ■

## SPECIAL REPORT

**MORE AND MORE** of our children and youth are coping with the impact of traumatic events in their lives. Trauma severely affects their ability to learn and grow, and often results in disruptive behaviors. This story is part of our series that looks at how educators are handling students with trauma. In addition, youth-care expert Charles D. Appelstein offers strategies for educators on page 39. Read more at [californiaeducator.org/teaching-through-trauma](http://californiaeducator.org/teaching-through-trauma).

Teaching  
Through  
Trauma

San Leandro High School peer educators Rosemary Che, Patrick Campana and Katelyn Ross present information on vaping's harmful effects. Inset: Slide from a presentation created by peer educators.

# RISKY BUSINESS



## Educators see the dangers of teen vaping

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

**A**T FIRST GLANCE, the San Leandro High School teacher thought he was looking at a memory stick inserted into the USB port on the Chromebook. But a closer look revealed it to be a vaping device recharging in the school's computer.

In school hallways, bathrooms and even classrooms, vaping has become commonplace, say school employees. And it does not appear to be going out of fashion any time soon.

Vaping is a practice where battery-operated devices heat nicotine-laced liquid to generate an aerosol that's inhaled. Unlike tobacco, vaping has a sweet smell that dissipates quickly. Because the most popular devices are small, discreet and easy to use, a student taking a puff in a bathroom, hallway or classroom may escape notice.

The smell may be pleasant — with flavors like mango, cotton candy and sour patch — but the side effects are anything but. Vaping is harmful to health and extremely addictive. Studies show that high levels of nicotine have a dramatic impact on developing brains. Vaping, which also includes products that use THC, the high-inducing chemical in cannabis, has been linked to at least 23 deaths in 17 states. More than 1,000 people have developed lung problems as a result of vaping (see sidebar, page 29). Devices have exploded in users' hands, faces and pockets, causing disfigurement.

"A lot of students think it's harmless, but they are taking dangerous chemicals into their bodies," says San Leandro High School's Tobacco-Use Prevention Education (TUPE) coordinator Dave Mason. (While vaping is not tobacco, schools can use



Dave Mason

## E-CIGARETTES ARE THE MOST COMMONLY USED TOBACCO PRODUCT AMONG YOUTH.

THE 3.6 MILLION YOUTH WHO USED E-CIGARETTES IN 2018 WAS A STUNNING INCREASE FROM 2.1 MILLION WHO USED THEM IN 2017.



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

funding from California's Tobacco Surtax Fund to educate students about its dangers.)

Mason prefers to call it "aerosoling" rather than vaping. He tells students it's like inhaling hair spray into your lungs, not water vapor. The San Leandro Teachers Association member is an adviser to junior "peer educators" who spread the word about the harmful effects of vaping. Through TUPE, they have created public service announcements and PowerPoint presentations.

"They've gone into freshman classes to present, and I think they are making a difference," says Mason, a social studies teacher. The teens are also educating staff about vaping devices and what they look like, so educators can recognize telltale signs. They visit other high schools to share strategies.

"It's important that we do this, because the media tends to normalize vaping," shares peer educator Rosemary Che, who points out that pods inserted into vaping devices may have two or three times the nicotine level of one pack of cigarettes. "Some students say they vape to relieve stress, but there are better ways — such as power naps and meditation."

Peer educator Patrick Campana became involved because his grandfather died from lung cancer related to smoking. Students rarely smoke cigarettes these days, he observes, but they are all about vaping. He

In 2018, more than  
**3.6 MILLION**

U.S. middle and high school students used e-cigarettes in the past 30 days, including:

**4.9%**  
MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

**20.8%**  
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS



"I REALLY THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE THE GENERATION TO BEAT TOBACCO. BUT THEY PULLED THE WOOL OVER EVERYBODY'S EYES IN A NEW GENERATION."

—**Dave Mason**, San Leandro Teachers Association

explains to his fellow students that vaping can result in "popcorn lung," a life-threatening condition where the lungs' smallest airways become inflamed and damaged, causing coughing and shortness of breath.

Mason is proud to be pushing back against what he sees as a vile and addictive habit that caught educators by surprise.

"I really thought this would be the generation to beat tobacco. But they pulled the wool over everybody's eyes in a new generation."

### TEEN VAPING SOARS

Data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show a staggering 78 percent increase in high school youth vaping between 2017 and 2018. Vaping among America's teens continues to climb while the use of other substances, such as alcohol and opiates, has declined in recent years, according to "Monitoring the Future," a report from the University of Michigan. (A 2017 survey by the CDC found nearly 7 million adults 18 or older use e-cigarettes.)

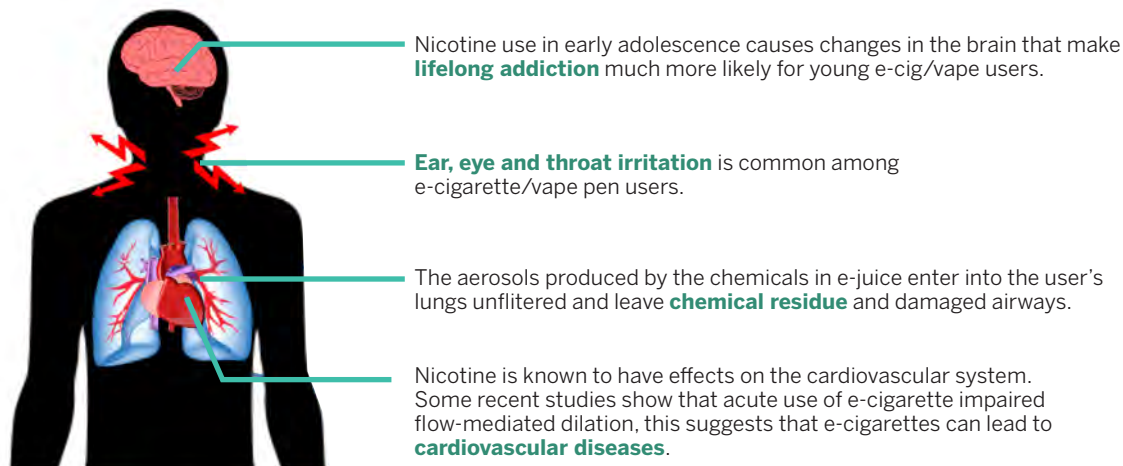
According to a December 2018 survey by California Healthline, U.S. teens are vaping in record numbers. More than one-third (37.3 percent) of 12th graders reported vaping at least once in the past month — up 10 percentage points from 2017.

The number of teens who took up vaping increased when Juul,



## RISKS OF E-CIGARETTE AND VAPING DEVICE USE

Although the overwhelming majority of young people do not use e-cigarettes, the recent increase in use among adolescents is concerning to health professionals. (This does not include cannabis-related products.) *Source: Tobacco Prevention Toolkit, Stanford University*



an e-cigarette resembling a flash drive, became available and was widely advertised in 2017. Juul Labs says the product is intended for smokers trying to quit; its actions indicate otherwise.

In July, hearings by the House Oversight Subcommittee on Economic and Consumer Policy revealed that Juul Labs spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to fund youth programming. Democratic members of the subcommittee investigating Juul's role in the youth vaping epidemic found the company "deployed a sophisticated program to enter schools and convey its messaging directly to teenage children." In one case, Juul Labs paid \$134,000 to sponsor a five-week "holistic health education" summer camp in Baltimore that "recruited from grades 3 through 12." Juul's plans also included paying \$10,000 to high schools that would "use the Juul-sponsored curriculum" during classes.

While you must be 21 to purchase vaping equipment in California, teens are able to obtain products easily. In fact, Breathe California reports, 93.8 percent of students are successful when ordering vaping products online.

After the sixth death linked to vaping in September, the Trump administration announced plans to ban flavored e-cigarettes. California's Department of Public Health has issued a "stop vaping" advisory. Meanwhile, laws to restrict vaping are making their way through the state Legislature. Senate Bills 38 and 39, sponsored by Sen. Jerry Hill (D-San Mateo), would ban the sale of flavored tobacco and e-cigarette products in stores and vending machines and make them more difficult to buy online. Twenty-five cities or counties in California have restricted the sale of these products. (The bills would not affect the sale of unflavored e-cigarette products.)

Health experts fear that the high concentration of nicotine in vaping liquids can be extremely addictive for teens. Nicotine is known to raise blood pressure, is linked to heart disease, and affects brain development. The heated e-liquids damage lungs, too. There are still many unknowns about the long-term effects of vaping (see sidebar, above).

Not surprisingly, tobacco companies are investing in

## THE TEEN BRAIN & NICOTINE

**THE BRAIN KEEPS** developing until about age 25. Using nicotine in adolescence can harm the parts of the brain that control attention, learning, mood and impulse control.

Each time a new memory is created or a new skill is learned, stronger connections — or synapses — are built between brain cells. Young people's brains build synapses faster than adult brains. Nicotine changes the way these synapses are formed.

Using nicotine in adolescence may also increase risk for future addiction to other drugs. *Source: Centers for Disease Control & Prevention*





# VAPING'S VICTIMS

**ON OCTOBER 1,** the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 1,080 lung injuries in people in 48 states and the Virgin Islands who vaped nicotine- or THC-related products. As we went to press, at least 23 deaths had been tied to vaping.

Investigation into the cause of the illnesses is ongoing. The majority (578) of those injured used devices with THC, and while the Food and Drug Administration has warned consumers to stop using THC vaping products, nicotine has not been ruled out as a cause. The CDC reported that most cases have involved young people in their late teens and 20s, and recommended that people stop using vaping products. Those who continue to do so should be aware of symptoms such as coughing, shortness of breath, chest pain, nausea and vomiting — and promptly seek medical attention for any health concerns.

**“I TELL STUDENTS THAT WHEN SOMETHING NEW COMES ABOUT THAT LOOKS FUN AND FANTASTIC, THEY NEED TO BE CAUTIOUS AND RELY ON REAL INFORMATION INSTEAD OF WHAT THEIR FRIENDS SAY.”**

—Michelle Patterson, San Ysidro Education Association



Abigail Jauregui's survey of her fellow students showed that many were unaware of vaping's dangers. Above, Michelle Patterson shows vaping ads to her class.

e-cigarette companies. Altria, the company behind Marlboro cigarettes in the United States, spent \$12.8 billion in 2018 to purchase a 35 percent minority stake in Juul Labs. (Recently, Altria introduced a new product that heats rather than burns tobacco; it claims to give users a nicotine rush with fewer toxins.)

## EDUCATING STUDENTS

Michelle Patterson, a science teacher at San Ysidro Middle School, which overlooks Tijuana, is presenting a slide show to her eighth grade class of primarily Latino students. The slides are of advertisements showing happy, attractive young people vaping candy, dessert and fruit flavors — even chamoy, a sweet and salty Mexican condiment.

Her students know that these ads, which they see on YouTube and other websites and in stores, are aimed directly at them.

“These kids are ripe for advertising, so it’s important to teach them early,” says Patterson. “Last year, a fifth grader brought a vaping device to school with flavored nicotine.”



Diana Abasta

The San Ysidro Education Association member asks students what these messages imply, and they tell her that it makes vaping look fun and healthy.

