

california
educator

JUNE / JULY 2022 VOLUME 26 ISSUE 6

DREAMING
IN CALIFORNIA

*Two aspiring, undocumented
educators speak out on the
immigrant struggle*

PAGE 17

SUMMER
CONFERENCES
AND TRAININGS

PAGE 9

*Preparing
the educators
of tomorrow*

PAGE 20

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS'
COLLABORATIVE PROCESS
ENSURES SUCCESS

PAGE 26



A woman with her hair in a bun and a young girl with a large afro are dancing in a living room. The woman is wearing a green and white striped long-sleeve shirt and light blue jeans. The girl is wearing a red and white plaid shirt and dark jeans. They are both smiling and have their arms outstretched. In the background, there is a wooden cabinet with a bookshelf on top filled with books. A television is mounted on the wall, and a speaker is visible on the right. The room is lit with warm, ambient light.

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VOLUME 26 ISSUE 6

Artwork by Lyra Modersbach, the Grades 5-6 winner of CTA's 2022 César E. Chávez & Dolores Huerta Education Award Program; her supporting teacher is Mayra Alvarado, Oakland Education Association. For details, see page 53.



#WeAreCTA

OUR VOICE, OUR UNION, OUR PROFESSION

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

MAGAZINE

TEACHER RESIDENCIES

It's all about relationships — and trainings centered in equity. **PAGE 20**

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Snapshots of educators building a hub. **PAGE 26**
cta.org/communityschools

'ANTI-BIAS ABC'S'

Ryan Brazil and her fourth grade students publish a book to inspire love, empathy and compassion. **PAGE 38**

WHAT IS MARKET FAILURE?

How econ teacher Breanne Wymore taps into student creativity. **PAGE 41**

DIGITAL



TRANSFORMATIONAL TECH

Webinar series offers professional development for educators, and a whole lot more. **PAGE 42** [f](https://www.youtube.com) [t](https://www.youtube.com) [i](https://www.youtube.com)
[YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

RISING TO LEAD

Educators across the state run for elected office to make direct change for students. **PAGE 50** cta.org/educator

COMMUNITY COLLEGE PARITY

Part-time instructors file lawsuit over wage violations. **PAGE 33** cta.org/educator

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CTA SUMMER INSTITUTE

Back in person with everything you need to start the new year. UCLA, July 24-28. **PAGE 9** [f](https://www.facebook.com) [t](https://www.twitter.com) [i](https://www.instagram.com)
cta.org/conferences

PRESIDENTS CONFERENCE

Prepares chapter leaders for the challenges and opportunities ahead. Burlingame, July 14-17. **PAGE 9**
cta.org/conferences

A SUMMER OF LEARNING

Expand your horizons at specialized conferences, from project-based learning to STEAM. Sign up soon! **PAGE 9**

MEMBER BENEFITS

STUDENT LOAN NEWS

Temporary waiver can help educators with public service loans — but the deadline looms. NEA, CTA have resources. **PAGE 34** [▶](https://www.youtube.com)
tinyurl.com/NEAstudentdebtnavigator

VACATION PLANS?

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CTA partners with The Standard to offer quality life insurance at group rates. [▶](https://www.youtube.com) CTAMemberBenefits.org



20

◀ Preparing the Educators of Tomorrow

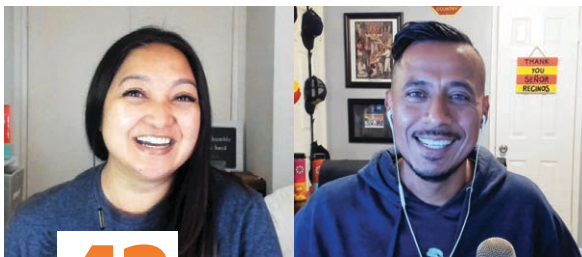
Teacher residency programs develop strong relationships and networks for those entering the profession

▶ COMMUNITY SCHOOLS EXPAND

Educators, families, partners are key to collaborative process



26



42

▶ TRAINING ON DEMAND

Webinar series thrives with help from CTA chapter and Instructional Leadership Corps

Dreaming in California

Two aspiring DACA educators speak out **PAGE 17**

DEPARTMENTS

In the Know

- 8 Calendar
- 10 News & Notes
- 12 Quotes & Numbers

Spotlight

- 13 **YOUR VOICE:** Thomas Courtney
- 14 **WORDLE:** Metaphor for learning

Advocacy

- 30 **BUDGET:** Governor's May Revise
- 32 **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:** Five bills
- 33 **LAWSUIT:** Parity for community college instructors
- 34 **STUDENT LOANS:** Big news
- 35 **BARGAINING:** Statewide roundup

Social Justice

- 38 **KIDS' BOOK:** "Anti-Bias ABC's"

Teaching & Learning

- 41 **ECON:** What is market failure?
- 44 **MEDIA LITERACY:** Fact vs. fiction
- 46 **ENGAGEMENT:** Reviews kids like

CTA & You

- 48 **STATE COUNCIL:** A brighter future
- 50 **RISING LEADERS:** Members running for elected office
- 51 **POET:** Alexandra Huynh
- 51 **HONORED:** Educator magazine
- 52 **AWARDS:** John Swett Awards
- 54 **A BETTER BOT:** Half Moon Bay robotics team is moving on up
- 55 **BRAVE STEPS:** Run, Bob, run
- 56 **LIT FROM WITHIN:** Works by our members

▲ Cover: Jerico "K-G" Keeler-Garcellano; photo by Kim White. This page, from top: Ayo Adedeji and Maria Sanchez, Aptos Middle School in San Francisco; courtesy NEA; Teresa Magpayo Castro and Ricardo Recinos, TOSAs with Hacienda La Puente Unified School District.



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

Investing with Principles: Pensions and Our Planet

Re: "Fossil Fuel Investments" (April 2022)

Climate change is one of the greatest threats to our future, impacting the planetary environment, global economy, and worldwide health and safety. Moreover, investment risks associated with climate change may impact the value of our investment portfolio without constant monitoring.

This is important because 60 cents of every dollar our members receive in retirement benefits come from CalSTRS' investment gains. Our ability to secure the financial future of California's public educators depends in part on our long-term investment strategy and how we address climate risk as investors.

CalSTRS is approximately 73 percent funded, and we remain on track toward full funding by 2046. Maintaining a diverse investment portfolio is critical to ensuring returns. Less diversification means more risk, which could lead to higher contribution rates.

Sustainable investing across sectors is integral to our success. For nearly 20 years, environmental, social, and governance principles have guided how CalSTRS manages long-term risks and opportunities.

CalSTRS currently holds \$20 billion in climate solution investments and is accelerating the net zero emissions transformation of companies in our investment portfolio, consistent with the Paris Agreement and United Nations' Race to Zero campaign.

We are holistic and inclusive in preparing our investment portfolio for a low carbon economy, engaging with corporations, influencing public policies, and advancing sustainable business and investment practices.

When corporate engagement falls short, we have moved toward activist stewardship, such as the successful shareholder campaign last year to elect three independent board directors to drive systemic change at ExxonMobil on emissions reduction.

Today, we are holding corporate directors accountable on climate and board diversity. We are also voting for shareholder proposals that demand transparency or set emissions reduction targets.

At CalSTRS, we are proudly delivering for our members and responding to climate risks.

CalSTRS (California State Teachers' Retirement System)

Often educators' creativity spills over into a book, blog, app, album, podcast or other work. We're happy to showcase your talents on our Lit From Within pages! See page 56 for details.



Equitably Assessing Learning

"Remaking the Grade" (Feb./March 2022)

mentions a practice that grades students "on what they know, rather than on their behavior and ability to meet deadlines," piloted at a continuation school in Seaside. It is not surprising that this "new" system came from a continuation school. The whole concept behind continuation education is the understanding that students need flexibility in their goal to attain an education.

In other examples, students are still held accountable for knowing some content. The story says that Sacramento City Unified School District has adopted a policy that students are not supposed to score lower than 50 percent — "even if they don't do the work."

Some will fixate on this, conveniently forgetting the second part of the paragraph that says "The goal is for students to keep trying and redo work so they won't be derailed from a four-year college." Assigning 50 percent for work not done is worse than the unwitting promotion of racism. It is racism. It can be safely assumed that those trying to undermine public education will pounce on and rework this part to suit their desires. They will use it as an argument to transfer public school students to private and parochial schools because such an approach to "education" would make some students "disadvantaged" indeed.

Faith O. Mowoe, PhD

Rialto Education Association



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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.

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OPTIMISM FOR OUR FUTURE

AS MANY of you wrap up a full year of in-person teaching in the COVID era and embark on a well-deserved summer break, it's a good time to examine the current education landscape in California and look toward the future.

First, there is some very positive state budget news. The governor's proposed May Revision budget takes full advantage of an unprecedented surplus and proposes increasing per pupil spending by more than \$3,000 per student. This is a sign that California, the fifth largest economy in the world, is slowly making progress in pulling itself up from its inexcusable position — for decades — as near the bottom in the nation in per-pupil funding.

The proposed budget would mean many good things for students, educators and communities. Not only are we beginning the multi-year phase-in of universal transitional kindergarten for all four-year-olds, but the state's community schools program that CTA members have led the way on is slated to receive an additional \$1.5 billion. That's *over* the \$3 billion proposed in January. Both these programs will hugely benefit students, especially those who have been underserved. They are solid education policy changes that will help us better serve families and our communities.

The short-term political outlook remains good as well. CTA-recommended Tony Thurmond is likely to win re-election as Superintendent of Public Instruction. In addition, there are hundreds of local school board, state legislative and congressional races across the state that will be important to educators, students and their families.

As I write this column, we are mourning the devastating loss of students and teachers in yet another horrific

classroom shooting, this time in Uvalde, Texas. Everyone should be able to send their children to school and know they will be safe and taken care of, yet once again over 20 lives have been taken and countless others shattered by a senseless act of gun violence on a school campus.

As students, educators and others across the country grieve and wonder when and where the next attack will happen, lawmakers continue to throw up their hands as if there's nothing they can do, and they continue to put the demands of the firearms lobby above the lives of children. As a nation we can and must do better. We must never accept such abhorrent events as simply the status quo. Tell lawmakers to enact laws to prevent gun violence in schools and communities — *now*. See page 11 to take action.

There are, of course, other urgent challenges facing educators, and CTA is ready to help address them. COVID has not gone away. Attacks on curriculum continue, with educators being harassed for being inclusive of LGBTQ+ students and themes, or for teaching honestly about the role of race in the history of the United States. Powerful media outlets stoke division, and disinformation continues to spread, often promulgated by those who would like to do away with public schools.

Despite all this, I remain optimistic about the near- and long-term future of California public schools. CTA members have the strength and capacity to meet whatever challenges come our way. A top focus in the coming year is to help our local chapters build organizational strength and increase member engagement so our voices on these critical issues are heard. CTA members will continue to lead the way and, united as a strong union, we will continue to ensure that all California students get the quality education they deserve.

Have a wonderful summer.

E. Toby Boyd

CTA PRESIDENT
@etobyboyd



Elizabeth Douglas Photography



▲ Above: Tavia Verwuest thanks middle school teacher Lisa Dushane; left, Ben Tutupoly holds the letter he wrote to his middle school teacher Jason Walker.

Feeling Thankful

AT THE END of the school year, educators may get thank you notes and gifts from students. Antelope High School in Placer County has a tradition that goes a little deeper: Graduating seniors from its student government class write thank you letters to a former teacher who made a difference in their lives. They surprise the teacher in their classroom and read the letter, in full cap and gown, while the younger students look on. The result is incredibly powerful and moving for all.

“I am so grateful for how helpful and kind you always were to me in your class, you always believed in me even when I didn’t think I would be able to do something,” read Tavia Verwuest to her middle school science teacher Lisa Dushane, a member of Dry Creek Teachers Association. Verwuest intends to pursue civil engineering, an interest that sparked during her time with Dushane. “I am so thankful that it all started with such an amazing and inspiring teacher.”

Other letters are equally appreciative, often recalling lighter moments. “You left a crazy impact on my life, so much so that you probably don’t realize it,” wrote Ben Tutupoly to middle school PE teacher Jason Walker, also a Dry Creek TA member. “You defined workout drip for me, [teaching] me that those ALL NEON OUTFITS are most definitely not the way to go.”

Of course, educators inside and out of the classroom have an impact on students’ lives, during all phases and in all facets. It’s this whole-child approach that informs community schools, for example, and is why educators involved in transitioning their campuses to community schools feel so strongly about the work. Read what some of them are doing in “**A Transformative Journey**” (page 26).

Recognizing educators’ crucial roles in students’ lives is also behind several teacher residency programs in California (“**Preparing the**

Educators of Tomorrow,” page 20). The programs focus on supporting residents through strong relationships and professional networks, as well as through trainings centered in equity so they become the teachers their students need.

“The residents really get to know who their students are and what gets them going,” says Juliet Wahleithner of Fresno State University’s program.

Equity figures prominently in several other stories in this issue. A popular professional development webinar series for educators highlights technology, but with an eye toward social emotional learning and engagement for all students (“**Training on Demand**,” page 42). “It’s about access and equity for our kids,” says Teresa Magpayo Castro, who leads the webinars with fellow TOSA Ricardo Recinos. Teacher Ryan Brazil and her fourth-grade class recently published “Anti-Bias ABC’s,” where each student was responsible for an anti-bias-related word for each letter of the alphabet (“**Inspiring Love, Empathy and Compassion**,” page 38).

“If we have a little empathy and see things from a different perspective, I think the world would be a better place,” Brazil says. “And we have to start young.”

Indeed. Thank you, educators.

Katharine Fong

EDITOR IN CHIEF
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Prior district approval is highly recommended and the responsibility of the student if using course units towards salary advancement, credential renewing, and/or recertification. Not all courses may qualify in your local school district.

June / July 2022

CALENDAR

Carlos de Toro/Unsplash



June is Pride Month

LGBTQ+ Pride Month is a great time to talk with students about LGBTQ+ people and their struggles to achieve equity and justice. Teach students about key LGBTQ+ figures in history, read stories and other media authored by or featuring LGBTQ+ people, explore heterosexism's causes and solutions. LGBTQ+ history should be integrated into the curriculum throughout the year.

Find lesson plans for various grade levels at the Anti-Defamation League (adl.org/education; click on "lesson plans" and filter by topic). Join educators, parents, students and communities uniting across race, genders and place to demand safe and affirming schools where all students can thrive at neaedjustice.org/supporting-lgbtq-youth. Find resources to support LGBTQ+ students at cta.org/social-justice-resources.

Keep Students, Educators Safe and Supported

CTA Member Benefits partners with the NEA-LGBTQ+ Caucus to offer the "I'm Here" badge. Wear the badge to identify yourself as a safe, supportive person to discuss LGBTQ+ issues. Order a badge and find the resource toolkit at nea-lgbtqc.org.

LGBTQ+ youth are four times as likely to attempt suicide as their peers, which is why support from their educators is critical. Educators in turn need to be supported and protected as they teach relevant curriculum. Sadly, many students and educators are not receiving this support. Urge legislators to pass the Equality Act — to make discrimination against LGBTQ+ people illegal — and the Safe Schools Improvement Act — to protect all students from harassment. Go to tinyurl.com/equalityandsafeschools.



▼ CTA delegates make their voices heard at NEA RA.



NEA Representative Assembly, Human and Civil Rights Awards

NEA's annual meeting, July 2-6 in Chicago, is the world's largest democratic deliberative body with about 8,000 delegates. They help set policy and chart the direction of NEA. On July 2, NEA presents its Human and Civil Rights Awards in a dozen categories. nea.org/ra



CTA Summer Conferences & Trainings

We're back, baby! After CTA's Presidents Conference and Summer Institute went virtual for a few years, both are back in person in 2022. There's nothing like learning and networking face-to-face with your colleagues. Chapter leaders, emerging leaders and members interested in enhancing their skills as educators and unionists should head to cta.org/conferences for details and to register.

Presidents Conference **JULY 14-17, 2022**

Hyatt SFO, Burlingame. Provides new and returning chapter presidents and vice presidents a foundation to build on as we prepare for the challenges ahead. Includes a variety of skills-building sessions and multiple opportunities to network with other leaders.

Summer Institute **JULY 24-28, 2022**

UCLA, Los Angeles. CTA's premier training offers sessions and activities to hone the skills needed to meet the challenges of the coming year – in both education and labor. The various strands assist chapter leaders in the day-to-day representation and support of members, and include Communications, Instruction and Professional Development, Emerging Leaders, Bargaining, School Finance, Healthcare Benefits and Issues, Legal, Member Benefits, and Community Engagement.

2021 National Poet Laureate **Alexandra Huynh** speaks at Summer Institute; see page 51. →

CA LMI Summer Institute

JUNE 21-23, 2022 CONFERENCE

San Diego. The California Labor Management Initiative institute convenes labor-management teams to energize partnerships, build community, and navigate the upcoming year. Pre-conference on June 21 for new teams.

► cdefoundation.org/clmi

ISTE Live 22

JUNE 26-29, 2022 CONFERENCE

New Orleans/virtual. The International Society for Technology in Education offers over 1,000 sessions presented by experts from education and beyond to provide practical, immediately usable strategies for your classroom.

► conference.iste.org/2022

PBL World 2022

JUNE 27-30, 2022 CONFERENCE

American Canyon High School, Napa. Sponsored by the nonprofit Buck Institute for Education, this is the premier conference for Project Based Learning.

