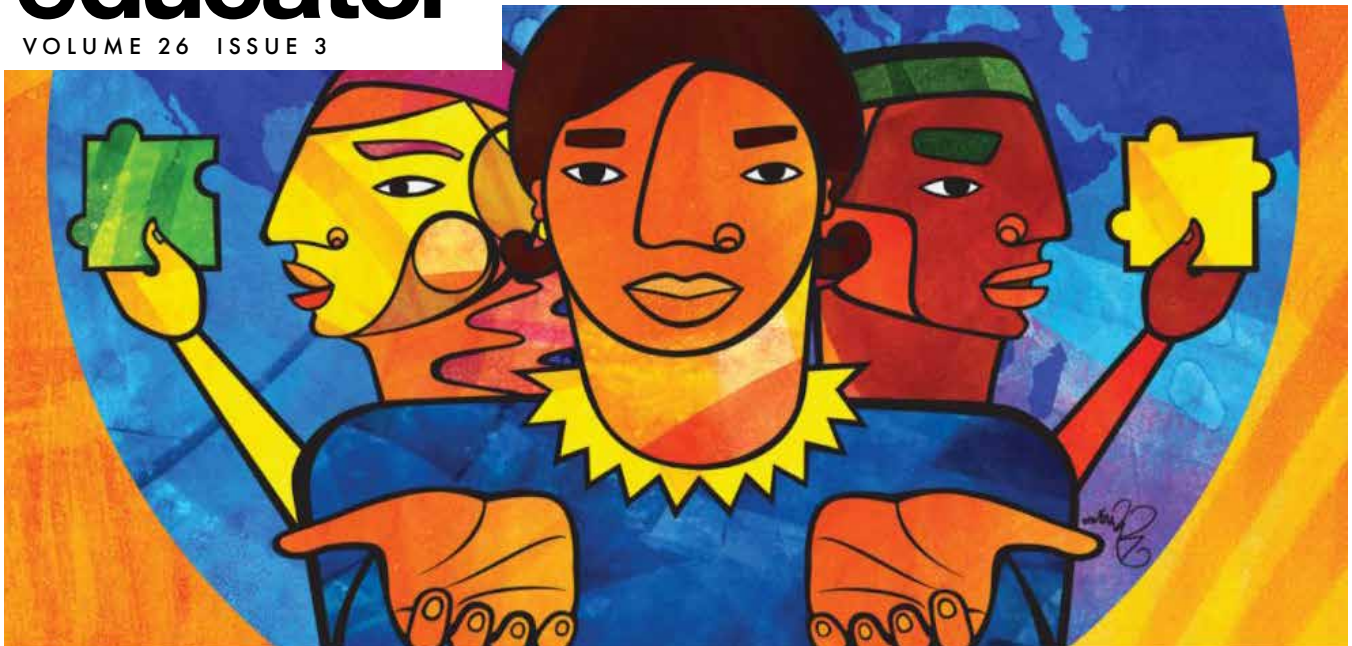


california  
**educator**  
VOLUME 26 ISSUE 3



**#WeAreCTA**

OUR VOICE, OUR UNION, OUR PROFESSION

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

**MAGAZINE**

**TEACHERS OF THE YEAR**

Meet five exceptional educators chosen as California's 2022 Teachers of the Year.

**PAGE 52**

**NEW SOCIAL JUSTICE SECTION**

What members are doing to secure a more just, equitable society. **PAGE 43**

**SUPPORT FOR EDUCATORS**

Four new programs for teachers and teachers-to-be aim to expand, diversify the workforce. **PAGE 46**

**LIT FROM WITHIN**

New(ish) works by our talented members. **PAGE 60**  
[cta.org/lit](http://cta.org/lit)

**DIGITAL**

**CALIFORNIA READS**

Check out our new list of teacher-vetted books for all grade levels! **PAGE 11**

[f](https://www.facebook.com/cta.org) [t](https://twitter.com/cta.org) [y](https://www.youtube.com/cta.org) [cta.org/careads](http://cta.org/careads)

**CTA MICRO-CERTIFICATIONS**

Short, competency-based CTA/NEA courses, taken at your own pace, let you demonstrate mastery in specific areas. [cta.org/ipd](http://cta.org/ipd)

**TUESDAY TAKEOVERS**

Missed the CTA live webinars where members dialogue on racial/social justice issues related to students and schools? All are recorded. [f](https://www.facebook.com/cta.org)

[t](https://www.facebook.com/cta.org) [y](https://www.youtube.com/cta.org) [cta.org/react](http://cta.org/react)

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**GOOD TEACHING COMING!**

CTA's premier conferences, that is. Register now for GTC-North, Jan. 28-30, or save March 18-20 for GTC-South. **PAGE 9** [f](https://www.facebook.com/cta.org) [t](https://twitter.com/cta.org) [i](https://www.instagram.com/cta.org)

[y](https://www.youtube.com/cta.org) [cta.org/conferences](http://cta.org/conferences)

**WE'VE GOT ISSUES**

CTA's Issues Conference brings together educators to strategize on major concerns. Jan. 21-23 in Las Vegas. **PAGE 9** [cta.org/conferences](http://cta.org/conferences)

**SCHOLARSHIPS & GRANTS**

CTA scholarships help members and their dependents' educational pursuits. **PAGE 12**  
[cta.org/scholarships](http://cta.org/scholarships)

**MEMBER BENEFITS**

**NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS**

Get financially fit in 2022! Use these simple calculators to estimate future savings and expenses, and set goals. [ctainvest.org/tools](http://ctainvest.org/tools)

**WHEN LIFE CHANGES**

Whether starting a family, nearing retirement or coping with unexpected illness, find useful information and tips here. [CTAMemberBenefits.org](http://CTAMemberBenefits.org)

Artwork by Favianna Rodriguez in a presentation on the 2021-22 ethnic studies program at Stockton Unified School District. Story on page 33.

## THE INNOVATION ISSUE

### ▲ MAKING DREAMS POSSIBLE

Through their inventive, essential work, these educators dream big and make sure students do, too.

PAGE 17



### ▲ ETHNIC STUDIES PIONEERS

Groundbreaking program in Stockton shows how ES is an integral part of education.

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# LEARNING & the BRAIN®

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—Daniel L. Schwartz, PhD  
Stanford University

Learners Without Borders: Can COVID Be a Catalyst for Real Change?

Yong Zhao, PhD, University of Kansas

Kids Under Pressure During COVID: Providing SPACE to Address Student Stress, Sleep, Schedules, and Engagement

Denise C. Pope, PhD, Stanford Graduate School of Education

Bringing Cognitive Science, Adolescent Brain Development, and Personalized Learning Into the Classroom

Terry L. Jernigan, PhD, University of California, San Diego

Transforming Schools: The Science and Design of Learning

Daniel L. Schwartz, PhD, Stanford Graduate School of Education

Rethinking Teaching: Lessons from the Science of Learning and COVID

Barbara A. Oakley, PhD, PE, Oakland University

Disruptive Thinking: Rethinking and Redesigning Our Schools

Eric C. Sheneringer, MEd, Author, *Disruptive Thinking in Our Classrooms* (2021)

Implementing Principles From the Science of Learning Within Educational Practice

Shana K. Carpenter, PhD, Iowa State University

Time for Change: Essential Skills for Transformational School Leaders

Anthony Muhammad, PhD, Co-Author, *Time for Change* (2019)

Design Thinking for Every Classroom: A Practical Guide for Educators

Shelley V. Goldman, EdD, Stanford Graduate School of Education

Teachers as "Learning Engineers": Using Brain Research-Practice Partnerships to Advance Teaching Practice

Melina R. Uncapher, PhD, University of California, San Francisco

Creating the Schools Our Children Need

Dylan A.R. William, PhD, University of London

Lessons Learned: Restarting and Reinventing Schools

Monica R. Martinez, PhD, Stanford University

The Science of Teaching

David B. Daniel, PhD, James Madison University

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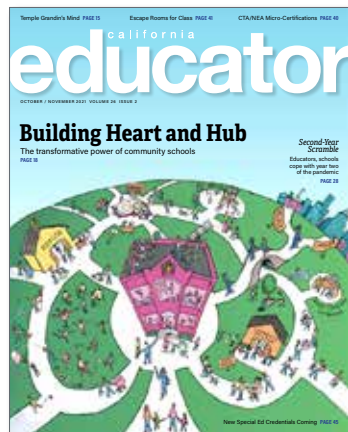
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**Community Schools: Whole Child Education**

Really good articles on community schools in the October/November issue ("Building the Heart and Hub"). I appreciate the work that went into interviewing people all over the state who are making this happen. Perceptive quote from Ingrid Villeda, who said students "can't focus on academics if they're hungry or sad or tired."

I appreciate the leadership provided by CTA Vice President David Goldberg. I strongly support the goal reported in the article, "of turning every school where 80 percent or more of students live in poverty into a community school over the next five years."

**JIM BURFEIND**  
CTA/NEA-Retired



**School Furniture**

Regarding the letter in the October/November issue about dilapidated classroom chairs and desks in a low-income school district, I have taught in a high-income district in the East Bay, and the majority of our furniture is from the '70s and '80s. Our carpets are cleaned once a year and are 35 years old and in horrible shape, only to be replaced by something lower quality.

We have more technology, so the district can implement more online testing with the same clunky grading software.

High-income district with the same issue.

**KIM LOISEL**  
Fremont Unified District Teachers Association



**The Modern World** ▶ I am carefree about the *Educator* being wrapped in plastic. [Our August/September issue was packaged with CTA membership cards in plastic bags.] As an educator, I don't push my beliefs on students and would never mention this to them. Please reconsider using plastic in the future, since this is the modern world.

Also, fossil fuels have lifted humanity out of poverty. It's a historical fact. But since those opposed to fossil fuels want to depopulate the planet, they won't mind at all never receiving the *Educator*.

**ANDREW STEWART** *Associated Chaffey Teachers*

**Get in the Educator!**

**WE'D LOVE TO** hear from you. We publish members' letters and longer articles. Email [editor@cta.org](mailto:editor@cta.org) with the specific topic (in boldface below) in the subject line, and include your name, chapter and contact info. Ways to contribute:

**Letter to the Editor** — Respond to content that has appeared in the *Educator* (in print or at [cta.org/educator](http://cta.org/educator), at right); letters and emails have a 200-word limit and are subject to editing for clarity and space.

**Your Voice** — Have something to say about your students, the art and science of teaching, or being an educator in the trenches? Tell us about your experience, your thoughts and opinions — funny, serious or both — in no more than 650 words.

Don't forget: We take note of members' new(ish) works (books, blogs, movies, podcasts, albums and more) that can be used in the classroom in **Lit From Within** (see page 60).



**My Faith in You**

**THIS JANUARY MARKS** two years since the first case of COVID-19 was diagnosed in the United States. Less than three months later, California schools began closing, and educators entered one of the most challenging periods in the history of public education. Yet educators rose to the occasion, making the best of an unthinkable situation with innovation, care and commitment that the general public may never fully know or appreciate.

Even now, you continue to lead the way and make California an example for the rest of the nation. Your generosity of spirit, your efforts to keep students engaged and moving forward, your fight for safe learning and working conditions in our schools are truly inspiring. We know you've been stretched to your limits, and we're hopeful that the new year, with resources from state and federal funding, will make a difference.

To say it's been a challenging time is an understatement. But this time has also spotlighted the tremendous adaptability and creativity of CTA members. I am always amazed, but never truly surprised, by the incredible ability of educators to adapt to almost any circumstances, to overcome almost any obstacles, and to continue to grow and create learning environments with new and successful ways for students to learn. That's what

educators do: We innovate. (See our annual feature section on member innovators, page 17.)

CTA has a long history of encouraging and directly supporting that innovation. Our Institute for Teaching has awarded over 450 grants totaling more than \$5 million to CTA member projects and programs impacting individual classrooms or entire school sites. Our Instructional Leadership Corps has provided innovative, teacher-led professional development to educators in thousands of schools in nearly 600 school districts. Every year our Good Teaching Conferences provide countless opportunities for CTA members to share new ideas and instructional practices.

These past two years have also demonstrated your willingness to fight for what is right — with our students, and out in the community. The new "Social Justice" section in this issue is intended to highlight your efforts, beginning with a story about an initiative that seeks reparations for Black students in Oakland to address impacts of systemic anti-Black racism (page 43).

As we gradually move out of this pandemic, you should take pride in all you have accomplished and continue to do.



Elizabeth Douglas Photography

Yes, there remain many issues that require our attention and action, from ongoing work to ensure the health and safety of students and school staff, to standing up for educators' right to **#TeachTruth**, to staving off yet more attempts to undermine and destabilize public education. But I have faith — in you, and because of you.

I have faith because your creativity, your dedication to our students, and your willingness to fight for justice are changing the world. CTA supports you and is there for educators and students everywhere.

**E. Toby Boyd**  
CTA PRESIDENT  
[@etobyboyd](https://twitter.com/etobyboyd)



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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 for all students; to ensure that the human dignity and civil rights of all children, youth and adults are protected; and to secure a more just, equitable and democratic society.

**EDITORIAL INFORMATION**

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

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CTA/NEA membership dues for the fiscal year (Sept. 1, 2021, to Aug. 31, 2022) are \$955, including a \$20 refundable contribution (see [cta.org/contribution](http://cta.org/contribution) for details). \$22.38 of CTA annual dues is designated for CTA/ABC political activities to support state and local candidates and/or initiatives, and \$15.00 of CTA annual dues is designated for independent expenditures, totaling \$37.38 not deductible for income tax purposes. Please consult your tax adviser.

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

**CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**

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◀ Carolina Cortes takes part in a special summer enrichment camp in Inglewood, organized by educator Aba Ngissah. Story on page 18.

partnership deliberately done through a racial justice lens,” says Kampala Taiz-Rancifer, an Oakland Education Association member. Send your suggestions for our new section to [editor@cta.org](mailto:editor@cta.org), with “Social Justice” in the subject line.

This issue is also our seventh annual Innovation Issue (“**Dream Big**,” page 17). We’ve been delighted to put a spotlight on numerous members and their creative, inspiring work, much of which has lasting impact on students. Often, our innovators do this work against tremendous odds, with the only payoff a smile of gratitude, a lightbulb flash of understanding, or (as in the photo at left) a young person completely immersed and learning in the moment.

And it’s enough. Well, almost. Read “**We Must Make Schools Human Again**” (page 14) by Jennifer Yoo-Brannon, and it’s clear that educators want and need much more — but changes that are systemic, not superficial. “Yes, teacher appreciation gifts are nice,” Yoo-Brannon says, “but I’ll take a good flow chart, a clearly articulated process, or a problem-solving protocol over a branded water bottle any day.”

Educators behind the ethnic studies (ES) curriculum at Stockton Unified have been refining and clearly articulating a process for years (“**Ethnic Studies Trailblazers**,” page 33). The result is a program that is a model for other districts, yet is totally organic and foundational to Stockton. “ES allows Stockton students to see themselves in the curriculum and to be proud of their history and culture,” says Ed Arimboanga Jr., a teacher overseeing the program. “It also inspires them to want to do something about the issues and challenges we face in Stockton.”

Teaching students to think globally and act locally is an amazing feat, one that you do as a matter of course, along with instilling the basics. The **2022 California Teachers of the Year** (page 52) are yet more exemplars of extraordinary educators, ensuring our students are ready to participate and contribute to the greater world.

We are amazed by all you do. Happy new year!

**Katharine Fong**  
EDITOR IN CHIEF  
[editor@cta.org](mailto:editor@cta.org)

# Impact and Innovation

The *Educator’s* masthead (page 6) always contains CTA’s mission statement. When you read it, you understand that we see public education as a right for every child. We also believe that protecting the human dignity and civil rights of all children, youth and adults is necessary for us to secure a more just, equitable and democratic society.

This work is not new to CTA. And while we’ve been reporting on social justice issues since our inception, in this issue we’ve decided to launch a new “Social Justice” section to highlight our members’ work in reaching all students and promoting a more just world. Because educators work so closely with families and communities, and because we are stronger together, our coverage embraces broader collaboration and partnership.

Our inaugural story is “**Organizing for Equity in Oakland Schools**” (page 43), which highlights a community-organized effort to undo the impacts of decades of systemic anti-Black racism in Oakland public schools. “This is an educator-community

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December 2021 / January 2022

# CALENDAR

2022 Good Teaching Conference - North



## Here's to a Happy, Healthy 2022

WE WISH OUR educators, students and their families a happy new year! We are so grateful for all that you do and bring to the world. May 2022 bring you joy and wonder.

January is National Staying Healthy Month, so stay healthy and energized with sleep, exercise, good eating, and spending time with friends and loved ones.



### Ed Roberts Day

**JAN. 23 IS** Ed Roberts Day in California, honoring the "Father of Independent Living" on the day of his birth.

Roberts, born in 1939 in San Mateo, was an international leader and educator in the independent living and disability rights movements. He fought throughout his life to enable all persons with disabilities to fully participate in society. Roberts was the first student with significant disabilities to attend UC Berkeley and was a founder of UCB's Physically Disabled Students Program. The program became the model for Berkeley's Center for Independent Living (CIL) and over 400 independent living centers across the country; Roberts was an early director of CIL. He was also the California Department of Rehabilitation's first director with a disability and was co-founder and president of the World Institute on Disability. He died in 1995.

### Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service **JAN. 17**

**OBSERVED EACH YEAR** on the third Monday in January as "a day on, not a day off," MLK Day is the only federal holiday designated as a national day of service. It honors Dr. King's life of service and encourages all Americans to volunteer to improve their communities.

Students can participate in a multitude of ways, even during this pandemic. Youth Service America suggests ways in the illustration at left, but educators can also design their own day (or even semester) of service. Find ideas, toolkits, action guides and classroom facilitator guides at [ysa.org/covid](https://ysa.org/covid).



