

california
educator

DECEMBER 2022 / JANUARY 2023 VOLUME 27 ISSUE 3

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BELONGS

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**THE
INNOVATION
ISSUE**



Good For You!
You got the job.

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- CTA-endorsed Disability insurance to help protect your paycheck
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**February 7, 2023
4:00 p.m, PST**

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1 Coverage reduces to 65% of the amount in force at age 70, 45% of the amount in force at age 75 and 30% of the amount in force at age 80. Offer not available to retirees.

california educator

VOLUME 27 ISSUE 3



#WeAreCTA

OUR VOICE, OUR UNION, OUR PROFESSION

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

MAGAZINE

LESSONS IN THE WAVES

Salinas Surf Club introduces kids to the ocean, life experiences. **PAGE 16** [f](#) [ig](#)

CYBERSECURITY GURU

Allen Stubblefield receives national recognition for growing his cyber program to reach students of all ages. **PAGE 32** bit.ly/3GE72qj

SOCIAL JUSTICE RESOLUTION

Oak Grove chapter, district show support for LGBTQ+ community. **PAGE 42**

TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

The state selects five outstanding educators — all CTA members. **PAGE 54**

DIGITAL

GRANTS FOR GOOD IDEAS

CTA's Institute for Teaching awards grants for educator passion projects. Applications are open now! **PAGE 31** [f](#) [t](#) [ig](#) [yt](#) cta.org/IFT

CTA SCHOLARSHIPS

Members and their dependents can further their educational goals — application deadlines are imminent. See details at cta.org/scholarships.

ELECTION WRAP

Students and public ed win! Find final results at sos.ca.gov. **PAGE 34** [f](#) [t](#) [ig](#) [yt](#)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ESP LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Become a more effective leader for your chapter. Apply by Jan. 23, 2023. **PAGE 11**

[f](#) [t](#) [ig](#) [yt](#) cta.org/esp

CTA CONFERENCES, cta.org/conferences

- **Issues Conference**, Jan. 13-15, Las Vegas. Learn, share, strategize about the future of public education.
- **Good Teaching Conference-North**, Feb. 3-5, Burlingame. Peer-led and peerless.
- **CCA Winter Conference**, Feb. 10-12, San Diego. The Community College Association focuses on advocacy.

MEMBER BENEFITS

UNIVERSITY CREDIT

Members who attend CTA conferences can get professional growth hours to qualify for university credit units with CSU Chico. cta.org/conferences/22-23credit

ATHLETIC GRANTS

Apply for a California Casualty Thomas R. Brown \$1,000 grant for your middle/high school team. Deadline: Jan. 15. calcasathletics.com

Above, a scene from "When We Fight," a new documentary on the massive UTLA strike in 2019. Story on page 15.



18 THE INNOVATION ISSUE:

Celebrating educators who imagine what can be — and then make it happen



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LESSONS IN THE WAVES:

A surf club in Salinas opens up a new, inclusive world for kids

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WHERE EVERYONE BELONGS:

Educators help craft supportive LGBTQ+ resolution for their district



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Photos from top: A student works with children in Professor Edwina Williams' Project LIKE program; kids learn life and surf skills at the Salinas Surf Club; Oak Grove Educators Assn. President Maripaz Berlin (left) with OGEA Human Rights Committee member Kirat Sachdev.



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)



Fixing an Epidemic

THANK YOU FOR running "Fentanyl Poisoning: An Invisible Threat," Oct./Nov. 2022. Page 26 says it all: Parents need to get involved. It's got nothing to do with the school districts raising people's kids. It's parents who need to fix the problem.

DAVE GEVAS

California School Employees Assn.; 2019 Napa County Classified School Employee of the Year

Correction: In Quotes & Numbers from our Aug./Sept. 2022 issue (p. 14), the quote from Kaitlin Holt, Saugus High School teacher and Hart District Teachers Association member, referenced the school shooting in 2018 and the problem with guns. It should have read, "The shooter shot six people on my campus, including himself, in 16 seconds."

▼ **CTA Represents!** CTA members who serve on local school boards are a growing and powerful group. Many are pictured here at the California School Boards Association's annual conference Dec. 1-3. For members who won board races in the recent election, see page 35.