► pblworks.org/pbl-world-2022

California MTSS Professional Learning Institute

JULY 12-14 CONFERENCE

Anaheim. The 2022 California Multi-Tiered System of Support PLI theme is "Hear Us, Together We Rise." Educators, administrators, school counselors and psychologists, county offices of education leaders, and community-based organizations come together to support inclusive and equitable learning environments. ► camtsspli.ocde.us

QTEL Summer Institutes

JULY 18-22, JULY 25-29, 2022 CONFERENCES

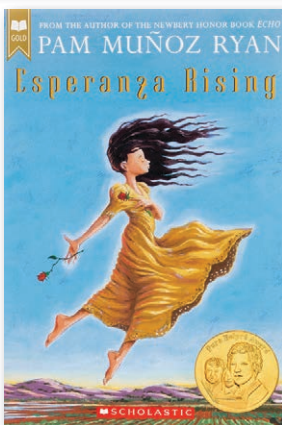
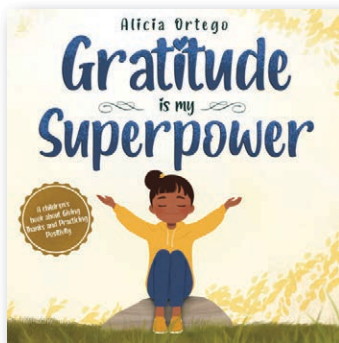
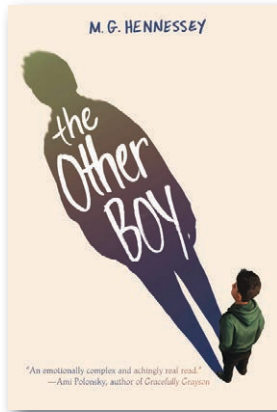
San Francisco/virtual. WestEd's Quality Teaching for English Learners team offers professional development supporting education for English learners.

► qtel.wested.org/2022-summer-institutes

NSTA Chicago22

JULY 21-23, 2022 CONFERENCE

Chicago. The National Science Teaching Association event brings together educators, presenters and exhibitors, and features the latest tools and technologies for successful STEAM education. ► nsta.org/chicago22



SUMMER READING

FOR KIDS, the summer break is often as busy as when school is in session, what with camps, summer school and other activities. Let students and their families know that reading, such as these recommendations from CTA's California Reads program (cta.org/careads), is well worth making time for. Teacher-vetted books include:

The Other Boy, by M.G. Hennessey and illustrated by Sfe R. Monster (grades 6-8), is a heartfelt story about a 12-year-old boy's journey toward acceptance. Shane Woods loves pitching for his baseball team, working on his graphic novel, and hanging out with his best friend, Josh. But he is keeping something private, and when a classmate threatens to reveal his secret, Shane's world is upended. It will take a lot of courage for Shane to ignore the hate and show the world that he's still the same boy he was before.

In *Gratitude Is My Superpower*, by Alicia Ortego (grades 1-2), Little Betsy has a magic stone that helps her feel gratitude for her parents, friends and toys. When she forgets to use the stone, she comes to realize that the power of gratitude is hidden in her heart. The book helps children appreciate what they have and what others do for them. Includes a Gratitude Journal.

Esperanza thought she would always live a privileged life on her family's ranch in Mexico, with fancy dresses, a beautiful home filled with servants, and a loving family. But as told in *Esperanza Rising*, by Pam Muñoz Ryan (grades 6-8), a sudden tragedy forces her and Mama to flee to California and settle in a farm labor camp. Esperanza isn't ready for the hard work, financial struggles, or lack of acceptance she now faces. When Mama gets sick and a strike for better working conditions threatens to uproot their new life, she must find a way to rise above her difficult circumstances — because Mama's life, and her own, depend on it.

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JUNETEENTH, June 19

JUNETEENTH COMMEMORATES the end of slavery in the United States. Last year it became the 11th holiday recognized by the federal government.

Celebrated by African Americans since the late 1800s, Juneteenth in recent times has promoted and cultivated knowledge and appreciation of African American history and culture. Following the nationwide social upheaval in the past few years — in the wake of the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and other Black Americans — Juneteenth focuses on freedom and social justice.

Classroom discussion (on Juneteenth and throughout the year) can help give students voice to advocate for their own narratives and experiences, and surface those that have been erased or forgotten. It can also empower students to connect with their communities and to become advocates in a diverse democracy. Find more at learningforjustice.org/magazine/teaching-juneteenth.

TAKE ACTION to Stop Gun Violence

WE ALL SHOULD be able to send our children to school knowing they will be safe and taken care of. But in Uvalde, Texas, it happened again — another day of horror and grief. Another school turned from a center of safety and learning to a place of violence; another community dealing with the loss of their children, siblings and friends.

“Our elected leaders need to pass laws that protect children from gun violence and bring an end to senseless and preventable killings,” said NEA President Becky Pringle. “My message to Congress: What are you waiting for?”

Demand common-sense gun laws to prevent violence in our schools and communities — *now*. Email your elected officials now at nea.org/gunviolence.



Boost for Students, Schools

A U.S. Department of Education (ED) announcement of \$220 million in investments from government, private and public sectors in April has resulted in multiple initiatives underway now to help students, schools and communities recover from the pandemic.

These initiatives support student academic and mental health recovery as part of the ED's effort with American Rescue Plan funds, and include:

- 2022 summer learning and enrichment opportunities, including summer camp-school partnerships;
- \$17 million from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for high-impact tutoring;
- \$14.4 million in grants from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation throughout 2022 to support afterschool across the country;
- \$10 million from the Raikes Foundation to support organizations aimed at accelerating learning and expanding access to mental health supports.

The full list is at tinyurl.com/EDinvestment.

The Case for More Money

A RECENT NEWS STORY finds that low teacher pay and skyrocketing inflation are exacerbating school staffing problems in the state. In “California Public Schools Are Losing Underpaid Teachers at a Steep Rate” (at capitalandmain.com), one example finds the turnover rate of teachers and staff in the Salinas area to be more than 10 percent a year. A big factor contributing to this is the entry level salary for middle and high school teachers in Salinas, the largest city in Monterey County: \$48,000. New teachers, especially, struggle to live on low salaries in increasingly pricey areas.

An Economic Policy Institute analysis shows that public educators earned 19.2 percent less than their nonteaching peers; when adjusted for inflation, there has been no change in teacher compensation over the past 20 years. Suggested solutions include fixing the state funding structure or convincing local taxpayers to pay higher taxes. The story makes clear that we must act with urgency to pay educators better wages or risk losing even more.

QUOTES & NUMBERS

Compiled by Julian Peeples

NEAToday



“We need to change this idea that teachers should take on everything while being mistreated or disrespected just because we love being in the classroom or because it’s what’s best for our kids. Is it best for our kids to lose great teachers? Because that’s where we are headed.”

—Erin Castillo, Fremont Unified District Teachers Association member, in an NEA Today story on teacher burnout

41

Number of California school districts funded in the first round of Teacher Residency Capacity Grants, with most receiving \$250,000. (Last July, Gov. Gavin Newsom approved \$350 million in grant funding over the next five years to expand/create teacher residency programs statewide. See our story on page 20.)

55%

Percentage of educators who told a recent NEA member survey they were thinking of leaving the profession earlier than previously planned.

\$649 MILLION

Funding to establish and expand community schools awarded by the state to 268 school districts and county offices of education. See story on page 26 to see what locals are doing to build these schools.

\$100 MILLION

Funding proposed by Gov. Newsom and endorsed by the Legislative Analyst’s Office to improve cybersecurity at California’s Community Colleges.



“Our public schools must help to educate the new generation to look critically at the ongoing present-day effects of genocide denial.”

—Taline Arsenian, Glendale Teachers Association, whose grandparents fled the Armenian Genocide

\$66,397

Estimated average teacher salary nationwide for the 2021-2022 school year, according to NEA, \$2,179 less per year than a decade ago, when adjusted for inflation.



“We must organize at every level to adequately fund our public schools. If we value every student, we must value every educator as foundational to great public schools.”

—Noel Candelaria, NEA Secretary-Treasurer, referencing an NEA Today story that notes 37 percent of ESPs work two or more jobs



“For Teacher Appreciation, what I want and need is the basic dignity of a living wage, [and] a mental wellness day. Teachers have had the hardest year of their lives. A day to take care of myself would make me feel respected.” —Susan Keen, Oakland Education Association



HOW WE CAN SUPPORT EACH OTHER

Five phrases to remember, from staff superstars

By Thomas Courtney

THE WORD SUPPORT seems to carry more and more weight in education these days. In fact, recently I was invited to read through hundreds of comments in a FuelEd survey regarding teacher wellness (fueledschools.org/partners-teachplus). After an extensive analysis, we wrote a policy brief to California state leaders regarding our findings. As a classroom teacher of 20 years, it didn't surprise me that of the responding teachers, almost half called out the word "support" in their responses. One thing about the word seemed clear: Just about all school staff feel as though they need a lot more of it.

And that's where *you* come in - because it doesn't seem to matter whether you are a classroom teacher, a custodian, a principal, a counselor, a literacy resource teacher, a special education coordinator - whoever you are, you need support too.

With that in mind, I asked some of the finest teachers I know, and some of the most supportive staff I've had the privilege to work with, what they do to help support one another. What they said is summarized and synthesized into five simple phrases.

"See the whole picture — these kids are all on our caseload"

One colleague, a special education coordinator, told me that they sometimes feel placed in positions that are at odds with others, even though that is not the case. "It helps me to remember that all these kids, whether they have IEPs or not, are on *our* caseload. If I teach a phonics lesson, and there are a few other students that can use the help, we arrange to have them join us." Her school site has begun to invite special education staff to professional learning communities with classroom teachers whenever possible. "Now," she said, "all my special ed students are on the classroom teachers' caseload, and all their kids are on mine. If there's a kid with a need, and it's the same as another kid, we put them together. Makes no difference whose roster they are on or which class they sit in."

"You too can prevent fires," or "Pro-activity is the best activity you can help me with"

Support can also take the form of prevention. Our principal recently began to address the needs of students beyond the typical "cusp" students we've been asked to target for years. Throughout the year we complete and maintain a document for students who need a little extra support, and it's not always academic in nature. "Knowing that a kid needs extra attention goes beyond the classroom," she said to me. "Sometimes a student has experienced trauma that extends beyond the school's typical safety net. But when they know that the whole village has his or her

back, they can really make meaningful progress."

As the village is aware of who needs additional support, kids are involved in various activities to give them an extra boost. Sometimes we choose them for announcements or help steer them towards leadership positions in our school Playground Patrol or after-school leadership clubs. These activities are pro-active and help put out fires before they happen, but also lead to motivation in class.

"Be mindful of language and how we conduct ourselves"

One of the best pieces of advice was from a San Diego Unified School District Teacher of the Year. Janice Anderson has taught for over two decades at her Title 1 school and recently became a literacy resource teacher. When I asked her about support, she gave me her usual smile and customary sound logic. "It's often how we act with one another," explaining that both sides of the fence tend to feel like we might be busier than the other side and being mindful of our language and how we conduct ourselves sets a tone to either collaborate effectively or build resentment that stifles productive work. "I avoid I statements that do not promote being helpful," she said. "Unless I am asking what it is that I can do for you. It doesn't matter if I'm a teacher or support staff"

"Find me at the right place and the right time"

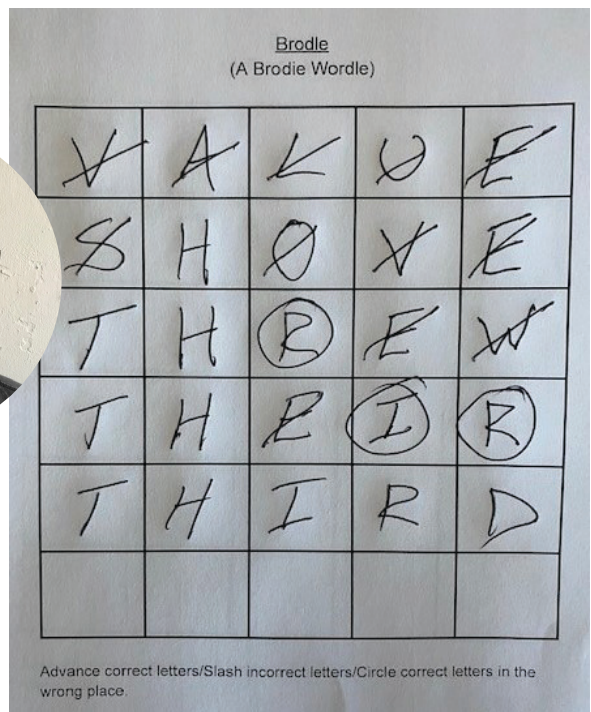
It's hard to feel either supportive or to give support if you feel rushed. "You've got to be mindful to



Continued on page 15

Wordle — A Metaphor for Learning

By Scot Brodie



▲ Brodie calls his Wordle creations “Brodles”

“**TAKE THE PLUNGE;** participate; try; give me your best effort; make mistakes; learn from your mistakes; it’s not impossible; don’t give up; you only have a certain amount of chances; you may fail, but if you do, get up and try again.” These are words and phrases used by teachers, coaches, parents, guardians, motivational speakers, and anyone else of that ilk all over the world, and for good cause. It’s because these words, statements and adages encourage one to learn. They are a big part of the pedagogical process.

In fact, they *are* the learning process in a nutshell, and a great way to put these philosophies to use in the classroom is by playing a simple little game that only involves five letters and 30 squares.

Recently a friend came over for dinner. Like me, she is a teacher and when we get together, we do exactly what I imagine our students imagine English teachers do for fun – we play word games: Scrabble, Boggle, Bananagrams, etc... On this particular evening after wine, dinner and word games, she showed me a Wordle and we worked on it together. Wordle is a game featured in The New York Times created by Josh Wardle, a software engineer, and his partner Palak Shah. Being a word meister I was immediately hooked. I put the game on my phone and continued to check the 24-hour countdown for the next Wordle like Pavlov’s dog, or a kid on Christmas Eve. The next day there it was, the gift, wrapped in 30 blank boxes in rows of five - no hint or clue provided.

With Wordle, there is no dipping of the toe to test the waters; one has to just jump right in the word pool with a five-letter word. Any five-letter word. There is the option of going online and selecting the best word to start a Wordle (a “Wordlebot” claims that it’s crane), but after only playing a few weeks, I don’t think it matters which word one starts with. I did “beard” for a few days, which worked well, meaning that I had a few green boxes (a sign that the letter is in the right place) and a few beige (which indicates the letter is in the word, but that it’s in the wrong place) – then “beard” didn’t work at all (all the letters stay blank). I have since taken notice of every five-letter word I hear or see in print.

“When a class is in sync – as it is with these daily Wordles – it is pure magic.”

One day whilst sitting in traffic I had an epiphany – cue angelic chorus: “I could do this in class.” The idea was as simple as they come: create a worksheet with a grid (six rows of five boxes), select a random five-letter word, and using the projector at the front of the class have students take turns solving the mystery: Cross out letters that aren’t in the word, circle letters that are in the word, and advance letters that are correct. I put it to work and it was an immediate hit. This simple little game has become a classroom sensation. When we wordle, the class ebbs and flows with activity as each student tries to figure it out. I’m telling you I can see the gears spinning in their heads, and the tension really builds after the third guess when the entire room starts taking the activity very seriously. Even the class clowns are on task.

These wordles have replaced the dull, monotonous classroom warm-up. In fact, after we complete one, and I’m not kidding, I’ve had students literally chanting for another. They have surpassed all my other bribes. “Okay,” I tell them, “if we finish today’s assignment, we can do a wordle.”

I’m not sure how long this craze will last. Seventh graders are a very fickle bunch; it could just be a Pet-Rock (sorry, am I showing my age?), or a Beanie Baby (still showing my age?), or how about silicone bubble pops (there we go). It doesn’t really matter. As any teacher knows – if something is working in the classroom, keep doing it. Don’t stop ‘til you get enough.

Continued from page 13

Wordles emulate the best practices in learning any skill, from playing a recorder to speaking Japanese. For starters, with a Wordle, one must try. Placing a word in the first row is the equivalent of throwing your hat in the game. The players/learners' way of saying 'I've got this, I'm going to do it, I can do it.'

With Wordle and learning, it's the mistakes one makes that lead them to the right answer. Mistakes are gifts when we learn, although one can only make so many. Another caveat to finding the right answer is that a participant only has a certain amount of chances. So if a wordler/learner is going to make a mistake, make sure it's a good one.

"A winner never quits and a quitter never wins." You can't give up with Wordle. The goal, like many a goal, is within reach, is not impossible. You keep on trying. Also, if one does fail, there's always tomorrow.

Learning metaphors aside, there are many other academic skills students exercise when playing a Wordle. The process of elimination is a must for test-taking – especially multiple-choice tests, or tests that require word match-ups. Wordles are in grid form which I'm sure must, in some way, stimulate logical-mathematical intelligence. Students are also developing an innate aptitude for problem-solving. What student/person doesn't need that?

Teaching a class is like playing in a band. Sometimes it's a garage band, periodically it's a jazz band, most of the time it's a punk band, irregularly it can be a classical quartet. This is rare, mind you, but a room full of seventh graders can be "in the pocket," so to speak. I've seen this happen occasionally when we read, sometimes when we write. When a class is in sync, it is pure magic. These daily Wordles have been sending my students and me to this place for the first five to 10 minutes of every class for the past few weeks.