### Good Teaching Conference North

**JAN. 28-30** CONFERENCE

Hyatt Regency SFO, Burlingame. Back in person! Let one of CTA's premier training and professional development events kick off your new year. With all safety precautions in place, the conference supports excellent teaching practices and offers participants a variety of workshops on curriculum content areas for K-12 teachers. Don't miss great opportunities to learn from experts and one another, exchange ideas, and improve your skills. Booking deadline: Jan. 12. ► [cta.org/conferences](https://cta.org/conferences)

### CTA State Gold Awards

**JAN. 7** NOMINATION DEADLINE

Given to individuals (including private citizens and public officials) or organizations whose leadership, acts and support have had a positive impact on California public education. Any CTA member may nominate.

► [cta.org/awards](https://cta.org/awards)

### CTA Human Rights Awards

**JAN. 7** NOMINATION DEADLINE

Given to CTA members, chapters and Service Center Councils to promote programs for the advancement and protection of human and civil rights. Any active CTA member, chapter, caucus or Service Center Council may nominate.

► [cta.org/awards](https://cta.org/awards)

### Issues Conference

**JAN. 21-23** CONFERENCE

Tropicana Las Vegas, Nevada. Educators from rural and urban locals and education support professionals come together to learn, share, strategize, and unite together to determine the future of public education. Booking deadline: Jan. 6. ► [cta.org/conferences](https://cta.org/conferences)

### CTA Scholarships

**JAN. 28** APPLICATION DEADLINE

The CTA Scholarship Program offers scholarships up to \$3,000 to CTA members; up to \$5,000 to dependent children of active members; and up to \$5,000 to Student CTA members.

► [cta.org/scholarships](https://cta.org/scholarships)

### NEA RA State Delegate Candidacy

**JAN. 28** FILING DEADLINE

Candidates for NEA Representative Assembly state delegate must submit a declaration of candidacy, starting Jan. 4. See page 56 for details.

► [cta.org/racandidacy](https://cta.org/racandidacy)

### Region III Leadership Conference

**FEB. 4-6** CONFERENCE

Westin Bonaventure, Los Angeles. "Challenging the Past — Reshaping the Future." Includes Friday pre-sessions and over 40 leadership training sessions. Booking deadline: Jan. 20.

► [cta.org/conferences](https://cta.org/conferences)

### Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarships

**FEB. 11** APPLICATION DEADLINE

Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Scholarships up to \$6,000 are available to CTA members, their dependents, and Student CTA members who are persons of color and are pursuing a teaching-related career.

► [cta.org/scholarships](https://cta.org/scholarships)

### New Educator Weekend North

**FEB. 25-27** CONFERENCE

Santa Clara Marriott. For educators in their first three years, NEW has everything you need to be successful, including sessions on classroom management, lesson plans, special education, and assessments. Booking deadline: Feb. 10.

► [cta.org/conferences](https://cta.org/conferences)

### Chavez/Huerta Awards

**MARCH 4** ENTRY DEADLINE

Cesar E. Chavez and Dolores Huerta Education Awards recognize students who demonstrate an understanding of Chavez's guiding principles with a visual art project or written essay. Awards up to \$550 go to both the sponsoring CTA member and the student.

► [cta.org/scholarships](https://cta.org/scholarships)

### CTA/NEA-Retired Issues Conference

**MARCH 3-4** CONFERENCE

Westin Bonaventure, Los Angeles. Learn how CTA/NEA-Retired is protecting your future and keeping watch on federal legislation that affects your benefits. Booking deadline: Feb. 14.

► [cta.org/conferences](https://cta.org/conferences)

### Equity and Human Rights Conference

**MARCH 4-6** CONFERENCE

Westin Bonaventure, Los Angeles. Affirms CTA's mission to protect the civil rights of all people and secure a more equitable, democratic society. Speakers and workshops give members a greater understanding of diversity, equity and social justice. Booking deadline: Feb. 16.

► [cta.org/conferences](https://cta.org/conferences)

### Good Teaching Conference South

**MARCH 18-20** CONFERENCE

Hyatt Regency Orange County, Garden Grove. Supports excellent practices for K-12 teachers. Booking deadline: Feb. 24.

► [cta.org/conferences](https://cta.org/conferences)





# Kindness Matters

**GET STUDENTS READY** for The Great Kindness Challenge Week, Jan. 24-28, 2022. Sign up your school at [thegreatkindnesschallenge.com](http://thegreatkindnesschallenge.com), then download a checklist (available for younger and older kids) for students to complete during the week. Even a simple task such as smiling at someone, as the Dalai Lama says, "is the start of opening your heart to be compassionate to others." And smiling is contagious!

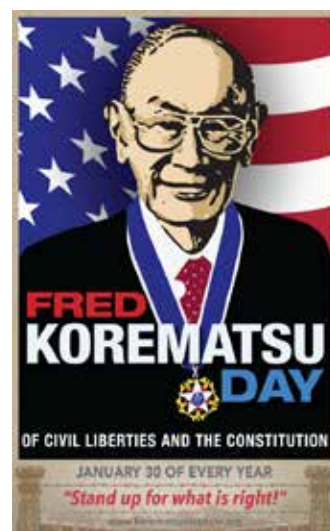
## CCA Winter Conference

The **Community College Association** is holding its Winter Conference Feb. 11-13, 2022, in San Diego at the Doubletree by Hilton San Diego Mission Valley. The conference highlights advocacy, along with lobbying and contract enforcement issues. It will offer a bargaining, grievance and advocacy academy, and will address legislation pertaining to community colleges. Get details and register at [cta.org/conferences](http://cta.org/conferences).

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-  [@WeAreCTA](https://twitter.com/wearecta)
-  [@WeAreCTA](https://instagram.com/wearecta)

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



## Fred Korematsu Day, Jan. 30

**KOREMATSU WAS JAILED** for his defiance of the WWII incarceration of Japanese Americans, which he contested as unconstitutional. The U.S. Supreme Court upheld his conviction; it was finally reversed in 1983. Find curriculum toolkits at the Korematsu Institute ([korematsuinstitute.org](http://korematsuinstitute.org)) and standards-aligned lesson plans on the Japanese American experience during WWII — with its connections to current events — at PBS Learning Media ([ca.pbslearningmedia.org](http://ca.pbslearningmedia.org)).



Just out: **CTA's California Reads** 2021-22 recommendations of teacher-vetted books for your students and classrooms. Find full book descriptions and links to buy — at a 20 percent discount for members — at [cta.org/careads](http://cta.org/careads).

### PRE-K, KINDERGARTEN



**The Colors of Us**  
Author & Illustrator: Karen Katz



**I Promise**  
Author: LeBron James  
Illustrator: Nina Mata



**Amy Wu and the Perfect Bao**  
Author: Kat Zhang  
Illustrator: Charlene Chua

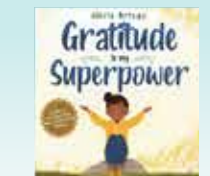
### GRADES 1-2



**Ben and Emma's Big Hit**  
Authors: Gavin Newsom with Ruby Shamir  
Illustrator: Alexandra Thompson



**Write to Me: Letters From Japanese American Children to the Librarian They Left Behind**  
Author: Cynthia Grady  
Illustrator: Amiko Hirao



**Gratitude Is My Superpower: A Children's Book About Giving Thanks and Practicing Positivity**  
Author: Alicia Ortego

### GRADES 3-5



**Change Sings: A Children's Anthem**  
Author: Amanda Gorman  
Illustrator: Loren Long



**Dolores Huerta: A Hero to Migrant Workers**  
Author: Sarah E. Warren  
Illustrator: Robert Casilla



**We Dream of Space**  
Author: Erin Entrada Kelly

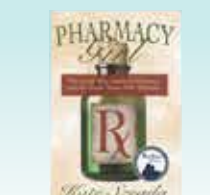
### GRADES 6-8



**Esperanza Rising**  
Author: Pam Muñoz Ryan



**The Other Boy**  
Author: M.G. Hennessey  
Illustrator: Ste R. Monster



**Pharmacy Girl: The Great War, Spanish Influenza, and the Truth About Billy Detwiler**  
Author: Kate Szegda

### GRADES 9-12



**Firekeeper's Daughter**  
Author: Angeline Boulley



**Children of Blood and Bone**  
Author: Tomi Adeyemi



**The Hill We Climb: An Inaugural Poem for the Country**  
Author: Amanda Gorman





## CTA Human Rights Awards

**NOMINATIONS DUE JAN. 7, 2022**

**HUMAN RIGHTS AWARDS** are given annually to members, chapters and Service Center Councils to celebrate the diversity of racial equity and social justice work that CTA members create, challenge and participate in. From creating safer spaces and environments for their students and school sites, to programs that address needs of the whole child, our awardees make the world a better place and inspire all.

The deadline to nominate is Jan. 7, 2022. Any active member, chapter, caucus or Service Center Council may nominate in the following categories:

- African American Human Rights Award in Honor of Lois Tinson
- American Indian/Alaska Native Human Rights Award in Honor of Jim Clark
- César Chávez "Sí Se Puede" Human Rights Award
- Pacific Asian American Human Rights Award
- Human Rights Award for LGBTQ+ Advocacy in Honor of Nancy Bailey
- Human Rights Award for Women's Advocacy
- CTA Peace and Justice Human Rights Award
- CTA Member Human Rights Award
- Students with Exceptional Needs Human Rights Award
- CTA Chapter Human Rights Award
- CTA Service Center Council Human Rights Awards

For full category details and application form, go to [cta.org/awards](http://cta.org/awards).



## Apply Now for CTA Scholarships

CTA offers members and their dependents a variety of scholarship opportunities to help further their education. Deadlines for the CTA Scholarships and Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarships are approaching. Check [cta.org/scholarships](http://cta.org/scholarships) for eligibility and application forms, as well as information and deadlines for other scholarships.

### CTA Scholarships

**APPLICATION DEADLINE JAN. 28, 2022**

The program offers scholarships up to \$3,000 to CTA members; up to \$5,000 to dependent children of active members; and up to \$5,000 to Student CTA members.

### Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarships

**APPLICATION DEADLINE FEB. 11, 2022**

Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Scholarships up to \$6,000 are available to CTA members, their dependents, and Student CTA members who are persons of color and are pursuing a teaching-related career.

### DON'T FORGET!

Our school counselors help students succeed, especially during these challenging times. National School Counseling Week, Feb. 7-11, 2022, focuses public attention on counselors' unique contributions. Have schools, students and communities show their appreciation with proclamations, posters, stickers (in Spanish too!) and more. Visit [schoolcounselor.org](http://schoolcounselor.org) for ideas.



# Quotes & Numbers

Compiled by Julian Peeples

## 140,000

**Number of U.S. children** who have lost a parent or grandparent caregiver during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a study in *Pediatrics*. Even before the pandemic, 1 in 14 U.S. children lost a parent before they turned 18.



## 900,000

**Number of children ages 5-11 nationwide** who received a COVID-19 vaccination during the first week following its November approval by federal regulators, according to the White House.

***"Threats against public servants are not only illegal, they run counter to our nation's core values. Those who dedicate their time and energy to ensuring that our children receive a proper education in a safe environment deserve to be able to do their work without fear for their safety."***

—Merrick Garland, U.S. attorney general, in an October announcement on combating the "disturbing spike" in violent threats facing educators and school officials.

## 4.3%

**Percentage of California students** (more than 269,000) who experienced homelessness at one point during the school year in 2018-19, the most recent year data is available.



***"Educators speaking with one voice are a force to be reckoned with. We must stand strong together to beat back any effort to privatize one of California's oldest and most valuable resources: our public schools."***

—E. Toby Boyd, CTA president, speaking to State Council of Education in October.

## 97%

**Percentage of school meal program directors** who have concerns about supply chain disruptions, according to the School Nutrition Association.



***"This resolution with these 380 teachers' signatures is the result of a failure to listen and a failure to lead."***

—Kim McCarthy, Campbell High School Teachers Association president, delivering a resolution of no confidence in the district superintendent to the school board in November.



***"WE HAVE SO MANY PEOPLE THAT ARE AT THE BRINK, AND THIS IS NOT GOOD FOR THE SCHOOL SYSTEM."***

—Manuel Bonilla, Fresno Teachers Association president, in a *Fresno Bee* article on grievances the union filed against Fresno Unified in October.

## \$4.6 BILLION

**Amount of federal COVID-19 relief funds** allocated to Los Angeles Unified School District, according to EdSource.

# We Must Make Schools Human Again

By Jennifer Yoo-Brannon

“THIS HAS BEEN the worst semester of my career.”

It was the third time that day I heard a teacher express this sentiment.

“I didn’t think anything could be worse than distance learning, but somehow this year has been harder.”

Sitting in my office, I listened to this teacher who has been teaching and coaching for 23 years. She is that beloved teacher who is always willing to engage and re-engage in the work, even when things are difficult and morale is low. If this joyful canary is singing a frustrated tune in the coal mine, we must listen.

As an instructional coach, the most important role I have is as a listener. The best part of my job is bearing witness to the deep self-reflection that leads to perspective shifts and instructional changes. So I listened as teachers articulated what has been making this school year so difficult.

Even though teaching from home introduced new challenges for teachers across the country, it also gave many a break from all the nonteaching tasks that get piled on their plates: campus supervision, submitting unnecessary paperwork, lengthy observation and evaluation processes, maintaining and often cleaning physical classrooms, and seemingly constant fire/earthquake/active shooter drills. For many educators, coming back to in-person instruction also meant coming back to all the daily frustrations we experienced before the pandemic. But this year, we just don’t have the patience for it anymore.

Teaching through the pandemic — online, in person or hybrid — took a toll on teachers. One teacher I work with, Maria, confessed she was angry and bitter by the end of last school year. Her students stopped turning on their cameras and stopped responding despite her best efforts to keep them engaged. Without seeing faces or hearing voices, her empathy diminished. She felt disconnected and demoralized. She

▼ A 1997 band photo of Jennifer Yoo-Brannon’s husband, who is now a teacher. He uses it to connect with his students.



said she felt like a machine just pushing out work for students to do. This was something I heard over and over again. We have all expressed the same phenomenon of being dehumanized in our work as educators.

We are not just educators, of course. We are mothers of multiple school-age children, parents of students with special needs, individuals with anxiety disorders exacerbated by the worldwide anxiety of the pandemic. We are human, too. While we transform our schools into welcoming spaces, we must also make them a human place to work. We can’t forget that we saw each other’s humanity and shared a universal human experience, and then return to business as usual. We must make schools human again.



Jennifer Yoo-Brannon

How do we do that? In my role, I’ve heard what teachers need. This is what they are asking from their colleagues, administrators and communities.

**1. Avoid toxic positivity.** Toxic positivity is the belief that no matter how bad a situation is, we should all have a positive mindset about it. Toxic positivity rejects or refuses to acknowledge how difficult things can be. This message is for administrators in particular.

To humanize schools, listen to and validate the real emotions teachers are bringing to campus, even the negative ones. Don’t just talk about “moving forward” when the pandemic is still playing out in the world and in our

minds. Don’t just say that we must have a positive attitude for our students. Rather, give us real support, such as applying schoolwide policies with consistency and fidelity, creating schedules that allow for collaboration, and ensuring that evaluations are meaningful. Follow through on your promises and create a working environment built on trust — in each other’s competence and in one another’s commitment to our students.

**2. Give teachers the professional development they want.** Throughout the 2020-21 year, the instructional support team at my school site offered professional learning sessions twice a week. Sometimes we had an agenda, sometimes it was a virtual open office for teachers to show up and ask questions.

Even though sessions were voluntary, we consistently saw the majority of teachers show up to learn. I do not hold to the essentialist thinking that puts teachers into categories of “will participate” or “won’t participate” in professional development. Rather, I follow the “context principle” as discussed in *The End of Average* by Todd Rose.

The principle is: “Individual behavior cannot be explained or predicted apart from a particular situation, and the influence of a situation cannot be specified without reference to the individual experiencing it.” In other words, the question is not “How do we get teachers to participate in professional development?” but rather “How can we create a context in which everyone will want to engage in professional learning?”

To feel human in our workplace, we need to feel like we have choices, and teachers need to feel trusted and empowered to make those choices.

**3. Systemic change, not “self-care.”** We need to stop telling demoralized, tired teachers to “take care of themselves” when what they are really asking for is systemic change. Yes, teacher appreciation gifts are nice, but I’ll take a good flow chart, a clearly articulated

*“To feel human in our workplace, teachers need to feel trusted and empowered.”*

process or a problem-solving protocol over a branded water bottle any day.

When teachers are communicating that they feel “burnt out,” they are often really expressing demoralization. Researcher Doris Santoro, author of *Demoralized: Why Teachers Leave the Profession They Love and How They Can Stay*, explains that demoralization occurs when teachers “encounter consistent and pervasive challenges to enacting the values that motivate their work.”

I often ask teachers, “What makes you tired?” Their answers are almost never about the students. They are about the bureaucracy: inconsistent communication, policies that don’t make sense, or the never-ending parade of initiatives they are expected to implement. You may be able to combat burnout with self-care practices, but you cannot fight demoralization with a gift card or a spa day. We must bring a critical eye to our schools’ systems and practices — and be willing to change things for the better.

**4. Go beyond “checking in” to building a culture of relational trust.** We cannot ask teachers to build strong positive relationships with their students without making the effort to do the same among school staff. In fact, educational leadership experts say that culture is always at play in a school’s success or failure. And research indicates that building trust among staff makes them more successful when it comes to implementing best practices over time.

This may begin with getting to know one another, but it must be a constant, concerted effort.

Last year, I helped coordinate grief counseling sessions and devoted meeting time for reflection and acknowledging feelings. Then a colleague said to me, “I

think we just need to have fun together again.” So, I took on a new role I like to think of as my school’s “cruise director of fun.” One teacher called me the Julie McCoy of my school (a reference to the ’70s TV show *The Love Boat* — I had to look this up). I organized virtual happy hours where we played trivia games and sang karaoke. I thoroughly enjoyed watching maintenance staff and coaches come up with the 10 most recent Sexiest Men Alive according to *People* magazine to clinch a win for their trivia team. This kind of frivolity may seem like just that, frivolity. But ultimately, making the time to have fun together builds trust and creates a more human workplace.