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For our full social media directory, see cta.org/social.



SIMPLE SURVEY

WE RECENTLY

STARTED Legal Beat, a column on your legal rights, in response to member input (see page 36 for the latest). What other content do you want more of in the magazine: Member profiles? Member benefits? Teaching and learning tips? Advocacy and union information? Features on topical education and educator/student issues? Tell us at editor@cta.org — with "Simple Survey" in the subject line.

LATE ISSUE?

Editor's Note: Many of you told us your Oct./Nov. 2022 *California Educator* arrived too late and much of the information was out of date. We apologize for this. The chief reason for the delay is that the magazine is mailed at bulk nonprofit rate; local post offices deliver it *after* priority, first-class, second-class, etc. mail. Also, the inclusion of the annual CTA Membership cards affected production. We are striving to do better in the future. Please note that cta.org/educator contains much of the same content that appears in print, posted in a timelier fashion. Thanks for reading!

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MISSION STATEMENT

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

EDITORIAL INFORMATION

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

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CTA/NEA membership dues for the fiscal year (Sept. 1, 2022, to Aug. 31, 2023) are \$972, including a \$20 refundable contribution (see cta.org/contribution for details). \$22.65 of CTA annual dues is designated for CTA/ABC political activities to support state and local candidates and/or initiatives, and \$15.00 of CTA annual dues is designated for independent expenditures, totaling \$37.65 not deductible for income tax purposes. Please consult your tax adviser.

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

CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

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ASSOCIATION



The Path *Forward*

THIS IS THE TIME of year we tend to reflect on the last 12 months and resolve to make some changes in the year ahead. We reflect on the memories we've collected along the way, the friendships we've made and the experiences that have strengthened us. Conversely, we recall the challenges, the difficulties, and the hurts that we endured and conquered. And then we make resolutions that often center on self-care, making healthier choices and challenging ourselves to step outside our comfort zone.

As I reflect on 2022 in my role as CTA president, I feel pleased and motivated by the upbeat outlook for California schools. The state had another record budget year and state leaders held true to their commitment to prioritize public education. Although we now live in the *fourth* largest economy in the world, California ranks nowhere near where we need to be in public education funding.

We have work to do, but fortunately the funding is available to recruit qualified teachers, counselors, nurses, librarians and other student support services; improve salaries; and invest in programs that provide all students with the support and opportunities they need to succeed. The work will come down to organizing and bargaining. If you haven't been involved with your local union, please consider doing so now. Members supporting their local bargaining teams make a real difference; our collective power comes from all of us working together.

As I reflect on the experiences, I think about how our hard work during the campaign paid off in the November election. We celebrate the re-election of Tony Thurmond as State Superintendent of Public Instruction. We're elated that voters overwhelmingly supported additional monies for arts and music in schools (Prop. 28). And while the need to solve our climate issues is urgent, Lyft's attempt to pass a special interest tax that would rob public schools of funding (Prop. 30) was misguided, as voters realized by turning it down.

The election results affirm educators of the continued support and trust of voters. And that is good news because we all know public schools work best when parents and educators collaborate on what students need and address the real issues facing our schools.

Cue the self-care resolution.

The coming year will not be without its challenges. There continue to be concerted efforts to inject extremist beliefs into our public schools. Book banning has reared its ugly head in California. Antisemitism is again a threat. Coming on the heels of COVID-science denialism and attacks on accurately teaching the role of



"Just imagine what we can accomplish if we all just stepped a little further outside our comfort zone."

race in our history, the latest targets for extremists are LGBTQ+ students and educators, and LGBTQ+ curriculum inclusion and student support.

The growing teacher shortage crisis will continue to be a problem until educator salaries are improved significantly and meaningful steps are taken to reduce the factors, including extremist, politically driven attacks on teachers and school staff as well as on-the-job discrimination, that lead to stress and burnout in our profession. CTA's New Educator Pipeline and Support Workgroup is currently developing recommendations on teacher recruitment and retention and promoting diversity and inclusion in the education workplace.