After the pandemic, I especially love this game for the social aspect. It's the shot in the arm that we've been needing all year (pun intended). With Wordles I get a classroom full of students who are laughing, talking, thinking, turning their passive vocabulary into active vocabulary, relieving stress, and boosting their moods. When students are more word-aware, they are more successful with reading and writing. And let's face it, without words, we have nothing, and without Wordles we have less words. ■

Scot Brodie is a member of United Educators of San Francisco.

respect each other's time," said a colleague who has worked as both a teacher and a support provider. "When you have children in front of you, there is no down time. So as someone without a roster, I'm always mindful of making sure to respect teachers when they are eating, when they have a moment to themselves." She keeps a schedule of when teachers might be most available to talk and says that talking with them when they are most present helps collaboration. "It's also important to use any time we're given for collaboration so that I respect their time in that way too. I want to make sure we get as much done as we can when we are gifted the time to collaborate."

"Communicate progress to me, of any kind"

A common refrain in the FuelEd survey was the daily workload. A special education resource teacher told me, "It can take me hours to complete an IEP, and there's a lot of assessment that goes into it as well. But if the teacher and I are on the same page, I can give them information that they can use, and they can give me information I can use. It saves us both time and energy." A classroom teacher who has worked alongside special education programs for years agreed. "I've got grades to write. I've got parents to conference with and tests to grade for meetings. Anytime someone helps me figure out where a kid is at, it's good news. Also, whenever I attend an IEP meeting, my major concern is that I'm prepared and can help make the right decisions and give the right input about the child. When the SPED coordinator and I have been in communication throughout the year about the child's progress, we can talk mostly about how best to help that kid with all the members of an IEP meeting present."

"I'm always mindful of making sure to respect teachers when they are eating, when they have a moment to themselves."

Whether you feel your school is supporting you and your colleagues effectively or you feel there needs to be a tune-up, I hope these five phrases can help.

Thomas Courtney, San Diego Education Association, is a fifth grade teacher at Chollas-Mead Elementary in southeast San Diego. He was San Diego Unified's Elementary District Teacher of the Year in 2021.

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God First Since 1899



I, Too

I, too, sing America.
 I am the darker brother.
 They send me to eat in
 the kitchen
 When company comes,
 But I laugh,
 And eat well,
 And grow strong.
 Tomorrow,
 I'll be at the table
 When company comes.
 Nobody'll dare
 Say to me,
 "Eat in the kitchen,"
 Then.
 Besides,
 They'll see how beautiful
 I am
 And be ashamed—
 I, too, am America.

—Langston Hughes,
 1901-1967. First
 published in 1926.


I, Too, Sing America

Two aspiring, undocumented educators share their struggles — and how they are speaking up for fellow immigrants and DACA recipients

By **Brenda Álvarez**

IN THE FAMOUS POEM, “I, Too,” Langston Hughes constructs a powerful and undeniable message: African Americans have long contributed to the rich fabric of the United States and will one day be recognized, included, and celebrated as part of mainstream society, ending racism and oppression for Black Americans.

Nearly 100 years after the poem was written, its message still rings true for many marginalized groups, from African Americans to Indigenous people to families who came to this country generations ago to the newcomers of today. But those who have lived in the shadows of society are slowly coming “out of the kitchen” to declare that they “too, sing America.”

Among them are 15,000 educators with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status — a federal policy that protects immigrants who were brought to the U.S. as children. DACA recipients receive temporary lawful status that prohibits their deportation and makes it legal for them to work and get a driver’s license, among other life-changing provisions. DACA, however, doesn’t provide a pathway to citizenship. Here, two Student CTA members who are DACA recipients share their stories. 



“I was responsible for my family’s legacy. It’s what we call in Tagalog an *utang na loob* — a debt of the soul.”

The Vision Versus Reality:

JERICO “K-G” KEELER-GARCELLANO

I was born in Saudi Arabia to Filipino parents. I come from a lineage of immigrants, carrying my family’s intergenerational stories: goodbyes, resistance, packing, repacking, fast food, paid in cash, pillows on hard floors, and education as social mobility.

I also internalized my parent’s relentless message that I “had” to attend college. I was responsible for my family’s legacy because they brought me to the U.S., risking it all. It’s what we call in Tagalog an *utang na loob* — a debt of the soul.

And so here I am. The first in my family to navigate the U.S. educational system. Since my family wasn’t fluent in higher education discourse, most of this journey occurred on my own. This made me feel simultaneously connected and alone.

As a first-year student at UC Santa Cruz, my family didn’t have enough cash to last me the year. I was able to get a paid internship with the Student Diversity and Inclusion Program, a space for undocumented students who were unable to access paid work and federal financial aid.

Soon I realized I wasn’t alone. I had a community of people in similar situations. Together, we learned how different populations are affected by dominant systems of colonialism and capitalism. We learned about anti-Blackness, classism, and cultural appropriation. I soon found myself leading seminars about meritocracy in K–12 education and White supremacy through assimilation.

Today, I am finishing up a master’s degree from UC Berkeley. This summer, I hope to be in my first classroom, teaching middle or high school ethnic studies. I want to provide my students — particularly those who are marginalized — with an opportunity to succeed by teaching a full and accurate history, filled with stories that have challenged dominant systems.

This is one of the things I value about the United States: BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color), women, and queer folks can challenge the norms of the country and help our students redefine what freedom means.

“We can’t live in fear anymore. We need to be able to share our stories and continue to do the work we want to do.”



A New Dream:

VIRIDIANA CASTRO SILVA

The notion of the American dream is so flawed to me. People say, if only you work hard enough, you’ll make it. My family and I have done that. Yet our status in this country has been threatened for more than two decades, and we’ve lived in fear. The narrative of this dream ignores the barriers that are intentionally created to keep people oppressed and away from real growth and opportunities.

We can’t live in fear anymore. We need to be able to share our stories and continue to do the work we want to do. As an undergraduate student, I got involved in advocating for and making connections with fellow undocumented students in community colleges and high schools. I worked to debunk myths that permeate immigrant communities — like the false belief that you have to be a U.S. citizen or have a green card in California to go to college.

I was able to take my work into the union. I was the first openly undocumented president of Student CTA, and I’ve led advocacy trainings at Student CTA and CTA. I think they have resonated with folks — in the union you don’t need to be a citizen either because it’s irrelevant, and even using that to debunk what it means to be a leader.

We need a path to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants already living in the U.S. This would be such a victory for all of us and would solidify years of grassroots organizing. It would also show the value and power of working as a community as well as our influence in politics — whether we have voting ability or not.

Call on Congress to create a pathway to citizenship for undocumented students and educators. Go to nea.org/create-fair-immigration-process. Photos by Kim White.

▼ Emma Nalchajian and her resident teacher Duncan Wanless.



PREPARING THE **Educators of Tomorrow**

Teacher residency programs
develop strong relationships,
centered on equity

By **Julian Peebles**

“**E**veryone knows it takes a village to raise a child,” says Esther Jaramillo-Woo, director of clinical education for the San Francisco Urban Teacher Residency program. “It also takes a village to raise a new teacher.”

As California continues to struggle with a dire teacher shortage, many districts are looking to teacher residency programs to build the educator pipeline and provide new educators with extensive support systems, centering the training in equity so they become the teachers their students need. Last July, Gov. Gavin Newsom approved \$350 million in grant funding over the next five years to expand and create teacher residency programs statewide to help fill shortages in areas like special education, kindergarten and computer science.

While student teaching program placements often begin after the school year starts and end four months later, teacher residency programs provide aspiring educators with intensive support and preparation for a full school year in one classroom with the same students and mentor educator. The result is first-year educators who have already spent a year

as part of a school community, ready to hit the ground running with an extended support network so they never feel alone.

“Teacher residency programs are such a wonderful way of bringing teachers into our profession,” says Juliet Wahleithner, assistant director of teacher education at Fresno State University’s Kremen School of Education and Human Development.

According to the California Teacher Residency Lab, a program of the CDE Foundation, quality teacher residencies can prepare effective teachers who stay in the profession, helping to reduce high rates of teacher turnover that impact California’s highest-need schools. Residencies also provide financially feasible pathways for candidates and are more likely to recruit educators of color than other paths into teaching, according to the Learning Policy Institute.

“We are very intentional about recruiting residents of color, so they reflect our students’ cultural and linguistic diversity,” Jaramillo-Woo says.

The San Francisco Urban Teacher Residency Program (SFUTR) is a collaboration between San Francisco Unified



Esther Jaramillo-Woo

▼ Elyse Johansson, Lena Hwang and Rachel Herrera at Aptos Middle School in San Francisco. Hwang is a mentor teacher; Johansson was her resident teacher last year and now teaches at Aptos, and Herrera is Hwang's current resident teacher.

“We make sure our residents are receiving that robust training before they enter a classroom on their own.”

—**Esther Jaramillo-Woo**,
United Educators of San Francisco



School District (SFUSD), Stanford University and United Educators of San Francisco (UESF), going into its 13th year. It was designed to be a teacher preparation program and to help the district fill educator vacancies. Jaramillo-Woo says SFUTR was also created to give context and prepare educators for teaching in an urban environment.

“We make sure our residents are receiving that robust training before they enter a classroom on their own,” says Jaramillo-Woo, a UESF member. “We maintain strong networks and relationships with our residents throughout their time in SFUSD.”

Lena Hwang, an eighth-grade science teacher at Aptos Middle School in San Francisco, is a cooperating (mentor) teacher in SFUTR. She says teacher residency programs are so important, especially when the support is long-term.

“You can’t learn all of it in just one year or from one mentor teacher. The first two years teaching on your own is really hard. Having support to get through those tough times is essential,” says Hwang, a UESF member. “We need good teachers and need

them to be well-trained so they don’t burn out in two years, and they can help the students in our district.”



Juliet Wahleithner

FOCUSING ON SUCCESS FOR EDUCATORS, STUDENTS

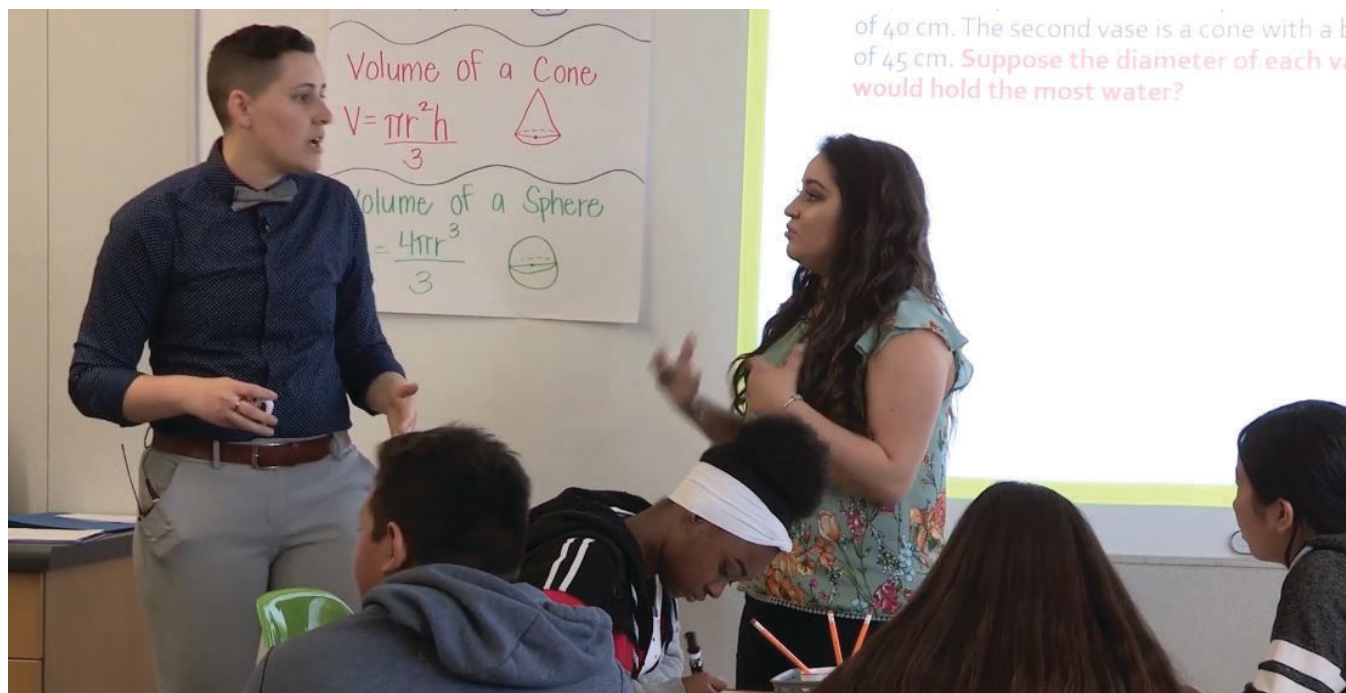
“It’s really beneficial for teacher candidates to commit to a school community and make connections that lead them into a more successful and smooth transition into being a teacher,” says Emma Nalchajian, English teacher at Fresno’s Roosevelt High School and member of Fresno Teachers Association (FTA).

Fresno State University offers residency programs throughout the Central Valley, partnering students with a professor-in-residence and mentor teacher, and supporting them with a comprehensive professional development curriculum. In school districts in Fresno, Clovis, Madera, Sanger and rural areas, resident teachers are fully immersed in the classroom experience, learning about the district’s culture, needs and expectations.

Resident teachers receive a stipend, district



▼ Mentor teacher and resident teacher in a Fresno Unified School District video on teacher development.



professional development, access to district technology, paid sub days and guaranteed employment upon successful completion of the program, in addition to an entire network of experienced educators working together to help them succeed. Fresno State Professor Heather Horsley says the power of the program is evident in the 87 percent retention rate experienced by Fresno Unified School District, Fresno State's longest-standing teacher residency partner.

"This is almost tripling national retention rates, so we're feeling really encouraged with the outcomes we're seeing with the residency model," says Horsley, Fresno State teacher residency program coordinator.

Nalchajian is a graduate of the Fresno Teacher Residency Program who now serves as a mentor teacher in the program, working to provide the same support she received as a new teacher. She says being a resident teacher in Fresno Unified made her more confident and comfortable navigating her first couple years of teaching, while the \$13,000 stipend helped her support herself. Nalchajian appreciated the three-year commitment to the district, students and community, "so you know you're doing this for a purpose."

Current resident teacher Jade Muñoz says she has experienced a tremendous amount of support as she learns to be the educator her students need.

"Fresno State and Fresno Unified have gone above and beyond to help me be successful during my residency," she says. "The Fresno Teacher Residency Program creates supportive and loving teachers that strive to provide an education to all students, focusing on creating safe environments for resident teachers so we all have opportunities to learn from each other."

Fresno sixth grade teacher Scott Holm first served as a mentor teacher 10 years ago, which he continues today to help prepare the educators of tomorrow.

"It's hard for me to imagine a world where beginning teachers aren't hooked up with a veteran teacher," says Holm, an FTA member. "This residency program makes beginning teachers so much more successful and more confident than they would've been otherwise."



Heather Horsley

BEING INTENTIONAL TO MEET STUDENTS' NEEDS

Everything is deliberate in SFUTR, from the recruitment of resident and cooperating educators to partnering educators with similar values to grounding their efforts in a student-centered approach. The process has led to a high success rate for the program, according to Jaramillo-Woo.

"We are being very intentional about building new



CDE FOUNDATION

Characteristics of Effective Teacher Residency Programs

1. Equity and justice is defined and advanced at all levels of residency work.
2. Authentic partnerships among local educational agencies and institutions of higher education exist.
3. The residency system is financially sustainable.
4. Formative and outcome data are collected, analyzed and used for continuous improvement.
5. Specific hiring needs are defined and filled each year with the recruitment of resident candidates who reflect the district and community's unique diversity.
6. Residents engage in a full year of clinical practice teaching alongside an accomplished mentor teacher, who also reflects the district and community's unique diversity.
7. Coursework and professional learning opportunities are tightly integrated with clinical practice.
8. Clusters of mentors and residents support and learn from one another at residency partners' "teaching schools."
9. Residency graduates are supported to continue their professional learning and develop as leaders.

Adapted from the California Teacher Residency Lab



"This residency program makes beginning teachers so much more successful and more confident than they would've been otherwise."

—**Scott Holm**,
Fresno Teachers Association



▲ Jade Munoz

relationships between a new teacher and the people and resources in the district," she says. "A residency program that is intentional about maintaining networks for residents is better for students and it's better for teachers."

Seasoned middle school math teacher Maria Sanchez and resident teacher Ayo Adedeji are paired this year at Aptos Middle School. In addition to daily discussions about math and lesson plans, Sanchez and Adedeji have deep conversations about social justice and how to center it in their students' experiences.

"I wanted to get as much assistance as I can for the first couple years of teaching and have a strong group of people I can have a connection with," says Adedeji. "It has allowed me to grow a lot just in this one year of teaching."

San Francisco native Nick Hom wanted to teach where he was raised and says he had heard about a program that spoke to the culture of community and would prepare him for teaching in the city. Along with the high ratio of support for resident teachers, Hom was certain teaching in his home district as a part of SFUTR was the right decision.



Scott Holm

"I wanted to have that impact and give back to the communities that raised me," says Hom, an AP calculus teacher at Burton Academic High School and UESF member.