Lastly, to make schools human again, we must, on an individual level, commit to being human at work. We must bring our whole selves to work and be human in front of our colleagues and our students.

The picture in this article is a 1997 band photo of my husband, who is a high school English teacher. During Spring 2021, students returned to in-person classes once a week for an advisory period, a nonacademic class designed to provide a space for building relationships. He took his ninth graders on a tour of the school to reacquaint them with the building, and to make things a little more interesting, he hid several copies of that band photo along the route. If students spotted one, they could keep it. It was his way of telling them, “I was in ninth grade once too. It will be OK.” The students loved it and asked for more copies. Now, he gives these out randomly as rewards.

So, this year, this incredibly challenging academic year, we must center our humanity at work. This is what it means to be human at work — acknowledging the connections between us. There are so many dehumanizing workplaces. We cannot let schools be those spaces. ■

*Jennifer Yoo-Brannon is a member of El Monte Union Educators Association. A version of this essay was first published on [edsurge.com](https://edsurge.com).*



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# DREAM BIG

OUR 2021-22 INNOVATION ISSUE  
SALUTES EDUCATORS WHO DARE TO  
IMAGINE A WORLD WHERE LIFE IS  
BETTER FOR THEIR STUDENTS.

Stories by **Sherry Posnick-Goodwin**

Big dreamers unleash their imaginations to see what might be. The innovators we highlight on the following pages not only imagined scenarios and worlds where they could improve students' lives, but took action to make those possibilities real. From assisting foster youth and homeless students and their families, to creating cutting-edge enrichment curriculum for children and youth in a challenged community, to opening doors for underrepresented young people in the sciences, these educators' big dreams illuminated a path that helped students set goals and move beyond real or perceived barriers. They have made a difference, and our students, schools and colleges are better for it.

**ABA NGISSAH**

Making dreams possible  
*PAGE 18*

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Working behind the scenes  
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# MAKING DREAMS POSSIBLE



**ABA NGISSAH:**  
*“I have seen students blossom and say they want to go to college and become excited about opportunities in the real world.”*

**“I BELIEVE THAT MY JOB AS A TEACHER IS TO FIND OUT WHAT EACH CHILD NEEDS — WHAT THEIR GOALS AND DREAMS ARE — AND FIND PEOPLE AND PROGRAMS TO CONNECT THEM WITH, TO MAKE THEIR DREAMS POSSIBLE.”**

says ABA NGISSAH, who teaches a fifth and sixth grade combination class at Hudnall Elementary School in Inglewood.

She encourages her students to dream big, although many face challenges and are low-income. During the pandemic, she and other teachers used their own money to buy families food and cleaning and hygiene supplies.

Inglewood students may go without some things, but Ngissah didn't want them to go without enrichment opportunities available to students in wealthier communities. Because she too dreams big, this past summer she brought together a team of educators, administrators, district leaders, tech leaders, artists and musicians for a summer enrichment camp where approximately 200 students were encouraged to discover their creative side and explore career paths.

Professionals volunteered their time or were paid to teach career skills, serve as role models, and work with Inglewood Teachers Association (ITA) members. STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) was integrated throughout.

Amazingly, Ngissah (who is president of ITA) convinced the school district, foundations, nonprofits, private businesses and community organizations to provide resources and funding. The summer camp was so successful that new course offerings based on the program are becoming available in the district. This collaboration between ITA and the district honors the goal both parties set to work cooperatively to help students succeed.

The camp was a huge step toward equity for Inglewood

Unified, which was taken over by the state in 2012 and remains in receivership, with severe budget cuts imposed to keep the district afloat. The arts were mostly eliminated, says Ngissah.

The eight-week summer camp, held at Woodworth-Monroe, a TK-8 school, offered “academies” for students to choose from.

For the music academy, Ngissah and her team partnered with Musicians at Play (MAP), a Los Angeles foundation that provides students and teachers access to music education through live performances and mentorship. They also partnered with the Musicians Guild union, whose members worked with students. Bertrand's Music store donated instruments. The district paid for the program, which served some 50 students in grades 2-10.

The program is continuing, says Ngissah, “with four interested school sites and after school. MAP is also working with us to get either credentialed music teachers or CTE [career technical education] credentialed music teachers.”

Ngissah was key in creating the summer animation academy for high schoolers, funded by the district, by partnering with BRIC (Break, Reinvent, Impact and Change), a foundation that aims to increase representation in entertainment, gaming, media and tech for women and underrepresented people, plus Sony and Nickelodeon, which provided resources for teachers and students. Students were encouraged to pitch ideas for their own animated series.

The partnerships continue, Ngissah says. “Students will be

Musicians at Play



▲ Students in the Music Academy.

working with experts in the industry on animation and game design. We are working on making this an ‘a-g’ class [meeting UC and CSU admission requirements].”

“My experience with the BRIC animation class was highly positive,” says Tariq Stone, a student who now attends California College of the Arts. “It gave me a ton of new opportunities and taught me things that have been so helpful as I go through art school. I feel like I have an expanded view on art and the entertainment industry thanks to those classes.”

At the Girls Make Beats academy, GMB professionals taught girls about sound engineering, podcasting and careers as music producers.

With the smartphone filmmakers project, created by Ngissah and funded by the district, students learned writing and filming skills, while collaborating with industry experts from We Make Movies, a collective that offers online tutorials, and We Uplift the World Foundation, whose mission is to create positive change through art, entertainment and education.

“Students learn literacy through filmmaking and will hopefully obtain internships and paid jobs through this program,” says Ngissah; she will use a recently awarded CTA Institute for Teaching innovation grant to support the project this year.

These enrichment programs have transformed students who were struggling or did not like school, says Ngissah.

▼ Student Tariq Stone got an expanded view of art and the entertainment industry, thanks to the summer animation academy.



◀ Many summer program partners are continuing into the school year.



“I have seen students blossom and say they want to go to college and become excited about opportunities in the real world. They are happier and doing better in their regular classes. I believe that through art and STEAM, we address social-emotional learning.”

Ngissah, a teacher for more than two decades, also serves as professional development chair for ITA and is a member of the Instructional Leadership Corps, a partnership of CTA, the Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in

Education, and the National Board Resource Center at Stanford University to foster teaching excellence.

“I’m a person who can’t do just one thing at one time,” she admits. “That’s just the way my brain works.”

She moved to America from Ghana as a child. “My education in Ghana was top-notch, but not all children there receive an education.”

What drives her is the belief that all students deserve an excellent education.

“In the United States of America — where people from other countries are dying to come so their children can have a better life — we should have excellent schools for everybody. Instead, we have schools that are struggling. Teachers shouldn’t have to fight for programs in this country. But I am willing to fight — so students can achieve their dreams.”





## ON A MISSION TO EMPOWER

**KATIE MCNAMARA SPENDS HER DAYS IN NORTH HIGH SCHOOL'S LIBRARY IN THE TOWN OF BAKERSFIELD. BUT THE ENTIRE SCHOOL — AND WORLD — IS HER CLASSROOM.**

McNamara's mission is to share a wealth of information with students and teachers through technology and, of course, books. Her hope is that through such knowledge they will feel empowered to do great things.

"Empowering educators and students is my driving force," says McNamara, a teacher librarian and Kern High School Teachers Association member. "Putting positive ripples in the world is great. Helping my students put positive ripples in the world is even better."

In 2018, McNamara was one of 150 people worldwide — and one of 37 educators in the U.S. and Canada — accepted into the Google Innovator Academy, an intensive program where educators design creative solutions to the world's challenges in education.

The application required a video of a project. Hers, called "Students Teaching Students," was inspired by her North High students virtually teaching fourth graders in another city about CoSpaces, a coding program that lets users create virtual interactive worlds. "My students were nervous at first,"

she recalls. "But they saw that the fourth graders were so excited that they, too, lit up. The younger students had to create a virtual setting for the theme of a book they were reading. It was a great experience for all."

An active Twitter user, McNamara connects with educators around the world and shares what she learns with those on her own campus.

"Through Twitter, I have a pulse on new things that are happening, and I can dissect what is valuable and bring it back to teachers and students, [especially] things that makes our jobs easier and better."

One of those things is Wakelet, a platform where teachers and students can save links, social media posts, videos and images that can be organized later into private or public collections. Users can add notes to items to tell a story, ask questions, or give directions.

"I have been encouraging Wakelet in the library and asking students to use it to research wellness information that can improve their own lives," says McNamara. "It was exciting to see the students create action plans to improve

their own mental and physical health through research."

McNamara believes students should have a voice and connects them to venues where they can be heard. She helped teens become student ambassadors for the Wakelet program and for Telosity, a company working to improve mental health in young people.

She connected 12th grader Damien Cebreros with Steve Isacs, education program manager for Epic Games, so that her student could voice his strong opinions about e-sports industry regulations he would like to see changed.

"Miss Mac is one of best teachers I ever had," says Cebreros. "She wants to know about our passions — and then gives us the best resources we could possibly have to pursue them."

McNamara uses her own voice as well, believing that respect and appreciation for school librarians is long overdue. "Our role is crucial in the world of education," she says.

Among her external roles: She is program director for the teacher librarian credential program at Fresno Pacific University. She presents regularly at



**KATIE MCNAMARA:**

*"Putting positive ripples in the world is great. Helping my students put positive ripples in the world is even better."*



▲ McNamara on the move in the North High library.

national and international conferences, including at a recent Digital Citizenship Institute summit, where she shared her sessions *MythBusters*-style to help others understand the pillars of digital citizenship. (One of her students spoke at a session on mental health and algorithms.)

"Digital citizenship is not just about being nice online. It's about being informed, alert, balanced, engaged and inclusive. It's about being an impactor, instead of just a consumer. The big piece I try to convey to students is by asking: 'How are you making positive social change in your community — or on a larger scale?' Digital citizenship is about using technology for good to inspire and empower."

McNamara is co-chair of the California School Library Association (CSLA) conference in February 2022 and will speak on innovative ways to empower students. She has also organized and served on a CSLA panel about neuro-diverse students.

The subject hits home for her: All her life she has had trouble sitting still; she is constantly moving and changing topics of conversation. When her son began having difficulties in school two years ago, he was diagnosed as having ADHD. And so was she, after more than 40 years.

"My son and I are on this path together," says McNamara, who grew up in San Bernardino County and was often frustrated in school. "Having ADHD doesn't mean there is a problem. You just see and experience things differently."

It turns out that being a teacher librarian — switching from subject to subject and moving around the room to assist students — is a *perfect* job for someone with ADHD.

"Somehow, I ended up exactly where I needed to be," says McNamara. "I was meant to be in this library helping these students succeed."



*"My students know I mean business, but they also know I care for them and want them to be their best selves at all times."*

**CHANTEL PARNELL:**

## WORKING TO DIVERSIFY TECH

**CHANTEL PARNELL'S STUDENTS ARE ONLY IN MIDDLE SCHOOL. BUT THEY ARE ON A PATHWAY TO WELL-PAYING CAREERS AND DIVERSIFYING THE TECH INDUSTRY, THANKS TO HER.**

Parnell, a teacher at Bret Harte Middle School in Oakland, was named Teacher of the Year by her district last May for developing computer science and animation courses at her school — and creating the district's only all-girls computer science class.

"My girls love being in a girls' class just for them," says the Oakland Education Association member. "We have newcomer girls, too. They are getting stronger with their English skills, and we are all learning a whole new computer language together."

Parnell sees herself as helping to create a pipeline of women in computer science that will help diversify the tech industry in the Bay Area and beyond. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, computer science research jobs will grow 19 percent by 2026. Yet women only earn 18 percent of computer science bachelor's degrees in the U.S. The percentage of women working in computer science-related professions dropped from 35 to 26 percent between 1990 and 2013.



Parnell, who teaches primarily Black and Latino students, hopes to see the tech industry become more racially diverse, too, reflecting California's demographics. The challenge is real: According to a 2020 *Los Angeles Times* story, "The industry has failed to move the needle on workplace diversity," and as a result, "an entire sector of the economy ... is functionally barely open to Black and Latino people."

Parnell grew up in the Crenshaw District of Los Angeles and went to school in LA Unified. She always wanted to be a teacher.

"Growing up, I would gather all the kids on my block to come onto my lawn, where I had a chalkboard, and have them do math."

With support from the Fulfillment Fund (an LA nonprofit that helps make college a reality for students growing up in underresourced communities), she attended Bryn Mawr in Pennsylvania. After graduation she joined Teach for America. She was placed at Bret Harte; after five years as a math teacher, she was ready for a change.

"I had an opportunity to pilot an all-girls introduction to computer science class. I went to an all-women's college and knew the advantages of being surrounded by other girls — which is being more willing to take risks, speak up, and share ideas. I wanted to duplicate that experience with students on my campus."

She sought support and expertise from Code.org, a nonprofit that expands access to computer science, including animation, while increasing participation by young women and students from other underrepresented groups.



Geoff Yu

▲ Parnell, top right, and her students with David Beckham.

"It was a very exciting time for me to be surrounded by young ladies and all of us learning together. I was up-front with my students. I said, 'I'm terrified too, I don't know how it will turn out, but let's see where it takes us.'"

It has taken her to new opportunities, where she now teaches computer science and animation, including one all-girls computer science class.

Parnell describes her teaching style as warm but demanding. "My students know I mean business, but they also know I care for them and want them to be their best selves at all times."

"I wanted to take computer science because coding is super fun," says Vernia Morgan, eighth grader and student body president, who is enrolled in the all-girls class. "Being in this class opened my mind to a career path in computer science."

"I really like the way Ms. Parnell teaches, because it makes me feel like I have something to look forward to," says seventh grader Charlie Sellman.

Parnell lets her students shine. Pre-pandemic, they presented at the inaugural Future Trailblazer Challenge hosted by Salesforce, competing with students from other schools in a style similar to the TV show *Shark Tank*.

Her students used coding and a 3D printer to build a solution to a problem — school shootings — and created a drop-down mechanism on classroom doors to keep intruders out. Her students have also met with UNICEF ambassador and soccer star David Beckham to discuss concerns about the state of the world.

"For me, the fun comes when I allow students to create what they want to create and see them apply all the skills they have learned," Parnell says. "I love seeing them do what they are interested in and sharing that with their classmates."

Parnell also trains teachers in computer science alongside computer science specialists. During the pandemic she created videos for her students, and she continues the practice this year.

She cried happy tears when she was named Teacher of the Year.

"It was so nice to be recognized. It's not about what we do in the classroom; it's also about preparing our students to be successful in the outside world. I'm so glad I wasn't afraid to take a risk. We are all teachers and learners. We are all in this together."

## HELP FOR OUR NEEDIEST

### JULIE WHITE HAS THE TITLE OF SCHOOL COUNSELOR AT PARAMOUNT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, BUT SHE IS SO MUCH MORE.

She oversees programs at 19 school sites for foster youth and students experiencing homelessness. In the past four years, working from the district office, she has built a network of support services for these students, whose numbers are rising in the pandemic.

If families are homeless, she tries to find them permanent housing. If homeless and foster youth need role models, she finds them mentors. Families needing food, clothing or toiletries can pick up supplies at the resource center that she created with the help of her union, Teachers Association of Paramount (TAP). And if she thinks that students may be overlooked by Santa, she bestows Christmas gifts through a foundation she created.

"If we're not taking care of the basic needs of students, we're not giving them the necessary tools to reach their potential academic development," says White. "Students who are in the foster care system or who are homeless have so many stress factors. But if we can fulfill their needs and show them love, they will bloom."

To help students academically,

White fostered a partnership between her district and School on Wheels, a nonprofit whose volunteers tutor homeless children in the McKinney-Vento program (from a federal law allocating funds to the homeless).

"The organization also provides a free laptop and gift cards as motivators," White says.

For foster youths, she partnered with the Los Angeles County Office of Education to provide in-person or virtual tutoring.

To help homeless families, White turned to the city of Paramount, where officials recommended Family Promise, a national nonprofit that offers housing assistance and other services so families can stabilize. Thanks to White's partnership with Family Promise, seven families are now off the streets.

"I'm super proud of this. I literally cry when I think about it. I just wish we could help all of our families."

Ariane Dearing's family was offered a hotel room for 28 days through Family Promise. White worked tirelessly to find them housing while Dearing was in the hospital giving birth to her fourth child.



### JULIE WHITE:

*"If we're not taking care of students' basic needs, we're not giving them the tools to reach their potential academic development."*

"Julie White goes above and beyond," Dearing says. "She tries to help families as much as she can. She's a really good person and has a good heart."

White opened a resource center at a school where students and families could obtain necessities such as food, clothing, school supplies and hygiene items, along with medical, dental and mental health referrals. The center is now a drive-through program at the TAP office. Partners such as the Los Angeles Dodgers, Own Your Own, Feed the Children and Frito-Lay donate food and other necessities. She estimates 300 families participate.

When White told her doctor about the work she was doing, her doctor handed her a check. The donation prompted her to start her own foundation, Treasured Little Hearts, which provides resources for underprivileged youths and their families. TAP members generously donated \$5,000 in gift cards for students to open presents on Christmas.

White has expanded existing district programs that provide mentors for homeless and





▼ White at TAP's resource center, where families can pick up necessities.



foster youths. She personally interviews and hires the mentors, who receive a small paycheck. They provide social-emotional support and serve as role models. When students graduate and have only two invitations for the ceremony, mentors are often invited, says White.

Her job can be exhausting and overwhelming. Sometimes she receives late-night calls when school families are experiencing emergency situations.

"Lots of people hear the word 'Paramount' and think we are a wealthy community because of Paramount Studios. But we are a Title I district with a mostly low-socioeconomic Hispanic population."

White, the daughter of a minister and a teacher, grew up in the San Fernando Valley. She began her career teaching elementary school. During that time students would come to her with their problems — and there was never enough time to listen.

"I would always say, 'Honey, can you tell me later?' And later never came. There was a lot of pressure to keep the students on pace. I felt horrible about it."

Eighteen years ago, she became a counselor, and ever since she has loved being able to say "Honey, you can tell me about that now" when students are upset. Even though she is busy overseeing programs these days, White counsels individual students when needed.