“Do you consider these ads to be a reliable source of information?” asks Patterson. “Do the ads show you what’s really in the product? Does it show you how vaping could affect your heart, lungs and brain? Does it show you that your tongue could turn black and that it could affect how you learn and remember things?”

No, say the students in unison.

“Marketers don’t care about health risks,” says a student. “I think they only care about sales.”

As her science project, student Abigail Jauregui



conducted a survey about vaping at her school. About half of the seventh graders she surveyed had tried it. Of these, only half knew there were dangerous chemicals in the vape liquid. The rest thought they were vaping flavored water.

“It was surprising,” says Abigail, who created anti-vaping posters for display on campus.

A student named Jorge admits being pressured by friends into trying vaping. He says Patterson has convinced him not to do it again.

“Vaping has been a big concern for me,” says Patterson. “I think it’s a big gateway to vaping marijuana or taking other drugs. Vaping nicotine interacts with a child’s brain to give them the feeling of being relaxed, which makes it easier to try something else.”

She encourages students to value their self-worth, to not be

followers, and to educate their peers.

“Students have told me they use vaping for depression, relaxing, and to look cool,” she says. “I tell them we all experiment in life, but when something new comes about that looks fun and fantastic, you need to be cautious. Students need to practice how to say no if they feel pressured. They need to rely on real information instead of what their friends say.

“And we definitely need to begin educating children at an earlier age, starting in elementary school, along with parents.”

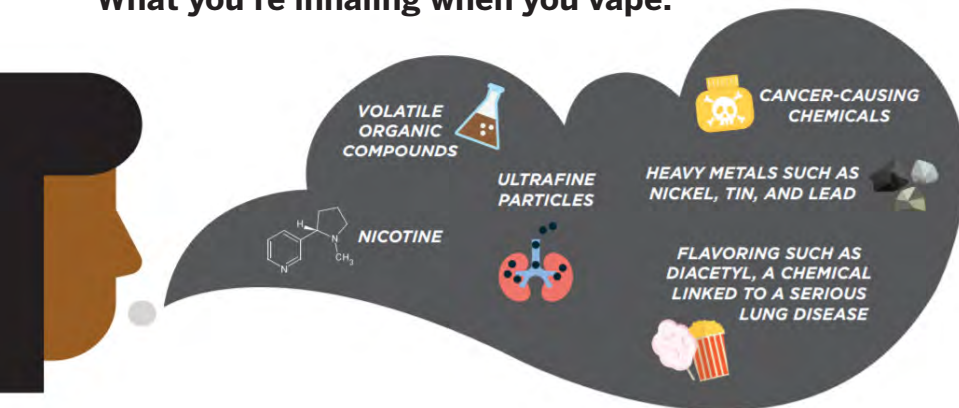
In addition to education about vaping, some schools actively monitor vaping activity, including installing vaping sensors in bathrooms. A few schools suspend offenders; others require they attend counseling sessions to help them quit. In San Francisco, Washington



Linda Boyer-Chu

## TEACHING TOOLS

What you’re inhaling when you vape:



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Michelle Patterson with students.

### Classroom resources:

**SCHOLASTIC:**

Lesson plan, worksheet and more — [headsup.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-e-cigarettes-what-you-need-to-know](https://headsup.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-e-cigarettes-what-you-need-to-know)

**STANFORD MEDICINE:**

Comprehensive module, in five units, exploring e-cigarettes — [med.stanford.edu/tobaccopreventiontoolkit/E-Cigs.html](https://med.stanford.edu/tobaccopreventiontoolkit/E-Cigs.html)

**AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION:**

Research, fact sheets — [lung.org/stop-smoking/smoking-facts/e-cigarettes-and-lung-health.html](https://lung.org/stop-smoking/smoking-facts/e-cigarettes-and-lung-health.html)

**BREATHE CALIFORNIA:**

Quick facts — [ggbreathe.org/e-cigarettes-facts-and-myths](https://ggbreathe.org/e-cigarettes-facts-and-myths) — and **BREATHE LA:** workshops for youth and adults — [breathela.org](https://breathela.org)

**CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL:**

Information, infographics, links to multiple resources — [cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes](https://cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes)



Below, some of the many vaping devices and e-cigarettes available. According to a survey last November by the Truth Initiative, less than half of 1,500 high school and middle school teachers and administrators recognized a photo of a Juul device; more than a third thought it was a USB drive, pencil container or something else. Photo: Minnesota Department of Health



High School nurse and United Educators of San Francisco member Linda Boyer-Chu provides one-on-one counseling. Fremont Unified School District works with the city to have students attend four weekly evening counseling sessions, including one attended by parents.

**“IT’S OUR JOB TO TEACH MATH, SCIENCE AND ENGLISH, BUT IT’S ALSO OUR JOB TO TEACH TO THE WHOLE STUDENT. AND THAT MEANS TEACHING ABOUT HEALTH RISKS.”**

— **Christina Noriega**, Hart District Teachers Association

### GETTING PARENTS INVOLVED

A joint effort to educate parents about vaping was undertaken by the Burbank Teachers Association and the Burbank Unified School District. The union and school district recently sponsored parent meetings at two high schools on the topic.

“Parents said, ‘Oh my goodness, this is wonderful,’” shares Burbank Teachers Association President Diana Abasta. “We see ourselves as having an important role in educating parents. We can’t just be concerned about kids in classes; we have to be concerned about them holistically, too.”

The collaboration was prompted after a representative from Breathe California Los Angeles contacted Abasta, offering to present information to parents for free.

“I thought it was fantastic, because we are really having an issue with vaping in our schools,” says Abasta. “I am proud BTA was involved in reaching out to the parent community about this.”

Christina Noriega, a counselor at William S. Hart High School in Santa Clarita, has worked to educate Spanish-speaking

parents at her school about the student vaping epidemic.

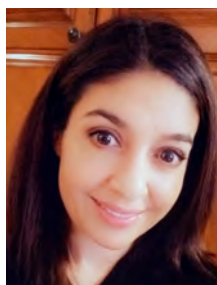
“It’s a huge problem,” says Noriega, a member of Hart District Teachers Association. “When I read that one in five high school students is vaping, I decided we needed more parent education on the subject. I was surprised at how little information parents have.”

She found that parents were under the impression that e-cigarettes did not contain nicotine and were relatively safe. They were also surprised that vaping products look just like highlighters and flash drives. She shared warning signs a student may be vaping, including increased coughing, pneumonia, nose bleeds, dry skin and increased thirst.

“I try to empower parents on ways to start a conversation with their child about vaping instead of just lecturing,” says Noriega. “Seeing advertisements or seeing someone vaping may be the perfect opportunity to start that dialogue.”

Some have questioned why it should be educators’ job to push back against vaping. Noriega says that given educators’ commitment to teach to the whole student, it makes sense.

“It’s our job as educators to teach math, science and English, but it’s also our job to teach to the whole student,” she says. “And that means teaching about health risks. Vaping affects what happens in the classroom because it affects students’ brains and prevents learning. It affects their overall health. If we don’t educate students and their families, who will?” ■



Christina Noriega

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# LEGISLATIVE SESSION ENDS WITH LANDMARK VICTORIES

**Bills fixing charter school system, guaranteeing parental leave become law** By **Claudia Briggs**

**THE 2019 CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE SESSION** saw huge gains for students and public education, with major pieces of CTA-sponsored legislation signed into law, including significant reforms to the broken charter school system. Visit [cta.org/legislation](http://cta.org/legislation) for a closer look at these and other bills.

## Charter school accountability

CTA members, parents, community groups, and partners in education and labor worked with key legislators to pass CTA-co-sponsored **AB 1505** (O'Donnell) and **AB 1507** (Smith). Gov. Gavin Newsom signed these historic charter school accountability bills into law Oct. 3. Our coalition partners lobbied in Sacramento, visited legislators in their district offices, used social media to boost our digital voices, made countless calls and emails to lawmakers, and packed the State Capitol on CTA's **#RedForEd** Day of Action in May. All these efforts made this victory for our students possible.

"This would not have happened without the unrelenting advocacy of CTA members across the state," said CTA President E. Toby Boyd at the bills' signing. "This will go a long way in changing the landscape of public education in our state and putting control back into the hands of those closest to students."

CTA-supported **SB 126** (Leyva, O'Donnell) requires privately operated charters to follow the same laws governing open meetings, public records and conflicts of interest that apply to school districts. Under this law, beginning Jan. 1, 2020, board meetings will be open to the public, and these charters must provide records

upon request. To prevent personal gain, board members are banned from voting on contracts in which they have a financial interest. Signed by Gov. Newsom March 5.

CTA-supported **AB 967** (Smith) provides development, adoption and transparency requirements for Local Control and Accountability Plans in charter schools, holding privately managed charter schools to the same LCAP requirements as all public schools. At press time, awaiting Gov. Newsom's signature.

## School facilities bond

Following a near-unanimous vote by the Assembly just prior to adjournment, CTA-supported **AB 48** (O'Donnell, Glazer) was signed by Gov. Newsom Oct. 7. This places on the March 3 primary election ballot the Public Pre-school, K-12, and College Health and Safety Bond Act — expected to generate \$15 billion in revenue for K-12 schools, community colleges and universities.

## Student support services

The following CTA-co-sponsored bills focus on identifying additional resources to increase the number of student support personnel at school sites.

**AB 258** (Jones-Sawyer) authorizes the use of



Gov. Gavin Newsom signs AB 1505 and AB 1507, as CTA President E. Toby Boyd (third from left) looks on. Key legislators and CTA's partners in education and labor are present, along with state Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond (third from right).

**“THIS WILL GO A LONG WAY IN CHANGING THE LANDSCAPE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN OUR STATE AND PUTTING CONTROL BACK INTO THE HANDS OF THOSE CLOSEST TO STUDENTS.”**

—CTA President **E. Toby Boyd**, on the signing of AB 1505 and AB 1507

funds generated by cannabis sales (Proposition 64) to increase much-needed in-school support services to students. At press time, awaiting Gov. Newsom’s signature.

**AB 1322** (Berman, O’Donnell) establishes a school-based health program to assist school districts in providing health-related services to students and advising school districts on issues related to the delivery of school-based Medi-Cal services statewide. At press time, awaiting Gov. Newsom’s signature.

**Civil rights training**

CTA-supported priority bill **AB 493** (Gloria) encourages schools to provide resources and training at least once every two years to all middle and high school teachers and other certificated staff for the support of LGBTQ+ students. At press time, awaiting Gov. Newsom’s signature.

**Parental leave**

CTA-supported priority bill **AB 500** (Gonzalez) requires K-14 districts to provide certificated and classified employees leave with full pay for a minimum of six weeks for pregnancy, miscarriage, childbirth and recovery. At press time, awaiting Gov. Newsom’s signature.

**Tax fairness**

CTA-co-sponsored **SB 468** (Jackson) requires the evaluation of certain California tax credits and exemptions for their effectiveness as well as economic, social or other benefits

to the state. This bill will bring transparency and accountability to California’s tax incentive process by creating a mechanism for review of some of California’s most costly tax expenditures. The bill applies to nine corporate and other tax incentives that cost more than \$1 billion a year and currently include no sunset or metrics for evaluation — with an annual cost to the General Fund of \$7.3 billion in 2018-19 and a cost to public schools of \$2.92 billion. At press time, awaiting Gov. Newsom’s signature.