Now in his sixth year teaching, Hom is paying it forward, serving as a cooperating teacher in SFUTR. He enjoys the everyday experience of collaborating with his resident teacher, Emily Lam, who also took over all of Hom's classes when he went on paternity leave earlier this year.

▼ Resident Ayo Adedeji with mentor Maria Sanchez.



Hom says being a mentor teacher keeps him fresh and young, inspiring him to push harder.

“It makes me a better educator,” he says. “Having a student teacher helps me to dream as well.”

SFUTR is unique statewide due to the collaboration with UESF, which is an equal partner with the district and Stanford invested in the program’s success. Jaramillo-Woo says that prior to a \$150 million grant from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), the district had to apply for grants with UESF helping with grant-writing and other support. A SFUTR working group with representatives from both SFUSD and UESF meets once a month to discuss and guide the program.

With teacher layoffs potentially next year and first-year teachers bearing the brunt of impacts, SFUTR worked with UESF on how best to support their residency graduates, with UESF holding workshops to inform them about the layoff process.

“That’s where having the partnership with the union was very influential for our members to feel supported and connected,” Jaramillo-Woo says.

Former resident and current eighth grade Spanish language arts teacher Sara Mokhtari Fox says the union’s involvement in new teacher programs is especially helpful.

“I wanted to get as much assistance as I can for the first couple years of teaching and have a strong group of people I can have a connection with.”

—Ayo Adedeji,
Student CTA and resident teacher

“It really is comforting and builds security in your new career when you know who to go to for support,” she says.

LOOKING THROUGH AN EQUITY LENS

When Mokhtari Fox was researching teacher credential programs, she wanted to find something that would get her into the classroom quickly. With a stipend that would help with living costs and a one-year intensive program rooted in real-world work in the classroom, a teacher residency program was the choice for her.

“SFUTR formulated and solidified my approach to being a classroom teacher and installed an equity lens in how I look at my students, their families and my co-workers,” says Mokhtari Fox, a UESF member. “In this program, I was taught to see who needs the most support and how to give them more of my time. Who as a teacher do I focus on to pull up with the rest of the class?”

In teacher residency programs, residents engage in experiences that deepen their understanding of how race, culture, poverty and other factors impact students’ needs and their own perceptions and beliefs. Horsley says it’s important to have conversations that challenge each other in areas of equity, inclusion, diversity and justice – an opportunity to reflect and grow together as mentors and residents.

“How do we embody anti-racist practices while acknowledging anti-Blackness and other racist practices still exist?” asks Horsley.

Wahleithner says in rural Fresno County, centering equity means that resident teachers ask students as early as transitional kindergarten to share their lived experiences, to determine what they can explore together.

“The residents really get to know who their students are and what gets them going,” says Wahleithner, who taught resident teachers in Sanger.

In San Francisco, this work includes training and

▼ Mentor teacher Nick Hom, right, with his resident teacher Emily Lam.



▼ Sara Mokhtari Fox



development in trauma-informed and restorative practices, and identity issues. Hwang says her resident teacher brings a sharp anti-racist lens to the classroom with a particular focus on newcomer students.

“So many kids have gone through a lot of trauma and need additional supports,” Hwang says. “My resident teachers have been able to make those connections.”

While the \$350 million in funding from the state over the next five years will no doubt spur the development of new teacher residency programs, there are continued concerns about the necessity for dedicated funding. Jaramillo-Woo says there needs to be a financial commitment to sustain these valuable programs.

“Without financial support from the federal and state level, we can be the most passionate and driven educators possible, but the work will stop,” she says.

In February, the CTC announced it was funding 41 school districts in the first round of Teacher Residency Capacity Grants, with most receiving \$250,000 (see the list at tinyurl.com/teacherresidency). These are important investments to continue the kind of experience Hom had as a resident at SFUTR.

“It was a place where we could talk about the challenges and joys of urban teaching. We could share stories and learn from each other,” he says. “It has really formed who I am as a teacher right now.” ■

Paying It Forward

Opportunities abound statewide to participate as a mentor teacher (in traditional student teaching programs as well as residency programs) and more are likely to come with the state’s increased investment in teacher residency programs. Current mentor teachers shared advice for fellow educators considering playing this important role in the lives of aspiring educators.

“Think about all that you have under your belt and inside your heart, and how much it would mean to someone to receive that.” —Scott Holm, Fresno Teachers Association

“You learn as much from a resident teacher as they do from you. I’ve found that as I’m observing residents and giving feedback, it causes me to reflect on my own practice.” —Lena Hwang, United Educators of San Francisco

“Every experience I’ve had with my resident teacher has taught me a new tech skill or caused me to think deeply about my practice.” —Maria Sanchez, United Educators of San Francisco

“It pushes me to have good productive conversations and reminds me of the joy and excitement of having my first class.” —Nick Hom, United Educators of San Francisco

“It keeps me current and makes me question how I do things.” —Emma Nalchajian, Fresno Teachers Association

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COMMUNITY SCHOOLS: A Transformative Journey

Educators, families and partners are key
to the collaborative process

By Julian Peebles

EDUCATORS ACROSS THE STATE are embarking on the journey to build community schools in their local districts, identifying needs and developing partnerships to create transformative experiences for their students.

A community school is both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources with an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, leadership and community engagement, leading to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities. With a historic \$3 billion in funding from the state (and another \$1.5 billion proposed in the governor’s May budget revision), many local associations are applying for planning and implementation grants from

the California Community Schools Partnership Program to help support their work.

These investments will strengthen and expand community schools across the state, with a focus on schools and communities with demonstrated need and an eye toward converting every high-poverty school (more than 80 percent of students qualifying for free or reduced-price meals) in the state to a community school within the next five years.

While locals like United Teachers Los Angeles and United Educators of San Francisco have been working to build community schools programs for some time, many others are at different points of the journey. We checked in with three local associations to learn about their progress.

1

ANAHEIM SECONDARY TEACHERS ASSOCIATION:

Building Trust Along the Way

Anaheim Union High School District

Enrollment: 29,183

Unduplicated pupil count of free/reduced-price meals,

English Learners & foster youth: 80.1%

English Learners: 19.4%

Anaheim Secondary Teachers Association (ASTA) has been active in the community school movement for more than six years, with concerted efforts to build community schools. Last year, ASTA received a \$75,000 Safe and Just Schools grant from NEA to develop structures to create community school policies, forming a steering committee and two school site committees. ASTA President Grant Schuster says they are looking to further expand with grants they applied for this year.

The Anaheim Union High School Board adopted a resolution in March supporting community schools, acknowledging the work done by the steering committee and affirming the need for shared leadership as they move forward. The district will continue to develop two of its 18 schools to be community schools next year — Anaheim High and Sycamore Junior High — with a new \$23.275 million state grant funding these and 11 more schools, according to Schuster.

"It's been a good process to start building trust as we build community schools," Schuster says. "The only way this works is if we trust each other."

Schuster says the community school movement is a generational opportunity to lift voices that have not traditionally been heard, so that



Grant Schuster

"The only way this works is if we trust each other."

schools become more reflective of the communities they serve.

"We're looking at a measurable transformation of how public schools are operated and how they interact with their communities," he says. "It's really exciting."

ASTA's work has attracted the attention of fellow educators looking to build community schools in their districts. Schuster says a group from Chula Vista Educators (CVE) visited an Anaheim steering committee meeting to get ideas for how to collaborate in their community. CVE President Rosi Martinez says their local's vice president is now on full release time to work on the community school effort, funded through a Community Schools Grant from NEA.

Next up in Anaheim: the completion of need and asset assessments, followed by recommendations by site committees to the school district with the steering committee presenting directly to the school board. Schuster says they will continue to build their coalition.

"Everyone is invested in success," he says.

The Six Pillars of Community Schools

The Community Schools Model advanced by CTA and NEA includes six pillars of practice. Unlike most public education models, these pillars are adaptable to the needs of a school's students, staff, families and community, and pay particular attention to creating, supporting, and sustaining a culturally relevant and responsive climate.



Strong, Relevant Curriculum

Community schools provide a rich and varied academic program, allowing students to acquire both foundational and advanced knowledge and skills in many content areas.



High-Quality Teaching – Teachers at community schools are fully licensed, knowledgeable about their content and skillful in their practice.



Inclusive Leadership – The leadership teams of community schools include educators, other school staff, parents, students and community members.



Positive Behavior Practices

Community schools emphasize positive relationships and interactions. Restorative discipline practices such as peer mediation, community service and post-conflict resolution help students learn from their mistakes and foster positive, healthy school climates where respect and compassion are core principles.



Family & Community Partnerships

Families, caregivers and community members are partners in community schools. Their engagement is ongoing and extends beyond volunteerism to roles in decision-making, governance and advocacy.



Community Support Services

Community schools provide meals, healthcare, mental health counseling and other services before, during and after school. Connections to the community are critically important so support services and referrals are available for families and other community members.



2

OCEANSIDE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION:

Involving All Stakeholders

Oceanside Unified School District

Enrollment: 18,984

Unduplicated pupil count of free/reduced-price meals, English Learners & foster youth: 58.6%

English Learners: 11.9%



Tiffany Cooper-Ortega

“We can teach our hearts out, but our students need more.”

Educators in Oceanside are excitedly preparing for the debut of four community schools (three elementary, one middle) this fall, after pushing for and placing in the district’s Local Control Accountability Plan a process for this to happen. Oceanside Teachers Association (OTA) President Tiffany Cooper-Ortega says community schools are about so much more than the wrap-around services often associated with the model.

“It’s also the mindset of the stakeholders working together,” says Cooper-Ortega. “I don’t want to say this is the future of education — it’s what education should have always been.”

Cooper-Ortega says OTA and school district officials established shared leadership from the start of their collaborative work on community schools, lauding their “strong partnership.” With an active political action committee, OTA worked to get progressive leaders elected to their school board, which now has three

current or former CTA members. She says the district’s “ask a teacher first” mentality has laid the groundwork for the important community schools effort.

“We worked hard to cultivate this partnership and this shared decision-making in this district,” Cooper-Ortega says.

OTA is currently surveying key groups in school communities, informing members about community schools, and even looking at potential bargaining implications, such as winning contractually guaranteed shared leadership in community schools. With student needs exacerbated by the pandemic, Cooper-Ortega says the services and support provided in community schools are more important than ever.

“We can teach our hearts out, but our students need more,” she says. “I’m excited to see families and students validated, letting them know that this is their part in education. It’s not just something that happens to them but something they have a hand in.”

3

CENTRAL UNIFIED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION:

Empowering Families

Central Unified School District

Enrollment: 15,742

Unduplicated pupil count of free/reduced-price meals, English Learners & foster youth: 71.2%

English Learners: 13.9%



Judee Martinez

The recent funding for community schools has accelerated plans in Fresno’s Central Unified School District, according to Judee Martinez, Central Unified Teachers Association (CUTA) president.

“It’s not going to take two to three years,” says Martinez. “We need to get on it now.”

CUTA set out to inform its members about community schools and their transformative power. When the district said it wanted to move



THIS STORY IS part of our ongoing coverage of community schools. See cta.org/communityschools for background and information, and cta.org/communityschools-building-heart-hub for a broad look at educators' work around the state.

Benefits of Community Schools

Community schools help foster:

- Lower rates of absenteeism
- Better work habits, grades, test scores and behaviors
- Higher enrollment in college preparatory classes
- Higher graduation rates

Watch CTA's video for details on community schools' benefits at tinyurl.com/communityschools-benefits.

State Awards Community Schools Grants

The California Community Schools Partnership Program (CCSPP)

supports schools' efforts to partner with community agencies and local government to align community resources to improve student outcomes. These partnerships provide an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement.

The State Board of Education in May approved more than \$38 million in community schools planning grants to 193 local educational agencies (LEAs), with most receiving \$200,000. Central Unified School District and Chula Vista Elementary School District are among many districts with CTA-affiliated local associations that won planning grants.

Nearly \$600 million in community schools implementation grants were also awarded to 71 LEAs. Among many school districts with CTA locals, Oceanside Unified School District will receive \$8.3 million and San Francisco Unified will get \$33.7 million, while Oakland Unified will receive the largest grant in this funding cycle at \$66.7 million.

Alameda County Office of Education was also selected as the contractor for the CCSPP Lead Technical Assistance Center.

For a full list of grantees, visit:

tinyurl.com/CommSchoolsPlanning (planning grants) and tinyurl.com/CommSchoolsImplementation (implementation grants).

—Julian Peebles

forward, Martinez says they decided to do it together. They selected a school, Teague Elementary, to designate as a community school, meeting with the staff and school community to build the team necessary for success. CUTA received a \$75,000 Safe and Just Schools grant from NEA.

Martinez says that when educators met with the Teague community for the first time, they learned of needs that included a food pantry and a bus to transport school families without vehicles to important appointments and tutoring services.

"This is about empowering our families and letting them know we want the same thing for their children,"

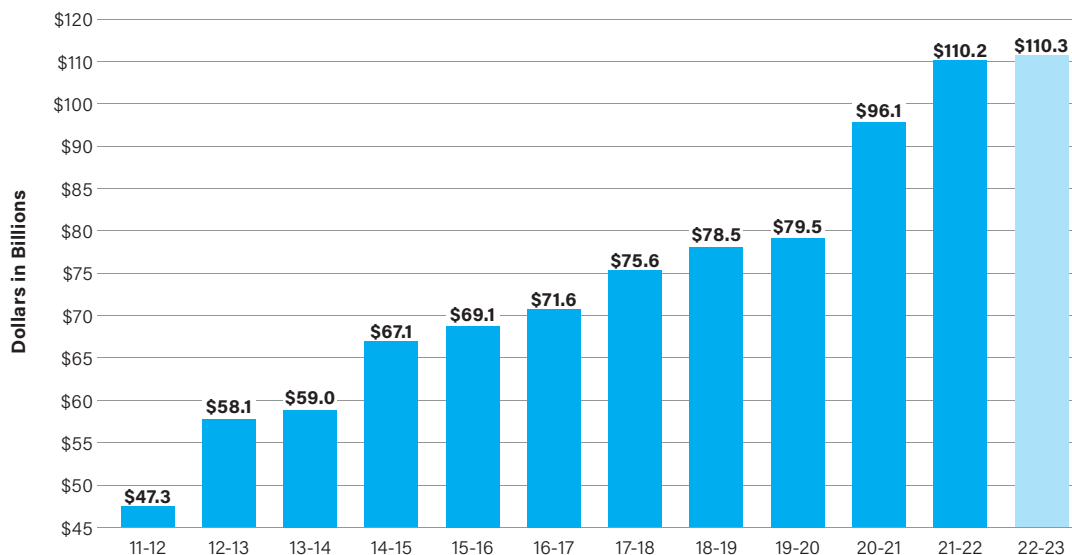
Martinez says. "The teachers were very emotional because they're so excited."

Martinez says the district is submitting a grant proposal for further community schools work. She says they already have eyes on a second and third school in the district, perhaps a middle school that Teague feeds into and then a high school. Martinez says she is grateful for community schools training from NEA as well as constant support from CTA along their journey.

"It makes me proud to be a part of CTA and NEA," she says. "We have always said we will do what's best for kids. They are our future, and community schools are the future of education."

PROPOSITION 98 FUNDING, 2011-12 TO 2022-23

► Proposition 98 requires a minimum percentage of the state budget to be spent on K-14 education. Gov. Newsom’s May Revision proposes a record \$110.3 billion in Prop. 98 funding.



Record Education Funding in Budget’s May Revision

Proposed 2022-23 state funding for public schools and colleges adds more resources for students **By Julian Peeples**

HIGHER THAN PROJECTED revenues mean that California students will be the big winners in the 2022-23 state budget, after Gov. Gavin Newsom’s May Revision proposes increases to already-record funding for public schools and community colleges.

The final budget is negotiated through the legislative process, and the State Legislature has until June 15 to pass a balanced budget. (For the latest budget news, see cta.org/educator.)

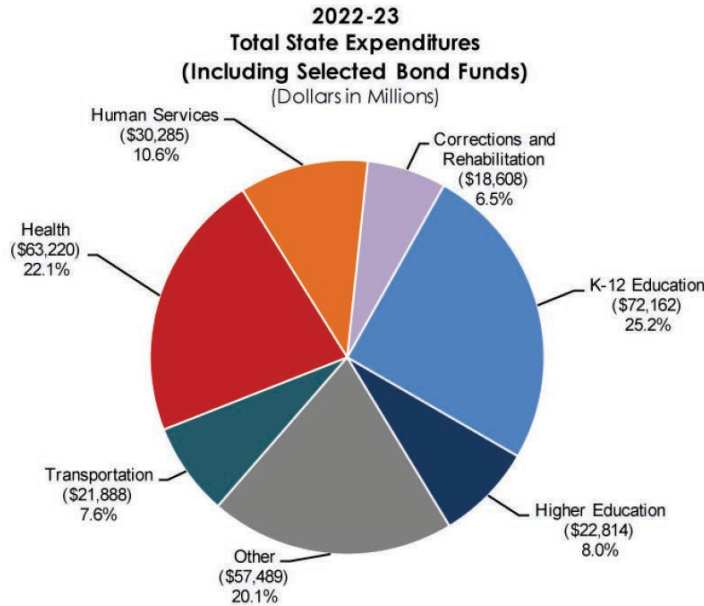
The governor’s revised Proposition 98 minimum education funding level for the 2022-23 budget is projected to be \$110.3 billion, an \$8.3 billion increase from initial budget proposal in January. The revised budget includes an additional \$1.5 billion in ongoing Prop. 98 funding for California’s Community Colleges.