She had a steep learning curve when she was put in charge of the district's foster youth and homeless students' programs, but happily accepted the challenge.

"I felt that I was either going to swim or sink in this job — but instead I jumped on my boogie board. I love, love, love what I do."



*"I love knowing I'm helping students learn something that will help them get a job or start a future career."*

**JO WEN WU:**

## OPENING DOORS FOR STUDENTS IN SCIENCE

**WHEN IT COMES TO ENCOURAGING STUDENTS TO PURSUE BIOTECH CAREERS, JO WEN WU HAS IT DOWN TO A SCIENCE.**

She sponsors mentorships and internships, holds weekend workshops and summer camps, and partners with industry experts to prepare students for well-paying careers.

The Fullerton College biology professor has an impressive list of awards. She was a finalist for National Postsecondary Teacher of the Year by the Association for Career and Technical Education, which honored her as the 2019 Region V Postsecondary Teacher of the Year. In 2017, she received the California Hayward Award for Excellence in Education and the Orange County Science and Engineering Fair Educator of the Year Award. She has also been selected twice for Teacher of the Year at Fullerton College, where she has taught since 1990.

But the greatest rewards for Wu, a member of United Faculty North Orange County CCD, stem from knowing that she's opening doors for female, ESL and minority students who are underrepresented in the sciences.

"I love knowing I'm helping students learn something that will help them get a job or start a future career," she says.



Her own story resonates with students. She moved to St. Charles, Missouri, from Taiwan in second grade without knowing English. Her father, a civil engineer, was already there working for a train design company. When he was blacklisted by the Chinese government for political activity, facing arrest if he returned home, it took the intervention of a U.S. senator for Wu, her mother and brother to seek political asylum and join him in America.

"There was no ESL program in my school," she recalls. "They put me into special ed because they could give me more individual attention."

Impressed by her math ability, teachers enrolled her in independent study. She learned English on her own by reading every children's book in the local library. She read each story twice — once for word meanings and again for information. Once she mastered English, she entered science fairs and won awards in middle and high school.

Ernestine Long, one of the first female chemistry Ph.D.'s in Missouri, mentored Wu in high school and invited her to participate in summer research programs. Wu's science fair awards and her work with Long led to full academic merit scholarships for her bachelor's degree in biological sciences from the University of Missouri and her doctoral degree in developmental and cell biology from UC Irvine.

Wu's main course is cellular and molecular biology, where she emphasizes communication skills. "I have students answer questions in every class — so they won't be scared in a presentation. I was very

◀ Wu, left, works with a student intern on a supply chain project.

### HOW JO WEN WU IS ENCOURAGING AND MENTORING STUDENTS

- She established the Orange County Biotech Education Partnership, which connected industry advisers to develop a biotech certificate and degree pathway that is now offered at Fullerton, Irvine Valley, Santa Ana and Santiago Canyon colleges. Students can get certificates to become biomufacturing technicians, lab assistants and lab technicians while earning an associate degree in biotechnology.
- She sponsors Saturday workshops led by her college student assistants, who teach high schoolers lab skills. She describes this as a "win-win": College students learn to communicate and see themselves as leaders; high school students learn new skills.
- She created a weekend supply chain internship program, where high school students work with college students to produce lab reagents for molecular biology lab experiments. As coordinator of the Amgen Biotech Experience for Orange and Riverside county high schools, she provides equipment and resources that many high school teachers lack. The program has grown from seven teachers at seven schools to 80 teachers in 43 schools serving over 8,000 students per year (pre-pandemic).
- She started a summer science camp for middle and high schoolers. In addition to giving students hands-on experience in a college lab setting, younger students are mentored for a full year by her Fullerton students.

shy in college; when I was put on the spot and asked a question, it was terrifying."

Now Wu is paying it forward, encouraging and mentoring students in the same way that Long helped her succeed (see sidebar).

She is modest about her accomplishments — but former students are eager to share how she has influenced their lives. "Dr. Wu constantly encourages students to participate in teaching, research and biotech workshops to show us the different facets of science," says Rosa Serrano. "The hands-on exposure helped me determine my interests and prepared me for graduate studies in neuroscience."

Sophia de Alba fondly remembers weekend workshops. "She helped me get into a paid internship summer program for minority students. After transferring to UC San Diego and getting my degree in biochemistry and cell biology, I am a scientist with multiple FDA products being tested on actual patients. Dr. Wu changed my life for the better. And I can't thank her enough."

## THE JOY OF READING

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT IS ON THE MENU WHEN MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS ATTEND THE SÍ SE PUEDE BOOK CLUB DURING LUNCH AT JEFFERSON ACADEMY IN HANFORD.**

Students, who have just read *Kids Who Are Changing the World* by Anne Jankéliowitch, eagerly discuss the social activism of students in the book.

"I was impressed with Olivia Bouler, who took action when she heard about the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico," eighth grader Marlee Liniger tells her classmates, describing how the 11-year-old from New York partnered with the Audubon Society to sell her paintings of birds, raising \$200,000 for gulf recovery efforts.

Students are in the classroom of Josefa Bustos-Pelayo, whose love of reading inspires their passion for the written word. This old-fashioned book club is bringing students together, fostering critical thinking, raising awareness of important issues, and letting students know that they, too, can change the world and make a difference.

"Reading books is a way of opening students' eyes to the world," says Bustos-Pelayo, a member of the Hanford Elementary Teachers Association.

Books for her program are provided via 2019-20 and 2020-21 innovation grants from CTA's Institute for Learning. The club, currently with 23 students, meets monthly during lunchtime. Occasionally special guests Zoom in; when the pandemic wanes, Bustos-Pelayo will take students on field trips.

"I recruit kids who love to read and some who are reluctant readers. I think it builds a sense of community, as students become better thinkers, better readers and friends."

Her focus this year is on the environment, because of students' concern about climate change at the STEAM-centered school. They will read about Rachel Carson, whose influential book *Silent Spring* and other writings are credited with catalyzing the global environmental movement.

"As the students read the works of authors and scientists, they will not only be learning content, but the craft of writing like a scientist and environmentalist. So, in the spirit of Rachel Carson as the mother of environmental

studies, we will uncover her love for the environment, her social activism, her passion for writing, and be inspired by her unrelenting work."

Students will read *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by William Kamkwamba, the true story of a 13-year-old Malawian boy who is thrown out of school when his family can no longer afford the fees, then sneaks into the library and learns how to build a windmill to save his village from a famine.

Other assignments will be on the political environment. *This Book Is Anti-Racist: 20 Lessons on How to Wake Up, Take Action, and Do the Work* by Tiffany Jewell will encourage students in the book club to take action of their own.

Bustos-Pelayo's book club was on hiatus during the pandemic shutdown, but in 2019 the club's focus was on Latino writers and Hispanic heritage. This was a natural fit, since she teaches in the school's dual immersion program, and the majority of students at Jefferson Academy are Latino.



### JOSEFA BUSTOS-PELAYO:

*"I recruit kids who love to read and some who are reluctant readers. It builds a sense of community, as students become better thinkers, better readers and friends."*



▲ A few students from Bustos-Pelayo's book club.

"I grew up in nearby Fresno and have always had a love of reading," says Bustos-Pelayo. "But I didn't read a book by a Latino author until my senior year of high school. A teacher gave us a list of books to choose from, and I saw a Hispanic name — Isabel Allende — author of *The House of the Spirits*. After that I bought all her books because I connected so much with this eccentric character with curly long hair and a sense of magical surrealism."

She attended Merrill College at UC Santa Cruz, and discovered she had a passion for Spanish literature.

"I decided that I wanted to become a teacher that students could relate to, and that I wanted my students to love books as much as I do. I am constantly going to book fairs and even went to a book fair in Spain to find excellent Spanish literature."

Reading, she believes, has changed with the Accelerated Reader and other programs that give students "points" for books rather than fostering a love of reading. Book reports and testing students on books can sometimes result in the opposite of engagement and reading for pleasure.

Students in her book club are reading for fun, and they have shown a marked improvement in reading. At the end of the academic year in 2019, many had increased their reading ability, and some improved by an entire grade level.

"Oh my gosh, I was shocked," she says. "I asked students why their reading levels had jumped, and they said it was the book club. It just shows that finding books that *truly* engage students makes all the difference."



*"My job is to make sure our kiddos have the best learning environment and that teachers can concentrate on teaching."*

### LOREN PARCK:

## CRUCIAL WORK BEHIND THE SCENES

**TEACHERS IN REDLANDS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT MAY NOT KNOW IT, BUT LOREN PARCK IS MAKING SURE THEIR CLASSROOMS AND SCHOOL BUILDINGS ARE COMFORTABLE AND WELL MAINTAINED SO THEY CAN TEACH IN A PLEASANT ENVIRONMENT.**

Parck is the maintenance and operations technician for the district's 25 school campuses and works in the district's Service Center with the maintenance department. She was recognized by her district in 2021 for being an "outstanding school employee who sees the big picture and is an integral agent of change and improvement, who prioritizes a myriad of needs to the right people in the right place at the right time."

"My job is to make sure our kiddos have the best learning environment," says Parck, a member of Redlands Education Support Professionals Association. "It's also to make sure that teachers don't have to even think about things that I take care of, so they can concentrate on teaching."







▼ Parck and colleague get their equipment ready.



When Parck first came on board six years ago, things were done with paper and pencil. Her mission was to improve efficiency. She asked the district to provide new iPads and convinced administrators to see the benefits of modernizing. The result was that work orders that previously took days to process are completed much faster, making everyone happier.

“Bringing in technology to our department streamlined five steps into one for our staff.”

Parck also decided to update the preventative maintenance (PM) scheduling system for schools, which includes inspections of plumbing and HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) systems, and replacing worn carpet and painting school sites.

“Preventative maintenance is important because teachers don’t have to deal with a dripping faucet in the back of a classroom, because we have a plumber check faucets every six months and make repairs before anyone notices there is a problem,” she explains. “It’s the same with HVAC; technicians check the filters and make sure units are functioning properly a few times a year, so teachers don’t have to worry about whether the air conditioner will turn on during hot days.”

To improve the PM scheduling and efficiency, Parck mapped every school building in the district. Buildings were categorized by age; for example, buildings over 100 years old need more PM than modern buildings. She went through blueprints and listed the square footage of buildings, how many rooms each one has, the age of the roofs, and whether or not major work had been done on them.

“I compiled a massive amount of data into a living, breathing document in 2018,” says Parck. “It took me months. I still had to manage my other daily tasks and worked on it as time permitted.”

Having pertinent information in one place allows the district to make better financial decisions and

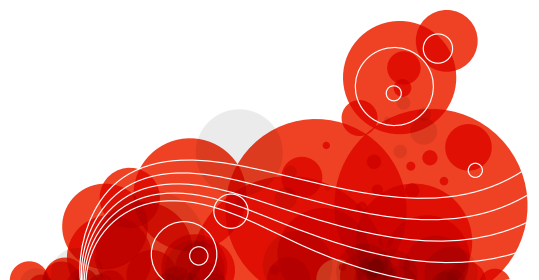
save money. Some repairs may not be worth it, such as replacing parts of portable classrooms that have reached the end of their life cycle.

When students returned to schools after the COVID-19 shutdown, the district hired staff to disinfect and sanitize. Parck made sure they had the equipment and cleaning/disinfecting items they needed.

Parck grew up in San Bernardino and worked for years as a support professional in the classroom before switching classified positions.

“It was an unknown world to me. I went from working in the classroom and keeping track of students to keeping track of tractors, lawn mowers, dump trucks, plumbing fixtures, pool pumps, door locks and HVAC units. I had a lot to learn, but I knew that we needed to do things differently.”

While she loves her job “because no day is ever the same,” she has a message for those who don’t see her and her colleagues working behind the scenes. “Reach out and let us know what’s going on. If you see or hear that something isn’t right, let us know. We’d rather be proactive than respond to an emergency.”



## SCHOOL NURSE STEPS UP TO LEAD



**STEPHANIE YELLIN-MEDNICK:**  
*“Not all superheroes wear capes; some of them wear scrubs. This has definitely been the year of the school nurse.”*

**WHEN LA STUDENTS RETURNED TO SCHOOL IN AUGUST AND SOME TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19, AN ADMINISTRATOR TURNED TO SCHOOL NURSE STEPHANIE YELLIN-MEDNICK AND ASKED, “HOW DO WE HANDLE THIS?”**

She instantly knew that she and other school nurses — already overworked and stretched thin — would need to assume leadership roles in the pandemic and work in new and groundbreaking ways.

Yellin-Mednick is a nurse at Sherman Oaks Center for Enriched Studies, a magnet school for more than 1,900 students in grades 4-12 that is part of Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). She is also lead chair for the nursing chapter of United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA), which has more than 500 nurses.

The question “How do we handle this?” was sobering, she recalls. She knew she would have to oversee school safety measures to prevent COVID from spreading, and also be a strong advocate for the safety of nurses and health care staff through negotiations at the bargaining table. Both roles meant venturing into uncharted territory, but she did it.

“You step up to the plate and put on your big girl pants and realize that you are the medical person and expert on campus that others are looking to for answers. Nurses may

have never done these things before, but we have trained for this.”

Like other district nurses, she conducts COVID rapid tests of students returning from quarantine and also tests those who have failed to get the “daily pass” required of all students, who must log into their account and answer questions about COVID symptoms each morning.

She helps with contact tracing, analyzing seating charts and lunch tables to see which students and staff have been exposed to someone who has tested positive. She calls the parents of students who have tested positive or been exposed, and oversees “isolation areas” where students who test positive wait for their parents.

And because school nurses can only be in one place at one time, she helped train office staff and school aides to step in as needed, doing things like taking temperatures and observing symptoms. She also trained teachers how to properly sanitize classrooms in between different groups of students.

When vaccines came out, she

helped administer vaccinations to district staff.

All these new responsibilities are in addition to her existing duties of caring for students with special needs, who may require assistance with feeding tubes, catheters, insulin injections or asthma attacks, as well as monitoring students’ immunization records and treating injuries.

“It’s been said that not all superheroes wear capes; some of them wear scrubs,” says Yellin-Mednick, who has been a school nurse for nearly 40 years. “This has definitely been the year of the school nurse.”

In her role as UTLA representative for nurses and health and human services staff (including mental health workers, psychiatric social workers, and pupil services and attendance staff), she helped negotiate a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for safer working conditions. The district had proposed that health care workers wear surgical masks and plastic aprons like cafeteria staff, which she viewed as unacceptable.

“If our people are going to be around those who are sneezing





▼ Yellin-Mednick checking a COVID-19 rapid test.



and coughing out the virus, I wanted us to be protected, just like nurses in hospitals. And that includes having scrubs and N95 masks, which we were able to receive through negotiations."

The MOU ensured that staff who test positive or need to be quarantined can stay home without having that time deducted from sick leave. The same applies to those caring for relatives with COVID.

"I was part of the discussion about ventilation in the classrooms and the need for air filters to be changed. And when teachers negotiated their separate agreement, they pulled many of the things that we had already successfully negotiated with our district."

Yellin-Mednick knew from age 5 she wanted to be a nurse. She made paper nurses' hats for her dolls. Her parents hid the Band-Aids because she pasted them all over her friends. She called her little red wagon her "ambulance."

She received a bachelor's degree in health and safety and another in nursing, as well as a master's in nursing administration, at CSU Los Angeles. She previously taught in National University's school nurse credential program.

The pandemic is hardly her first challenging assignment. She was at 49th Street Elementary School in LAUSD during a mass shooting in 1984 when one child and one staff member died and 12 were wounded, and administered first aid to the wounded.

But Yellin-Mednick loves what she does because she knows that she is making a difference in the lives of students and their families.

"The job of a school nurse is to ensure that children are healthy, safe, and in their seats ready to learn. We are not paid enough for what we do. But as the pandemic has clearly shown, school nurses are an essential part of every school district."



*"I let students self-educate. I teach them skills but leave it up to them as much as possible. That's what it's like to work in the tech industry."*

## ANTHONY CARLSON: GAME FOR ANYTHING

**"ANDY HAS BEEN SERVING HIS COMMUNITY FOR DECADES BY MAKING THE MOST DELICIOUS DONUTS IN THE VALLEY," READS THE INTRO TO ANDY'S DONUTS, A MOBILE GAME THAT WAS CREATED IN ANTHONY CARLSON'S CLASS AT MONROVIA HIGH SCHOOL AND RELEASED LAST SUMMER.**

"As he looks toward retirement, Andy has found a way to automate the donut-making process! However, there are still a few kinks to work out. Can you help him reach his goal?"

The game is available for free from the App Store and is a basic "puzzler" in which a curmudgeonly robot named Andy runs an automated shop where donuts decorate and package themselves. The player is a donut who must roll around in various ingredients (such as sprinkles) and jump into a pink box to earn a point. The game has 30 levels and a grand finale.

Creating and publishing a complex mobile game was a huge achievement for students in Monrovia's Digital Studies Academy (DSA). They were taught, then given freedom and encouragement, by Carlson, a member of Monrovia Teachers Association.

"I wanted to create a class that was different from other programming or game development classes," says Carlson. "I wanted to give my students



◀ Carlson's student Julia Heatherly shows the graphic art she is working on for a game.

▼ Andy's Donuts is in the App Store.



real-world experiences. And what they produced was absolutely amazing."

Students in the DSA pathway start out in Carlson's programming class where they learn Python, a computer programming language. Next, they can enroll in his game development class. "We look at all aspects of game development including writing, character development, narrative — and creating digital art for games in 2D and 3D format."

Students seeking extreme levels of game creation take Carlson's advanced class called the Software Development Team, where their mission is to spend an entire school year creating a game and publishing it in the real world.

Andy's Donuts is the second game to be released by his advanced students. The Red Dungeon mobile game was released on the itch.io platform in 2019 and won a Congressional App Challenge award in 2020. The challenge, where members of Congress host contests in their districts for middle and high school students, encourages young people to learn to code and possibly pursue careers in computer science.

Andy's Donuts has entered the 2021 Congressional App Challenge, and there are high hopes that it will give the competition a good dunking. (Winners are to be announced in December 2021.)