CTA-supported priority bill **AB 147** (Burke) requires out-of-state and online retailers like Amazon to collect sales taxes like local brick-and-mortar California businesses, eliminating the out-of-state and online unfair advantage. Signed by Gov. Newsom April 25.

CTA-supported **AB 263** (Burke) extends existing requirements detailing goals, purposes and objectives that tax credits will achieve as well as performance indicators. The bill also protects taxpayer information. At press time, awaiting Gov. Newsom’s signature.

**Willful defiance suspensions eliminated**

**SB 419** (Skinner) was signed into law Sept. 9. It is designed to keep kids in school by making permanent the pilot program that eliminates willful defiance suspensions in grades 4-5 and prohibiting them in grades 6-8 for five years. The new

law, which takes effect July 1, 2020, applies to both neighborhood public schools and privately managed charter schools. In the pilot program, school districts failed to provide the resources and necessary training for educators to use restorative justice and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. CTA will be providing resources to locals to help prepare.

**Bills CTA opposed and helped defeat**

**AB 249** (Choi) would have prohibited an employer from discouraging a public employee from opting out of becoming a member of an employee organization.

**AB 1078** (Weber) would have extended the probationary period for certificated educators to three years.

**SB 709** (Morrell) would have required a teacher applicant to provide information to a prospective employer on any prior allegations or investigations, even if unsubstantiated.

**Labor rights**

CTA-supported **AB 5** (Gonzalez, Fletcher) closes loopholes that allow “gig-based” corporations to classify their workers as contractors instead of employees. This bill guarantees these workers basic protections including sick time, unemployment insurance and workers’ compensation. Signed by Gov. Newsom Sept. 18.



AB 5 closes loopholes that affect “gig-based” workers, such as those with ride-share services. Photo: Dan Gold/Unsplash

**A BILL SENT** to the governor’s desk can be signed or vetoed. If the governor does neither of these by Oct. 13, 2019, the bill becomes law.



Find out more about the SCF initiative at [schoolsandcommunitiesfirst.org](http://schoolsandcommunitiesfirst.org) and [cta.org/taxfairness](http://cta.org/taxfairness).

# Put Schools and Communities First

*Voter initiative could raise \$11 billion for public services*

By **Julian Peoples**

**THE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES FIRST (SCF)** initiative could mean another \$4.5 billion annually for public education — \$11 billion in total for public services — if California voters approve the tax fairness proposition in 2020. But first, CTA and other supporters need to qualify it for the ballot by gathering about 1.4 million signatures, starting at the end of October.

SCF, officially known as the California Schools and Local Communities Funding Act of 2020, is a vital initiative that will help California students, workers and businesses meet today's challenges while strengthening protections for homeowners and residential property. It addresses the impact of Proposition 13, passed in 1978, which saw California's approach to taxing commercial and industrial property starve funding for schools and local communities, disadvantage small and startup businesses, and exacerbate the state's housing crisis.

As the state reduced property taxes, California's national ranking

in per-pupil spending dropped from near the top to near the bottom. Over time, homeowners' share of state property taxes has risen to more than 70 percent, while businesses continue to pay low property taxes based on their original assessment.

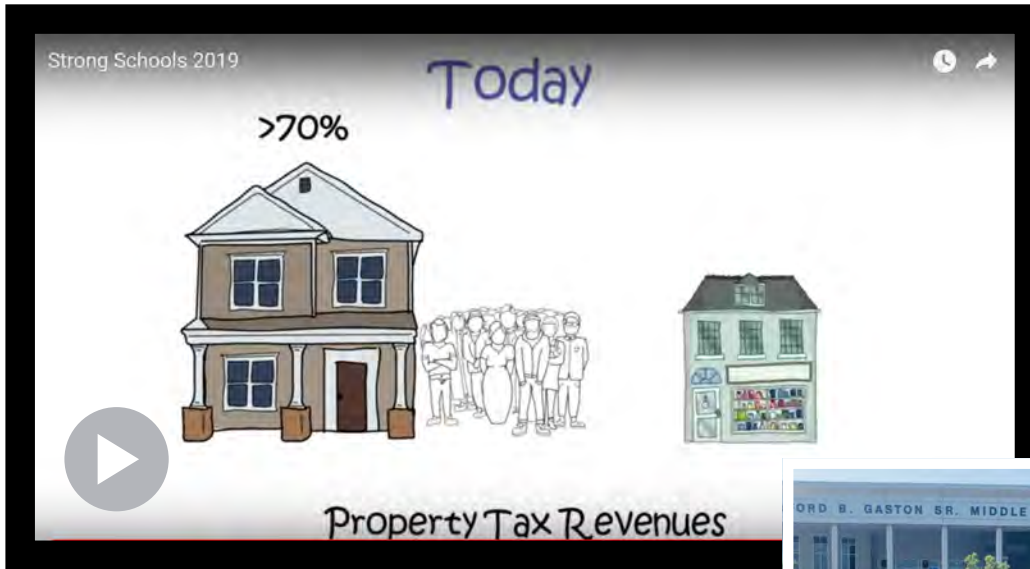
**“SCF CLOSES A LOOPHOLE IN PROPOSITION 13 TO ENSURE THAT BIG CORPORATIONS PAY THEIR FAIR SHARE OF PROPERTY TAXES TO SUPPORT PUBLIC EDUCATION AND LOCAL COMMUNITY SERVICES.”**

—CTA President **E. Toby Boyd**

“SCF closes a loophole in Proposition 13 to ensure that big corporations pay their fair share of property taxes to support public education and local community services,” says CTA President E. Toby Boyd. “It raises up to \$11 billion for schools and communities every year and doesn't impact homeowners or renters.”

The initiative previously qualified for the 2018 ballot, but supporters opted to wait until the November 2020 general election. This meant some revisions needed to be made to the implementation timeline language as well as some





From CTA's video "Strong Schools 2019," which explains how California schools have been funded over the years, including the current property tax burden on homeowners (left) vs. businesses (right). [tinyurl.com/strongschools](http://tinyurl.com/strongschools)

other technical adjustments. None of the adjustments change the intent of the initiative. The revised SCF has already gathered more than 400 endorsements.

SCF will restore more than \$11 billion every year for public schools and local communities by assessing commercial and industrial property at fair-market value. It will *not* raise taxes on homeowners or renters. Agricultural land will continue to be assessed the way it is now. The initiative also helps small businesses by eliminating the burdensome personal property tax. Knowing that our public funds need to be used responsibly, SCF has transparency and accountability safeguards to ensure the resources get to the public schools and communities that need them.

"Investing in public education, dollar for dollar, grows the economy more than tax cuts and corporate subsidies," says Boyd. "The Schools and Communities First initiative is the next step in bringing much-needed funding to our schools, colleges and communities."

The passage of Prop. 13 marked a watershed moment for California and the country, launching a fierce anti-tax and anti-government movement. This disinvestment has caused a perpetual funding crisis for schools and local communities, starved much-needed resources for education, housing and transportation, and led to regressive tax policies, making a disproportionate impact on communities of color and low-income families, and fueling racial and economic inequality in California.

"The Prop. 13 impacts have been multigenerational," says Boyd. "We now have the opportunity, coalition and movement to make significant changes for the next generation. It is up to us — and together, we can make it happen." ■



SCF supporters outside of Gaston Middle School in Fresno.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION** on the Schools and Communities First initiative and other resources like social media graphics and a sample school board resolution, visit [schoolsandcommunitiesfirst.org](http://schoolsandcommunitiesfirst.org) and [cta.org/taxfairness](http://cta.org/taxfairness). Signature-gathering is expected to start across the state in late October.

# BARGAINING ROUNDUP

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



## PLACER HILLS: New contract

The small but mighty **American Bear Education Association**, with about 40 members, organized and built major support in the Placer Hills Union School District community, winning a new contract that sets maximum class sizes, supports professional growth for teachers, provides an average 5.32 percent pay increase to ABEA members, and increases district health benefit contributions by \$500 a year. Per the agreement, the starting credentialed teacher salary will be increased by \$3,500 to \$46,000 annually.

## FILLMORE:

### Settlement rejected

Unconvinced that the school district was showing its educators the respect they deserve, **Fillmore Unified Teachers Association** (FUTA) members voted down a mediated contract settlement in mid-September.

The rejected settlement offer included a 2.5 percent pay increase — considered insulting after the school board awarded the district's superintendent a 6 percent raise this year and 7 percent next year. Fillmore teachers are the lowest-paid in all of Ventura County, while district administrators are the highest-paid countywide.

"Fillmore Unified teachers have spoken loudly and clearly," says FUTA President Tammy Ferguson. "FUSD's salary proposal is simply not enough, given our members' previous sacrifices. FUSD will be unable to attract and retain high-quality educators if they continue to devalue the contributions of professionals who work directly with students."

Negotiations began last January and ended in impasse in late May. FUTA is hopeful that a return to mediation will help the two sides reach a fair settlement.

## DESERT SANDS:

### Focus on member equity

**Desert Sands Teachers Association's** focus on member equity helped bring a settlement that strengthens early childhood education (ECE) for every student in the community.

DSTA's efforts were transformational in the lives of 18 ECE members, who participated fully in the organizing effort. Desert Sands' highest-paid ECE teacher was previously making less than the lowest-paid certificated teacher for similar work, and was paid significantly less than in surrounding districts. DSTA's success in bringing fair compensation (as much as 20 percent increases) provides an important lesson in equity within bargaining groups. Chapter leaders say their resolve in addressing it has made DSTA stronger and reinvigorated its members.





↑  
**FORESTVILLE:**

**Teachers strike — and win**

After four sweltering days standing together on the picket line, the 16 members of **Forestville Teachers Association** won the contract they demanded — one that will help attract and retain the qualified teachers Forestville students deserve.

The school district passed up every opportunity to avert a strike and avoid impacting students. District managers walked out of negotiations the first day of the strike and refused to resume bargaining for three days. On the fourth day of the strike, which was also the first day of instruction, Forestville parents and students stood with FTA teachers. That evening, the FTA bargaining team emerged from negotiations after less than 30 minutes, signed agreement in hand.

“I think they severely underestimated our connection with the community,” says FTA lead negotiator Ryan Strauss.

FTA won the 13 percent wage increase over three years they wanted.

**REDLANDS:**  
**Moving to mediation**

**Redlands Teachers Association (RTA)** and **Redlands Education Support Professionals Association (RESPA)** are moving to mediation after 14 months without a contract. Lack of progress in negotiations has impacted the more than 2,000 members of both unions.

RESPA President Gladys Kershall says the protracted bargaining is affecting staff morale and “negatively impacts the classified employees who daily support Redlands students and who maintain a professional yet compassionate relationship with students and parents.”

Teacher and support staff salaries are far below comparable districts. “Redlands is a costly city to live in, and our teachers are paid the lowest in the region,” says RTA President Teresa Steinbroner.

State mediation began in early October.

**DEL NORTE COUNTY:**  
**At impasse**

**Del Norte Teachers Association** is at impasse with Del Norte Unified School District after six months of negotiations made fruitless by the district’s refusal to budge from its initial proposal of a 1 percent raise. Despite every attempt by DNTA’s bargaining team, including four rebuffed compromise offers, the school district doesn’t seem interested in reaching a fair agreement.