The May Revision includes a \$97.5 billion budget surplus,

meaning the governor’s updated revenue projections are much higher than previous forecasts.

“Educators welcome the very good news of robust revenues due to a strong economy and a budget proposal that would bring record funding for our public schools and community colleges,” CTA President E. Toby Boyd says. “Our schools and students are still reeling from the pandemic and the inequities it exposed, and this May revise provides added hope that California’s 6 million students will be closer to having the resources they need to succeed.”

Noting that the budget includes a lot of one-time funding, Boyd says that the state is moving in the right direction in per-student spending, but there is still a way to go. He says with the fifth-largest economy in the world, there’s no reason schools shouldn’t have the highest per pupil funding in the country.



“Educators welcome the news of robust revenues and a budget proposal that would bring record funding for public schools and community colleges.”

—CTA President **E. Toby Boyd**

Highlights of revisions to the education portions of the budget include:

Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF): \$4.4 billion in ongoing Prop. 98 funding to provide a 6.56-percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), updated from the 5.33-percent COLA in the January budget. The revision includes an additional \$1.2 billion in ongoing Prop. 98 funding to increase LCFF base funding for school districts and charter schools to address ongoing fiscal pressures, staffing shortages and other needs, as well as \$101.2 million to augment LCFF funding for county offices of education. Total LCFF funding in the May Revision is \$73.4 billion, \$3.2 billion above the January budget.

Community Schools: An additional \$1.5 billion in one-time Prop. 98 funding to expand access to community school grants.

COLA: An additional \$62.1 million in ongoing Prop. 98 funding to select categorical programs to reflect a change in the COLA from 5.33 percent to 6.56 percent.

Discretionary Block Grant: \$8 billion in one-time Prop. 98 discretionary funding for local education agencies to help offset increased operational costs. The funding would be allocated on a per-student basis and could be used for any purpose, including protecting staffing levels, addressing student learning challenges and supporting mental health and wellness. The budget includes \$750 million in one-time Prop. 98 funding to community college districts for block grants to address issues related to the pandemic and reduce long-term obligations.

Transitional Kindergarten: \$639.2 million to expand eligibility for transitional kindergarten.

School Nutrition: An additional \$611.8 million in ongoing Prop. 98 funding to maintain the federal meal reimbursement

rates scheduled to expire on June 30.

Expanded Learning Opportunities Program:

An additional \$3.4 billion in ongoing Prop. 98 funding for the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program program, increasing per-pupil funding and expanding the number of participating agencies. The May Revision increases this investment by an additional \$403 million in ongoing Prop. 98 funding, bringing total ongoing funding to \$4.8 billion.

Student Centered Funding Formula (SCFF) Base Increase:

\$250 million in ongoing Prop. 98 funding to increase the SCFF’s funding rates for community colleges. Additionally, the budget proposes \$125 million in ongoing Prop. 98 funding in recognition of the digital footprints that community college districts have developed to accommodate demand for distance learning.

Educator Workforce:

- \$500 million in one-time Prop. 98 funding to expand residency programs for teachers and school counselors.
- \$300 million in one-time Prop. 98 funding to provide resources for professional learning through the Educator Effectiveness Block Grant.
- \$85 million in one-time Prop. 98 funding to create Pre-K-12 educator resources and professional learning to implement the Next Generation Science Standards, the California Math Framework, the California Computer Science Standards and the math and science areas of the California Preschool Learning Foundations.
- \$80 million in ongoing Prop. 98 funding for the Classified School Employee Summer Assistance Program, which provides supplemental pay for education support professionals during months when they are not employed. ■

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Julian Peebles

Although AB 1752 has been held, we are moving forward in efforts to achieve parity for community college educators

THE FOLLOWING ARE bills of interest to educators and public education that are making their way through the State Legislature.

Community College pay parity bill held in committee again

AB 1752 (Santiago): Part-time community college faculty are currently only compensated for their instructional time and are not paid for the hours they spend grading papers, planning coursework and other requirements. Some do not even earn minimum wage. This shortchanges students, harms the community college system and exploits instructors. CTA is a co-sponsor of AB 1752. Read our story at cta.org/communitycollege_parttime_lawsuit. Status: Held under submission in the Assembly Appropriations Committee

Protect Retirees from Retroactive Pension Cuts

SB 868 (Cortese) and **AB 1667** (Cooper): A systemic inequality in the CalSTRS system has left some educators who retired prior to 1999 with less equitable benefits than their peers. SB 868 will create a one-time permanent adjustment and stabilize the financial footing of these retirees, most of whom are women. AB 1667 will protect retired educators from retroactive pension cuts resulting from employers' reporting mistakes to CalSTRS by establishing a process that promotes accuracy and transparency. Both these bills are sponsored by CTA. Status: SB 868 – Approved by the Senate 28-2. Awaiting hearing by the

Assembly Public Employment and Retirement Committee. **AB 1667** – Approved by the Assembly 75-0. Awaiting assignment to Senate committee.

Creating a Pathway for Permanent Status for All Educators

AB 2573 (McCarty): Current law prevents some educators from obtaining permanent status. This includes adult education teachers, career technical education teachers and teachers in school districts and county offices of education with less than 250 students. Some districts have acted in bad faith and kept these educators in probationary status year after year. This denies these educators basic professional rights, hurts students and exacerbates the teacher shortage. This bill is co-sponsored by CTA. Status: Approved by the Assembly 47-18. Awaiting assignment to Senate committee.

Streamlining Medi-Cal Billing for Student Health Support

AB 2034 (O'Donnell): The pandemic has intensified the need for student health and behavioral health services. But due to problems with the Local Education Agency Medi-Cal Billing Option Program (LEA BOP), some districts have ceased participating, despite the enrollment of half of all California students in Medi-Cal. AB 2034 will streamline this process and expand access to critical services for students. Status: Approved by the Assembly 76-0. Awaiting assignment to Senate committee.

TAKE ACTION!

Help us pass these and other important bills. To learn more and to send letters to your legislators urging them to support these bills, visit cta.org/takeaction.

Parity for Community College Instructors

Educators file class-action lawsuit over wage violations

By **Julian Peeples**

Two Long Beach City College (LBCC) educators have filed a class-action lawsuit charging LBCC with violating minimum wage laws with the way it pays part-time faculty, in a case that is likely to shine a light on the lack of pay parity for part-time instructors at California's community colleges.

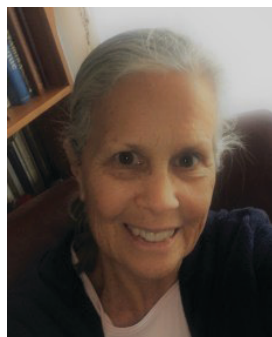
Some community colleges unlawfully treat part-time adjunct instructors as exempt from minimum wage laws. Part-time faculty do not earn enough money to be exempt from California's minimum wage requirements. These colleges pay part-time instructors an hourly rate only for each hour teaching in the classroom, in front of students, despite requiring these instructors to work many hours performing teaching-related work outside of the classroom.

"I'm not paid for the prep that each course requires," said Karen Roberts, a longtime part-time art history instructor at LBCC and Community College Association (CCA) member who is one of the plaintiffs in the lawsuit along with Seija Rohkea, also a CCA member. "Asking us to work for free is wrong, unethical and shows a lack of care for employees."

The lawsuit has the potential to benefit more than 650 current part-time faculty at LBCC as well as former faculty. The practice of paying part-time faculty only for hours spent in the classroom is widespread throughout many of California's community colleges, despite these colleges expecting and evaluating the job performance of these instructors based on outside-the-classroom requirements for which they are not compensated, including grading, planning lectures and meeting with students.

"For too long, Long Beach City College and other community colleges throughout the state have unfairly and unlawfully

exploited part-time faculty," CTA President E. Toby Boyd said. "We thank Karen and Seija for stepping forward and shining a light on the unfair and illegal practices at Long Beach City College and at other community colleges."



Karen Roberts

"The current system forces many part-time instructors to work multiple jobs just to eke out a living. The exploitation is unfair, and, when compensation drops below the minimum wage, it is illegal."

—CCA President **Eric Kaljumägi**

The plaintiffs are seeking back pay for the last three years of unpaid work time plus interest, retirement system contributions for the unpaid wages, a court order that LBCC pay part-time faculty for all hours worked, and any additional penalties prescribed by law. There have been many unsuccessful attempts to get LBCC to address this issue in the past through collective bargaining efforts. The union representing the plaintiffs, Certificated Hourly Instructors (CHI), has tried to address and remedy the issue through negotiations, but the college has refused to change its illegal compensation structure.

"California's Community College system is the largest higher education system in the world. More than half of classes in the system are taught by part-time instructors being paid far less on an hourly basis than their full-time counterparts," said CCA President Eric Kaljumägi. "The current system forces many part-time instructors to work multiple jobs just to eke out a living. The exploitation is unfair, and, when compensation drops below the minimum wage, it is illegal."

CTA co-sponsored legislation to support pay parity for part-time community college faculty. AB 1752 by Assemblymember Miguel Santiago will ensure part-time faculty are being compensated for work they are required to do in and out of the classroom. Unfortunately, AB 1752 was held under submission by the Assembly Appropriations Committee. ■



Big News on Student Loans

Temporary waiver can help educators with public service loans — but the deadline looms



Vladimir Solomianyi/Unsplash

IN OCT. 2021, the Biden Administration issued a “Limited Waiver” of some of the strict requirements of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program. Qualifying payments now include older federal loans, as well as non-Income Driven Repayment and late payments.

While many have already received forgiveness under this temporary waiver, or are working toward eligibility, the U.S. Dept. of Education estimates that hundreds of thousands more borrowers will be on average two years closer to loan forgiveness because of the waiver’s provisions.

Educators and other public service workers must submit a PSLF application before Oct. 31, 2022, to receive the benefits of the Limited Waiver. Find information at cta.org/public-service-loan-forgiveness-pslf-and-temporary-waiver.

Take action before Oct. 31, 2022!

Go to studentaid.gov/pslf, log in with your Federal Student Aid ID (or create one if you do not have one) and make sure your contact information is up to date. The U.S. Department of Education uses this as their primary method of contact to reach you about the progress of your PSLF application.

If you have a Direct Loan, have made 120 payments, and have applied for PSLF, you should receive automatic forgiveness or updates about your payment count soon.

If you have a Direct Loan and have NOT applied for PSLF, you need to apply for PSLF immediately, even if you haven’t reached 120 payments yet.

If you have a Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) or Perkins loan, you must first consolidate into a Direct Loan, then apply for PSLF before the waiver period ends Oct. 31, 2022.

To begin your PSLF application, visit studentaid.gov/pslf to use the Department of Education’s PSLF Help Tool.

Why You Should Apply

You should submit the PSLF application even if you have not yet made 120 qualifying payments or reached 10 years of service. Submitting the application will help confirm you are on the right track by ensuring you are making qualifying payments and working for a qualifying employer.

It will also allow Federal Student Aid (FSA) to alert you if any changes are necessary and, under the temporary waiver, ensure any payments you’ve made that qualify under the temporary waiver but would not otherwise qualify under the regular PSLF requirements are counted toward your total.

Learn More

Visit NEA’s Student Debt page at nea.org/your-rights-workplace/student-debt-support/navigate-your-student-debt, where you find helpful information and tools, including the podcast “The PSLF Changes that Could Change Your Life”.

Watch the NEA webinar “Educators of Color and Public Service Loan Forgiveness” at tinyurl.com/PSLFeducatorsofcolor. Check out the NEA Student Debt Navigator powered by Savi, a tool to find options to better manage your student loan debt (tinyurl.com/NEAstudentdebtnavigator).

BARGAINING ROUNDUP

Compiled by **Julian Peoples**



UNITE SUMMIT:

Educators Win First-ever Contract

After more than two years of fighting for respect, Unite Summit educators at seven Summit Public Schools in the San Francisco Bay Area won their first-ever union contract.

The victory came after Unite Summit members organized and escalated their activism, voting to authorize a strike in March and picketing outside Summit's home office.

"Our goal was to reach an agreement that would help to counter high teacher turnover and provide our students with additional support," said Janine Peñafort, president of Unite Summit. "This contract was a long time coming, but in the end, we achieved our goals. We look forward to a productive and collaborative relationship with Summit."

The contract includes:

- New standards to support English language learners, including class size caps for middle and high school, along with a stipend for educators who teach those classes.
- Four weeks of fully paid parental leave.
- Fair discipline and dismissal policies that allow teachers to advocate for their students without fear of retaliation.
- A fair salary schedule that replaces a subjective "merit-based" pay system.
- Provisions that will help to create greater mental health supports on Summit's campuses.
- A 40-hour workweek that includes duty-free lunches.

OAKLAND:

Educators Go on One-Day ULP Strike

Oakland educators went on a one-day unfair labor practice (ULP) strike in late-April for the schools their students deserve.

The strikes came after Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) failed to follow its 2019 agreement with Oakland Education Association (OEA) to engage with families when considering closing schools. Despite the agreement, widespread outcry from families to stop school closures and a complaint filed by the ACLU of Northern California on behalf of the Justice for Oakland Students Coalition, 11 schools are scheduled to close by the end of next year — three this year and eight the following year.

OUSD has a history of closing schools in predominantly Black and Brown communities. Ending school closures was a top priority in the 2019 strike, resulting in the agreement that OUSD is now blatantly disregarding. The district also refused to bargain the closures.

"Let's be clear — educators don't want to strike, but we are because OUSD has forced us to fight to protect the schools our Black and Brown students deserve," OEA President Keith Brown said the morning of the strike. "Rather than putting their resources towards unilaterally closing schools, OUSD should be acting as a respected governing body of learning and walking the walk to support the future of Oakland's families."

In February, the Oakland School Board voted to close 11 schools only a week after making the proposal public. Massive community outcry followed, including a rally/march in downtown Oakland and a hunger strike by two Oakland educators. Despite the pleas of students, families and school communities, the school board reaffirmed its decision to close schools as soon as the end of this school year, refusing to consider alternatives or delay the decision.

"We find ourselves facing a majority school board that has gone back on its promise to not ambush a school with a last-minute closure," Brown said. "Enough is enough. We need to stop the school closures. As labor and community, we are united for the schools our students deserve!"





LOS ANGELES:

Alliance Educators Strike After Management Refuses to Bargain

Educators at four Alliance College-Ready charter schools in Los Angeles went on a one-day Unfair Labor Practice strike in April in response to the Alliance Board of Directors refusing to bargain for more than three years, despite multiple orders by the state to do so.

Picket lines were packed with educators, families and community supporters at Alliance Burton Tech, Alliance Gertz-Merkin, Alliance Leichtman Levine Family Foundation ESAT, and Alliance Morgan McKinzie High School. A supermajority of educators at these schools voted to unionize with United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) as Alliance Educators United more than three years ago. Yet Alliance management has refused to recognize the union.

“We have spent four years attempting to have our voices heard,” said Michael Miller, an Alliance history teacher. “Meanwhile, Alliance has spent four years ignoring teachers, students and court orders.”

The Alliance Educators United movement is made up of teachers, counselors, psychologists and other credentialed professionals in the Alliance College-Ready Public Schools. They are fighting for the resources and services their students need, smaller class sizes, teacher and counselor recruitment, educator voice in decision-making and a union contract, so students will no longer have to wonder if their teachers will be back next year.

“Our schools need to rebuild our teams every year, and all of our teachers are burned out,” said Alliance teacher Tony To. “It is heartbreaking when a student comes up to you and says, ‘are you coming back next year?’ Alliance, you leave us no choice but to strike.”

Learn more about Alliance Educators United and send a letter of support calling on Alliance to bargain with educators by visiting allianceeducators.com.

▼ SEA’s hardworking bargaining team.



SWEETWATER:

Collaboration Key to Successful Settlement

Members of the Sweetwater Education Association (SEA) bargaining team worked into the night on a settlement that was achieved through mutual respect and relationships built during the COVID-19 pandemic. Over that time, SEA and Sweetwater Union High School District (SHUSD) have worked consistently through challenges to ensure a safe return to in-person instruction.

Those collaborative relationships proved crucial in a settlement that “will be especially important as we face a future with declining enrollment and no guarantees regarding state and federal funding,” SEA President Julie Walker said.

Sweetwater educators won a more than 6 percent on-schedule pay increase over the next two years, along with a 4 percent off-schedule bonus and a \$1,000 increase to their health benefits.

Walker was pleased that concerns brought to the table were heard and addressed during this bargain cycle.

“We are committed to work with leadership to have the best working conditions in our district and to make Sweetwater ‘the place’ to work in San Diego County because good working conditions and satisfied teachers and staff create the best conditions for our students,” she said.



BYRON:

Strike Averted as Educators Win for Students

After overwhelmingly authorizing a strike in April, members of Byron Teachers Association (BTA) won a contract that invests in the learning all Byron students deserve.

Byron educators started April 13 with picketing in advance of their fact-finding hearing with the district later that day. By the evening, BTA and Byron Union School District had reached an agreement that will increase educators' salaries by more than 7 percent on-schedule for 2021-2023 and 4 percent in off-schedule bonuses.

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▼ Ryan Brazil, top, and her fourth-graders hold copies of their book.