It's not all fun and games, says Carlson. "I can't tell you how many freshmen come in bright-eyed saying they want to make games for a living, and then they find out how much work it is and realize that they would rather play games than make them."

Carlson runs his Software Development Team like a business, taking an "agile development" approach to

product development that emphasizes teamwork and project management. The team currently has 10 students.

"I let my students self-educate. I show them how to keep things organized and teach them skills to make a game work, but try to leave it up to them as much as possible, because that's what it's like to work in the tech industry."

Charlie Heatherly, who was project manager on Andy's Donuts and did coding on Red Dungeon, is now a freshman at the University of Southern California, which has the No. 1 undergrad games development program in the nation.

"It takes a lot of trust for a teacher to say to high school students, 'Spend a year making a game and you'll get out of it what you put into it,' but he did that," Heatherly says. "And we came out of that with knowledge we wouldn't have gotten any other way."

His sister Julia Heatherly, a junior at Monrovia High, is now in the Games Development course and enjoys creating art with graphics.

"The biggest thing for me is that Mr. Carlson gives me respect as a female in game-making," she says. "He has opened us up to an experience where we can immerse ourselves in creativity as a team. I could totally see myself going into this and pursuing it as a career."

Carlson, a fourth-year teacher, grew up in Monrovia. He spent several years as the drummer for a rock band. Being on the road was tough on his family, so he enrolled in a four-month web development boot camp and discovered he loved computer programming. He taught for a year at Monrovia High as a career technical education teacher, then left to work at an engineering firm.

"It sucked the soul out of me," says Carlson. "It made me realize how much I missed being in the classroom. Fortunately, Monrovia High School took me back."

He has never created a game himself.

"I want my kids to make better things than I ever could. I want them to surpass me. And when they do that, I feel like I did something great."





# INNOVATION CALLS

CTA IS ON THE LOOKOUT FOR GREAT IDEAS AND THOSE WHO PUT THEM INTO ACTION

Innovation happens every day in classrooms and schools throughout California. Educators are often compelled to make the best of what they have (or don't have), frequently with spectacular results. If you know of a colleague who is particularly inventive, enterprising and effective in their work with students, let us know at [editor@cta.org](mailto:editor@cta.org), with "Innovator" in the subject line.

Got a great idea and need help executing it? Educators can get support and funding for standout classroom and team projects through CTA Institute for Teaching (IFT). IFT awards innovation grants directly to members and local chapters. All CTA members are eligible to apply for an Educator grant (up to \$5,000) or an Impact grant (up to \$20,000). Educator grants are for individual CTA members and generally affect a single class or program at one school site. Impact grants involve a project team of two



LET'S SPARK THE LIGHT WITHIN OUR STUDENTS' MINDS

**IFT** INSTITUTE FOR TEACHING  
CTA

PREPARE TO APPLY FOR AN IFT GRANT THIS WINTER & EARLY SPRING

or more CTA members; these grants generally affect more than one class, grade level, program or school. IFT grants are funded by CTA members' voluntary contributions. To date, members have funded 453 grant projects totaling more than \$5.2 million. Applications are being accepted now; deadline is March 31, 2022. Awarded grants will be implemented in the 2022-23 school year. Find details and apply at [cta.org/ift](http://cta.org/ift).

▼ In 2019, the Stockton Unified school board passed a resolution strengthening and expanding the existing ethnic studies program. Student and educator supporters pose right after the vote; Aldrich Sabac is in the front row with glasses, and Ed Arimboanga Jr. is in the back row, second from left.



## ETHNIC STUDIES

# Trailblazers

*Stockton educators' groundbreaking program is a model for others*

By Sherry Posnick-Goodwin

**LONG BEFORE** Gov. Gavin Newsom signed groundbreaking legislation that adds a one-semester ethnic studies (ES) course to high school graduation requirements, Stockton educators were working on making ES curriculum an integral part of students' education.

The new law is especially relevant to Stockton and its students. Stockton was named "the most diverse city in the nation" by *USA News* last year. It was also described as a city "scarred by its past," linked to racial tensions and dire economic disparities.

Race and opportunity have been largely intertwined, according to the report, "with the city's people of color often faring poorly on health and economic measures despite the city

becoming majority-nonwhite more than three decades ago." Some members of the Stockton Teachers Association (STA) believe that creating a more inclusive curriculum and offering ES courses to all students are a path toward healing and encourage civic engagement and community-based social justice.

"ES allows students in Stockton to see themselves in the curriculum and to be proud of their history and culture," says Ed Arimboanga Jr., a teacher on special assignment (TOSA) overseeing the ES program at Stockton Unified School District. "It also inspires them to want to do something about the many issues and challenges we face in Stockton."



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▼ Four of the 10 principles of ethnic studies, part of a presentation on the 2021-22 scope of the ES program at Stockton Unified School District.



## A NECESSARY COMPONENT OF EDUCATION

The new legislation mandates that the ES graduation requirement will go into effect in the 2029-30 school year. High schools must begin offering ES courses as an elective by the 2025-26 school year. (See sidebar, page 35.)

Arimboanga and other STA members have made Stockton Unified a trailblazer in ES well before these deadlines. They are making a case to the school board to allocate funding for classes, additional teachers and professional development; are gathering community and student input on what will be studied; and are setting timelines on instructional goals and new course offerings.

Arimboanga and ES teacher Aldrich Sabac are part of the district's Curriculum Development Team, comprising 12 teachers, two curriculum specialists, and five community members. The team is tasked with charting a future course for ES and filling the subject's curriculum void. (California's ES model curriculum offers some resources and lessons, but an entire curriculum is currently not available.)

Ethnic studies is the study of historical and contemporary



**“ETHNIC STUDIES ALLOWS STUDENTS IN STOCKTON TO SEE THEMSELVES IN THE CURRICULUM AND TO BE PROUD OF THEIR HISTORY AND CULTURE.”**

—Ed Arimboanga Jr.,  
Stockton Teachers Association

narratives, contributions, struggles and resistance by people of color and historically marginalized communities. It includes historical and sociological analysis of how colonialism, race and racism have been (and continue to be) powerful social, cultural and political forces.

In some communities ES has been controversial, but in Stockton, ES is considered a necessary component of education.

Research shows student benefits related to ES, observes Sabac, including improved attendance and grades, higher graduation rates, growth in literacy and critical thinking skills, and the ability to engage in meaningful conversations about race.

“It also brings students together,” he says, noting that ES helps foster respect for different cultures and build community and a sense of interconnectedness.

## POSITIVE FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS, EDUCATORS

A 2020 survey of Stockton students enrolled in ES showed 92 percent had developed an increased appreciation for other cultures, 90 percent enjoyed the course, and 85 percent would

▼ Ethnic studies professional development at Stockton's Chicano Research Center, summer 2021.



recommend it to other students.

“Ethnic studies means a lot to me,” says 12th grader Mercedes San Nicolas, a student at Edison High School. “You learn about things you wouldn't normally learn about in a regular history class.”

“Ethnic studies inspired me because it makes me feel like I have a voice,” says Andrew Sajor, also an Edison 12th grader. “I'm not scared to represent who I am, especially as a Latino and Filipino.”

ES operated as an after-school program in Stockton from 2009 to 2016, primarily focused on Filipino American studies. In 2017, the district adopted a broader ES course description, and classes were held at three schools. During that year, STA members and advocates drafted a district resolution to fund the program, and succeeded in getting a TOSA hired, who happened to be Arimboanga. In 2019, a small group of teachers organized to help get a resolution passed to strengthen and expand the program.

In addition to the Curriculum Development Team, the district's ES Community Collaborative is a larger group of stakeholders who contribute their perspectives.

The team continues to seek community input — connecting with elders and community organizations from diverse groups in Stockton, including Black, Native American, Asian, Filipino and Latino residents. The team has also welcomed input from students, parents and college professors. All of these participants have made valuable suggestions for richer content and have increased buy-in for the ES program.

“Community input is a very powerful tool,” says Aldrich. “It makes sure that our curriculum is a reflection of who we are as a community and also influences how we design our professional development.”

## THE ETHNIC STUDIES MANDATE

**ON OCT. 8**, California became the first state to require all students to complete a one-semester course in ethnic studies to graduate. Assembly Bill 101 (Medina) takes effect starting with the graduating class of 2029-30, and high schools are required to offer ES courses starting in the 2025-26 academic year. Many high schools already have such courses, and a few districts have already voted to require students to take ethnic studies. (See sidebar on page 37.)

For decades, ES advocates have pushed for a curriculum that more closely reflects the history and culture of California's diverse population. Earlier legislation authorizing the creation of an ES curriculum stated it should highlight four ethnic and racial groups whose history and stories have been traditionally underrepresented: Blacks, Latinos, Native Americans and Asian Americans.

The state's Instructional Quality Commission, which oversees curriculum development, created a model curriculum that was approved by the State Board of Education in March and is optional for districts to use. It encourages discussion of the ethnic heritage and legacies of students in individual communities. It also includes lesson plans on Arab, Armenian, Jewish and Sikh Americans. Find the curriculum at [cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/esmc.asp](https://cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/esmc.asp).



▼ From a presentation on the 2021-22 scope of the ES program at Stockton Unified School District.

<b>History of Ethnic Studies in Stockton</b> <small>(What we know of)</small>	<b>1969-90s</b> Ethnic Studies in Stockton post Third World Liberation Front. Some strikers return to Stockton and create an Ethnic Studies Program at Delta College	<b>2009</b> Start of Little Manila After School Program (an Ethnic Studies based program)	<b>2015</b> Start of Little Manila After School Program at Edison High
<b>2016</b> Start of "us history" comparative Ethnic Studies after school program at Edison High	<b>2017</b> SUSD Adopts Ethnic Studies Course Description Course begins at Stagg, Franklin, & Chavez (17-18 SY)	<b>2019</b> Small group of Ethnic Studies Teacher Organizers formed Resolution 19-24 passes to strengthen Ethnic Studies in SUSD Course begins at Edison (19-20 SY)	<b>2020-Present</b> SUSD Teacher On Special Assignment Position Hired More intentional student and community involvement to improve and grow curriculum and program

**“COMMUNITY INPUT MAKES SURE THAT OUR CURRICULUM REFLECTS WHO WE ARE AS A COMMUNITY AND INFLUENCES HOW WE DESIGN OUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.”**

—Aldrich Sabac,  
Stockton Teachers Association

### BIG PLANS FOR THE ETHNIC STUDIES PROGRAM

The team is building on existing ES courses and plans on bringing the new and improved curriculum to the school board in the spring for adoption.

This year’s goals include adopting upper-division specialty ES courses; piloting dual enrollment courses between San Joaquin Delta College and high schools; collaborating with history teachers, ELD instructors and K-8 teachers to integrate ES content into different subjects and grade levels; and piloting an ES educational pathway at Edison High. The pathway, a partnership with Sacramento State University’s educational equity program and Delta College, would be an effort to “grow our own” ES educators, as a presentation on the 2021-22 scope of the district’s ES program put it.



Aldrich Sabac

Long-term goals include creating an ES department at the district level that supports K-12 staff and teachers with professional development in culturally relevant and ES-centered pedagogy and content.

“When ethnic studies is incorporated into student reading, writing and ELD skills — and also supporting students with special needs — it becomes super engaging,” says Arimboanga. “Eventually ES will be expanded to include music, art, guest speakers, multimedia, students writing about their own lives, and students going out into their community to create action research projects. Ethnic studies is a big part of wellness and social-emotional learning. We are very excited at what the future will bring.” ■

## ETHNIC STUDIES’ LONG AND WINDING ROAD

**ETHNIC STUDIES** (ES) has been taught in some California classrooms for years. The ethnic studies movement famously began in California, where students protested in the late 1960s at San Francisco State University and UC Berkeley to demand courses in African American, Chicano, Asian American and Native American studies.

Efforts to teach ethnic studies to younger students followed. In 1976, the Superintendent of Public Instruction published an analysis of curricula for “ethnic heritage programs” to help teachers incorporate ES in K-12 classrooms. As a February 2021 *Education Next* article reports, state budget constraints impeded growth of these programs for years.

Activists and educators brought the issue to the fore again in the 2010s. Teacher Jose Lara won a school board seat in the small district of El Rancho Unified, east of Los Angeles, on the promise to deliver ethnic studies as a graduation requirement. In 2014, ERUSD became the first district in California to adopt the requirement.

Lara helped found the Ethnic Studies Now Coalition, which lobbied the LAUSD school board to adopt an ES graduation mandate in 2014. The plan was overruled for financial reasons, and the district instead created a yearlong elective in 2016. Almost a third of the city’s 150 public high schools

already offered at least one related elective in fields such as Afro American history, American Indian studies, Asian literature and Mexican American studies.

In San Francisco in 2010, 10 social studies teachers launched a pilot ES curriculum in five high schools, later expanded to all 19 SFUSD high schools. In 2014, Stanford University professor Thomas Dee and a colleague began to study the impact of an ES course on 1,405 SFUSD ninth graders, who were at risk of dropping out and who had been assigned to the course.

The data showed that enrolling in the elective improved general academic performance, measured by attendance, grades and credits earned. A follow-up study, published in 2021, found that the ninth grade ethnic studies class has had a prolonged and strong positive impact on students, increasing their overall engagement in school, probability of graduating, and likelihood of enrolling in college.

The study was cited by Gov. Gavin Newsom in his support for the state’s Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. School districts, however, are not waiting for the state mandate, but setting their own, including in LA, Fresno and Riverside. And the number of districts offering ES courses has been increasing to reflect California’s demographics and history.

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# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

## Celebrating 2021's legislative victories By Julian Peoples

**DURING A DIFFICULT 2021**, CTA educators continued the fight for much-needed resources for public schools. Working together with coalition partners and community supporters, CTA helped secure record funding for public education, community schools, transitional kindergarten for children beginning at age 4, and resources to attract and retain educators, among many other critical programs. Here's a look at what we achieved in 2021.

### Early Action Budget Agreement (AB 86)

Provides \$6.6 billion in one-time funding for schools as part of "early action" by the Legislature, including \$4.6 billion in Expanded Learning Opportunity Grants for schools to provide academic and other supports, and prioritization for vaccines for school employees.

### 2021-22 Budget Agreement (AB 129, AB 130, and SB 132)

The approved 2021-22 budget has a Proposition 98 funding level of \$93.7 billion — the highest level ever.

The budget repays all deferrals to schools and community colleges, applies a 5.07 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to the Local Control Funding Formula, and provides \$1.1 billion in ongoing funding to increase staffing.

### Transitional Kindergarten

Lawmakers adopted universal TK, phasing in expanded age eligibility by two months per year from 2022-23 to full implementation in 2025-26, and expressed the intent to provide ongoing funding for the TK expansion of

approximately \$2.7 billion at full implementation.

### Community Schools

The state budget includes \$3 billion in one-time Prop. 98 funding through 2028 for districts to expand the community school model.

### Teacher Pipeline and Training

Facing a critical teacher shortage, CTA helped secure \$2.5 billion for various teacher recruitment, retention and professional development programs. AB 130, the Education

Omnibus Budget Trailer Bill, includes important provisions related to credentialing for teachers and teacher candidates. In addition to extending COVID-related testing flexibilities, it creates new options for aspiring teachers to meet the basic skills requirement and to demonstrate subject matter competence.

### Student Assessments

Thanks to CTA advocacy and overwhelming outcry and support, districts were allowed to administer standards-aligned local assessments during the 2020-21 school year, in place of the summative assessments of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress, and receive an apportionment at a rate approved by the State Board of Education.

### Health and Student Support Services

Also incorporated in the budget trailer bill are CTA-supported AB 285 (Holden) to appoint a state school nurse consultant to work with local educational agencies and school nurses to promote school nursing and school health programs; and AB 563 (Berman) to create an Office of School-Based Health Programs to improve operations and technical support for students throughout the state.

### School Nutrition

The state budget provides funding for the Universal School Meals Program, with an increase in state meal reimbursements of \$54 million in 2021-22 and \$650 million in ongoing Prop. 98 funding beginning in 2022-23, to cover the costs of offering breakfast and lunch for all students.

### Special Education

Special education funding is increased by \$396 million in ongoing Prop. 98 funding, by increasing the per-student statewide base rate; and the special education funding formula is increased by \$260 million in ongoing Prop. 98 monies to include funding for specified services for children ages 3-5.

### Charter Schools

Mandated lockdowns surrounding the pandemic made it necessary to extend the existing moratorium on the approval of new non-classroom-based charter schools by three years to Jan. 1, 2025.

### Community Colleges

The budget includes the following for California Community Colleges: a 5.07 percent COLA (or \$371.2 million in ongoing Prop. 98 funding); \$100 million in ongoing Prop. 98 funding to increase the hiring of full-time faculty; and \$90 million one-time and \$10 million ongoing Prop. 98 funding to support part-time faculty office hours.

### Ethnic Studies

CTA-co-sponsored AB 101 (Medina) requires all high school students to complete a semester of ethnic studies in order to graduate, effective in the 2029-30 school year. (See related story, page 33.)

### Teacher Credentialing

CTA-supported SB 488 (Rubio) makes substantive changes to the outdated and controversial Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) statute. CTA has worked for several years with the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) and education stakeholders to eliminate the RICA

because of its negative impact on the teaching profession and the lack of evidence it has improved reading literacy for students.

### Employee Rights

CTA-co-sponsored SB 294 (Leyva) removes the 12-year limitation for CalSTRS or CalPERS service credit earned on an employer-approved compensated leave such as union work. CTA-co-sponsored AB 438 (Reyes) makes the required advance notice of layoffs for classified staff equal to that of certificated personnel and administrators.

### Voter Access

Thanks to CTA-supported AB 37 (Berman), the practice of sending vote-by-mail ballots to every registered voter is here to stay for future elections. The bill extends the practice, which helped prevent the spread of COVID-19 at polling sites in 2020.

### Menstrual Equity for All Act of 2021

CTA-supported AB 367 (Garcia) requires community colleges and schools serving students in grades 6-12 to stock each school's restrooms (including at least one men's restroom) with feminine hygiene products, and prohibits a public school from charging for any menstrual products provided to pupils.