“Work with us, that’s all we ask,” says DNTA President Marshall Jones. “The school board can direct district managers to come back to the table and work with educators. The board is able but unwilling.”

About 200 DNTA members and supporters, including educators from surrounding CTA locals and Oregon, attended a school board meeting at the district office in Crescent City in August to demand that DNUSD return to the bargaining table and negotiate a fair contract with teachers.

At press time, a fact-finding hearing was scheduled for September. DNTA’s 213 members are escalating their organizing campaign, taking to the community their message that Del Norte students deserve better.

“We work hard for our students,” Jones said. “We hope this school board will step up and work with us to achieve the resources and opportunities our students need to succeed.”





# No Such Thing as a Bad Kid

An expert primer on helping students who struggle with emotional and behavioral challenges **By Charles D. Appelstein**

**I TRULY BELIEVE** there is no such thing as a bad kid, just bad luck and bad choices. If you injected truth serum into any acting-out kid and asked, “Who would you rather be — you, the kid who is constantly acting out, or that kid over there who has lots of friends, a great family life and a wonderful future ahead of him?” — no kid would pick himself or herself. Their misbehavior is a message, a neon light flashing above their head, reading: Help me!

And the way to help is by using a positive, strength-based approach.

You can go online or read my book, *No Such Thing as a Bad Kid*, to see a formal definition of strength-based practice, but for me the approach is about two words: *attitude* and *actions*.

It starts with the inspirational attitude educators relay to students from the moment they meet that says: “I believe in you. I am excited to be working with you. And I just know you will be successful with me and forever. Let’s go!”

From that moment on, everything an educator says or does must be an extension of that attitude and message: “I believe in you.”



Charles D. Appelstein



Why is this so important? There are a multitude of reasons.

When a teacher extends a positive attitude, it makes her students feel good, and chemicals actually get released in their brains helping them to function at a higher level. And these good feelings contribute to the development of meaningful teacher-student relationships. More and more research on school discipline is saying the same thing: If you want students to learn more and behave better, build great relationships with them.

An educator who believes unconditionally in every student knows that kids who struggle with their behavior are often riddled with self-doubt and lack hope for a meaningful future. The educator, therefore, uses an array of tools and strategies to confront hopelessness and, most importantly, change the self-defeating, negative mindsets many at-risk kids harbor.

Here are some of my favorite strength-based strategies for changing mindsets and maximizing student potential — in no particular order.





“It starts with the inspirational attitude that says: ‘I believe in you. I am excited to be working with you. And I just know you will be successful with me and forever. Let’s go!’”

### Get excited about little changes

In the strength-based world it is said that little changes can ripple into big solutions.

- Send postcards to a kid’s family when she has accomplished something noteworthy.
- Post positive work on walls.
- If a student does a little better with his behavior, focus on that. “Hey, this was the best class you’ve had all week. I’m proud of you, man! [Slap him five.] And I’m curious, why did you do better? I’m thinking that you’re now realizing that acting more mature and going with the flow is going to open more doors for you? Is that it?” We call this verbal intervention *amplifying change using speculation*.

### Greet kids warmly every day!

Use memorable greetings with your kids.

- “How ya doing?”
- “I’m living the dream!”  
“All the better for seeing you!”  
“Happy as a hippo!” “Fantastic!”  
“Unbelievable!”
- Add touch — fist bumps, slap fives, etc.

### Make sure your most challenging students experience multiple successes every day

Success in one area almost always generalizes to other aspects of a student’s day.

- Get dice! Break the kids into groups of two to four and have them take turns rolling two dice. The winning team is the one that can roll the most consecutive rolls without getting doubles. It’s what we call a *universal opportunity for success*.
- Play cards and other games with at-risk kids. Lose on purpose, but be a good actor.
- Have your more challenging kids volunteer somewhere.
- Modify academics or activities so kids have better opportunities for success.

### Actively talk to kids about their futures

Use *positive predicting* (e.g., “How are we going to celebrate your best week in school? Who should I call when \_\_\_\_\_?”). When you talk about the future in positive terms, you make any desired outcome more possible. And when it’s more possible, it becomes more probable.

- Have your kids create business cards for their future professions. Post them all on a wall under the

sign: Future Leaders of America (or your state).

- Download college diplomas. Place kids’ names and pictures on them and hang them on walls under the sign: College-Bound Kids!

### Use consequences instead of punishment

Consequences are related to the behavior in question.

- The most important thing an adult should think about before setting a limit is the sanctity of the relationship. Behavior comes and goes. Positive relationships are what drive kids to success. Punishment or badly delivered limit-setting hurts relationship formation.

### Post inspirational slogans on walls

- The harder I try, the higher I fly. Be the eagle!
- What’s a mistake? An opportunity to take!
- If it’s stinkin’, change the thinkin’!
- If it is to be, it’s up to me!
- I’m smart, it’s in my heart. Believing in myself is where I start.
- Back on track, Jack!

“Educators can use an array of tools and strategies to confront hopelessness and, most importantly, change the self-defeating, negative mindsets many at-risk kids harbor.”

### Reframe problem behavior

Decode the function of a seemingly negative behavior and offer praise.

For example:

- **Behavior:**

Looking for attention.

- **Reframe:**

“I’m glad that you act out for attention. I’m not sure you always got enough. You’re good at looking out for yourself. I apologize for anyone who has ever put you down for looking for attention.”

### Use rhythmic self-talk

- Let it go, Joe.
- Just stay cool, no need to blow.

- Don’t call out, share the air.
- Make a list, it will assist.
- Here’s some advice, talk real nice.
- If you got to do it, just hop to it!

### Manage your behavior first!

When students act out and you suffer a self-esteem injury, say to yourself: “It’s an injury and it will heal. Respond instead of react.” *Respond* means use the Golden Rule. (See sidebar below.)

### And...

Avoid yelling, say please and thank you when making requests, and be cognizant of your body language.

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*Author of No Such Thing as a Bad Kid, Charles D. Appelstein, MSW, focuses primarily on teaching positive, trauma-informed, strength-based theories and techniques to professionals who guide at-risk children, youth and families. He trains educators and other child welfare professionals throughout North America. For more, go to [charliea.com](http://charliea.com).*

*This article is part of our series “Teaching Through Trauma.” See related stories on pages 18 and 20, and read more at [californiaeducator.org/teaching-through-trauma](http://californiaeducator.org/teaching-through-trauma).*

## Before You Talk

**BEFORE YOU SPEAK** to an agitated student or group, consider the desired outcome and how to achieve it. No. 1 goal: Engage!

- Listen, empathize, paraphrase, offer help, apologize, repeat, offer hope... hook 'em in!
- Don’t be defensive. Anticipate negative comments — don’t take them personally.
- Expect displacement (that is, anger directed at you that is meant for someone else).
- Assess your relationship and feelings toward the youth. Think *pie* (as in, everyone deserves an equal slice). The kid who is pushing you away the most is probably the one who needs you the most.
- Practice the talk in your head. Longer discussions generally have a beginning, middle and end phase.
- Other considerations: Fill in the blank \_\_\_\_\_.



Zack Gottsagen and Shia LaBeouf in *The Peanut Butter Falcon*.

Brian Donovan, his then-fiancée Temppany Deckert, and Kelly Donovan.



# Impossible Dreams — Realized

Two new films feature people with disabilities pursuing their goals

**SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS** know that many of their students will be able to live rich lives beyond the classroom. With instruction designed to meet their unique learning needs, these educators give students with special needs the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential.

That includes the opportunity to realize their hopes and dreams. Two recent films — one a feature-length movie and the other a documentary — focus on young people with disabilities who are passionate about reaching their goals, and the friends and family who help them. The films are worth tracking down to screen with colleagues and students.

*The Peanut Butter Falcon* stars Zack Gottsagen, a performer with Down syndrome who is described by movie co-director Tyler Nilson as possessing relentless optimism backed up by the kind of fierce ambition that makes stars

out of actors. He plays Zak, a young man with Down syndrome who dreams of being a professional wrestler and busts out from his care facility to find a wrestling idol he knows only from old videotapes.

Along the way, he meets fugitive fisherman Tyler (Shia LaBeouf), and the unlikely pair set off on a makeshift

raft down waterways in the American South, reminiscent of Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*. The storytelling is colorful and lyrical, and Gottsagen has been praised for the humor and intelligence he brings to the role. Said one critic: "All you have to do is watch Gottsagen's performance to see what we are missing when we discount the

complaints of the disabled community in re: representation. It is inconceivable to imagine an able-bodied 'name' playing this role and bringing to it even half of what Gottsagen does naturally."

***"The whole movie is about someone like Zack being able to do what other people do."***

—Tyler Nilson, co-director of *The Peanut Butter Falcon*

“The whole movie is about someone like Zack being able to do what other people do,” Nilson says.

Another performer, Kelly Donovan, was born with Down syndrome, and at age 5 doctors discovered a hole in her heart and said she wouldn’t live past 20. The high-spirited, extroverted Kelly and older brother Brian were inseparable growing up in 1970s New York, bonded by a love of performing and described by Brian as “soul mates.” She dreamed of becoming a Hollywood diva, so when he moved to Los Angeles as an adult, he brought her out and started filming their journey to create and present a live one-night-only variety show starring Kelly.

*Kelly’s Hollywood* documents not only unconditional family love and Kelly’s

exuberant talents, but also the challenges as her health began to fail and Brian’s tight relationship with his sibling threatened the relationship with his fiancée. The show, a red-carpet event complete with press coverage, eventually took place. Sadly, Kelly passed away in 2009 at age 39.

Brian Donovan said that “the dignity of risk” guided the show and the documentary. “It’s the idea [from writer Robert

**“That’s all my sister ever wanted — not to be famous, but to be recognized as a fully realized person.”**

—**Brian Donovan**,  
of his sister Kelly

Perske] that self-determination shouldn’t be impeded by excessively cautious caregivers,” he said in a story in the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

“It’s a scary proposition, but if you strip that autonomy from a human being, you strip away their passion for life.

“That’s all my sister ever wanted — not to be famous, but to be recognized as a fully realized person.” ■

**TO CHECK FOR** theater showings of *The Peanut Butter Falcon*, go to [thepeanutbutterfalconmovie.com](http://thepeanutbutterfalconmovie.com). It is also available for preorder on Amazon Prime Video. *Kelly’s Hollywood* is available on Amazon Prime Video; for more information, go to [kellyshollywood.com](http://kellyshollywood.com).

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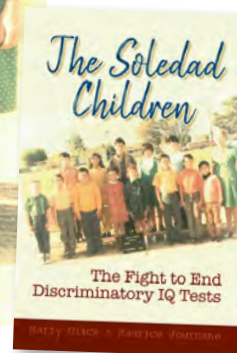
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The class picture of students who became known as “the Soledad children,” circa 1970. Thousands of California students were dubbed “educable mentally retarded” as a result of culturally biased IQ tests.



# Ending Biased IQ Tests

## New book tells of the fight to end discriminatory assessments

*The Soledad Children: The Fight to End Discriminatory IQ Tests* is a new book that looks at the push in California for equal educational opportunities for nonwhite and non-English-speaking students back in the 1960s, but is all too relevant today. It is written by Marty Glick and Maurice Jourdane, then attorneys with California Rural Legal Assistance.