Inspiring Love, Empathy and Compassion

Educator Ryan Brazil and class build awareness with 'Anti-Bias ABC's' By Julian Peoples

IN A SCHOOL named Love, Alameda fourth grade educator Ryan Brazil and her class are inspiring compassion, sharing the joy of words like “hope,” “empathy” and “voice” in their newly published book, “Anti-Bias ABC’s.”

The book features anti-bias-related words for each letter of the alphabet, along with descriptions and illustrations penned by Brazil’s students. The mission to spread love has come a long way since Brazil first had the idea to write a book with her class — “Anti-Bias ABC’s” can be purchased on every major online bookseller, at Target and at local bookstores like Alameda’s Books Inc., which invited Brazil’s class to sign their books at an event in May.

“We’re really excited. Our hope is that people learn from this and then they can teach other people about it,” says Brazil, a

member of Alameda Education Association. “We want to inspire love, empathy and compassion.”

Brazil says that she had 26 students at the beginning of the school year and decided to write an alphabet book with her class, with each student getting a letter to write and draw about. The class discusses social justice every day and Love Elementary School has an anti-bias group. Brazil came up with the idea to do their alphabet book on the topic and brought it back to her students, who embraced it and charged ahead with the creation.

A great deal of thought was put into the words that were selected for each letter, and Brazil’s students discussed the merits of each to make the tough decisions about which would make the cut.

“Why do we want to do open-minded instead of oppression,”

▼ Young authors sign their books at Books Inc. in Alameda in May.




“They are on top of the world. They have this pride. Every kid is an expert on their specific word.”

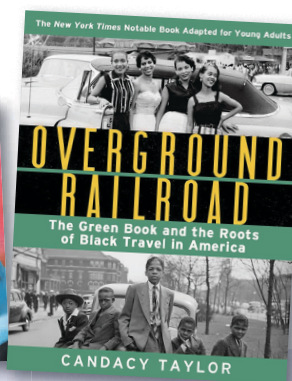
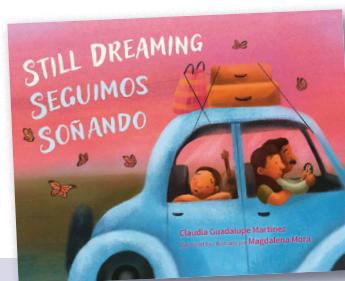
—Ryan Brazil, Alameda Education Association

Brazil asked, noting that the class came to a consensus on the tone they wanted to set. “We decided to keep it positive.”

Brazil initially was going to publish the book using a kit, but decided the result wasn’t high-quality enough. She researched the options and decided to self-publish the hardcover book.

“And it kind of just exploded,” she says. “I wanted it to be nice quality because I thought the book was so amazing.”

As of press time, Brazil is happy to report they’ve sold close to 300 books. Her students are 



Social Justice Reading for Young People

GET YOUR students inspired! A few suggestions from socialjusticebooks.org/booklists that have published thus far in 2022:

Still Dreaming / Seguimos Soñando, by Claudia Guadalupe Martínez, Magdalena Mora (illustrator), Luis Humberto Crosthwaite (translator). During the Mexican Repatriation between 1930 and 1940, two million people living in the United States were forcibly removed and sent to live in Mexico. A young boy and his family leave their home and begin a journey filled with uncertainty.

Truth Has a Power of Its Own: Conversations about a People’s History, by Howard Zinn and Ray Suarez

Days of Infamy: How a Century of Bigotry Led to Japanese American Internment, by Lawrence Goldstone

Bad Mexicans: Race, Empire, and Revolution in the Borderlands, by Kelly Lytle Hernández

Insurgent Social Studies: Scholar-Educators Disrupting Erasure and Marginality, edited by Sarah B. Shear, Natasha Hakimali Merchant, and Wayne Au

Abdul’s Story, by Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow and Tiffany Rose (Illustrator)

Call Me Miss Hamilton: One Woman’s Case for Equality and Respect, by Carole Boston Weatherford and Jeffery Boston Weatherford (illustrator)

Yes! No! A First Conversation about Consent, by Megan Madison, Jessica Ralli, and Isabel Roxas (illustrator)

Augusta Savage: The Shape of a Sculptor’s Life, by Marilyn Nelson

Evicted! The Struggle for the Right to Vote, by Alice Faye Duncan and Charly Palmer (illustrator)

A History of Me, by Adrea Theodore and Erin Robinson (illustrator)

Ida B. Wells, Voice of Truth: Educator, Feminist, and Anti-Lynching Civil Rights Leader, by Michelle Duster and Laura Freeman (illustrator)

Overground Railroad: The Green Book and the Roots of Black Travel in America — Young Adult Adaptation, by Candacy Taylor. Chronicles the history of the Green Book, which was published from 1936 to 1966 and was the “Black travel guide to America.” For years, it was dangerous for African Americans to travel; they couldn’t eat, sleep, or even get gas at most white-owned businesses. Includes photos of Green Book sites, and interviews with people who owned and used these facilities.

Seeking Freedom: The Untold Story of Fortress Monroe and the Ending of Slavery in America, by Selene Castrovilla and E. B. Lewis (Illustrator)

Star Child: A Biographical Constellation of Octavia Estelle Butler, by Ibi Zoboi

excited to be published authors, especially about their chosen topic.

“They are on top of the world. They have this pride,” says Brazil. “Every kid is an expert on their specific word.”

Brazil says being anti-bias is a choice we all need to make every day. She says that because a lot of our biases are implicit, we don’t even know we have them. As educators, it’s crucial to be conscious of these biases, acknowledge them and keep working to be fair to everyone. The book celebrates this equity and inclusion.

“If we have a little empathy and see things from a different perspective, I think the world would be a better place,” Brazil says. “And we have to start young.”

Brazil is a proud CTA member, noting the fight to continue to teach truth in the classrooms has a direct impact on her classroom experience.

“I can’t do my job if I’m not allowed to teach this stuff,” she says.”

“Anti-Bias ABC’s” is available at online booksellers like Powell’s and through your local bookstore. ■



▲ Self-published by Alameda educator Ryan Brazil, "Anti-Bias ABC's" is available at all major online booksellers and through most local bookstores.

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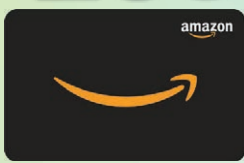
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SUCCESSING AT FAILURE

A novel way to teach a complex topic

WHAT IS market failure? Why is it a problem, and what's the solution?

For the past four years, social science teacher Breanne Wymore has addressed this topic twice a year by assigning her senior-level economics students a interactive market failure project. The results have been creative and fun, as opposed to written essays, "which can be really dry," says the El Dorado Union High School District Faculty Association member.

"It's a mix between a PSA and an infomercial," says Wymore of the projects. "Since kids choose something they are passionate about, I get widely different topics each semester, some on super serious topics like pollution, mental health services, cost of college or the teacher shortages [as well as] light-hearted topics like homework"

In economics, market failure is a situation defined by an inefficient distribution of goods and services in the free market.

"Students have to convince me there is a problem – and then present a 'there's got to be a better way' part - a way to solve the problem." One innovative presentation focused on the environmental and financial costs of chewing gum litter. The solution? Government subsidizes production of biodegradable gum, with higher taxes on the production of non-biodegradable gum.

Students are expected to use economics vocabulary and show a proper supply and demand graph. "The purpose is to get the kids to think critically, look at solutions and get a voice to talk about issues in which they have a passion," Wymore says.

At right, excerpts from a few student examples, with Wymore's commentary:



Breanne Wymore



- ▲ Some students add music or rap videos or other media to their projects, including this one from an industry pollution presentation. "This illustrates just how creative and talented students are. The music video is amazingly well made, the lyrics and music are original, and it's performed by the students themselves. High school students have so much more to give than answers on standardized tests."

Chewing Gum as a Market Failure

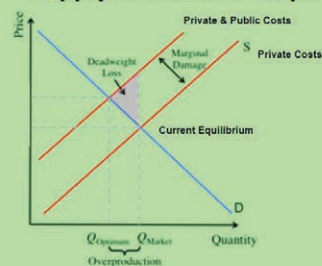
Chewing gum is a **negative externality**, meaning the external costs to society are not included in the supply price. Therefore, the current market equilibrium is failing to account for the costs that fall on those that aren't included in the market exchange of buying and selling gum.

What are these external costs?

Chewing gum creates an abundance of litter, and since many of the name-brand gum products are not biodegradable, there are significant costs: both to the environment and to the workers /companies that must remove the litter from public spaces. "80-90% of chewing gum is not disposed of properly and it's the second most common form of litter after cigarette butts."



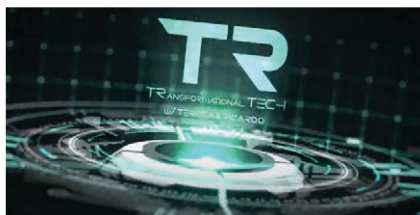
Supply & Demand Graph of Market Failure



The **Pink** section of the graph represents the "deadweight loss" or market inefficiency caused by gum's environmental and financial costs to society.



- ▲ Slides from the gum presentation: "A perfect example of a market failure. They do a great job of explaining the economics and seemed to have fun with it."



▼ Ricardo Recinos and Teresa Magpayo Castro welcome viewers to TRansformatiOnal Tech.



Training on Demand

Expansive webinar series thrives with help from CTA chapter and Instructional Leadership Corps

MOST EVERY THURSDAY afternoon, Teresa Magpayo Castro and Ricardo Recinos sit in their respective home offices, turn on their laptop cameras, flip the switches on their mics and lights, hit record and start livestreaming their webinar “TRansformatiOnal Tech.” (Capital T for Teresa and R for Ricardo.)

The pair are friendly, fun and have an easy rapport with each other and their audience – with whom they chat and answer questions via multiple social media platforms. Their professional development sessions for educators cover such topics as “The Inclusive Classroom: Cross-Language Communication Tools,” “Enhancing Student Learning With AR and VR” (augmented and virtual reality) and “Engaging Students Through Design-Based Learning.” Sessions that address social emotional learning and student engagement are especially popular.

“It’s about access and equity for our kids,” says Magpayo Castro, who, like Recinos, spent years as a classroom teacher. “That is ingrained, no matter what we do. For us, it’s not just fad tech. Tech is a vehicle to provide meaningful instruction.”

While the webinars focus on using tech to support students who might otherwise be left out – English Learners, students with exceptionalities, etc. – they’ve drawn a broader audience beyond educators to include students, parents, school

administrators and board members, and ed tech fans around the country and globe.

Both Magpayo Castro and Recinos are teachers on special assignment with Hacienda La Puente Unified School District, and members of Hacienda-La Puente Teachers Association (HLPTA). The district enrolls 16,500 students, 77 percent of which are Latinx and 16.5 percent Asian; more than 12,000 students receive free/reduced-price lunch.

“There is a huge need for professional development to reach all students,” says Recinos. He and Magpayo Castro both learned English as a second language and understand the needs of ESL students.

“With tech, every student can show mastery, no matter their background,” Magpayo Castro adds.

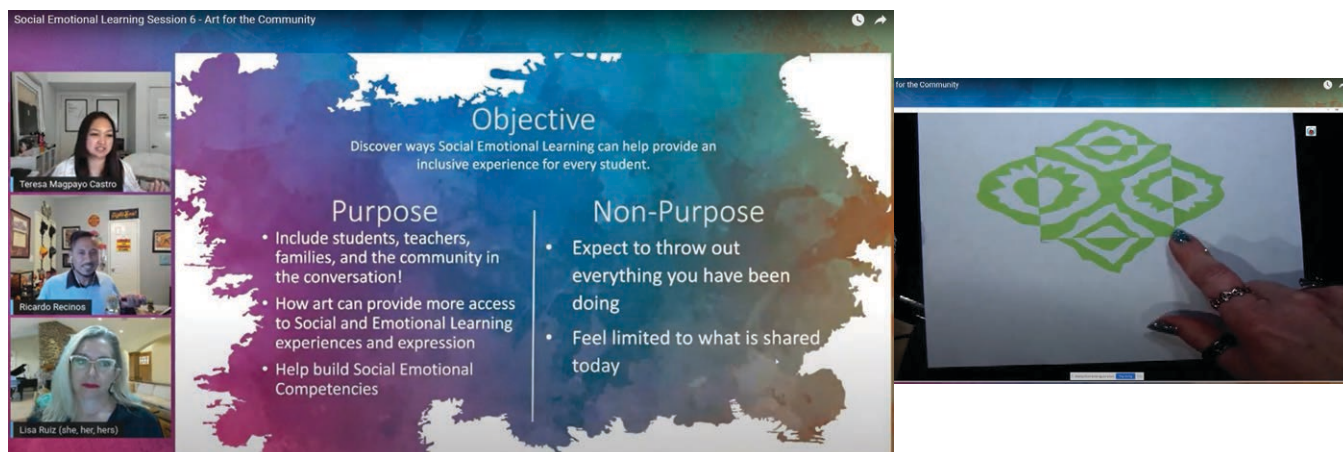
In July 2021, TRansformatiOnal Tech became a pilot project of CTA’s Instructional Leadership Corps (see box). ILC provides training and support for teacher-led professional development, such as helping the HLPTA team secure a grant used to purchase production gear and fund small “thank you” gifts for webinar guests.

Magpayo Castro and Recinos had been training educators for years as district TOSAs when the pandemic, school shut-down and distance learning necessitated a quick shift online

“It’s about access and equity for our kids. It’s not just fad tech. Tech is a vehicle to provide meaningful instruction.”

—Teresa Magpayo Castro, HLPTA

▼ Magpayo Castro and Recinos, at top, with visual and performing arts TOSA Lisa Ruiz, presenting a session on how SEL can help provide an inclusive experience for every student; Ruiz guided viewers in constructing Japanese Notan art, which focuses on the play of light and dark.



to help teachers transition and deliver instruction virtually – a quick shift that most districts were not always able to make. That’s where the union stepped in with the ILC opportunity for training on demand.

Just prior to the pandemic, new HLPTA President Billie Joe Wright had been making plans to engage chapter members as well as community, including setting up an equity team and leveraging member expertise for professional development opportunities. He saw that Magpayo Castro and Recinos’ work dovetailed with his chapter objectives.

“It was those two things combined – PD by our members that reflected the equity component,” Wright says. “I wanted Teresa and Ricardo to lean into that equity part” - mentioning LGBTQ+ examples, mental health topics, etc., that could attract a wider range of members. “HLPTA represents nurses, speech language pathologists, counselors, as well as classroom educators.”

HLPTA and CTA supported Magpayo Castro and Recinos’ attendance at relevant conferences and trainings, and promoted TRansformational Tech on its social media platforms and in communications with parents and community, among other things. Even when schools went back to in-person instruction in 2021, there was an urgent need for more PD – for example,

teachers wanted to know what tech was worth bringing back into the classroom.

The webinars have gained a solid following. “It started with 10 people watching the livestream at first,” Recinos says of the pair’s passion project. “Our loyal watchers still tune in live,

but teachers want PD on demand. We noticed our audience would grow to 300 or more who viewed webinars later.”

“We’re always trying to think of what teachers need from us,” he continues. “And we think about the broader audience and how to bring in parents, students, community. We survey viewers about what topics they want to see, or they tell us.”

Recinos and Magpayo Castro have presented at conferences, such as CTA’s Good Teaching Conference, and hope to develop a more intensive training session in the future,

such as an AR/VR bootcamp. Meanwhile, they continue to volunteer their time for the weekly webinars, often planning and preparing late in the evening after their children have gone to bed and their day jobs are done.

“We’re trying to be purposeful about TRansformational Tech,” Magpayo Castro says, “because we care about student voice and choice.” ■

Find TRansformational Tech on YouTube.

“We’re always trying to think of what teachers need from us. And we think about the audience and how to bring in parents, students, community.”

—Ricardo Recinos, HLPTA

CTA’s Instructional Leadership Corps

The Instructional Leadership Corps is a statewide community of educators committed to transforming our profession through educator-led professional learning so each child in California public schools may reach their full potential and thrive. ILC is currently focused on supporting 60 existing teams and four new regional pilot projects that strengthen partnerships and embed practitioner-led professional learning in local associations across the state. See cta.org/ilc.



Olloweb/Unsplash

A Better Way to Teach Media Literacy

“Lateral reading” encourages students to check multiple sources

By Youki Terada

IN CLASSROOMS ACROSS America, students — digital natives who spend more than seven hours online every day — are struggling to parse fact from fiction. In a 2016 study, for example, researchers gave middle school through college-age students 56 tasks — ranging from evaluating the trustworthiness of a source to distinguishing the difference between a news article and an opinion column. “Overall, young people’s ability to reason about information on the internet can be summed up in one word: bleak,” the researchers concluded.

A fundamental problem is that typical approaches to teaching information literacy are often outdated, says Sam Wineburg, professor of education at Stanford and lead researcher on the study. In a holdover from the days of traditional print news, we often teach a vertical analysis of information: closely reading an article to look for mistakes, dubious assertions, or inconsistencies.

“We learn to think critically by paying close attention and reading thoroughly from top to bottom, thinking very carefully about what we’re reading,” says Wineburg.

But poring over a text with a fine-toothed comb from start to

finish is time-consuming and inefficient, and few readers are knowledgeable enough to suss out factual errors. Instead, Wineburg offers a simple, teachable strategy, drawing from what he calls the “virtuosos of the internet”: professional fact-checkers.

