**SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

As a longtime classroom teacher, the recent survey done by UCLA and the California Teachers Association showing that teachers are burned out, exhausted and in need of more support hit close to home. I started teaching many years ago, very idealistic about the positive difference I could make in the classroom. I still love my job on many days, but after the two hardest years of teaching I’ve ever had, the lack of respect we show educators is increasingly unconscionable.

While increasing teacher pay to a level on par with our similarly educated peers (studies show we make 23 percent less, and that gap is widening), it would signify that we truly value teaching and learning. Hiring more counselors and nurses would allow teachers to focus on teaching. Smaller class sizes would make our jobs more manageable and improve student learning. A society that does not value its educators does not value its children. In a state with an economy that rivals that of other nations, we can and must do better.

Signed (your name)

**SAMPLE LOCAL NEWSLETTER STORY**
*315 words*

Better pay and working conditions key to addressing teacher shortage

As the teacher shortage impacts schools here in [YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT], throughout California and across the United States, the results of a new CTA/UCLA survey show that better pay and working conditions are key to preventing educators from leaving the profession.

To identify the driving factors contributing to California’s teacher shortages and to better understand the racialized experiences of educators of color, CTA partnered with UCLA's Center for the Transformation of Schools and Hart Research Associates this summer to conduct a comprehensive statewide survey of 4,600 California teachers. “Voices from the Classroom: Teaching in the Golden State” includes a quantitative survey of current teachers as well as in-depth interviews with former and aspiring educators.

The survey found that four in 10 current teachers have explored leaving the classroom either to continue within education or to switch occupations entirely. One in five current teachers say they will likely leave the profession in the next three years – with educators aged 55 and older the most likely to leave along with more than a third of younger teachers.

The top reason current teachers say they are considering leaving: Burnout from stress, with political attacks on teachers the next highest factor. Educators said workload, low pay, student apathy and behavioral issues, and lack of district support contributed to their high stress levels. Most former teachers said there was no single reason they left the profession – it was a gradual compounding of all the issues.

Here in [YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT], educator recruitment and retention continue to be important issues that require our continued attention. With historic funding from the state, the district has robust resources to show that educators are appreciated and valued here.

Visit cta.org/educator for more on “Voices from the Classroom: Teaching in the Golden State” and to see expanded results of the survey.