We have the tools to improve our profession and make our great public schools even better. I'm confident that better funding, community schools, universal transitional kindergarten, and the sheer power of our 310,000 members will continue to propel us forward on behalf of our students. Just imagine what we can accomplish if we all just stepped a little further outside our comfort zone. I hope your winter break is restful and one that prepares you for a great new year.

E. Toby Boyd

CTA PRESIDENT
@etobyboyd



MAKING AN IMPACT

THINKING DIFFERENTLY COMES naturally to children and young people, especially in the right settings. Educators see this on the daily.

"In my classroom, [students] are not constrained by adult thinking, so they do think outside the box," says Mariana Garcia Serrato, who teaches grades 5-8 science and STEM. "Instead of asking 'Why can't we do this?' they just go and do."

Garcia Serrato, one of the teachers featured in our **Innovation Issue** (page 18), operates a project-based learning classroom, where students are given freedom to come up with ideas on how to make the world a better place. Results have included a cookbook for leftovers and tips on saving and reusing water.

She and the other innovators we profile also think out of the box, developing creative ideas to enrich student learning. They're an inspiring bunch. From Garcia Serrato's fully gamified teaching to an educator sending English Learners out to interview and write news stories (and learn English quickly) to a duo who invented an app that gives targeted feedback to students while saving teacher time, they imagined what could be — and made it happen.

Of course, *all* of you must be resourceful and innovative these days, and you make the world a better place through the work you do every day. Some educators extend the learning beyond the classroom. Elementary school teacher Jeff Smallwood founded the Salinas Surf Club to give his students, many of them children of farmworkers, an introduction to ocean culture and a view of life far from the farmlands and fields of East Salinas



("Lessons in the Waves," page 16). "Surf Club instills in their minds that they belong anywhere a wave can be found," Smallwood says.

Educators know this sense of belonging — anywhere and everywhere — is critical for both kids and adults. Oak Grove educators and school board members collaborated on a resolution, adopted in May, to loudly proclaim that Oak Grove sees, supports and embraces students, educators and staff who are members of the LGBTQ+ community ("**Building Schools Where Everyone Belongs**," page 42).

"We have a responsibility as educators to move the needle and make a positive impact for our students," says Maripaz Berlin, Oak Grove Educators Association president. "How can we leave a space better than we found it?"

It's a question educators address every day. You can see it in Allen Stubblefield's passion to teach cybersecurity to his high schoolers as well as much younger students (page 32). You can see it in the remarkable 2022-23 California Teachers of the Year (page 54), and in the classroom and community work of Guadalupe Carrasco Cardona, recently recognized nationally for teaching excellence (page 57).

In this new year, we toast your extraordinary dedication to students and your communities, and to making this world a better place. Thank you.

Katharine Fong

EDITOR IN CHIEF

editor@cta.org

KNOW AN INNOVATOR?

Tell us about them — who they are, what they're doing, their impact on students and schools.

Email editor@cta.org with "Innovator" in the subject line. Educators seeking funding for their innovative ideas can apply for a grant from CTA's Institute for Teaching; see page 31.



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School Principals (NAESP)**

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School Principals (NASSP)**

"Sustained stress has numerous adverse effects. The amygdala becomes overactive and more coupled to pathways of habitual behavior. Crucially, the brain region most involved in feeling afraid and anxious is most involved in generating aggression."

—Robert M. Sapolsky, PhD
Stanford University

TEACHING BEHAVED BRAINS: STRATEGIES FOR CHALLENGING, DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS, AUTISM, ADHD, AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTION

FEBRUARY 17-19, 2023

Pre-Conference Workshops: February 17

AT THE HISTORIC FAIRMONT HOTEL, ATOP NOB HILL,
IN SAN FRANCISCO, CA, OR VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM

BEHAVE: The Biology of Humans at Our Best and Worst

Robert M. Sapolsky, PhD, *Stanford University*

Rethinking Challenging Behavior:

Combining Neuroscience, Compassion, and Common Sense

J. Stuart Ablon, PhD, *Harvard Medical School*

Behaved Brains Are Regulated Brains

Mona M. Delahooke, PhD, Author, *Beyond Behaviors* (2019)