CRLA filed a class action lawsuit in 1970 after discovering that schools were misusing culturally biased English-language IQ tests, by asking questions like “Who wrote *Romeo and Juliet*?” to place Spanish-speaking students into “educable mentally retarded” (EMR) classes. At least 13,000 farmworker and other second-language students were victims of these tests and dubbed EMR. Families were devastated by the stigma and lack of opportunity to learn.

Mexican American children were not the only minority impacted. They and African American students made up 21.5 percent of the state population but were 48 percent of special education programs at the time.

The lawsuit, on behalf of the 13,000 students and another 100,000 at risk of being categorized EMR, helped secure

students’ removal from EMR classes and ensure revised, appropriate testing for students throughout the state.

Here is an excerpt adapted and condensed from the book’s prologue:

*Arturo Velázquez, born and raised in a farm labor camp in Soledad, was bright, gregarious and energetic. When Arturo entered the first grade, he neither spoke nor understood any English. His teachers at the elementary school in East Soledad spoke only English in their classes.*

*Arturo understood little of his first two years of instruction but began to pick up English from some of his classmates and from his books. When he arrived at school for the third grade, he was given a timed IQ test in English. Arturo had trouble reading many of the words and questions in the test. Many parts asked about things he did not understand, such as “Who was Genghis Khan?” and “Why is it better to pay bills by check than cash?”*

*When Arturo came back to school the next day, he was told to go to a classroom where there were about a dozen*

children, all Mexican except for one Anglo boy off in a corner. The teacher handed out coloring books and pencils. Day after day, the class was coloring, cutting out pictures, doing a little bit of very easy addition and subtraction and recess. The children ranged in age from 7 to 13 but were in the same classroom together all day.

A year later, Arturo was still in the same room. Other children on the playground both shunned and teased him and his classmates, calling them “retard” and “tonto.”

The children in the class complained to their parents, but the parents did not know what they could do. The idea of mounting a legal challenge was completely foreign to the Soledad labor camp parents. They had no understanding of the justice system, did not know any attorneys or have the ability to afford them.

But in mid-1969, California Rural Legal Assistance

“Many parts of the test asked about things Arturo did not understand, such as ‘Who was Genghis Khan?’ and ‘Why is it better to pay bills by check than cash?’”

(CRLA) attorneys Marty Glick and Mo Jourdane became counsel for the Soledad children — and eventually came to represent them and thousands of other children in a class action lawsuit. The lawsuit, known as Diana v. State Board of Education, challenged the use of English-only and culturally biased IQ tests to justify the placement and retention of the Mexican American chil-

dren in classes for the mentally retarded. The battle raged for a decade.

CRLA eventually won a consent decree that allowed non-Anglo children to choose the language in which they would respond on IQ tests. It banned verbal sections of the test. It also required state psychologists to develop an IQ test appropriate for non-English-speaking students.

*The Soledad Children* (Arte Público Press) is available on Amazon. ■

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# Hone Your Teacher Voice

A broadcaster-turned-educator's pro tips on presentation and message By Danny Hauger

**E**ducators, like broadcasters, should always work on developing and improving their instructional voice and message. Start by analyzing, and then refining, your vocal presentation.

Before you teach your next lesson, sit down at a microphone and record yourself teaching for two minutes. Ideally, you will be introducing the next lesson you plan to teach in the recording for a more helpful conclusion of this experiment.

You can utilize your phone, a USB-connected microphone, or a computer's mic using a free program like Audacity to accomplish this. A professional or semiprofessional USB microphone will give you a closer idea of your actual frequency and tone quality, and is preferred (\$50 to \$100 will get you there).

Sit or stand as you would when you are teaching, about 1.5 to 3 feet from your recording device, to simulate the distance to your class. If you are too close, you will “peak” (add distortion) to the recording.

Hit record, and capture at least two minutes of an opening, general instructions, and some specific directions or instructions that are part of a typical lesson. Speak as if you were teaching. Project your voice just like you would during instruction. Envision your classroom and students while you speak, to be sure you are emulating the natural tone of performance. When you are finished, open a computer document or grab a piece of paper to jot down your reflections.



Danny Hauger

## Questions for reflection:

- FIRST LISTEN:** Observe dynamics (variations in the volume). Are you louder or softer than you imagined?
  - Are you too loud, to the point where students may feel uncomfortable?
  - Are you too quiet to be heard confidently in the back of your class?
  - Do you use changes in dynamics for points of emphasis?
  - Hearing your dynamics, can you make changes that could improve your presentation? Try re-recording with these additions before proceeding with step 2.
- SECOND LISTEN:** Do you sound motivated?
  - Are you alert and dedicated to your subject material, or just meandering and daydreaming while you speak?
  - Are you expressing genuine interest in the subject material?
  - Do you sound as if you are interested in learning, signaling to students that this is a lesson you look forward to teaching, to get them to sit up in their seats?
  - Did practicing make this feel less than realistic? Then put yourself in the desk of a student and play the recording again. What would you want to hear differently?
- THIRD LISTEN:** Is there a clear “why” to your objective for the lesson?
  - Did you explicitly state the learning goal or target?
  - Did you explain *how* you were going to achieve the goal?
  - Can you apply the lesson to something else you have learned, will learn, or have used in your life? Help relate the importance of the day's learning.
  - Did you get to the point? Does it hold the attention of your audience?



4. **FOURTH LISTEN:** Word usage and presentation.
- Are your words efficient, clear, concise and meaningful?  
Are you using appropriate vocabulary to be understood, but perhaps also challenging students with some new words through context and example?
  - Are you using inflection and tonality to emphasize your point?
  - Do you pause for key information to process, to help students digest the information?
  - Was there a clear hook to pull students into the next segment of the lesson?

### Steps for improving after reflection:

- 1. TOO LOUD?** Excessive force of voice can fatigue your vocal cords and vocal stability. You may be damaging your voice or making it hard for an audience to listen comfortably. Consider bringing your volume down; students will pay more attention in order to hear instructions and directions. Or walk around the room to speak, so students must track you with their eyes and ears, and you don't need to project to the scope of the entire room. Remember that where you stand might be great for some students in the room, but detrimental to students who are too close or far away.  
Too soft? Do you struggle to make out your words and syllables? Imagine what students who sit far away from you might be experiencing. Consider rearranging the room similar to an auditorium, to be heard from the center of the room.
- 2. THINK ABOUT YOUR MOTIVATION.** Would you be interested in listening to a speaker present as you just did? If you answered no, don't worry, this is just practice, and

**“Too loud? Consider bringing your volume down; students will pay more attention in order to hear instructions and directions.”**

you can read my book for steps to build confidence and effective qualities to present in a more engaging manner. You can re-record with more enthusiasm when you feel comfortable.

Remember, your ability to encode excitement or purpose into your presentation will captivate students and improve their commitment to learning.

- 3. SPEAKING YOUR LEARNING OBJECTIVE** is essential. Write it, refer to it, and state your goals explicitly if you want students to identify and achieve them.
- 4. INFLECTION** is necessary to pull students in and retrieve students who daydream. Use humor, props, tangible items or kinesthetic cues to get them more involved as listeners.
- 5. PAUSING** allows students to listen, think through any prompted cognitive process, and then continue to listen. If you proceed like a train on a track, students may get caught thinking and miss the next sentence. Think of this as if you were a student learning a second language — sometimes you need to stop and consider the meaning of words, then understand them, before being ready to proceed.



Educators Danny Hauger and Tavis Beem host the weekly podcast “Inspiring Teachers.”

- 6. FORWARD SELLING** is a term in broadcasting that advertises what's coming later in the show. Forward sell to hook in your audience. Then, backsell the important vocabulary and milestones of the lesson to reinforce what has been accomplished so far. This also builds a sense of accomplishment as you progress through the lesson. As a side note, any humor or jokes from early in the lesson can be used as call-backs to maintain throughlines of enjoyment for the class.

**Bottom line:** Repeat this test occasionally to check your progress as a dynamic speaker.

*Excerpted from A Broadcaster's Secrets to Teaching by Danny Hauger (available on Amazon). Hauger, a member of Liberty Education Association, worked in sports broadcasting before transitioning to the classroom. He also hosts the weekly podcast “Inspiring Teachers” (on iTunes and YouTube) with Tavis Beem, a member of Mt. Diablo Education Association. More information at [DannyHauger.com](http://DannyHauger.com).*

# Keep Students Motivated

Use neuroscience to sustain enthusiasm for learning **By Judy Willis**

**IT'S LIKELY THAT** your hard work orchestrating the first weeks of school enhanced your students' connection to the school community and their enthusiasm for the learning to come. However, as the semester goes on and you seek to sustain that motivated momentum, you may not be able to find the same amount of prep time that you dedicated at the start of the year.

Yet even when your students' bubbles of excitement fade, you can reboot their connections, engagement and motivation with the help of insights from neuroscience research.

## THE NEUROSCIENCE OF MOTIVATION

Motivation is a desire to learn, try, work and persevere. Students' levels of intrinsic motivation — the inherent satisfaction of the activity itself, rather than an outside reward — directly correspond with increased effort and with seeing the effectiveness of their behavior, choices, focus and performance.

Intrinsic motivation is promoted by dopamine, a brain chemical that gives us a rush of satisfaction upon achieving a goal we've chosen. When dopamine levels rise, so does one's sense of satisfaction and desire to continue to sustain attention and effort. Increased dopamine can also improve other mental processes, including memory, attention, perseverance and creative problem-solving.

## THE VALUE OF CHOICE

Dopamine release is promoted by meeting desired challenges, interacting with peers, movement, humor, and listening to music, among other things. Knowing what boosts students' dopamine levels can help you in your quest to maintain or reboot their motivation. One dopamine booster that I've found especially effective is choice, which appears to increase students' levels of intrinsic motivation, supporting their sustained effort and persistence in academic tasks.

Choice shifts responsibility for their learning to students and builds their judgment and decision-making. Some students may feel anxious about having too much freedom, fearing they

won't do the right thing. By starting with small choices first, you can help your learners develop skills of evaluating, selecting and following through with good choices. As you offer more opportunities for choice and expand students' boundaries as self-directed learners, you'll see further increases in their confidence and motivated effort toward their chosen goals.

## SOME CLASSROOM EXAMPLES

Here are some ways to provide choice to invigorate students' motivation, engagement and effort in their learning beyond the first weeks.

### *World languages:*

As students learn vocabulary in the target language, you can offer them choices regarding how they build mastery and self-assess their progress. Curiosity and personal relevance for this type of task can start with your showing a short humorous video in the target language. Look for clips that show positive emotions, laughter and people and places to which your learners will relate. Their goal is to explain — in a manner of their choosing — why they think the clip is funny. You may let them use dictionaries, provide guidance to appropriate textbook material, or have them work in flexible groups with you or peers.

Allow them to write or speak about the humor they found, draw a cartoon strip reflecting something in the video, or make their own videos on the humorous topic emphasized in the video.

### *Language arts:*

To motivate students to learn the essentials of punctuation, have them choose a book they love. Ask them to choose a favorite section of their chosen text and have them copy it without the punctuation. You then make anonymous copies of these unpunctuated documents and place them in boxes labeled with the level of challenge (as you determine it). You can add information about the topic to guide students in selecting a topic



of interest. Then allow them to choose their level of challenge.