*The Legislature is in recess until Jan. 3, 2022, when the second year of the 2021-22 legislative session will commence.*



# Fresno Educators File Grievances

## Loss of prep time, forced subbing among contract violations

By Julian Peeples

**IN RESPONSE TO** increased job demands that have only gotten worse during the pandemic, Fresno Teachers Association (FTA) filed three grievances against Fresno Unified School District in October for violating its contract with educators.

The grievances assert the district violated educators' eight-hour workday, failed to provide contractually guaranteed prep time, and forced teachers on special assignment (TOSAs) to act as perpetual substitutes.

FTA President Manuel Bonilla said that the district is still adhering to old practices and expectations for educators during a time of added stress, less prep time, and new health protocols in the classroom. "It just feels like a compliance-based system as opposed to a system that trusts the expertise of its educators," he told *PBS NewsHour* in November.

He said the working conditions are taking a toll on Fresno educators, with 67 percent saying they have considered stress leave, early retirement or a career change this year, according to FTA.

"These are not only rights, but educators need this time to serve students," Bonilla said in the *Fresno Bee*. "We have so many people that are at the brink, and this is not good for the school system."

FTA is seeking back pay for educators forced to work more than eight hours a day, the cessation of assignments that infringe on educators' prep time, and an end to the practice of using TOSAs as perpetual substitutes.

Bonilla said teachers are less concerned about an increase in pay than they are in getting adequate time to provide what educators see as quality instruction.

"Long term, we're worried that it's creating a trust crisis on top of a health crisis," Bonilla told PBS. "If the district leadership and the school board superintendent, if they're unwilling to listen, if they're unwilling to pivot to address the needs of educators in a crisis moment and probably the deepest needs educators have ever felt, what does that say to teachers? How else are they supposed to interpret that for when times are better?" ■



## Make Change CTA's New Action Center

**WHEN WE RAISE** our voice together, anything is possible. Join colleagues, partners and allies in taking action on social and education issues to make positive change. This is how we win the public education every student deserves, and move toward a more just, equitable society.

CTA's new Action Center ([cta.org/action-center](https://cta.org/action-center)) offers quick ways to get informed and add your voice on multiple issues and topics. These include:

- Current legislation — you can urge your senators to support the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, or contact your representatives to support the Public Servants Protection and Fairness Act.
- Local organizing.
- Community schools.
- Social justice.
- Hone your skills.
- Wellness.

It's easy — and a special numerical counter that keeps track of your total actions adds some fun. Check it out!

# BARGAINING ROUNDUP

Compiled by Julian Peeples

▼ APT educators with their guiding principle.



**PLEASANTON:**

## United to win resources and supports

After an adversarial year and a half of bargaining, **Association of Pleasanton Teachers** ratified an agreement with Pleasanton Unified School District in November that upholds APT's guiding principle: "Our Students Deserve the Best — Best Educators, Best Resources and Supports, Best Class Sizes and Caseloads."

"With high participation at every school site and the collective actions of our membership, we were able to secure some incredible wins for our students and members," APT President Michelle VerKuilen says.

"Our wins include contract language on class size reduction in fourth and fifth grades, preserving our duty-free lunch, recognizing elementary school counselors in our contract, obtaining ratios for our school nurses, securing a testing period for our secondary Special Education Resource Specialists, and agreeing to language around our schedules."

## **YUBA CITY:** Three-year contract

**Yuba City Teachers Association** recently negotiated a three-year settlement with their district that will result in a 7.16 percent on-schedule raise over three years. Educators had been working without a contract since 2019, the first contract since a closely watched strike in the district in 2016.

▼ TTEA strong!



**TAHOE TRUCKEE:**

## Success after one day at the table

After just a single day of negotiations in October, **Tahoe Truckee Education Association** reached a settlement that will help attract educators to an area known for its high cost of living.

The agreement includes a 5 percent wage increase retroactive to July 1, bringing the starting salary for a beginning teacher with a California teaching credential to almost \$61,000 and the top educator salary to just above \$120,000 a year. This comes on top of a 2 percent wage increase last year that also included a one-time payment of \$2,500.

"We know that students will benefit from this agreement because our district will be in a far better position to attract and retain the educators we need for success," says TTEA President Jess DeLallo.

The settlement between TTEA and the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District, a basic aid district, marks a shift from the prior year when negotiations entered impasse and the possibility of a strike loomed until mid-June.





**RAVENSWOOD:**  
*Groundbreaking agreement*

**Ravenswood Teachers Association** worked collaboratively with Ravenswood City School District to reach agreement in November on a new contract that will make RTA educators among the highest-paid in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The contract includes a more holistic and meaningful evaluation process and a 10 percent increase to teacher compensation, raising the starting salary for new teachers by 20 percent. Per the agreement, RTA's most seasoned educators could earn up to \$133,950 a year.

RTA President Ronda White praises the agreement, noting that RTA and the district "have boldly chosen to exemplify what public education leadership is by standing with and in support of its greatest resource: its educators. This contract treats educators as professionals, with salaries and step increases that reflect a professional scale. This is huge."

The new evaluation process uses state criteria and allows educators to set their own professional goals, allowing for teacher initiative, creativity and innovation. It makes it possible to confidently link bigger raises to the evaluation of teacher performance.

The new compensation system also offers the opportunity for teachers who demonstrate mastery of their skills to advance up the salary scale more rapidly.

**MARTINEZ:**  
*Wage increase to attract, retain educators*

**Martinez Education Association** won a 10 percent salary increase in an agreement reached in November with Martinez Unified School District. The agreement is intended to attract and retain quality educators to Martinez.

Other major victories include the increase of stipends by 10 percent, an increase in the hourly rate from \$40 to \$50, and the maintenance of health and welfare benefits.

**CAMPBELL:**  
*No confidence in superintendent*

**Campbell High School Teachers Association** has been holding rallies and pickets after declaring a joint impasse in September in negotiations with Campbell Union High School District over changing work conditions and salary. Educators say district management is withholding \$4,000 from the salary schedule that was previously negotiated, meaning \$450 less per monthly paycheck.

At a November school board meeting, CHSTA President Kim McCarthy informed the board that educators had taken a vote of no confidence in the district's superintendent.

"This resolution with these 380 teachers' signatures is the result of a failure to listen and a failure to lead," McCarthy said.

The district has an all-time high of \$48 million in reserves, which CHSTA asserts should be spent on the district's stated goal of educator attraction and retention.

**Vouchers Set Students and Schools Back**

By **Lisa Gardiner**

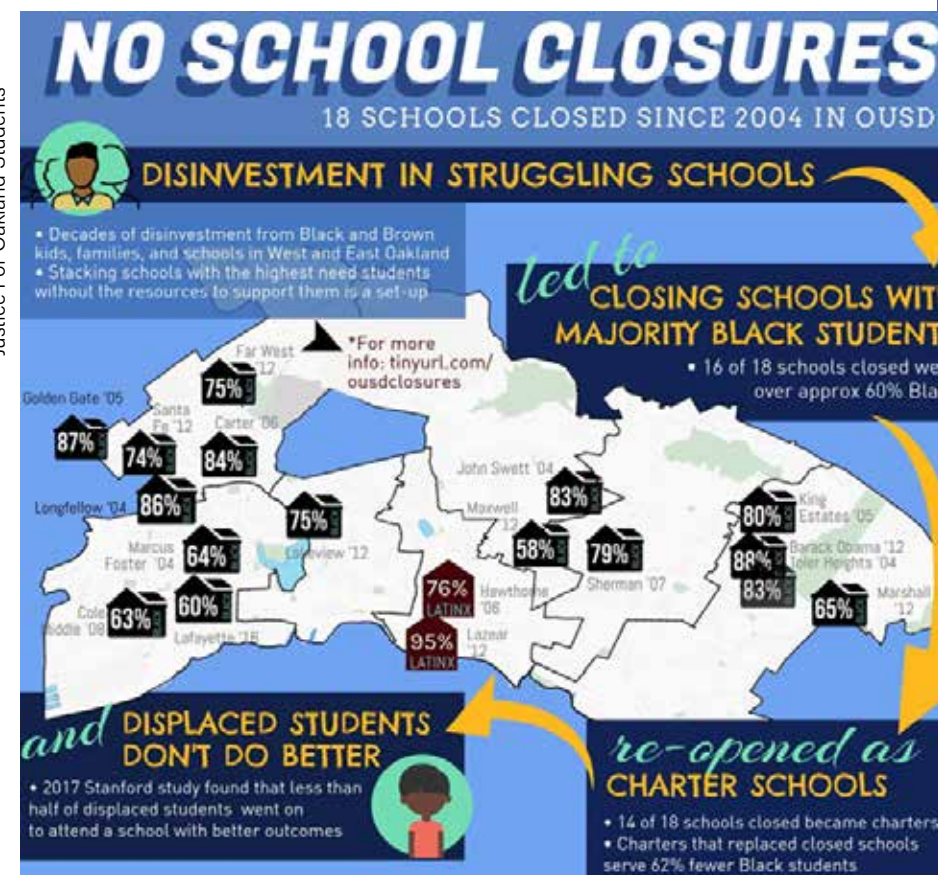
**TWICE IN THE** past 30 years, California voters have overwhelmingly rejected school voucher initiatives. Despite this, California voters may once again be asked to vote on school vouchers in 2022. Although CTA does not take a position on initiatives until they have qualified for the ballot, misinformation about vouchers has already begun surfacing. Here are some facts, based on research:

- **Vouchers reduce funding for neighborhood schools, meaning fewer textbooks, teachers and more overcrowded classrooms.** They also do not live up to their hype. In California, the vouchers currently proposed for \$14,000 would not cover the full cost of attending a private school, with one analysis showing the average cost of private school tuition currently at \$15,333, and \$20,876 for high schools. Costs for technology, books and other expenses can raise the bill for private school up to 30 percent higher.
- **Voucher programs are associated with reduced educational outcomes.** Studies of voucher programs in Indiana, Louisiana, Ohio and Washington, D.C., have found that vouchers reduce student test scores, especially in math. A 2018 analysis by the Center for American Progress concluded that the impact of families using public tax dollars to attend private schools is equivalent to missing out on more than 68 days of classroom learning.
- **Voucher programs do not work for students in rural areas.** Most rural and suburban areas do not include enough participating schools for vouchers to be a viable alternative.
- **Voucher programs have their roots in discrimination and continue to foster it.** The first private school voucher programs arose in the Jim Crow-era South in the 1950s to perpetuate school segregation. Private schools that participate in voucher programs often don't reflect the demographics of their surrounding communities. Unlike public schools, private and religious schools can and do discriminate when deciding whom to admit to their schools.

*New Section*

"This is an educator-community partnership deliberately done through a racial justice lens."

—**Kampala Taiz-Rancifer**,  
Oakland Education Association



Justice For Oakland Students

**ORGANIZING FOR EQUITY IN OAKLAND SCHOOLS**

**Reparations for Black students address impacts of systemic anti-Black racism** By **Julian Peoples**

**A COMMUNITY-ORGANIZED EFFORT** to undo the impacts of decades of systemic anti-Black racism in Oakland public schools led to the adoption of a resolution by the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) Board of Education earlier this year that will prioritize investment in Black communities.

The Reparations for Black Students Resolution directs OUSD to take all steps necessary to eliminate the Black student opportunity gap across district schools by 2026 and implement a series of initiatives to ensure Black students get what they need to feel safe, healthy and supported to succeed.

"Reparations for Black Students is our model of community schools, targeted at Black students," says Kampala Taiz-Rancifer, a member of Oakland Education Association (OEA). "This is an educator-community partnership deliberately done through a racial justice lens."

The movement grew out of a series of listening sessions led by

the Justice for Oakland Students Coalition that revealed many community members felt invisible and unimportant to the school district, and exposed an "enormous amount of anti-Black racism." The issues that surfaced during these meetings became the foundation for a list of demands by a community group organized by Taiz-Rancifer, OEA President Keith Brown, Oakland-based Black Organizing Project, and the Bay Area Parent Leadership Action Network. (See sidebar.) Raising the profile of educational issues important to the Black community, the group helped build a coalition of Black organizations to fight for policy change.

The Reparations movement was a priority for OEA, with a wide range of the local's 3,000 members taking active roles in elevating the demands for the public education all Oakland students deserve. What resulted was a community-led and educator-supported movement that took only eight months

**"Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) students have traditionally received very little support, which has created unequal results."**

—**VanCedric Williams**,  
OUSD Board of Education





to get from issuing the demands to the school board's approval of all but one.

"Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) students have traditionally received very little support, which has created unequal results," says VanCedric Williams, OUSD Board of Education member. "This resolution says enough is enough and reverses our policies toward our BIPOC students so they feel healthy and supported, and they succeed."

Williams says the groundwork for this movement was built during OEA's 2019 strike, when educators, families and community groups united to fight for the schools and resources Oakland students deserve. Utilizing these networks, educators put forth community-driven policies, speaking out for families and their needs.

"OEA's efforts pushed us over the top," says Williams, who is also a teacher in San Francisco and member of United Educators of San Francisco. "There's this belief in just, fair and equitable education that overrides the narrative pushed by the district."

Taiz-Rancifer says OEA members feel very strongly about the work for equity in Oakland schools. "People see the disparities. It becomes very personalized because we are connected to our communities and our families."

The only demand not approved by the school board in March was the ending of school closures and charter co-locations at schools with high populations of Black and brown students — a huge piece of the Reparations movement. Unbowed, educators and the community continued organizing over the summer, bringing a resolution to the school board in September that would have set a moratorium on school closures. The proposal narrowly failed, and educators now look at the coming contract bargaining and 2022 school board elections for ways to make progress on this important item.

"The community has been devastated by these closures of historically majority Black schools," Williams says. ■

## REPARATIONS DEMANDS

**THE FOLLOWING DEMANDS** were considered by the Oakland Unified School District Board of Education in March. The board approved all but one, noted below, in the Reparations for Black Students Resolution.

### Stop and Repair the Immediate Harm

- Design a community-informed plan for a safe and healthy return to school prioritizing Black students and their families as the hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Commit to closing the Black digital divide that disproportionately limits access to information and resources to Black families.
- End discriminatory discipline practices and disproportionate expulsions and suspensions of Black students.
- Stop school closures and co-locations of charter schools at in-district schools — especially at schools with high percentages of Black students. (*This was not approved.*)
- Stop using the current anti-Black equity formula that unfairly makes cuts to schools with high percentages of Black students.

### Invest in Reparations for Black Students and Families

- Establish a Black Thriving Fund that brings targeted resources and opportunities to secure a just and equitable education for Black students.
- Create a real racial equity formula that includes all historical and current factors impacting Black communities.
- Adopt a Black Thriving Index to set goals, outcomes and indicators for the district and schools to be held accountable and measure progress toward Black thriving.
- Establish a Black Student and Families Thriving Task Force that represents the voices of Black students, parents, families and

communities, and has the power to monitor the implementation of targeted plans and resources for Black thriving.

### Transform Community Schools to Center Black Students

- Invest in Black Family Engagement by increasing opportunities to participate in decision-making at the school and district levels.
- Ensure that Black students are ready for college and career by providing resources to receive career training and complete "a-g" requirements.
- Dramatically increase the literacy rates of Black students across all grades by creating a citywide literacy campaign for Black students.
- Prioritize resources for Black academic growth and achievement by assessing how the district uses funds to address the academic and social-emotional needs of Black students across various designations.
- Prioritize resources (facilities bond monies) by funding a hub to ensure that Black students in alternative education classes, programs and schools can thrive.
- Prioritize resources to create anti-racist cultures of belonging and increase the cultural competence of our educators, staff and their school communities to center Black thriving.
- Resource and ensure that all Black families have access to pre-kindergarten early education, including resources and services that support early family engagement.
- Provide professional advocacy services to Black families who have children with IEPs.
- Recruit and retain Black teachers and Black school leaders by meaningfully supporting and investing in them.

Indieflix Education



## Building Resilience

### New program offers students mental health supports

**IN OCTOBER**, state Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond announced *Angst: Building Resilience*, a film-based youth mental health support program available in Spanish and English at no cost to all public and charter middle and high schools in California through June 30, 2022.

The 75-minute program includes a 43-minute film that highlights the pervasive anxiety among our children and youth, discussion guides, classroom activities, and homework assignments to foster discussion with parents and caregivers.

"With [students'] mental health needs at an all-time high, our goal is for California schools to have robust and historic levels of mental health programming to provide critical support to students and families," said Thurmond in announcing the initiative. "*Angst* and its accompanying easy-to-use curriculum will help elevate the voices of students who are living with emotional distress so they will feel heard, validated and supported."

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented many challenges to students, educators and parents. Children already coping with mental health conditions have been especially vulnerable to the changes. Experts are now examining the broad impacts on students as a result of school closures, physical distancing guidelines and isolation, among other changes to their lives.

The goal of *Angst*, a partnership of the California Department of Education (CDE), iNDIEFLIX Education, the Department of Health Care Services' CalHOPE program, and Blue Shield of California's BlueSky initiative, is to raise awareness, connect students with support, and provide hope and coping strategies. The program offers resources and exercises to help youth build resilience and emotional well-being, and equips educators with tools to support students.

For details, including how to view *Angst* and bring a screening to your school, go to [indieflix.com/california](http://indieflix.com/california).

*"This will help elevate the voices of students who are living with emotional distress so they will feel heard, validated and supported."*

—Tony Thurmond, state superintendent of public instruction



### Survey: SEL as Important as Academics

With the pandemic, the role of school counselors in identifying and addressing students' social and emotional needs has become even more critical. A new survey, "School Counselors' Perspectives on the Social and Emotional Development of Students," finds a growing consensus among educators and administrators that K-12 students' social-emotional skill development may be nearly as important as cognitive ability for education and workplace success. The report, from ACT and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), was released in November.

The findings are no surprise to high school counselor Josh Godinez, president of the California Association of School Counselors and Corona-Norco Teachers Association member.