**ADHD in Girls: Challenges, Promises, and the Need for Coordination
Between Home and School**

Stephen P. Hinshaw, PhD, *University of California, Berkeley*

Chatter: The Voice in Our Head and Controlling Emotions

Ethan F. Kross, PhD, *University of Michigan*

**Queen Bees and Masterminds: Helping Young People Navigate
Friendships, Social Conflicts, and Bullying**

Rosalind P. Wiseman, BA, Author, *Queen Bees and Wannabes* (2016, 3rd Edition)

Bullying Prevention Through the Lens of Social and Emotional Learning

Diana Divecha, PhD, *Yale University*

Developing an Emotionally-Inclusive Classroom to Improve Behavior

Brian Dinkins, EdD, *Butler University*

Responding Instead of Reacting: Reimagining Behavior Management

Michele Borba, EdD, Author, *Thrivers* (2021) and *End Peer Cruelty, Build Empathy* (2018)

Managing ADHD and Autism in Smart Kids: Struggle, Support, and Treatment

Thomas E. Brown, PhD, *University of Southern California*

The Amazing Teen Brain: CBT and Neuroscience to Help Teens

Elisa E. Nebolsine, LCSW, *Beck Institute* and *Catholic University*

Promoting Resilience in Adolescents and Young Adults with ADHD and LD

Nicole S. Ofiesh, PhD, *Stanford University*

Reflection, Executive Function, and the Developing Brain

Philip D. Zelazo, PhD, *University of Minnesota* and Stephanie M. Carlson, PhD, *University of Minnesota*

Register Now to Save!

For more information and a complete list of speakers, visit
LearningAndTheBrain.com or call 857-444-1500 ext. 1 or 2.



December 2022 / January 2023

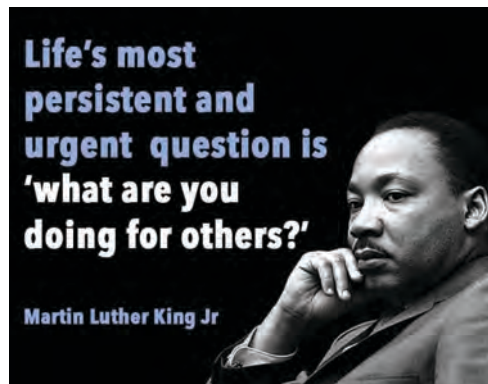
CALENDAR



Happy New Year!

A New Year

WE WISH OUR CTA family a joyous holiday season! May 2023 be a wonderful and fulfilling year for all.



MLK Jr. Day of Service

JAN. 16

It's Martin Luther King Jr. Day on Mon., Jan. 16 — which means it's MLK Jr. Day of Service. Encourage your students to make it “a day on, not a day off” and honor Dr. King's life of service by volunteering to improve their communities. There are many ways to help, from cleaning local parks to delivering food to home-bound neighbors, and even more opportunities for those who can volunteer regularly. Find events and volunteer activities at americorps.gov/newsroom/events/mlk-day. Educators can also design their own day (or semester); find ideas, toolkits, action guides and classroom facilitator guides at ysa.org/resources.

The Great Kindness Challenge **JAN. 23-27**

GKC (school edition) is a proactive and positive SEL-focused bullying prevention program for grades K-12 that improves school climate and increases student engagement. For one week, students and others perform as many acts of kindness as possible on campus. Schools can sign up at thegreatkindnesschallenge.com to find age-appropriate kindness checklists and additional resources. Jan. 23-27 — or choose the best week for your school.

▼ Share ideas at CTA's Good Teaching Conference.

Good Teaching Conference — North & South

Master new skills and update your expertise at CTA's renowned Good Teaching Conference. GTC supports excellent teaching and learning practices for classroom teachers via peer-to-peer instruction — and who better to learn from than fellow educators? In addition to workshops focused on curriculum content areas for K-12 teachers, GTC provides opportunities for professional development and to network and share ideas with colleagues and experts.