Fact-checkers move laterally rather than vertically, opening multiple browser tabs to validate claims and checking who is behind a site before continuing to read the initial page. They recognize that they’re at a disadvantage if they stay within a website, so they cross-check information across multiple sites to get a second — or even a third, fourth, and fifth — opinion. It’s a modern approach to identifying misinformation online that Wineburg says should be much more commonplace in schools.

At the heart of lateral reading is the idea that a single source of information should always be read with a critical eye.

A different way to navigate the web

At the heart of lateral reading is the idea that a single source of information should always be read with a

critical eye. Instead of taking an article at face value, we should take a step back, says Wineburg, and think about the information it contains as part of a broader ecosystem of both reliable and unreliable sources:

Is the claim corroborated by any other sources?

Are we looking at firsthand accounts, or does the information originate elsewhere?

What is the site's reputation?

Media bias and reliability charts can help readers quickly identify where a major publisher lies on the political divide and how accurate its reporting is — from Slate and *The New York Times* to *The Economist* and *The Wall Street Journal* to Breitbart News — while fact-checking sites like [PolitiFact.com](#), [FactCheck.org](#), and The Washington Post Fact Checker can be used to help quickly verify a claim.

Developing a list of reputable sites and cultivating a skeptical mindset in students — information should be considered dubious until verified — should be central to how students vet information they read online. Meanwhile, a quick scan for spelling or grammatical errors, sensational claims that sound too good to be true, and overtly political perspectives and single-source reporting, along with Google searches about the site itself, can also help students identify possible misinformation.

While researching, students shouldn't spend too much time on any one site, Wineburg asserts. Expert fact-checkers are adept at ignoring information while looking for answers; they almost immediately leave the site of the original claim and move laterally across the computer screen as they open new web pages. They assume that information is low-quality until fundamental questions are answered:

Does a quick search on Google yield information about a website or news article that will help me gauge its trustworthiness?

Have journalists investigated the site in question and uncovered a flow of funds from organizations that have a hidden agenda?

Are the site's claims confirmed by reputable sites?

Getting started in the classroom

Here are five tips for setting kids up to succeed at lateral reading. See more on the Stanford History Education Group's website at [sheg.stanford.edu](#).

1. Guide students with probing questions. U.S. history teacher Will Colglazier, who is part of the Stanford History Education Group team, launches a lesson on lateral reading by asking his students to answer three key questions when assessing the credibility of a website:

Who is behind the information? Investigate the people making the claims and how their motives could influence what is presented and suppressed.

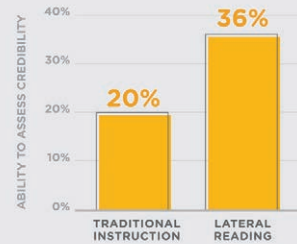
What is the actual evidence for the claim? Claims often appear to be scientific or based on evidence; when students gather and assess the actual evidence, does it still add up?

What do other sources say? Corroborate claims and verify



A Strategy to Dramatically Improve Recognition of Credible Information

Lateral reading—leaving an unfamiliar website to cross-check information on the open web—nearly doubles students' ability to evaluate the credibility of digital content, finds a 2022 study.



Source: Wineburg et al., 2022

Can Students Vet Information Like Experts?

IN A 2022 STUDY, Sam Wineburg and his colleagues at Stanford University set out to determine whether they could teach kids to read laterally — like fact-checkers — and whether there would be a change in student skepticism about sources.

Using materials they developed at the Stanford History Education Group, they asked 499 high school students to evaluate information found online. In one activity, students assessed the credibility of [minimumwage.com](#), a "site purporting to offer nonpartisan information about minimum wage policy." To get full credit, the students had to avoid being deceived by the site's superficial qualities — that it was a dot-org, referenced scientific studies, and claimed it was staffed by professionals with advanced degrees — and find information about the organization behind the site, any hidden motives or agendas, and any other sources that might challenge the site's claims.

Half of the students were given six 50-minute lessons in lateral reading, while the other half participated in their business-as-usual government classes. After a three-month period, both groups of students were tested on their ability to assess the credibility of a site, the accuracy of the information presented, and whether the claims made were supported by evidence. While students in the traditional government classes saw a modest gain of 25 percent, students who were taught the lateral reading strategy nearly doubled their scores, improving their eye for unreliable information by 71 percent.

information with other sources, such as experts, scholarly journals, and reputable news sites.

2. It's OK to use Wikipedia. Wineburg found that fact-checkers often use Wikipedia as a jumping-off point, as a portal to more authoritative sources. A Wikipedia article can help students learn about peer review, sourcing, footnotes, and internet research. It's a myth that anyone can change what's on a Wikipedia page.

3. Work on productive skimming. "You don't have to read everything on a website to make a decision," says Wineburg. It's difficult, if not impossible, to spot misinformation based on the original source's claim. Instead, get a quick sense of the content by scanning the page, and then do a Google search and open more sites to see if the information is supported by other sources. Go back to your original page for deeper reading after assessing the claims more broadly.

4. Don't be fooled by appearances. Today, slick websites are very attainable and affordable. Just because a site looks professional doesn't mean it's trustworthy. It's also easier than ever to purchase .org and .com domain names, and using those suffixes to determine a site's reliability is a mistake that students often make.

5. Create a list of go-to sources. Talk with students about how to develop a roster of reputable, go-to sites — trusted resources from across the political spectrum from *The Wall Street Journal* to *The New York Times*, government agencies such as the FDA and the EPA, and independent research organizations like the National Science Foundation and NASA, for example. Also talk about bad-faith outliers on both sides of the political divide, like Daily Kos and Breitbart News, and explain why relying on reputable, well-established publications is a critical part of smart media literacy. ■

This article originally appeared in Edutopia.



Review Activities That Kids Actually Like

How to liven up content review and make the information stick

By Sarah Gonser

MEANINGFUL CONTENT REVIEW activities start with a solid understanding of "where students are weak and where there is already good understanding," says eighth-grade math teacher Tara Maynard in an article published by AMLE, the Association for Middle Level Education.

To make reviews more engaging, or even fun, you need to find the right balance between effectiveness and motivation, mixing evidence-backed tactics that improve retention with gamification, group work or movement. A great review activity is self-checking — students don't need teacher input to assess the accuracy of their answers. It allows for some student choice, and builds in partner work, says Maynard. Kids can cover more ground at their own pace

▼ A “Jeopardy” game with homophones.

and teachers are freed up to work with individual students or small groups when needed.

Maynard also recommends building in movement — designing a review activity that requires kids to visit different stations in the classroom, for example — to keep kids energized and focused. Finally, she likes to use review time to reinforce her students’ meta-cognitive skills: “Usually on that review day, I make them stop and think about what’s going to be on the test so they can consider their approach,” says Maynard. “I often tell them: ‘Don’t practice the things you already know how to do, practice where you’re unsure so I or your partner can help.’”

Here are five engaging review strategies:

Correct the Teacher: Create a review assignment, or a set of problems, and then solve them yourself — but incorrectly. Have students pair up to work through the problems, correct your mistakes, and provide feedback. Students love correcting teachers...

Jeopardy!: Borrowing from the popular game show, this game doesn’t require specialized software — you can use PowerPoint or Google Slides to create the game grid, or the templates at JeopardyLabs — (jeopardylabs.com) and it’s adaptable across content areas. For a more lo-fi approach, create the grid on a poster board using Post-it notes. To promote deeper thinking, consider having students help write the questions or problems in advance. In Maynard’s math classroom, a game grid might include these column heads: multi-step equations with mostly addition, multi-step equations using subtraction, distribution multi-step equations, and word problems.

Around the Room: Prepare a problem set or other review activity, and using a Word or Google doc, type the first problem or question at the bottom of page 1. Type the answer to the first problem on the top of page 2. Next, type the second problem at the bottom of page 2, and the second answer on the top of page 3. Continue until the last answer is typed on the top of page 1. Print out the pages and hang them around your classroom, says Maynard, but not in order. “Students can start anywhere and solve the problem on the bottom half, then find the answer on another sheet of paper,” she says.

Rapid Review: For a quick review activity, high school history teacher Henry Seton opens class with

Vocab 1	Random	homophone/not homophone	Syllables	Vocabulary 2
hit on the head	in between bricks	be, see	birthday	Look at that huge mountain!!!!
leaning to the side	A spider has how many legs?	see saw	centipede	Singing that makes vibrations
2+2=5	syllables in the word perplexing	bear bare	flower	forever and ever
shaking with fear	contraction for cannot	sleigh slay	town	A dead body is kept here
Im so lonely	I and eye are homophones...true or false?	can't cannot	introduce	Baffling or very confusing

a rapid review that focuses on recently learned content. He starts by asking a question: “What are Locke’s views on private property in government?,” for example.

Students turn and talk to a neighbor for 90 seconds, then raise their hands to answer the question. If a student gets stuck, Seton calls out “Rescue!” and another student whose hand is raised gives it a try. “Rapid review starts class with energy and excitement. Students feel like the content is sticking,” says Seton. “They’re getting a lot of cold-call questions, but it’s in a safe, supportive atmosphere and helps students feel confident with the material.”

Partner Compares: Create two columns of problems. While each row should feature different problems, let students know that each row will have the same answer or solution. Have partners cut the paper in half so each student has a column of problems to work on individually.

They can cross-check answers as they go and work together to spot mistakes if their answers don’t match. The activity provides a “combination of independent and partner work,” says Maynard. “Students are encouraged to solve the problems independently, and can’t just copy an answer, but still have the support of a partner when needed.”

This article originally appeared in Edutopia.

▼ CTA President E. Toby Boyd addresses State Council.



Ready for Change

CTA State Council looks ahead to a bright future for our students

CTA State Council of Education in May was an action-packed affair — the first general session alone saw powerful presentations honoring Pride and Asian Pacific American Heritage months, African American history (focused on Martin Luther King Jr.) and Black Lives Matter, and the late CTA board member Jerry Eaton. State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond also made an appearance and was met with enthusiasm by delegates who appreciate his work supporting our students and public schools.

CTA President E. Toby Boyd struck an upbeat note in his speech to delegates, praising educators for always rising to take action to support students, families and communities, and each other. He also talked about the good news in Governor Gavin Newsom's May Revision of the state budget, where pre-K-12 and community colleges would receive a record \$128 billion in the 2022-23 school year — \$20 billion more than was proposed in January and \$35 billion more than the current budget. While noting that while much of the increases are in one-time funding, he said California is moving in the right direction in per-student spending.

"California has the fifth largest economy in the world. There's no reason our schools shouldn't have the highest per-pupil funding in the country," Boyd said.

Newsom is also proposing an additional \$1.5 billion in the ongoing effort to transform high-poverty public schools into community schools. (California led the nation last year with its \$3 billion investment in community schools.) CTA locals and partners are already working hard to ensure

community schools are done right, with educators, students, parents and community members leading the charge from the ground up. (See our story on page 26.)

"We're on the precipice of historical change here, change that will have a lasting impact on our communities because it engages students, parents and families and improves student learning," Boyd said.

Boyd drew attention to the social justice challenges educators contend with, particularly in attempts to bury history and truth about race in America, and in a rise in attacks on efforts to support LGBTQ+ students. But he was optimistic about the future.

"Harvey Milk once said, 'Hope is being able to see that there is light despite the darkness,'" Boyd said. "CTA members, you are that light; let's not let the darkness get in our way!"

"California has the fifth-largest economy in the world. There's no reason our schools shouldn't have the highest per pupil funding in the country."

—CTA President **E. Toby Boyd**

Elections matter

Council delegates also considered current legislation, including candidates and bills on the June primary ballot, and took the following positions on November ballot measures:

- Art & Music in Schools — Support
- Living Wage Act — Support
- Plastic Waste Reduction — Support
- Stop Big Tobacco Referendum — Support
- Online & Mobile Sports Betting — Oppose
- Pandemic Warning System — Oppose
- Clean Cars & Air Act — Oppose

▼ Members of CTA's newest local – the Association of Clovis Educators – stopped by State Council. With them are CTA President E. Toby Boyd, second from left, and CTA Vice President David B. Goldberg and Secretary-Treasurer Leslie S. Littman, both at right. The next State Council of Education takes place on Oct. 21-23 in Los Angeles.



(For more information on educators' recommended candidates, visit the Election 2022 home on cta.org.)

CTA Executive Director Joe Boyd, in his council speech, noted how crucial elections are as many of our rights and freedoms are under attack, including voting rights, reproductive freedom and marriage and equality rights.

"Elections matter - from our school boards to the White House, from city councils to the statehouse," Boyd said. He emphasized that union power, from successes at CTA's charter schools and locals to what's happening at Starbucks, Amazon and more, comes from organizing at the ground level. "It's those daily wins that lead to big wins in an election year."

Especially poignant was acknowledgement of Harvey Milk Day on May 22, the final day of State Council. Delegates heard from members of the Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Issues Advisory Committee during its Pride Month presentation. Milk's message to give young people hope is just as urgent today, given continuing attacks on LGBTQ+ educators and students.

Said SOGIAC's Nichole DeVore, "It is vital that we continue to stand up and be out role models for our students so they can see themselves and believe that they too can live their lives in their truest forms and thrive as valuable human beings."



The CTA Higher Education Award

CTA recognizes and promotes excellence in teaching; advocacy for the profession and for the union; attention to inclusion, equity and diversity; and community and student engagement. Community College Association and San Joaquin Delta College TA member **Dr. Wes Swanson** received the inaugural CTA Higher Education Award for his outstanding accomplishments in all these areas.

WHO "We Honor Ours" Awards

EACH YEAR since 1966, CTA has honored chapter members throughout the state who have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of the teaching profession. The WHO Awards recognize these individuals' local leadership and effective representation on the Service Center Council (SCC) and CTA State Council of Education. The 2022 recipients:

Alcosta SCC — **Keith Brown**, *Oakland EA*

Bay Valley SCC — **Aba Ngissah**, *Beverly Hills EA*

Capital SCC — **Jessica Hilderbrand**,
Twin Rivers United Educators

Chico SCC — **Alberto Mojica**, *Orland TA*

CTA/NEA Retired — **John Graham**

Delta SCC — **Chandra McPeters**, *Stockton TA*

Golden Gate SCC — **Betty Robinson-Harris**,
United Educators of San Francisco

High Desert SCC — **Antonieta Somoza**,
Palmdale Elementary TA

Imperial County SCC — **Carmina Ramirez**,
Associated Calexico Teachers

Merced/Mariposa SCC — **Ron Newark**,
Merced City TA

Orange SCC — **Grant Schuster**,
Anaheim Secondary TA

Redwood SCC — **Janet Renfrow**,
Fairfield-Suisun Unified TA

San Diego County SCC —
Catherine Sprecco, *Lakeside TA (2021)* ;
James Messina, *Grossmont TA (2022)*

San Geronio SCC — **Jeff Kingsberg**,
Temecula Valley EA

Service Center One — **Jacquella Payne**,
Mountain View TA

Southeastern SCC — **Lorraine Richards**,
Montebello TA

Stanislaus SCC — **JoDee Bonales**, *Ceres TA*

Student SCC — **Catalina Castillo**,
San Bernardino Valley College

Tulare-Kings SCC — **Wendy Colson**, *Tulare City TA*

UTLA/NEA SCC — **Cecily Myart-Cruz**, *UTLA/NEA*

Rising to Lead

Educators across state run for office to make change for students and communities

By **Julian Peebles**

EDUCATORS ACROSS CALIFORNIA are taking their leadership to the next level to make direct change for students and communities. We caught up with three educators and CTA activists looking to expand their changemaking reach from the classroom to the school board meeting and even the halls of the State Capitol as they run for elected office in the June Primary. (Others are expected to run in November's General Election.)

Results of these races unknown as of press time. Check cta.org/educator for the latest news on these and other races.



Dawn Addis

San Luis Coastal Teachers Association

OFFICE SOUGHT:

State Assemblymember, District 30

Longtime teacher and current Morro Bay City Council member, Addis is the CTA-endorsed candidate for Assembly District 30. She is a Teacher on Special Assignment for English Learner and Intervention Programs in San Luis Coastal Unified School District, where she has taught for 22 years. Addis' top priorities in the Assembly: education, housing, jobs, healthcare, climate action and justice.

Addis said now is the time to lead at a state level because too many people do not see themselves reflected in decision-making bodies — something especially true for educators who work and come from underserved communities, she said.

"We need to elect people who will speak up for others, who will bring dollars to classrooms, who understand the true needs of special education and English learner programs, and who will advocate for California's children and families."



Ingrid Gunnell

United Teachers Los Angeles

OFFICE SOUGHT:

Trustee, Glendale Unified School District

An educator in Los Angeles Unified School District for more than 24 years, Gunnell is running for school board in her hometown of Glendale. She is endorsed by the Glendale Teachers Association. Gunnell is a member of the CTA State Council of Education, serving as the chair of the Political Involvement Committee.

Gunnell is running for three main reasons: to protect Glendale educators' ability to teach truth in their classrooms; to ensure the district bargains in good faith; and to provide mental health support to students and staff.

"It's critical that we have educators who know the landscape run for school board. We know our profession and we can uplift our colleagues in the district we live in. Now is the time to get involved!"

▲ Above, Ingrid Gunnell with her children.



Ruth Luevand

Bonita Unified Teachers Association

OFFICE SOUGHT:

Mayor, City of San Dimas

Luevand teaches all divisions of chemistry at San Dimas High School, where she holds a variety of leadership roles. A member of the NEA Board of Directors, Luevand brings fresh ideas, bold leadership and a collaborative spirit to a city council that needs diversity in thought, profession and ideas.