"Social-emotional learning goes hand in hand with academic success," he says. "Anxiety, stress, depression and other challenges have always been there, and the more that we incorporate SEL strategies and normalize conversations around how to overcome them within our classrooms and our schools, the more we empower students with strategies of success for life."

For the full report, go to [bit.ly/3FHto6v](http://bit.ly/3FHto6v). And remember your school counselors during **National School Counseling Week**, Feb. 7-11, 2022! Visit [schoolcounselor.org](http://schoolcounselor.org) for ways to recognize and celebrate.

# New Support for Educators and Educators-To-Be

*Four programs aim to expand, diversify the workforce*

**FOUR INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS** are poised to expand and diversify the educator workforce and bring more talented and prepared teachers to California's high-needs schools.

This summer, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed AB 130, which allocates approximately \$3 billion to educator preparation, training and recruitment programs. This tremendous investment in educators and educators-to-be speaks to the current situation: a pandemic that has exacerbated the already-severe teacher shortage in our state and across the nation. Expanding and diversifying our workforce of teachers and incentivizing experienced teachers to teach in high-needs schools and fields are critical strategies to increase the number of educators in the state.

The new opportunities:

## 1 Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program

This program offers up to \$24,000 over five years to classified employees, such as tutors, administrative assistants, paraprofessionals, bus drivers and custodial staff, to earn teaching credentials and continue serving their school districts as teachers.

**The Classified Employee Teacher Credentialing Program**

**What is unique about this program?**  
Candidates can earn a grant of up to \$24,000 over five years to cover tuition, textbooks, and exam fees associated with becoming a teacher.

**Is this program for me?**  
If you are a classified school employee, such as a paraprofessional, tutor, custodian, or administrative assistant, and interested in becoming a teacher, then YES!

**What is my commitment?**  
To be eligible to apply, complete an AA or a BA and hold a position in a school district that hosts the program.  
To earn a credential, complete a BA and commit to teach in your district for each year of financial assistance received.

**How can I apply and learn more?**  
Reach out to your school district's human resources or retention office and submit an application!

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MAKING RIGHTS REAL

## 3 Golden State Teacher Grant Program

This grant offers up to \$20,000 to education students currently enrolled in a professional teacher preparation program in high-needs fields such as special education, multiple-subject teaching instruction, transitional kindergarten, bilingual education, and STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics, plus computer science and other areas). Grants cover teacher internships and teacher residency programs. Upon completing their programs, teachers commit to teaching at a California priority school for four years. (Note: "STEM" is the language used in the program description.) For details, visit the California Student Aid Commission.

## 2 National Board Certification Incentive Grant

This program offers eligible teachers \$2,500 to initiate the highly regarded National Board Certification process for teaching excellence, and a \$5,000 annual stipend for each year of their five-year commitment to teach in high-priority schools.

**National Board Certification Incentive Grant**

**Why should I apply?**

- Board Certified teachers are more likely to stay in the profession and have a higher impact on student performance.
- Teachers who initiate the certification process are eligible for a \$2500 grant and will receive a \$5000 annual stipend during their five-year commitment.

**Is this program for me?**  
If you hold a BA, have completed three years of teaching or counseling, and have a valid state teaching or counseling license, then YES!

**What is my commitment?**

- Eligible teachers have three years to complete National Board Assessments.
- After board certification, teachers commit to teach in high-need schools for five years.

**Where can I learn more?**

- Check the [NBPTS website](#) for information about the candidate certification process.
- Check the [California Department of Education](#) to see if your district has a local support group.

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MAKING RIGHTS REAL

## 4 Teacher Residency Grant Program

This program offers candidates the opportunity to participate in yearlong residencies, learn from a mentor teacher, and earn up to \$25,000 to cover their program costs. Residents apprentice alongside an expert teacher in a high-needs classroom for a full academic year. They take closely linked coursework from a partnering university that leads to a credential and a master's degree at the end of the residency year. They receive living stipends and tuition support. In exchange, they commit to teaching in the district for three to five years beyond the residency. This model fosters tight partnerships between local school districts and teacher preparation programs. Residencies recruit teachers to meet district needs, usually in shortage fields, and rigorously prepare them and keep them in the district. For details, visit the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Research from the Learning Policy Institute (LPI) shows that increasing teacher diversity has many positive academic and social-emotional benefits for students of color. Outcomes include increased reading and math scores, improved graduation rates, and less chronic absenteeism. According to LPI, "Teacher diversity may also benefit teachers of color who experience feelings of isolation, frustration and fatigue when there are few other teachers of color in their schools. Increasing teacher diversity may improve satisfaction for teachers of color and decrease turnover, a key contributor to teacher shortages and school instability."

However, teachers of color face several systemic barriers to recruitment and retention that have been exacerbated by the pandemic, including insufficient access to funding to pay for tuition and housing while earning their credentials, lack of adequate preparation and mentoring, and disparate pass rates of licensure exams. This is even more troubling since research shows that underprepared and undersupported teachers leave the profession at a rate that is two to three

times higher than fully prepared and supported teachers.

Fortunately, this year's state budget could prove to be a game-changer for teacher candidates, as it offers them coursework alternatives to standardized basic skills, subject-matter competency and reading instruction tests. (The nonprofit Public Advocates has been pushing for decades for such reasonable alternatives to what can often be racially and culturally biased standardized teacher tests.)

Investments in residencies and other sustainable and high-retention pathways such as those made this year can also mitigate barriers to access and pave the way for the strong, diverse and stable workforce that California needs. High-quality teacher residencies can prepare effective teachers who stay in the profession, helping to reduce high rates of teacher turnover and end the revolving door of educators in the highest-need schools. In addition, residencies, when adequately funded, often provide financially feasible pathways for candidates and are more likely to recruit teachers of color than other pathways into teaching.

*Adapted from an article by Public Advocates Inc. and The California Teacher Residency Lab.*





# HOW TO COUNTER LEARNED HELPLESSNESS

*For students who have internalized a message that they're destined to fail, promoting realistic optimism can be game-changing* By **GINNA GUIANG-MYERS**

**EDUCATORS HAVE LONG** advocated for reframing “failure” positively as a “learning opportunity,” but when failure becomes so normal and expected in a student’s life that it causes abject resignation, it leads to learned helplessness. Learned helplessness is a psychological condition associated with feelings of lost control, and it creates students who disengage from effort, even if the effort is within reach and will clearly lead to success.

This phenomenon develops early, so it’s critical that elementary educators have an understanding and awareness of the condition. Educators of older students also should be knowledgeable about learned helplessness, since it has a detrimental influence on academic performance

*“Where there is hope and optimism, there is the belief that students’ efforts are all worthwhile.”*

and mental well-being, as demonstrated in a 2007 video ([tinyurl.com/pennstateerie](https://tinyurl.com/pennstateerie)) of an experiment that shows college-age adults giving up on a classroom task in just 10 to 15 minutes.

## Learned helplessness in the classroom

Learned helplessness often starts early in a child’s life, through unresponsive caregivers (with institutionalized children, for example). Schools may exacerbate this condition, through untrustworthy adults or practices that perpetuate a pessimistic mindset that feeds into the cycle of learned helplessness.

These school- and classroom-based practices may come from good intentions, such as over-scaffolding (not allowing

*“One strategy is to place sticky notes around the teacher workspace with reminders like these: ‘Emphasize effort,’ ‘Praise diligence,’ and ‘Normalize failure!’”*

students the opportunity to at least try to work on a problem, by providing help to the point of almost doing the work for the child), that nonetheless can lead to the condition.

Examples of how learned helplessness may manifest in the classroom include the following:

- Refusal to accept help, even if the teacher repeatedly offers it.
- Frustration leading to easily giving up.
- Disengagement from effort.
- Lack of motivation.
- Diminished self-worth and self-efficacy (such as providing a myriad of reasons why solutions will not work).

It’s critical to examine what messages students receive from failure — how do children explain failure, and do educators perpetuate this explanation? For example, how does a teacher react when a student makes an error? Is the classroom an environment where teachers not only expect errors but also celebrate mistakes as opportunities to learn? If students internalize the message that failure is permanent, pervasive, and personal, learned helplessness may likely result.

## How to manage learned helplessness

Teachers can address learned helplessness from an equity lens: Students who are struggling, and have been struggling for a long time and given up, deserve more attention. Yet most of the strategies that target learned helplessness will actually help all students. There are a few things you can do.

- **Examine your grading practices:** Do you believe that handing out zeros motivates students? If so, it may be time to rethink that practice. No student has ever been motivated by a zero. Another policy to examine is redo’s and retakes. Not allowing for opportunities to try again may be sending the message that a failure is final and permanent.
- **Normalize and celebrate failure:** Have you tried My Favorite No as a strategy? This approach teaches that without failure, we don’t learn. Teachers can also model how to appropriately respond to failure and share stories of famous scientists and inventors who successfully reframed failure as opportunities to learn and discover. The stories of Marie Curie, Thomas Edison, and 15-year-old Jake Andraka are useful narratives about the value of failure and resilience.

- **Praise and encourage the effort, not the perceived intrinsic ability of the student:** “I can tell how much effort that took — congratulations!” instead of “You’re really brilliant at math.” This is important because it reframes success as the result of effort, not because of an already existing, intrinsic ability. Examine your language. Hang posters in your room that emphasize effort over perceived ability, and reference them constantly when teaching and providing feedback. Another strategy is to place sticky notes around the teacher workspace with reminders like these: “Emphasize effort,” “Praise diligence,” and “Normalize failure!”
- **Model an optimistic mindset:** Grab every opportunity to show that academic failure isn’t personal, pervasive or permanent. Failure isn’t forever. Model how to appropriately cope with failure by using it as a launch-off point for learning. Ever caught yourself teaching something erroneous or making a mistake? Well, what a great opportunity to recognize the error, perhaps laugh at it, and celebrate it by declaring, “Now that we know what method does not work, let’s explore effective ones!”
- **Work with students to set bite-size goals, and celebrate in a big way when they achieve each goal:** With a big project, have a checklist that empowers students to start small and see progress at each step. Provide a collection of accessible resources (e.g., visual dictionary, caring adults, websites, a peer coach) for students as they are working on their goals.

## Learned optimism

The antidote to learned helplessness is realistic optimism. If children can learn helplessness, they can learn realistic optimism. It’s critical that students (and the teachers who care for them) adopt a mindset that fosters hope, gratitude, and resilience. From an equity lens, those who lack access to resources also often lack the optimistic belief that success is attainable. Where there is hope and optimism, there is the belief that students’ efforts are all worthwhile.

*This story originally appeared on [edutopia.org](https://www.edutopia.org).*





Kelly Sikkema/Unsplash

# 3

## Tech Tools to Bolster Literacy

These simple tools can be used in or outside of the classroom

By Megan Allen

**THE FIRST TIME** I witnessed remote learning to teach reading was in a second grade classroom. As I walked into the room, I saw a student in front of a computer, headphones on, talking and laughing.

The teacher explained, "She's Skyping with my mother, who is a retired teacher in Texas. My mother hosts a daily word workstation in my class over Skype."

My jaw dropped. This was 2012, long before Zoom was commonplace in our public schools. But it broke down a mental barrier for me with teaching reading, leading to deeper thinking around how we can use technology to help kids learn in authentic and meaningful ways.

I now lead a team of certified teachers who work both in our physical space and over Zoom. Here are some of the ways they use tech to teach reading:

- 1. THE RECORDING FUNCTION ON A TABLET OR SMARTPHONE.** Sometimes the best tools are the ones right in front of us. I have found this piece of technology useful in both virtual and face-to-face teaching, using it for audio-journaling, for peer and teacher feedback, and as a way for students to reflect on their own reading fluency.

  - **Audio-journal:** Sometimes the physical act of writing can impede a student's ability to share their brilliance with an audience or even just get ideas down on paper. Using the audio-recording function offers students a way to record their thinking with fewer barriers. They can brainstorm writing ideas, record reflections on their latest read, or spin a tall tale inspired by the spider they saw on the way to lunch.
  - **Feedback:** The recording function can give a fresh update to student feedback or let students give feedback to peers. For example,



◀ Pixar Shorts serve as high-interest comprehension activities that promote great student participation.

can use Google Slides to not only host their virtual reading lessons but also record notes and embed photos from the sessions, allowing the slide deck to also serve as a record of past learning and as a reflection tool for the reading student.

Some of my current favorite digital tools for reading instruction are Epic's digital library (free for educators), Flipgrid's easy-to-use short video recordings (for feedback, fluency practice, reader's theater, etc.), and Zoom's annotation tools that allow for immediate interactions (game playing, problem-solving, interactive writing, etc.).

Teachers can also purposefully weave in social and emotional learning, including a slide in every reading lesson that teaches students how to manage their feelings, regulate their emotions, and build life skills. SEL not only supports students but also allows them to access grade-level reading content by being prepared to learn and navigate challenging endeavors. See examples at [tinyurl.com/SELGoogle](https://tinyurl.com/SELGoogle).



▲ With Google Slides, teachers can weave in social-emotional learning with a slide in every reading lesson that teaches students how to manage feelings, regulate emotions, and build life skills.

**3. PIXAR SHORTS.** Pixar Shorts ([pixar.com/theatrical-shorts](https://pixar.com/theatrical-shorts)) are brief, wordless movies. They serve as perfect high-interest

comprehension activities that promote a wild amount of participation. In a span of about 15 minutes, you can have students utilizing multiple comprehension strategies like making inferences and predictions, discussing story elements, thinking critically about character feelings, or looking at the cause-and-effect relationships throughout.

These movies rely heavily on our ability to interpret and make sense of the visual information we are given. When we combine new information with our prior background knowledge, we are actively making inferences. This is such an important comprehension skill to learn as students begin to tackle more complex texts, but it is not an easy skill to teach. As students watch these films, they are making countless inferences to interpret the visual clues provided by the director.

Pixar Shorts can be used during in-person teaching as well as remote learning. You can press pause and ask students a wide variety of comprehension questions. These questions may flow naturally for an experienced teacher who has used this tool before, but you can always prepare a lesson ahead of time by predetermining stopping points with purposeful questions.

students can exchange writing with peers, record feedback, and then insert the recording right in a Google Doc. By using the Voice Comments app in Google Docs, you can leave auditory feedback almost quicker than you can type (saving you time as a teacher).

- **Reflection:** Have students record their own reading to improve their fluency. I'd have my students read a short passage on Monday while recording on the iPod, then listen to it with a fluency rubric in hand. They would then set a goal using the rubric during a peer conference, committing to practice the passage for the week with the goal in mind. On Friday, they would record their reading again, listen to it with the rubric in hand, and reflect on their growth. Best part? I could send the recording to their parents by text or email.

**2. GOOGLE SLIDES.** Google Slides ([google.com/slides/about](https://google.com/slides/about)) enable educators to watch students engage in active learning while providing them with on-the-spot feedback. Teachers

Mary Phillips and Christina Webster contributed to this report. This story originally appeared on [edutopia.org](https://edutopia.org).



# STATE HONORS TEACHERS OF THE YEAR



*All five educators are CTA members*

By **Julian Peebles**

**FIVE EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATORS** were honored in October as the 2022 California Teachers of the Year for going above and beyond during one of the most challenging times in our nation's history.

Announced by state Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond, these educators are ambassadors for the profession and serve as representatives of the state for the calendar year.

"In what may be the toughest time ever for California families, students and educators, these five innovative and caring teachers have made profound differences in the lives of their students and communities," Thurmond says. "I'm proud that these educators are receiving this prestigious honor for their continued effort to connect with students even during unimaginable circumstances, to address their needs, and support them in any way they can."

Meet the 2022 California Teachers of the Year.



**ALONDRA DIAZ**, a third grade general education and dual immersion teacher at Ralph A. Gates Elementary School in Saddleback Valley Unified School District. Diaz is a member of Saddleback Valley Educators Association. Diaz was also selected by Thurmond to be California's representative for the National Teacher of the Year competition. The 2022 National Teacher of the Year will be announced in the spring.



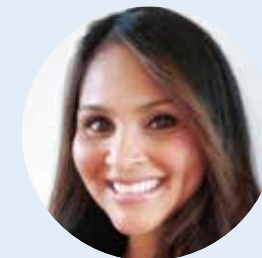
**NICHI AVINA**, a middle school science teacher at Cielo Vista Charter School in Palm Springs Unified School District. Avina is a member of Palm Springs Teachers Association.

Presented by California Casualty and supported by the California Teachers of the Year Foundation, the California Teachers of the Year Program began in 1972 to honor outstanding teachers and encourage and inspire new teachers to enter the profession.

CTA President E. Toby Boyd thanks the winners for their inspiring dedication.

"During a pandemic that has challenged teachers everywhere, these educators have gone above and beyond and made an extraordinary difference in the lives of their students," he says. "We congratulate them for receiving this prestigious honor and for being recognized for their excellent teaching, innovation, creativity, and ability to connect with students. You do our profession proud."

For more information about the California Teachers of the Year program, go to [cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/ct](https://cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/ct).



**SOVANTEVY LONG-LATTERI**, a special education teacher at La Sierra High School in Fullerton Joint Union High School District. Long-Latteri is a member of Fullerton Secondary Teachers Organization.



**TIFFANY JOKERST**, a high school mathematics and engineering teacher at West Hills High School in Grossmont Union High School District. Jokerst is a member of Grossmont Education Association.



**VIRGINIA VASQUEZ**, an AP Language and Composition teacher at San Gabriel High School in Alhambra Unified School District. Vasquez is a member of Alhambra Teachers Association.



## *New Science Center Named for Member*

**IN DECEMBER**, College of the Canyons (COC) held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Don Takeda Science Center, named in honor of longtime biology instructor Don Takeda, who retired in 2017.

Takeda is the longest-serving full-time faculty member, having taught at COC for 46 years. Several colleagues had the idea to honor him, and with the help of College of the Canyons Faculty Association (COCFA), the initiative became reality.

Located at the Canyon Country campus, the 55,000-square-foot building is primarily devoted to the physical and biological sciences and serves as a focal point for students and visitors.

Takeda was recognized in person by the Santa Clarita Community College District with a resolution commending his significant contributions to the biological sciences during his teaching career at COC. He also received recognition from local legislators.