The students' job is to make the chosen text understandable by adding punctuation. You should note that the original author's punctuation choices are not the only valid ones, and when students make different choices the class can discuss those differences. Your students will get feedback that they're building mastery as they use punctuation to make sense of increasingly challenging texts.

Eventually, you'll have samples of student work you can share in subsequent years — showing progression from a text with no punctuation to one with incorrect or incomplete punctuation, and then on to a readable text with appropriate punctuation.

### **Math:**

Metric system boring? Let students choose something that interests them, such as recipes they want to make or

“Choice appears to increase students' levels of intrinsic motivation, supporting their sustained effort and persistence in academic tasks. It shifts responsibility for their learning to students and builds their judgment and decision-making.”

of learning. Providing choices for students to engage with new learning and to progress through achievable challenges, with feedback on their progress toward their chosen goals, will make a difference in sustaining their motivated effort throughout the school year ahead. ■

*Judy Willis is a neurologist and former classroom teacher who lives in Santa Barbara. This article first appeared in Edutopia.*

sporting statistics, and have them convert the standard values involved into metric measurements.

Help learners recognize the pleasurable emotional experiences that occur through their learning and sustained effort. Remind them of these experiences when they need a boost of motivated enthusiasm and effort for subsequent goals.

Motivation has a major impact on students' effort, academic success and joy

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# FORGOT YOUR PASSWORD?

**‘Your password must contain 8-30 characters, a special character and a number.’ How can you possibly keep track?** By **Terry Ng**

**HUGE SECURITY** data breach headlines seem to be the norm these days. They’re scary, and it seems no institution is safe from them. In the last five years, hackers have compromised user account data from major platforms like Marriott, Equifax, Anthem, Facebook, and the mothership of them all — Yahoo, with over 3 billion users affected.

To keep yourself safe in the event of a data intrusion, you need strong, unique passwords for each of your online accounts. According to a recent Virginia Tech study, more than half of us reuse the same password on multiple websites, especially as sites begin to require longer and more complex logins. If a big company does get hacked, and you have the same password on multiple accounts, hackers will easily be able to get into all of them.

## HOW DO I KEEP MY ACCOUNTS SAFE? USE A PASSWORD MANAGER!

A password manager is a secure locked vault of your usernames and passwords that helps defend against hackers. It solves the problem of generating strong unique passwords, and acts like a digital wizard filling in your login info whenever you need to log into a site. Most popular password managers (like the ones at right) also encrypt your data across devices, which means your login information will be available on your computer, tablet and phone. Best of all, the only thing you’ll have to remember is one (very secure) master password for the manager itself, and everything else is taken care of for you.

## WHAT ABOUT BUILT-IN BROWSER PASSWORD MANAGERS LIKE APPLE KEYCHAIN OR GOOGLE SMART LOCK?

Most web browsers like Safari and Chrome already offer to save and autofill your passwords for you, and it’s certainly better than reusing weak passwords. Password managers like LastPass and 1Password go a step further and alert you about weak and reused passwords, and when to update a password because a service you use has been hacked. They allow sharing of passwords and other information between family members and friends.



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**\* Bonus tip:** Want to check to see if your accounts have been compromised in a data breach? Check here: [haveibeenpwned.com](http://haveibeenpwned.com).



Artwork by Mia Martinez; teacher: John Robrock, San Benito Joint Union High School Teachers Association.

# CTA Awards Program Turns 20

## *Cesar Chavez Awards honor their namesake's legacy*

**FOR TWO DECADES**, CTA has recognized educators and their students who demonstrate an understanding of the vision and guiding principles by which Cesar Chavez lived his life. The Cesar E. Chavez Memorial Education Awards honor the memory of the man and ensure his work lives on in California classrooms through student visual artwork and essays.

This year is the 20th anniversary of the awards program, which is once again open to students and sponsoring CTA members at all grade levels (including undergraduates in higher education). The awards are in two categories (written essay and visual arts). Applicants must show how one or more of the principles

Chavez upheld are evident in their lives and how their experiences correlate to Chavez's work. These include principles of nonviolence, human and civil rights issues, empowerment of the disenfranchised, and more.

The 2019-20 entries and application materials must be postmarked by March 6, 2020. Winning students and their sponsor educators each receive up to \$550. For more information, go to [cta.org/scholarships](http://cta.org/scholarships). To view CTA's video on the program's 20th anniversary, go to [cta.org/chavezawardsvideo](http://cta.org/chavezawardsvideo).

On these pages are just a few examples of winning artwork through the years.





## CTA Scholarships and Grants

CTA offers various educational scholarships, grants and awards. Go to [cta.org/scholarships](https://cta.org/scholarships) to check out the following programs, which are open for applications.

- **CTA Scholarships** in amounts up to \$5,000 are available to CTA members, their dependents and Student CTA members. Application deadline: Jan. 31, 2020.
- **Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Scholarships** in amounts up to \$6,000 are available to CTA members, their dependents and Student CTA members who are members of an ethnic minority group. Application deadline: Feb. 14, 2020.
- **LGBTQ+ Safety in Schools Grant and Scholarship Program in Honor of Guy DeRosa** offers scholarships up to \$2,500 to self-described LGBTQ+ educators who understand the importance of being a role model, and grants up to \$2,500 to CTA members, students, groups and school districts to support projects that promote understanding and respect for LGBTQ+ persons. Application deadline: Jan. 10, 2020.
- **Cesar E. Chavez Memorial Education Awards** (see main story).



From the top:  
 Artwork by Xiucoatl Mejia; teacher: Tamara Kirkpatrick, Claremont Faculty Association.  
 Artwork by Kailey Gonzalez; teacher: Oscar Vela, Montebello Teachers Association.  
 Artwork by Olivia Linn; teacher: Jill Jones, San Ramon Valley Education Association.

# Amplifying Marginalized Voices

## Irene Sanchez champions ethnic studies' place in the humanities

By Julian Peeples

**AZUSA EDUCATOR** Irene Sanchez is the only Californian on the National Humanities Center's Teacher Advisory Council for 2019-20, but that's not the most important distinction of her appointment to the 20-member board.

"I'm also the only ethnic studies teacher, and that's why I wanted to be on the council — to bring that voice," says Sanchez, a member of Azusa Educators Association. "That's why I applied, because I think that's super important."

After learning about the opportunity online, the Latino studies educator applied to be on the Teacher Advisory Council to bring marginalized perspectives and voices into discussions about teaching the humanities, such as English, social studies and history. She says it's time to ensure that ethnic studies has a voice and is included in humanities classrooms.

"If we don't start pushing these traditional humanities fields, they'll never change," Sanchez says. "Our history and our voices need to be included in these places."

The National Humanities Center (NHC) provides leadership, training, resources and partnerships that advance humanities education from kindergarten through higher ed. In order to be sure these education programs are rooted in the reality of classroom educators, the center appoints the Teacher Advisory Council, comprising 20 teacher leaders representing multiple disciplines, who help develop, evaluate and promote NHC materials and projects.

Sanchez became a classroom teacher only three years ago, specifically to teach Latino/Chicano studies in Azusa. She previously worked in higher ed, teaching ethnic studies as an adjunct professor and running programs at community colleges related to her education policy doctorate. Then a call came from a fellow educator with the opportunity to teach



*"If we don't start pushing these traditional humanities fields, they'll never change. Our history and our voices need to be included in these places."*

ethnic studies in Azusa — the previous teacher was leaving, and there were fears the course would disappear without someone to fill their shoes.

"I wanted kids to be able to take this class because I know how important it was to me," says Sanchez, who was in the first-ever Chicano studies class at Rubidoux High School in Jurupa Valley as a freshman. "I always remembered being a part of that class. I feel like this is what I was meant to do."

Sanchez teaches the course at three Azusa high schools every day (Azusa High, Gladstone High and Sierra Continuation High), serving a student population that is 92 percent Latino.

To emphasize the importance of ethnic studies, she picks up a thick U.S. history book and tells her students, "There are only about six pages on us in here." They learn about not only where they are in history books, but also where they are conspicuously absent.

"As teachers, we have to push this. It's our responsibility. We're fighting to have our voices heard and reflected in the curriculum."

The NHC Teacher Advisory Council is meeting in person in October in Raleigh, North Carolina, and will meet numerous times over the year by videoconference to review and discuss how to support humanities classrooms at all levels. Sanchez says she's eager to build bridges with her fellow educators on the council to talk about what ethnic studies is and how it can be a component of other humanities lessons.

"We need to insert ourselves into these discussions," Sanchez says of ethnic studies educators. "Nobody's going to invite us. I want to make sure our voices are elevated!"

For more information about the NHC and a wealth of resources for humanities educators, visit [nationalhumanitiescenter.org](http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org). ■



*“It was pretty dramatic — a big slap in the face. But BTA and CTA were with me every step of the way.”*

—Manolo Lopez

# A Fighter Wins

Educator, with union support, clears his name after five years By Julian Peeples

**NEARLY EVERYONE WAS** telling Manolo Lopez to settle, including a judge and his own attorney. But the 15-year Burbank High School auto shop teacher who became the target of a bullying principal says one supportive voice kept telling him to continue the fight to clear his name: CTA.

And after the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) accepted an administrative law judge’s recommendation in June, Lopez retained his teaching credential, turning the page on a difficult five-year chapter in Lopez’s life.

“There is definitely closure. There’s a lot of satisfaction and vindication,” Lopez says. “I feel very good about how CTA helped me, sending their attorneys and sticking with me until the end. From the beginning, Burbank Teachers Association was very supportive.”

The trouble started in 2014 when Lopez and his students were cleaning out the auto shop work area. Early on in the cleaning effort, the new principal walked in and angrily declared that the shop was “messy.” This was just the beginning of problems between the principal and Lopez, which culminated with the district accusing the dedicated educator of theft.

As in many high schools that have auto shop programs, there was a long-standing system in place at Burbank High

where district employees could utilize the shop to have repairs and maintenance performed on their vehicles. Lopez, like his predecessors, would purchase parts through a school district account, fix the car, and then bill the employee to recoup the funds. Lopez had gotten behind on the billing in 2014 when his family had health issues, but was in the process of getting caught up when the district accused him of theft.

“It was pretty dramatic — a big slap in the face,” says Lopez. “But BTA and CTA were with me every step of the way.”

Officials ran with the allegations, calling police and asking for a criminal investigation. But police said Lopez had not committed a crime and declined to intervene. While this would have been a good time for school district managers to back off, they instead doubled down on their egregious behavior. Arleigh Kidd, who was Lopez’s primary contact staff at the time, says it became clear the district would not stop trying to fire Lopez, so he filed a CTA Group Legal Services (GLS) referral. Proving Kidd’s suspicion true, district managers shortly thereafter illegally inserted a conference summary into Lopez’s personnel file without the knowledge of either Lopez or Kidd.

When Kidd filed a grievance to have it removed, the district agreed and settled the grievance. But the summary raised its ugly head again a short time later when Burbank Unified used it in a complaint to the CTC attempting to have Lopez’s credential stripped.

“I never expected anything like that happening to me. All my reviews had always been positive,” Lopez says. “I really loved teaching, so it was quite a shock.”

Eventually, the district settled with Lopez, compensating him for his losses and damages, and he resigned from Burbank Unified. The principal and district managers continued efforts to strip him of his credential. He was tired from all



the stress, and many advised him to settle for the sake of his health. But after a conversation with his wife, Lopez decided to fight to clear his name.