Among Luevand's top priorities: balancing the budget, creating opportunities for additional revenue in downtown San Dimas, and ensuring that development within the community is responsible and environmentally sound.

For fellow educators considering a run for city elected office, Luevand advises volunteering in the community and on city commissions, and developing relationships with business and community groups to become more knowledgeable about important issues.

"In essence, the message is get involved, get involved, get involved."

A Poet Laureate's Voice



ONE OF THE dynamic speakers at CTA's Summer Institute, July 24-28 at UCLA, is **Alexandra Huynh**, the 2021 National Youth Poet Laureate. Huynh, who grew up in Sacramento and just finished her first year at Stanford University, was raised by Vietnamese American immigrant parents — an experience that plays a significant role in her poetry and her mission to connect cultures and work toward social justice.

At the Instruction & Professional Development strand at Summer Institute, Huynh will speak about how she became a poet, how her time at school shaped her, and the impact that teachers have had on her life and advocacy. She will also do a short poetry workshop with educators and read some of her poetry. Register for Summer Institute at cta.org/conferences.

Below is an excerpt from "Love Song for the End of the World," by Alexandra Huynh:

*Should the end of the world come,
tell them we're not scared.*

*You see, worlds end all the time;
This moment is a world,
this poem a world*

And there will be infinitely many after it.

*How wondrous it is
that we have memory
to weave these stars into constellations*

*There is a pattern
we burn into the night sky
and we alone can make it beautiful*

*So listen now
while our hands are
still raw with magic:*

*hold all that you can
build something, break it down,
then build again*

*and when you finally look up
smile at the people standing beside you.*



Educator Magazine Honored

The *California Educator* was honored by the California State Assembly and the Asian American & Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus with a commendation on May 14, 2022 (during Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month).

The commendation praises the *Educator* for, in part, "uplifting AAPI visibility and voices...in the face of xenophobia and increased anti-Asian violence..."

You can check out our recent AAPI coverage and watch CTA's webinar "Supporting AAPI Educators and Students" at cta.org/aapi. Find AAPI lesson plans and resources at cta.org/aapi-heritage-month.

Media Matters

CTA's 63rd annual John Swett Awards for Media Excellence

IN MAY, CTA honored eight winning entries by journalists and media outlets with its John Swett Awards for Media Excellence.

The awards, chosen by an independent panel of working journalists and media professionals, recognized individuals, publications, websites and broadcast media for their outstanding achievements in reporting and interpreting public education issues during 2021. The awards are named in honor of the founder of CTA, who was California's fourth superintendent of public instruction and a crusader for public education.

Stories included coverage of the triumphs, challenges and perseverance of educators returning to in-person instruction; educators advocating for much-needed and deserved resources for their students; and a Sacramento television station's uplifting "Teacher of the Month" series.

"The narrative of educators across our state would not be possible without the incredible talents of these storytellers," said CTA President E. Toby Boyd. "Their outstanding work is based on truth, integrity, and equity. We are so proud to honor them for their dedication to quality journalism." The awardees, listed below, were announced at the May State Council of Education meeting in Los Angeles. The video honoring them can be viewed at tinyurl.com/CTAJohnSwett2022.

NEWSPAPERS

Hannah Holzer, *The Sacramento Bee*, for her continuous coverage of educational news particularly during a critical school board race that impacted students and educators.



Hannah Holzer

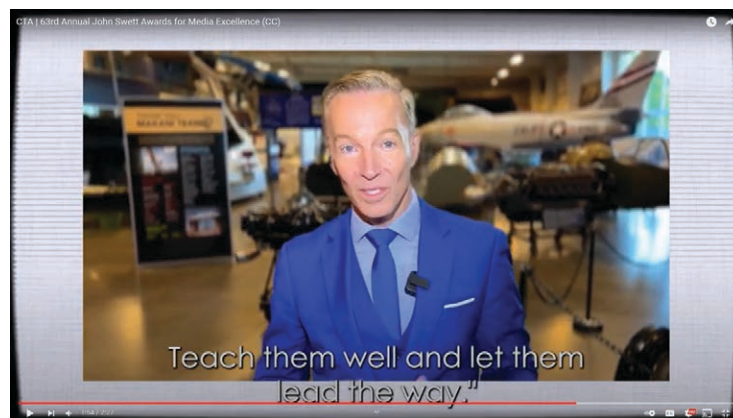
RADIO

Joe Fitzgerald Rodriguez and Jon Brooks, KQED, for a news story thoroughly examining the battle over school reopening in San Francisco. The report included voices on all sides of the issue, including nuanced opinions and experiences of a diversity of sources.

"The narrative of educators across our state would not be possible without the incredible talents of these storytellers. We are so proud to honor them for their dedication to quality journalism."

—CTA President **E. Toby Boyd**

▼ ABC10 anchor Mark S. Allen



TELEVISION

ABC10 in Sacramento for their "Teacher of the Month" series. The series highlights CTA members, such as Chris Dickey with the West Sacramento Teachers Association, who are making immediate differences in their local communities. Segments offer glimpses into who these educators are as well as showcase voices of students, who are the direct beneficiaries of these educators.

JOURNALS, MAGAZINES, SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS AND WEBSITES

Jana Kadah, Bay City News Foundation, for her continuous coverage of educational news on salary disputes, a student walk-out supporting Campbell High School Teachers Association members, and reactions to approval of a new contract for a controversial superintendent in the Campbell Union High School District.

Rachel Cohen, *The New Republic*, for her feature story showing educators across the country challenging a negative narrative about schools reopening and how educators negotiated a safe return for students and staff.

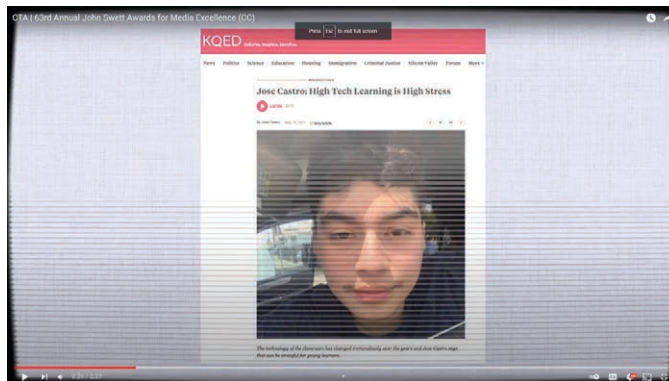
Christina Jewett and Lauren Weber, Kaiser Health News, for their series investigating the needlepoint bipolar ionization units that were sold to school districts for hundreds of thousands of dollars but were potentially harmful to students and staff. (Refers to a technology that can be used in heating/ventilation/air conditioning systems or portable air cleaners to generate positively and negatively charged particles.)



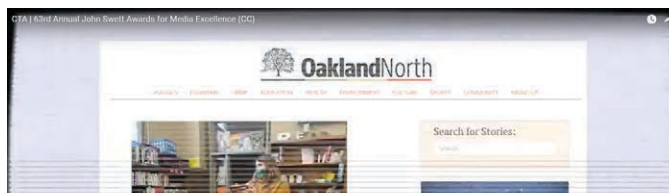
Rachel Cohen

STUDENT JOURNALISM

Jose Castro, KQED, for his feature story on how students have adapted to new technology in the classroom and the challenges that come with learning new skills.



Williamena Kwapo and Jiyun Tsai, *Oakland North*, for their feature story on the importance of library access and investment on school campuses.



Williamena Kwapo

CTA Scholarships & Awards Recipients

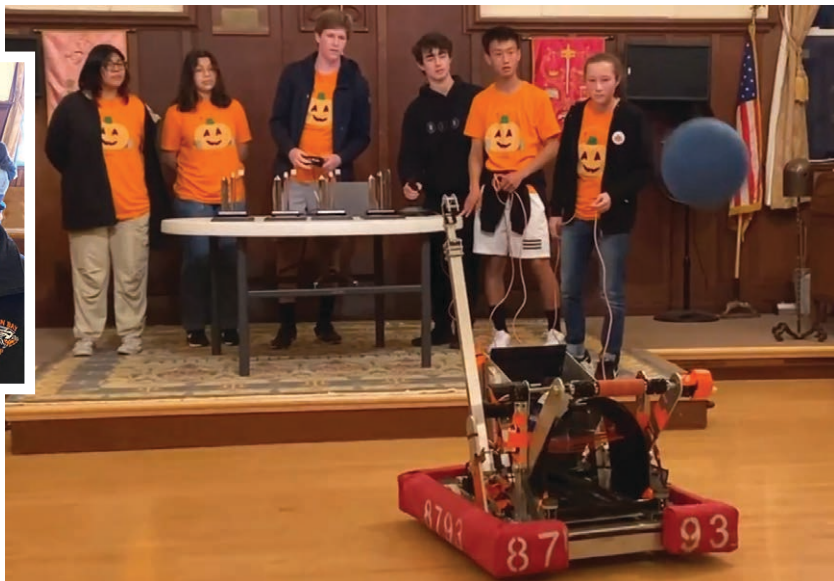
WINNERS OF THE 2021-22 César E. Chávez and Dolores Huerta Education Award Program have been announced and can be found on CTA's Scholarships and Awards webpage (cta.org/for-educators/scholarships-awards). The program recognizes educators and their students who demonstrate an understanding of the vision and guiding principles embraced by César Chávez and Dolores Huerta.

Recipients of other CTA scholarships and awards, and information about the scholarships/awards, are available on the same webpage. Congratulations to all awardees!

▼ Parents and mentors Matt Noris, Chris Doty, Mey Wong and CUTA's Sean Riordan.



▼ Members of the Pumpkin Bots demonstrate how Zip Tie the robot can shoot a ball at the Half Moon Bay Odd Fellows Lodge.



Building a Better Bot

Half Moon Bay Robotics Team is Moving Up

By Cynthia Menzel

IN APRIL, thousands of aspiring young engineers gathered in Houston, Texas, for the annual First Robotic International Championship. Students from all over the world, including a rookie team and advisor from Half Moon Bay High School, competed and attended workshops.

“The world championship was a wild ride for four days,” according to first-time robotics club advisor Sean Riordan, a member of Cabrillo Unified Teachers Association (CUTA). “We were one of five rookie teams in the competition and we finished 46th out of 75 in our division.”

In addition, the team was awarded the “Gracious Professionalism” award. All in all, it was a great showing for the “Pumpkin Bots” (a reference to Half Moon Bay’s famous annual festival) and their robot, Zip Tie. In fact, the robotics club had only started last fall in a Moss Beach garage and intended to participate in just one competition.

Riordan, CUTA co-president and bargaining team member, teaches art, including metal sculpture. Teaching robotics isn’t that big of a leap, he says. “There is a lot of working with hands, building things with crafts and a sense of pride – that runs through my art classes and that applies to Zip Tie, too.”

Riordan learned with his students, calling the experience “exciting.” “It’s hard to keep your hands off something as fun as a robot. As a teacher I want to help as much as I can, but it’s important to step to the side and let students fully take over.”

The Pumpkin Bots have stood out in their competitions because they are a small team that works exceptionally well together, Riordan

said. Most teams have 20-40 students while Half Moon Bay’s team has fewer than 10. “Everybody gets their hands on the robot and that doesn’t happen when you have teams of 40. Our two pilots were experienced in battle bots so we could engage in ‘rough play’ really effectively,” he added.

The competitions have three challenges. First, students must make the robot move autonomously and shoot a basket for 30 seconds. The second two minutes have the bot collecting and shooting basketball-sized tennis balls into two baskets – eight feet and four feet high, respectively. The last 30 seconds involves the bots climbing a series of monkey bars that are four, six and eight feet tall.

“By the end we accomplished all three challenges,” Riordan said. “I’m so proud of these students, how they gelled together, the group sharing and what they’ve accomplished.”

Club plans for the summer include familiarizing new members with Zip Tie (two members graduated) and computer programming. Donations to help subsidize costs for the robot build and maintenance, as well as transportation and lodging during competitions, can be made at oddfound.org/donate. ■

A Retired Teacher's Brave Steps

Bob Eilek's effort to support Native American youth

By **Ed Sibby**

EARLY IN THE MORNING on Saturday, April 30, at the end of the Oceanside Pier in San Diego County, Robert "Bob" Eilek began the first step of what he hoped would be a 3,000-mile journey to fulfill an ambition to run coast-to-coast across the United States. Friends and family cheered as the youthful septuagenarian started his cross-country trek.

Long before Forest Gump would make his Academy Award-winning fictional crossings of America back in the '90s, Bob Eilek had a dream to run across the country to bring awareness to an issue dear to his heart: supporting Native American young people in the U.S.

Eilek, a Native American with Santee Sioux ancestry, taught middle school U.S. history for 40 years before retiring from Temecula Valley Unified School District in 2019.

Now, educators and former students alike have shared their stories and memories of their "favorite teacher" as they followed his adventure on social media.

"Mr. Eilek was a great teacher who showed compassion to thousands of students in his class without favor or judgment," said Julian Forrest, who was Eilek's student in 2011.

Eilek, in fact, had to stop his run soon after starting, due to injuries after over-exerting himself. But at press time he was planning to pick up again. Eilek's intention, of course, is a worthy goal in itself.

Eilek's Native American roots extend beyond family and tribe. In childhood, he was a big fan of the running legend Billy Mills, a virtual unknown who came from behind in the

▼ Bob Eilek with a few supporters.



10,000 meter race to take the gold in the 1964 Olympics. The feat would make Mills the most celebrated Native American athlete since Jim Thorpe. Eilek often draws inspiration from Mills' awe-inspiring final lap.

"Billy Mills is truly a champion and a legitimate American hero," he says. "I've watched his victory in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics on many occasions and his electrifying final lap brings tears to my eyes every time."

Eilek's passion for running has been lifelong, and putting it together with his passion to help Native American youth just seemed right.

He is hoping to raise funds as he runs for Running Strong for American Indian Youth, a nonprofit started by Billy Mills himself back in 1986. Mills, who grew up in poverty on Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, was following in the tradition of the Lakota people to give back to those who contributed to one's success. Eilek chose Running Strong because of its devotion to strengthening Native communities and peoples. "It was simply their primary and genuine emphasis on helping Native Americans throughout our nation," he says. "And I wanted to do something to aid that cause."

Even if he can't complete his run, he encourages others to support the cause. His former chapter Temecula Valley Education Association, like many others, is rooting for Eilek and has made a donation. Find out more about Running Strong at indianyouth.org.

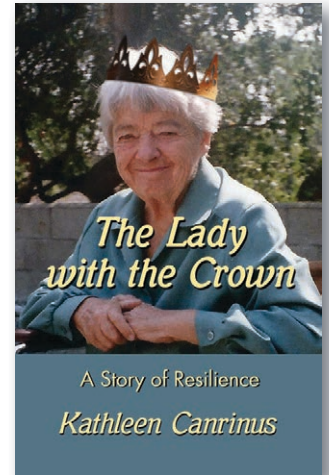
"[The nonprofit] Running Strong's primary and genuine emphasis is on helping Native Americans. And I wanted to do something to aid that cause."



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

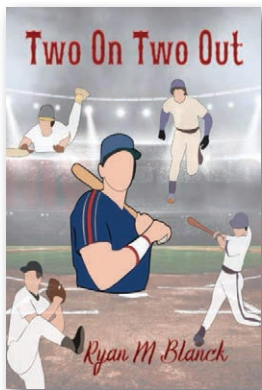
Reinventing Joy

Kathleen Canrinus, a CTA/NEA Retired member, retired from teaching in 2007 and spent the next 10 years learning to write. The now 77-year-old's debut memoir, *The Lady with the Crown: A Story of Resilience*, explores how unforeseen trauma can instantly transform a normal happy family into a uniquely wounded one. When Canrinus was 15, her mother barely survived a car accident. Brain damage on top of inevitable mother-daughter friction almost guaranteed an end to a loving connection. Yet as Canrinus married, had children and became her mother's caregiver and conservator, their bond endured and grew. The book charts not only their resilience and courage but also Canrinus' indomitable pursuit and reinvention of joy. Themes that high school students could relate to: mother-daughter dynamics, relating to someone with memory deficits, and facing adversity. On Amazon.



Animal Rescue

Nancy Hofrock retired last year after a 36-year teaching career and runs a small rescue group in Southern California. In late 2021 the CTA/NEA-Retired member published *Nebula's Great Adventure*, based on her work in the animal rescue community over the last three decades. Young readers learn what happens when Animal Control shows up at Nebula's home and tells the owners they have more dogs than the law allows. Her new foster parent helps raise her eight pups and finds the entire family loving forever homes. The book focuses on the compassionate people who do rescue work. On Amazon.



Baseball Is Life

Sharing a name with the greatest home run hitter in baseball seemed to put young Henry Aaron Mitchell on a path toward greatness. And indeed, Ryan Blanck's 2021 coming-of-age novel *Two On Two Out* begins with Henry stepping into the batter's box in his first Major League game, set on giving a performance that people will be talking about for years to come. Blanck, a high school English teacher and Santa Monica-Malibu Classroom Teachers Association member, goes back in time as Henry navigates life in the suburbs of Kansas City — coping with anxiety, confronting bullies and racism, experiencing young love with his high school crush. But Henry never strays far from the baseball diamond; the game he loves carries him through all of life's ups and downs. On Amazon.

Got something for this page — a book, blog, album, video, podcast or other creation? Tell us at editor@cta.org with "Lit From Within" in the subject line. We lean toward new(ish) work that can be used in the classroom.

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