GTC-North FEB. 3-5 *Hyatt Regency SFO*

GTC-South MAR. 3-5 *Hyatt Regency Orange County*

Find more information, registration and a letter you can use to show your principal or district the value of attending GTC. GTC-North booking deadline: Jan. 19. [#CTAGTC](#)

CTA State Gold Awards

JAN. 6, 2023

NOMINATION DEADLINE

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

► [cta.org/awards](#)

Extra Yard for Teachers Summit

JAN. 7, 2023 EVENT

Los Angeles Convention Center. The College Football Playoff Foundation hosts the free summit, with virtual/in-person professional development (4 hours credit), entertainment and giveaways. ► [cfp-foundation.org/events/extra-yard-summit](#)

CTA Issues Conference

JAN. 13-15, 2023 CONFERENCE

Tropicana Las Vegas, Nevada. Educators from rural, urban and ESP locals throughout the state come together to learn, share, strategize, and unite together to determine the future of public education. ► [cta.org/conferences](#)

CTA Scholarships

JAN. 27, 2023

APPLICATION DEADLINE

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

► [cta.org/scholarships](#)

NEA RA State Delegate Candidacy

JAN. 31, 2023 FILING DEADLINE

CTA members, Student CTA members and CTA/NEA-Retired members interested in running for 2023 NEA Representative Assembly state delegate must submit a declaration of candidacy. See p. 58 for details.

► [cta.org/racandidacy](#)

MLK Jr. Scholarships

FEB. 10, 2023

APPLICATION DEADLINE

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

► [cta.org/scholarships](#)

CCA Winter Conference

FEB. 10-12, 2023 CONFERENCE

DoubleTree by Hilton San Diego Mission Valley. The Community College Association's Winter Conference highlights advocacy in addition to lobbying and contract enforcement issues. It will also offer a bargaining, grievance or advocacy academy, and address legislation pertaining to community colleges. ► [cca4us.org/conferences](#)

CTA/NEA-Retired Issues Conference

MAR. 16-17, 2023 CONFERENCE

Santa Clara. Learn how CTA/NEA-Retired is protecting your future and watching legislation that affects your benefits. Stay connected, be protected, and enjoy great benefits.

► [cta.org/conferences](#)

Chavez/Huerta Awards

MARCH 3, 2023 ENTRY DEADLINE

Cesar E. Chavez and Dolores Huerta Education Awards honor students who show they understand Chavez and Huerta's guiding principles with a visual art project or written essay. Awards up to \$550 go to both the sponsoring CTA member and the student.

► [cta.org/scholarships](#)

Just out: **CTA California Reads** 2023 recommendations of teacher-vetted books for your students and classrooms. Find full book descriptions and links to buy — at a 20 percent discount for members — at cta.org/careads.



Pre-K / TK / K



Eyes That Kiss in the Corners

Joanna Ho
Illustrator: Dung Ho



Danbi Leads the School Parade

Anna Kim



Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story

Kevin Noble Maillard
Illustrator: Juana Martinez-Neal

Grades 1-2



Octopus Stew
Eric Velasquez



Buffalo Bird Girl: A Hidatsa Story
S. D. Nelson

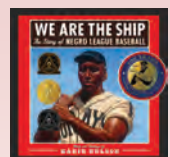


I Color Myself Different
Colin Kaepernick
Illustrator: Eric Wilkerson

Grades 3-5



Swishing
Victorica Monroe
Illustrator: Shawn Richardson



We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball
Kadir Nelson



The William Hoy Story: How a Deaf Baseball Player Changed the Game
Nancy Churnin
Illustrator: Jez Tuya

Grades 6-8



Sylvia & Aki
Winifred Conkling



Unspeakable: The Tulsa Race Massacre
Carole Boston Weatherford
Illustrator: Floyd Cooper