“If you’re in the right, you don’t just take it,” he says. “Growing up as a Latino in Texas, I’ve been fighting all my life. I’ve been aware of prejudice and I’ve been subject to it, but I haven’t just taken it.”

In April, an administrative law judge sided with Lopez, finding that his transgressions merited an admonition, not credential revocation. And in July, the CTC adopted the judge’s findings completely, which finally ended the ordeal.

“CTA went above and beyond for me,” Lopez says. “Know that if you are right, CTA will stick with you.”

Sadly, after Lopez left Burbank High School, the district never hired a replacement to teach auto shop, according to Lori Adams, former Burbank Teachers Association president and current CTA staff. This meant as many as 180 auto shop students were pushed into art and cooking classes they didn’t want, leading to numerous issues for students and educators. One teacher resigned, another was written up after a fight broke out in her class, and a third was constantly harassed about grading in art class.

“It was a disaster after we lost auto shop,” Adams laments.

The bullying principal in question unexpectedly announced he was leaving Burbank High at the end of last school year, citing health concerns. ■

## The Protection and Strength of CTA

**MANOLO LOPEZ** says the support of CTA throughout his ordeal was invaluable and kept up his spirits when times were tough. He urges all CTA members to learn more about their local associations in case the unexpected happens.

“Be very familiar with your union representative. Always have them present at your meetings with administrators,” he says. “Be aware of your safety net. I had the principal lie right to my face, and my BTA rep was right there taking notes.”

Visit [cta.org/legal](http://cta.org/legal) for more information.

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*“The success that Sanger Unified has experienced has just as much to do with [educators’] hearts and selfless giving of time as it does with the programs that have been put into place.”*

—**Bonnie Gonzalez**, Sanger Unified Teachers Association first vice president



# WHERE TEACHER-DRIVEN CHANGE WORKS

## New report spotlights seven ‘positive outlier’ school districts

By **Julian Peoples**

**WELL-TRAINED**, supported and empowered educators are at the heart of the success of seven school districts bucking the trend when it comes to achieving educational equity, according to the new Learning Policy Institute (LPI) report, “Closing the Opportunity Gap: How Positive Outlier Districts in California Are Pursuing Equitable Access to Deeper Learning.”

The report spotlights school districts where students are “consistently outperforming students of similar racial/ethnic backgrounds from families of similar income and education levels in most other California districts” — or positive outliers, districts where students exceeded their expected achievement, after accounting for their socioeconomic status.

The districts showing marked progress toward closing the opportunity gap are Chula Vista Elementary School District, Clovis Unified School District, Gridley Unified School District, Hawthorne School District, Long Beach Unified School District, San Diego Unified School District and Sanger Unified School District.

LPI’s analysis of each of the districts and their paths to

equitable learning found numerous commonalities in their strategies, approaches and principles guiding their pursuit of equity:

- A widely shared, well-enacted vision that prioritizes learning for every child.
  - Instructionally engaged leaders.
  - Strategies for hiring and retaining a strong, stable educator workforce.
  - Collaborative professional learning that builds collective instructional capacity.
  - A deliberate, developmental approach to instructional change.
  - Curriculum, instruction and assessment focused on deeper learning in a process of continuous improvement.
  - Systemic supports for students’ academic, social and emotional needs.
  - Engagement of families and communities.
- “Rapid and dramatic change in California’s education system provided an excellent incubator for school districts to make

changes to improve instructional quality and equity,” says LPI President Linda Darling-Hammond. “We hope that other school districts and states will focus on the lessons from these case study school districts to ensure all students have access to deeper learning regardless of the size, location and wealth of the district where they go to school. We know it can be done.”

The LPI report and related case studies are available at [learningpolicyinstitute.org](http://learningpolicyinstitute.org).

## Sanger

In Sanger Unified, LPI researchers noted a long-term investment in a stable, well-prepared teaching force, a culture of collaboration among and support for teachers, and professional learning communities (PLCs) at all levels for continuous improvement. The report notes that SUSD first adopted PLCs in 2005, but it took Sanger Unified Teachers Association (SUTA) making PLCs a bargaining priority for them to be contractually protected.

Bonnie Gonzalez, SUTA first vice president and seventh and eighth grade English teacher, says the local association successfully negotiated PLC language into the collective bargaining agreement in 2015, later enhancing that language in 2017 to protect educators’ PLC time. Gonzalez says the tireless dedication of Sanger educators and their strong collective voice as SUTA are the driving forces behind many of the programs that the LPI report spotlights as being especially important to equitable student outcomes.

“SUTA members give many hours beyond the duty day — often without compensation,” she says. “The success that SUSD has experienced has just as much to do with [educators’] hearts and selfless giving of time as it does with the programs that have been put into place.”

Among SUTA’s ongoing efforts to ensure SUSD continues to close the achievement gap, according to Gonzalez:

- Advocating for competitive compensation to attract and maintain quality teachers.
- Advocating for SUTA members who are part of the “leadership pipeline,” especially in relation to their time.
- Fighting to maintain lower class sizes.
- Negotiating to protect special education teachers’ time, as many of them have been recruited into the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) process. In addition to their caseloads, they are responsible for Response to Intervention (RTI) students.
- Negotiating language to protect PLC time when site meetings were infringing upon it.

## Chula Vista

In Chula Vista Elementary, the largest elementary district in the state, the LPI report spotlighted the district’s “interdependence philosophy,” an approach to continuous improvement that balances the respective roles of district and schools. LPI researchers found that CVESD’s investment in capacity-building and focus on marginalized students enabled the district to support teachers with programs and practices that improve learning environments and meet the unique academic needs of its students.

Susan Skala, president of the 1,500-member Chula Vista Educators, says that while she is excited about the great work in Chula Vista being highlighted as a model for districts across the state, she feels that the report focused on district administration and didn’t include the important and integral role played by dedicated and talented educators.

“We look forward to having a more collaborative relationship with CVESD leadership to maintain and build upon these impressive teacher-driven results,” Skala says. ■

## How to Support Student Learning

**BASED ON** practices enacted by positive outlier districts that contribute to supporting student learning, the LPI report recommended five areas for policy work at the state, federal and district levels:

1. Develop a stable supply of well-prepared, instructionally engaged teachers and leaders.
2. Support capacity-building for high-quality instruction and focused instructional change.
3. Use assessments and data strategically to support continuous improvement.
4. Create coherent systems of support based on student needs, including academic, social and emotional learning.
5. Allocate resources for equity.

Jamila Demby, dance teacher at Otay Elementary and Chula Vista Educators member, moves with her students.

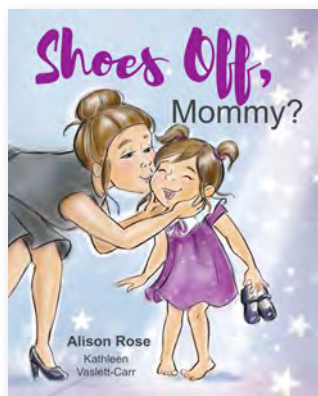


## Arts Education Improves Outcomes

**WATCH** “Something’s Happening in Chula Vista,” a short film by the California Alliance for Arts Education that explores the value of arts education in Chula Vista Elementary School District ([artsed411.org](http://artsed411.org)). The district has invested in arts education as a strategy to improve student outcomes and address the needs of its 30,000 children (one-third of students are English learners, and half participate in the free and reduced-price lunch program).

# Lit FROM WITHIN

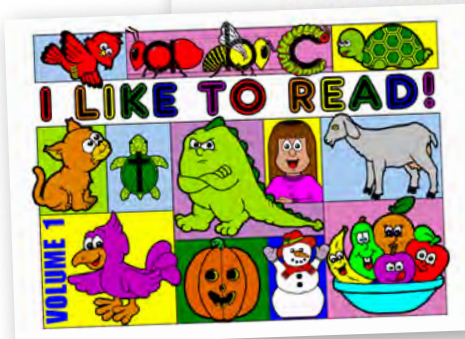
Often educators' creativity spills over into a book, blog, app or other work. We're happy to showcase members' talents.



## *Shoes Off, Mommy? / ¿Me descalzo, mami?*

**LITTLE ALI LOVES** to take her shoes off and go barefoot — she feels most free without her shoes. With her mom's support she discovers modern dance, her true calling, where she can be herself — barefoot and free!

Alison Rose is an elementary dance educator and United Teachers Los Angeles member. *Shoes Off, Mommy?* (2017), illustrated by Kathleen Vaslett-Carr, is based on Rose's own personal narrative and is best for ages 5-8. It's available in English and a Spanish and English bilingual version. On Amazon.



## *School Rules! and I Like to Read!*

### VETERAN KINDERGARTEN TEACHER

Dwayne Douglas Kohn has written and illustrated numerous books for the classroom, including *School Rules!* (2016). Perfect for the youngest students, the book introduces them to their new animal classmates, with teacher Miss G. Raff explaining some rules that make school even more fun and exciting.

Kohn, a member of Vista Teachers Association, also just released *I Like to Read!* (2019), a two-volume set with stories for beginning readers. Each story is eight pages long with limited vocabulary and high-frequency sight words, colorful illustrations, and entertaining characters. Topics include insects, wild animals, careers, the rain forest, fairy tales, dinosaurs, butterflies, transportation and more. On Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

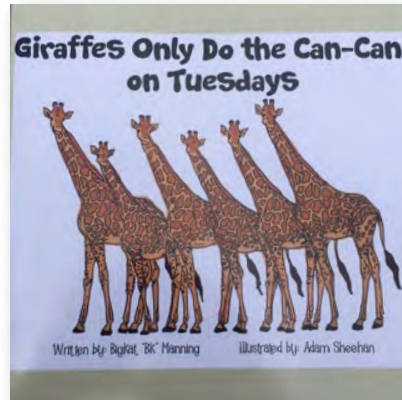
Kohn's books have been published in Spanish, Chinese and other languages.

## ***Giraffes Only Do the Can-Can on Tuesdays***

**WHAT DO ZOO** animals do at night when no humans are around? According to precocious third grader Scarlett in *Giraffes Only Do the Can-Can on Tuesdays* (2019), quite a lot! She spins a wildly imaginative yarn for her classmates — and who knows, she might not be that far from the truth.

The book by BigKat Manning, a member of both the Association of Coronado Teachers and Southwestern College Education Association, is meant for grades 3-6. It deals not only with animals but standing up for oneself when being verbally assaulted by the classroom troublemaker. On Amazon.

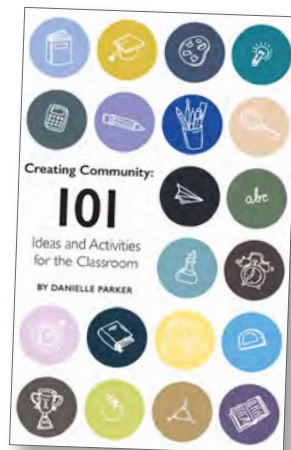
Manning, who teaches filmmaking, public speaking and interpersonal communications, published his first children's book *Crackers, It's Cold Outside!* in 2018.