"I am just incredibly honored that this has happened," said Takeda in a COC statement. "It is a testament to the leadership of this district to honor faculty members. When I get this kind of tribute, it is reflective of all the other faculty members, past to the present, because that is what makes the institution so great. This institution is a gem in the Santa Clarita Valley."

COCFA members applauded their former member, now a CTA/NEA-Retired member, on social media: "Congratulations, Don Takeda! Thank you for blazing the trail for fellow faculty and students."



# Council to Consider Bylaw Change

This bylaw amendment is being proposed to clarify requirements for Community College Association membership and payment of dues.

## 2021-2022 Proposed CTA Bylaw Amendment

### Provisos/Transition:

1. For State Council review, debate and possible modification at the October 2021 State Council meeting; and final consideration by written ballot at the January 2022 meeting.
2. Amendment to be effective upon adoption.

### Legend:

Additions are underlined.

Deletions are ~~struck through~~.

Unaffected and unchanged text is denoted by asterisks (\*\*\*)

Approved by CTA Board 10/2021

### ARTICLE III — MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. Categories of Membership. \*\*\*

SECTION 2. General Requisites. Members in good standing must be current in dues payments, meet requirements specified for their category of membership, and meet the following qualifications: (Amended January 1998; February 2001)

- a. \*\*\*
- b. \*\*\*
- c. \*\*\*

d. Anyone admitted to any category of membership in the Association must also become a member through the payment of dues ~~both in~~ of the chapter serving the area or level in which they are actively employed, and of the National Education Association, and, if applicable, the Community College Association. (Amended January 1998)

e. \*\*\*

\*\*\*

### ARTICLE X — CHAPTERS (LOCALS)

SECTION 1. Definition of Chapter (Local). \*\*\*

SECTION 2. Purposes of Chapters (Locals). \*\*\*

SECTION 3. Unified Dues Requirement. A chapter of the Association shall require that anyone admitted to Active membership in the chapter must also become a member of the Association and of the National Education Association through payment of membership dues. A chapter representing community college employees shall also require its members to join and pay membership dues to the Community College Association. The chapter shall be responsible for payment and transmittal of dues to the Association on a timely basis. (Adopted May 1975; Amended January 1998)

SECTION 4. Rights of Active Members in Chapters (Locals). \*\*\*

SECTION 5. Protection of Chapter (Local) Integrity. \*\*\*

SECTION 6. Rules Governing Chapters (Locals). \*\*\*

SECTION 7. Restrictions upon Merger. \*\*\*

# Eligible for the EITC?

*The Earned Income Tax Credit can put money in your pocket*

**THE EXPANDED** California Earned Income Tax Credit (CalEITC), the Young Child Tax Credit and the federal EITC can combine to put hundreds or even thousands of extra dollars in your pocket. That's money you can use for rent, school tuition, utilities, groceries and other essentials.

If you have low income and work, you may qualify for CalEITC. This credit gives you a refund or reduces your tax owed. If you qualify for CalEITC *and* have a child under age 6, you may also qualify for the Young Child Tax Credit.

Filing your state tax return is required to claim both credits.

You may qualify for CalEITC if:

- You're at least 18 years old or have a qualifying child.
- You have earned income within certain limits.

The amount of CalEITC you get depends on income and family size. You must:

- Have taxable earned income.
- Have a valid social security number or individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN) for you, your spouse, and any qualifying children.
- Not use "married/RDP filing separate" if married.
- Live in California for more than half the year.

Earned income can be from:

- W-2 wages.
- Self-employment.
- Salaries, tips.
- Other employee wages subject to California withholding.

For information about CalEITC and the Young Child Tax Credit (including a calculator to determine what you would receive), go to [bit.ly/3cZ8dQX](https://bit.ly/3cZ8dQX). For information about the federal Earned Income Tax Credit, go to [irs.gov/eitc](https://irs.gov/eitc).

# EDUCATORS

## Create Your Professional Growth Path

CHOOSE FROM HUNDREDS OF CONVENIENT COURSES OFFERED IN VARIOUS FORMATS TO ENHANCE YOUR TEACHING SKILLS

### FEATURED COURSE

#### USD's Annual Spring/Summer Curriculum Design Course is Back!

#### Design or Revise New Curriculum with this Convenient Online Self-Paced Course

This course is designed for educators in the K-12 classroom and allows for creative planning of new curriculum or revision of existing curriculum, with the goal of making classroom improvements. Participants will choose an instructor they feel best fits their subject matter and grade level. Participants coursework plans can include the introduction of new materials, designing new lessons, implementing new resources, converting curriculum to online/remote modality, revising current curriculum or implementing a new strategy. After instructor approval of the coursework plan, participants will receive instructor feedback as they move through the course.

#### CHOOSE A UNIT OPTION:

**EDU-X761P6 | Action Planning For Classroom Improvements | 6 units**  
Enrollment open Jan 14 through Jun 27

**EDU-X761P4 | Action Planning For Classroom Improvements | 4 units**  
Enrollment open Jan 14 through Jul 11

**EDU-X761P2 | Action Planning For Classroom Improvements | 2 unit**  
Enrollment open Jan 14 through Jul 18

Course launches Mar 7, 2022 and completed course work must be submitted no later than Aug 29, 2022.

The course is taught in a flexible and convenient Online Self-Paced format \*with set start and end dates, and available in various unit options (6, 4, or 2 units).

### VARIOUS FORMATS

#### Independent Study:

These courses offer flexibility and the ability to complete a course faster or slower than a traditional live course. Our courses deliver the same high-quality content and expert instruction as traditional, "face-to-face" courses.

#### Online Self-Paced:

Offering you the perfect blend of accessibility, convenience and flexibility for you to control your learning pace. You will use course textbooks, manuals, assignments, digital tools, and exams to learn and earn credit.

#### Online Fixed-Date:

This format offers a convenient, yet rigorous style of learning that allows you to structure your education to suit your schedule. Online courses have fixed start and finish dates, but as an online student, you will have access to your digital classroom at any time.

#### Classroom:

These courses are offered in a traditional classroom where you can connect with your instructor and classmates in a live setting. This learning environment facilitates communication on a given subject in real time, enables immediate feedback, and fosters interaction with the instructor and like-minded classmates.



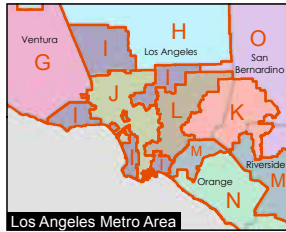
View our course offerings now!

Visit [SanDiego.edu/EducatorsPrograms](https://SanDiego.edu/EducatorsPrograms)





# CTA DIRECTORIAL DISTRICTS



ABT (O)	358.85
AGUILAR (H)	248.77
BARTELL (M)	453.12
BILEK* (G)	640.29
BONACCORSI (B)	449.86
BOYD	1,428.23
BRADFORD (N)	449.26
BUSHÉE (I)	436.97
EATON (A)	258.68
ELLIS (At-Large)	281.67
GOLDBERG	353.99
GRANADO (L)	759.74
GUPTON (E)	269.45
HOUSE†	172.56
JACO* (G)	688.36
JONES (J)	619.32
LITTMAN	601.44
MARTINEZ (K)	411.63
NORMAND (C)	100.31
PATTERSON (D)	876.92
RODRIGUEZ (P)	150.96
RUIZ (F)	728.58
SHEAFFER (Q)	534.30
TSE (At-Large)	454.56

†CTA/NEA Coordinator

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 Q (Higher Education) – Statewide  
 Two At-Large Directors – Statewide

## CTA Board Expenses

Amounts represent a monthly average for fiscal year 2020-21. During the reporting year, the normal and statewide activities include CTA Board meetings, State Council, Service Center Council meetings, Equity and Human Rights Conference, Good Teaching Conferences, various task force meetings and other business-related functions. Some differences in expenditures may be due to the widely varied geographical sizes of directorial districts, distances traveled for Regional, Service Center and other meetings, and the varied number of functions CTA Directors are responsible for attending. Expenses of Board members with partial-year service are averaged based on months served and delineated with an asterisk.

# YOU can represent CTA at NEA's convention

IT IS THE responsibility of each member wishing to run for state delegate to the 2022 NEA Convention to fill out a Declaration of Candidacy and file it by the deadline. You are encouraged to file online at [cta.org/racandidacy](http://cta.org/racandidacy). You may also use the form on the next page.

This form will not be printed in the *California Educator* in future years.

The CTA Elections Committee will begin accepting state delegates' declarations of candidacy on January 4, 2022.

Each candidate filing a declaration will receive an acknowledgment of receipt.

Actual dates and other format details are still being finalized. You can expect the Representative Assembly to be the first week in July 2022. At press time, the site of the convention has not been announced.

In keeping with CTA's commitment to minority involvement, members who are people of color are urged to become candidates.

For more information, or if your chapter has not initiated an election by March 16, 2022, contact the CTA Elections Committee at 650-552-5300, or email [RA@cta.org](mailto:RA@cta.org).

Note: The CTA Service Center Council directory can be found on the CTA website.

## DECLARATION OF CANDIDACY For State Delegate to the 2022 NEA Convention

**Deadline to submit declaration is January 28, 2022**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Cellphone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, Zip \_\_\_\_\_ CTA/NEA Member ID Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Personal email address \_\_\_\_\_ Gender  M  F  Nonbinary

I am a member of:  CTA  NEA \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

CTA Elections & Credentials Committee will begin accepting state delegate Declaration of Candidacy forms on Jan. 4, 2022.

### Category:

- NEA Active (Non-Supervisory) Member** (including Education Support Professionals)  
Send to CTA Elections, P.O. Box 921, Burlingame, CA 94011-0921, or email to [RA@cta.org](mailto:RA@cta.org)
- Higher Education CCA Member** (eligible to be in bargaining unit)  
Send to CTA Elections, P.O. Box 921, Burlingame, CA 94011-0921, or email to [RA@cta.org](mailto:RA@cta.org)
- CTA/NEA-Retired Member** (must be member of CTA/NEA-Retired)  
Send to CTA/NEA-Retired, Attn. Governance Support Dept., P.O. Box 921, Burlingame, CA 94011-0921, or email to [CTA-Retired@cta.org](mailto:CTA-Retired@cta.org)
- Student CTA** Send to Student CTA Office, CTA, P.O. Box 921, Burlingame, CA 94011-0921

### Ethnic Grouping, Other Information:

I am:  American Indian/Alaska Native  Caucasian  Hispanic  
 African American  Asian  Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

I am or plan to be a declared candidate for a local delegate position also.  
 Yes  No

If yes and you are elected to any delegate position (state, local, or both state and local), you are responsible for informing CTA (email to [RA@cta.org](mailto:RA@cta.org)) of your choice by April 8, 2022.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

Please give a brief biographical sketch of no more than 30 words. (If more words are used, the information that accompanies ballots will include only the first 30 words.) If you wish your ethnicity to be listed, this will not count as part of the 30-word limitation. Please print.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

**THIS FORM MUST BE FILED NO LATER THAN 5 p.m. on Jan. 28, 2022**, at the appropriate office listed above. Candidates are urged to return this form by certified mail in order to get a receipt and ensure compliance with the deadline. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that this document is received by the due date and time.

## Duties of delegates to NEA RA

1. Each delegate will be expected to arrive at the convention site in time to ensure registering as an official delegate to the Representative Assembly (RA) with both the California delegation and NEA.
2. Each delegate will be expected to attend all caucuses of the California delegation. Normally, the caucus begins at 7 a.m. daily. Delegates must be registered with the California delegation to participate in the caucus. Delegates are expected to remain through the convention.
3. Each delegate shall attend all business meetings of the RA.
4. Each delegate is strongly encouraged to attend NEA budget committee hearings, resolutions committee hearings, bylaw committee hearings, speeches by prominent national figures, etc.
5. Each delegate should take into consideration CTA State Council and caucus policy when voting.
6. Each delegate is encouraged to participate fully in all activities of the California delegation.
7. Each delegate — state and local — will be expected to sit with their Service Center Council delegation on the RA floor or to inform the appropriate person where they will be seated. This is to ensure communication regarding RA business and/or personal emergency information of concern to the delegate, as well as to verify attendance.

I understand that, as a state delegate, my attendance is being directly funded, at least partially, by membership dues. I accept my responsibility to carry out the above specified duties.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature \_\_\_\_\_



# CTA/NEA-Retired Officers Declaration of Candidacy



## CTA/NEA-Retired will be holding elections for the following offices:

President, Vice President, and Secretary-Treasurer of CTA/NEA-Retired

Term: 2 years, beginning June 26, 2022

Requirements: A candidate must be a member of CTA/NEA-Retired

Anyone wishing to run for office must submit a Declaration of Candidacy online beginning January 4, 2022. The deadline to submit the Declaration of Candidacy is January 28, 2022.

[www.cta.org/retired/elections](http://www.cta.org/retired/elections)

Questions — please email [CTA-Retired@cta.org](mailto:CTA-Retired@cta.org)

## Welcome to retired life!



German Rodriguez/Unsplash

*After devoting a career to public service,  
you are retiring from public education.*

*CTA/NEA-Retired wants to extend a warm welcome.*

**CTA/NEA-Retired advances the economic interests of retirees by advocating for:**

- Universal health care for all Americans
- Medicare/Affordable prescription drugs
- Preserving and improving our defined-benefit pension plans
- Repeal of the unfair offset provisions to Social Security

**Upon retiring and joining CTA/NEA-Retired, you will continue to receive the following benefits and services:**

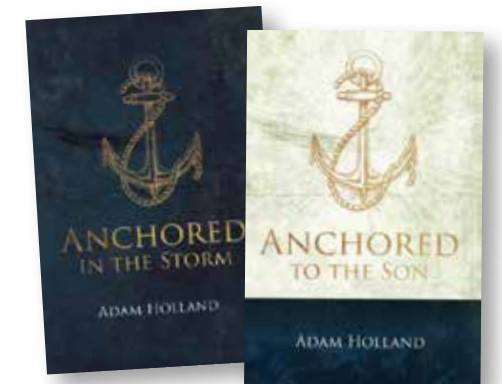
- Comprehensive insurance program
- Entertainment and travel discounts
- Million dollar liability policy when working as a substitute
- Group Legal Services Program
- Political Action/Legislative Advocacy
- Monitoring CalSTRS and CalPERS board meetings/activities

**We invite you to join CTA/NEA-Retired,**  
the only organization of retired educators affiliated with CTA and NEA.

Enroll today by going to [www.cta.org/retired](http://www.cta.org/retired)



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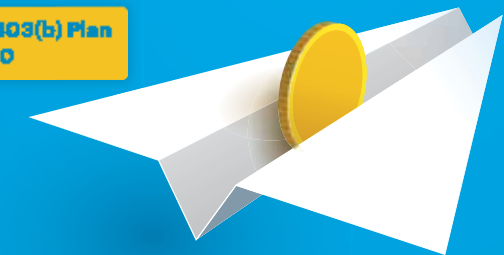
### ▶ **After the Storm**

In 2017 Adam Holland, Hart District Teachers Association, wrote a “Your Voice” column for the *Educator* about his battle with and recovery from brain cancer, and the support he received from his colleagues and students. The National Board Certified AP history teacher shared his story in *Anchored in the Storm*, describing how his Christian faith sustained him during the darkest and most difficult times in life. This year Holland published a companion book, *Anchored to the Son*, continuing the theme of how his faith brings calm and peace when life returns after a trial or suffering. On Amazon.

Got something for this section — a book, blog, album, video series or podcast? Tell us at [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.

## ENSURING A PATH TO A WONDERFUL RETIREMENT

The only CTA-Designed and CTA-Endorsed 403(b) Plan  
[enroll.ctaretirementplan.org](http://enroll.ctaretirementplan.org) | 916.235.9800



CTA VOLUNTARY  
RETIREMENT PLANS  
FOR EDUCATORS, LLC

CTA CALIFORNIA  
TEACHERS  
ASSOCIATION





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



### ◀ **Speak Out**

Always wanted to show off your dramatic skills, whether onstage or in the classroom? Prolific writer and teacher Mike Kimmel, Burbank Teachers Association, has written *Monologues for Adults*, a departure from his Young Actor Series of books with monologues and scenes for kids, tweens and teens. This book offers 60 original, family-friendly monologues addressing issues of interest to adults, including post-college jobs and careers, adult relationships with parents, siblings and co-workers, and maintaining creativity and individuality in an increasingly technological world. On Amazon.

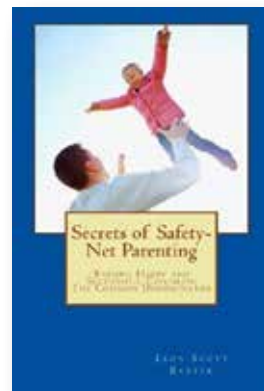
### ▶ **Kids' 20/20 Vision**

First grade teacher and first-time author Maria Thompson, Walnut Creek Teachers Association, has written *Our 20/20 Journey Back to School*. Based on Thompson's experience, the picture book is told from the children's perspective and starts during the pandemic shutdown. While students return to in-person school with joyful anticipation, they also talk about how they are feeling and the many unfamiliar changes in this new and different atmosphere. By the end of the book, the experience and discussion have opened children's eyes, and they're able to express the importance of the class being together, whether on Zoom or in the classroom, and learning as a "class family." On Amazon.



### ▶ **Secret Sauce to Parenting and Teaching**

In his 25 years in the classroom, Leon Lewandowski has seen many parenting styles, from helicopter parents to tiger moms. The Santa Barbara Teachers Association member and father of two proposed a different way in his 2014 book *Secrets of Safety-Net Parenting* (written under his pen name, Leon Scott Baxter). After looking for the common denominator to raising happy, successful children through research and interviewing parents and students, he believes he found the secret sauce. "Safety-net parents" give guidance and opportunities, and help children discover their passions and strengthen them. They let children experience life, especially failure, but are there to catch them before they crash. Lewandowski has found that he can use many of these techniques and strategies in the classroom. On Amazon.



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