The Girl From the Sea
Molly Knox Ostertag

Grades 9-12



Silence That Binds Us
Joanna Ho



The Kite Runner
Khaled Hosseini

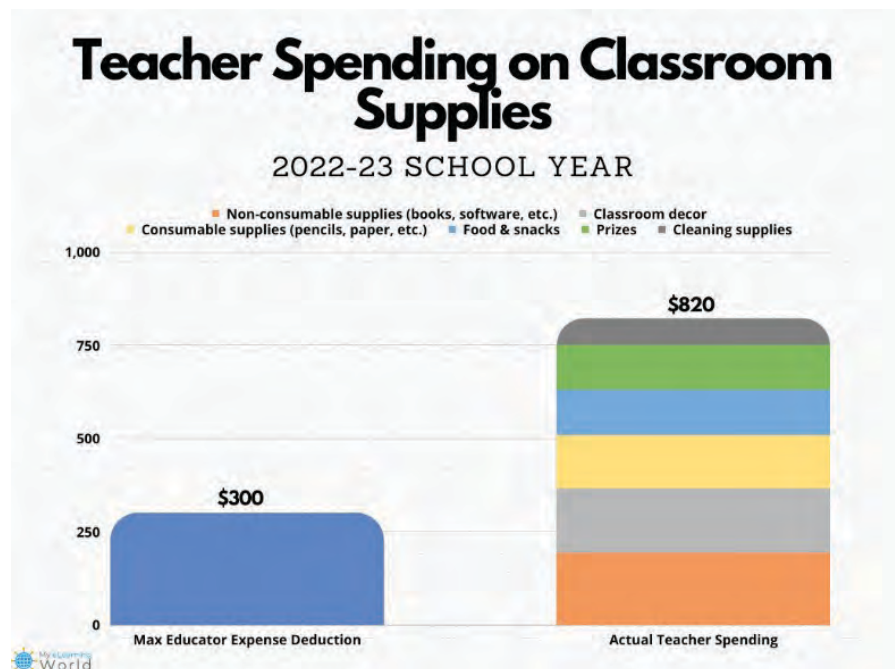


Farewell to Manzanar
Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston & James D. Houston



\$820. This is the average amount of their own money that educators will spend on supplies for their classroom this school year, according to mylearningworld.com. Including pencils, paper, cleaning supplies, books, software and other materials, teachers will spend 37 percent more on school supplies than they did in 2015. Nationwide, that adds up to around \$3 billion.

And despite recent increases, the educator expense deduction only allows teachers to deduct up to \$300 of out-of-pocket classroom expenses when filing their federal tax returns.



Everything ESP

NOMINATIONS OPEN:

2023 CTA ESP of the Year

EVERY YEAR, CTA recognizes an education support professional whose activities reflect the contributions of ESPs to public education as the Paula J. Monroe CTA ESP of the Year. The honoree is acknowledged at the March State Council meeting and is California's nominee for NEA ESP of the Year.

Nominations are now open for the 2023 ESP of the Year. Any CTA member may nominate an ESP member. **Deadline: Jan. 13, 2023.** Get more information and download the nomination form at cta.org/espoftheyear.



2022 CTA ESP of the Year
Mary Ambriz



2023 ESP Leadership Academy

STRENGTHENING OUR SCHOOLS means strengthening the voice of everyone who works within the school system. CTA's ESP Leadership Academy is an annual opportunity exclusively for education support professional (ESP/classified) members interested in becoming effective leaders in their local chapters. Your participation will better prepare you to help your local organization deal with known issues today and the unknown tomorrow.

Session 1: MARCH 24-26, 2023

Los Angeles

Session 2: APRIL 28-30, 2023

Burlingame

Join us — alone or as a team! Register at bit.ly/3T79wjv. **Application deadline: Jan. 27, 2023**, or until full. For more information, visit cta.org/esp.



Advocacy Then and Now

40th ANNIVERSARY OF *CORAM NOBIS* CASES

A SPECIAL CELEBRATION:

Fred Korematsu Day

Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution is officially on Jan. 30. This year, an in-person event is planned for Jan. 28, 2023, in San Francisco to mark the 40th anniversary of the *coram nobis* cases. *Coram nobis* is the general term for the 1980s reconsideration of the three cases of Gordon Hirabayashi, Fred Korematsu and Minoru Yasui, who challenged the exclusion orders or curfew during World War II, which led to the incarceration of more than 120,000 Japanese Americans. The convictions of all three were vacated, based on proof that the government had suppressed, altered and destroyed material evidence while arguing their cases before the Supreme Court.

Details of the celebration are at korematsuinstitute.org.



Help High School Seniors Apply for Financial Aid

A new policy requires that California's high school seniors apply for financial aid starting in the 2022-23 academic year. This will expand access to financial aid for thousands of students as they make important decisions about their futures after graduation.