## ***Creating Community***

**DANIELLE PARKER SAYS** you can safely retire “two truths and a lie” and inspire a little more fun and engagement with activities listed in *Creating Community: 101 Ideas and Activities for the Classroom* (2019). The book, co-authored by Parker and Rachel Lawrence, helps teachers and students at all grade levels build a connected and caring classroom, from name games to ideas about creating space to everyday greatness. On Amazon.

Parker is a high school English teacher and member of Asociación de Maestros Unidos in Los Angeles (currently on leave).



**GOT SOMETHING** for these pages? Send details to [editor@cta.org](mailto:editor@cta.org) with “Lit From Within” in the subject line. We lean toward new(ish) work that can be used in the classroom.

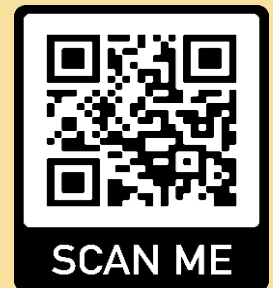


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UTLA's Rudy Dueñas tells his story in an NEA video.



## Rudy's story

**AS PART OF** its focus on the 2020 election, NEA has launched "We Need a President Who's With Us," educator stories that call on all Americans to support candidates who will fight for students.

High school history teacher and United Teachers Los Angeles member Rudy Dueñas tells his story in a short video. Many of the anxieties he sees in students every day mirror those he experienced as a youth, Dueñas says. The toxic political climate of the past few years — in which immigrants are routinely targeted and scapegoated — has "added an extra layer," making it even more essential that schools get resources to help struggling students.

"There's an urgency out there," he says. "People need to be educated about the issues to make wise decisions. We need to have a government — not just the presidency, it's Congress, governors — that will stand up and speak for the people and our students."

Watch the video and contribute your story at [educationvotes.nea.org/presidential-2020/member-stories](https://educationvotes.nea.org/presidential-2020/member-stories).

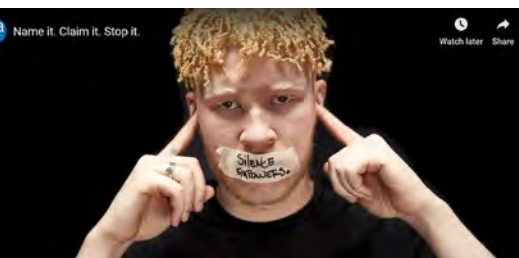
# NEA's Super Moves

NEA Board of Directors Class of 2019, California contingent, left to right: Taunya Jaco, Robbie Kreitz, Ruth Luevand, Telly Tse.



## Our own education superheroes

**TELLY TSE**, newly elected to the NEA Board of Directors and former president of the Beverly Hills Education Association, created a video featuring other new board members and him as Avengers-style superheroes for public education. See it at [tinyurl.com/NEABODsuperheroes](https://tinyurl.com/NEABODsuperheroes).



## Name it. Claim it. Stop it.

**WHEN BULLYING**, bias and hate happen in our schools, we all have a role to play to protect our students' right to learn and thrive in a safe and welcoming environment. A new video from NEA EdJustice urges educators to "speak up when you hear a student teased for their race, religion, gender or sexuality. Silence empowers the bully." Watch it and learn more at [NEAedJustice.org](https://NEAedJustice.org). For more resources and tools, go to [nea.org/neabullyfree](https://nea.org/neabullyfree).



# The Belt of Champions

Fresno chapter's new award honors their colleagues

**FIRST GRADE TEACHER** Tamika Tatum proudly rocks a totally *extra*, ginormous belt that honors her as Fresno Teachers Association's Educator Champion of the Week.

The FTA member is the first to receive the award. FTA says Tatum "won for being a positive force not only for the students in her class, but for all students on campus" at Thomas Elementary. Tatum is also part of a group of teachers who are starting the first Black Student Union club at a Fresno Unified elementary school.

Since it's a weekly award, the belt is on the move. FTA is looking for educators who are both "stylin' & profilin'" and inspire students and colleagues with their hard work and dedication. Nominations can be made online at [fresnoteachers.org](http://fresnoteachers.org), where nominators may check boxes that detail what strengths the educator embodies.

Strengths include:

- **Student centered:** Emphasis is placed on learning over teaching.
- **Work oriented:** Work is valued, purposeful, and relevant to students.
- **Student relations:** Students view other students as supportive and interested in their well-being.
- **Results oriented:** Students understand strength-based thinking increases capacity and resilience to achieve goals.
- **Schoolwide relations:** All school stakeholders are responsible for the education of each student.
- **School-family relations:** Parents as a strong partner in the teaching and learning process are encouraged to be involved in their child's education.
- **Future oriented:** Students have a dramatic, positive image of the future.

Winners not only get the belt for a week, they receive two pizzas from Round Table Pizza. Check out FTA's video promoting the award on Twitter ([@fresnota](https://twitter.com/fresnota)), Facebook and Instagram. ■



Tamika Tatum is "stylin' and profilin'."

At right, former CTA President Eric Heins, *NBC Nightly News*' Carol Eggers and Alicia Hastey, then-CTA Secretary-Treasurer David B. Goldberg, and CTA's Mona Davidson. Below, Heins, Davidson, Goldberg and *Red Bluff Daily News*' Julie Zeeb.



*“Good education reporting will always matter. The work of these media professionals is crucial to helping the public understand the pressures facing public education.”*

—Former CTA President **Eric Heins**

# Honoring Outstanding Journalism

## *60th annual John Swett Awards for Media Excellence*

Story and photos by **Julian Peeples**

From hard-hitting news stories on school funding issues to touching pieces about heroic efforts by educators, CTA’s 60th annual John Swett Awards for Media Excellence spotlight the best education stories of 2018 and the journalists who tell them.

**N**OMINATED BY CTA locals and selected by an independent panel of working and retired journalists and media professionals, 19 entries were honored for outstanding media coverage of education. The awards honor individuals, publications, websites, and television and radio stations for their compelling and informative coverage of public education.

“Journalists are all educators. We depend on their coverage to educate the public about the promise of California’s public schools,” said former CTA President Eric Heins, presenting the awards. “Like teachers, reporters are being asked to do more and more with less and less. But good education reporting will always

matter. The work of these media professionals is crucial to helping the public understand the pressures facing public education.”

The winners were honored during a reception at the CTA State Council meeting in June in Los Angeles. These journalists were proud to share the inspiring stories that happen every day in our schools and the dedicated educators who help make them happen.

“Keep on fighting and we’ll keep telling your stories,” said KTVU television reporter and award winner Azenith Smith.

The John Swett Award is named in honor of CTA’s founder, who was California’s fourth superintendent of public instruction and a champion for public education. ■



## NEWSPAPERS

- **DAVID WASHBURN** and **DIANA LAMBERT**, *EdSource*, News Story: "Paradise educators work to get kids back in school"
- **JILL TUCKER, TRISHA THADANI, DOMINIC FRACASSA**, *San Francisco Chronicle*, News Story: "School officials, incoming supes want SF to spend windfall on teacher raises"
- **HOWARD BLUME**, *Los Angeles Times*, Continuous Coverage of Educational News
- **OTIS R. TAYLOR JR.**, *San Francisco Chronicle*, Column or Blog: "Oakland teachers, without a contract for more than a year, threaten to strike"
- **ALI TADAYON**, *East Bay Times*, Continuous Coverage of Educational News
- **CRAIG SHULTZ**, *Riverside Press-Enterprise*, News Story: "Teachers on strike picket on Banning's first day of school"
- **JULIE ZEEB**, *Red Bluff Daily News*, Feature Story: "Bus driver tells of harrowing escape from Camp Fire" (about driver Kevin McKay, who safely evacuated 22 students and two teachers from Ponderosa Elementary School in Paradise)
- **RICHARD BAMMER**, *Vacaville Reporter*, Column or Blog
- **KEN EPSTEIN**, *Oakland Post*, Continuous Coverage of Educational News
- **KAREN BILLING**, *Del Mar Times/Rancho Santa Fe Review*, Continuous Coverage of Educational News

## JOURNALS, MAGAZINES, WEBSITES


- **THERESA HARRINGTON**, *EdSource*, Continuous Coverage of Educational News
- **RACHEL COHEN**, *The Atlantic*, News Story: "'The Teachers' Movement Goes Virtual'"

## RADIO

- **VANESSA RANCAÑO**, KQED Radio, Continuous Coverage of Educational News
- **BETH RUYAK**, Capital Public Radio, Talk Show/News Program: Interview about budget with Nikki Milevsky and David Fisher

## TELEVISION

- **AZENITH SMITH**, KTVU, News Story: "Teachers from Evergreen School District prepare to go on strike"
- **LYANNE MELENDEZ**, ABC7 News KGO-TV, News Story: "Lead found in more than half of San Francisco public schools"
- **CAROL EGGERS, ALICIA HASTEY** and **RON ALLEN**, *NBC Nightly News*, Feature: "Teachers in Crisis" (about teachers who can't afford to live where they teach because of high rents)
- **KXTV ABC 10**, Series on a Single Subject/Theme: "Teacher of the Month"
- **KVIE-TV**, Continuous Coverage of Educational News: "Inside California Education"



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John Swett, state superintendent of public instruction, 1863-67. Courtesy UC Berkeley, Bancroft Library.



# Living Legacy

CTA's foundation for advocacy still strong today

By Rachel Warino

**CALIFORNIA EDUCATORS** today are at the center of advancing historic legislation to address corruption in the charter school system that has led to chronic underfunding of neighborhood schools across the state. They are following a bold legacy that has been at the heart of the California Teachers Association since its founding more than 155 years ago.

John Swett was founder of CTA and the fourth superintendent of public instruction in California. After he was elected in 1862, Swett embarked on a listening tour across the state. With classroom experience under his belt, he knew to prioritize listening to and organizing teachers and parents in the early days of his term.

At one of his meetings with educators in San Francisco, Swett said, "Association in some form is the soul of modern progress. ... Let us organize and work together.

## THE EARLY YEARS OF

# CTA

CTA's foundation was built on the advocacy of organized educators who fought for their students and made history.



**1862**

**John Swett, founder of CTA,** was elected as the fourth superintendent of public instruction in California.



**1863**

After organizing and engaging educators on issues facing students in CA, the **California Educational Society** was born. The society would later change its name to the California Teachers Association.



**1866**

As a result of public pressure from organized educators and parents, the historic **Act to Provide a System for Common Schools** was passed in the California Legislature, creating a system for public schools in CA.



Let us make our influence felt in leading public opinion in school affairs." Educators agreed, and the California Educational Society was born in 1863. The name would later change to the California Teachers Association.

At the time, California was gold-rich, and many called for using that wealth and raising taxes to create schools in local communities. Public pressure for common schools (the term used at the time for publicly funded elementary schools) came to a boiling point as a result of organized and emboldened educators and parents. The California Legislature finally took action and passed the 1866 Act to Provide a System for Common Schools.

This innovative legislation established per-pupil and district funding; carved out funding for school libraries, a state series of textbooks, and teacher certification and training institute programs; authorized the State Board of Education to establish rules and regulations for schools; and required that all school districts provide ink, chalk, pens and stationery for students and classrooms. It was revolutionary for the time and has been lauded as the inspiration for our system of public education today.

Learn more about John Swett and our history at [cta.org/150](http://cta.org/150). ■

"Let us organize and work together. Let us make our influence felt in leading public opinion in school affairs."

—CTA founder **John Swett**

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