The pandemic years saw fewer students applying for the Free Application for Federal Aid (FAFSA) and the California Dream Act Application (CADAA). In 2021 alone, California left over \$561 million in unutilized dollars, which could have helped countless students pursue college or career training.

Now, through its All In for FAFSA/CADAA campaign, the California Student Aid Commission will work with counselors and teachers to support students in their financial aid applications.

"Many [students] do not know of the financial aid resources that are available to them. This is especially true for first-generation and low-income students," said Catalina Cifuentes, commission chair and executive director of College & Career Readiness at the Riverside County Office of Education.

For more on the All-In campaign go to csac.ca.gov/all-in. —Amy Peruzzaro



National School Counseling Week, Feb. 6-10, 2023, highlights the tremendous impact school counselors have in helping students achieve school success and plan for a career. The 2023 theme is "School Counselors: Helping Students Dream Big." The American School Counselor Association has resources to help promote the week, including proclamations, certificates of appreciation, sample press releases, posters, stickers, door hangers and bookmarks. Download them at schoolcounselor.org/nscw.



Black Lives Matter at School: An Uprising for Educational Justice, by Jesse Hagopian and Denisha Jones, is an essential handbook offering lessons from successful challenges to institutional racism that have been won through the BLM at School movement. It includes essays, interviews, poems, resolutions and more from educators, students and parents. UTLA President Cecily Myart-Cruz, who wrote a chapter with CTA board member Erika Jones, said "This book asserts that we are at a critical moment in time, where the racial uprisings underpin the absolute need to transform education and its foundational practices. It's time for educators to be bold, standing up for our students and communities. Our students are looking to us to lead the fight against injustice and dismantle systemic racism as we aspire to realize the schools our students deserve."

BLACK LIVES MATTER AT SCHOOL WEEK OF ACTION

FEB. 6–10, 2023

Black Lives Matter at School is a national coalition organizing for racial justice in education. Its annual Week of Action involves thousands of educators around the country who teach lessons about structural racism, intersectional black identities, black history and anti-racist movements. Join the week, year, lifetime to affirm the lives of Black students, teachers, and families. Find out more at blacklivesmatteratschool.com.

CTA Conference Grants Available



The **CTA Board of Directors** is awarding incentive grants for attendance at these 2023 statewide conferences — but hurry: Application deadline is Jan. 10, 2023.

- Good Teaching Conference-South
MARCH 3-5 Garden Grove
- Equity & Human Rights Conference
MARCH 17-19 Santa Clara

Available grants:

Minority Incentive Grants — Minority members are defined as belonging to one of the following racial-ethnic groups: African American; American Indian/Alaska Native; Asian;

Hispanic; Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander or Multi-ethnic. These grants are offered to encourage minority leadership within CTA.

Small Chapter Incentive Grants — Awarded to chapters with a unit size of 100 or fewer members. Unit size is defined as the number of persons who are represented for purposes of collective bargaining. Chapter membership may be less than the unit size.

New Member Grants — Awarded to applicants who are within their first 5 years of CTA membership.

Apply for a grant at cta.org/conferences/grants.

QUOTES & NUMBERS

Compiled by **Julian Peeples**

49

Percent of community college leaders who are white. 24 percent of community college students identify as non-Hispanic white, according to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

53

Percent of public schools nationwide reporting being understaffed at the beginning of the 2022-23 school year, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

84

Percent of 1,000 likely November 2022 voters who said they most trust the opinions of teachers on what should be taught in schools, according to an NEA survey released in September.



"We've been advocating for a long time for affordable housing for educators. [Our educators would] love to go evening events and be present in their schools, but it's hard to be involved in that way when you have a two-hour drive!"

—**Terri Baldwin**, president of the Palo Alto Education Association, on the impacts of high housing costs for educators in a recent NEA Today story



"Our district has spent years disinvesting in educators in Twin Rivers. They've spent less and less ... on teacher salaries and benefits. That's led to a staffing crisis and it's time to rectify that. Our students should be able to count on having teachers in the classroom when they come to school."

—**Rebecca LeDoux**, Twin Rivers United Educators president, in an October CBS News story about educators rallying for higher pay and more support for their students



"If you want to build schools where educators want to work and students want to attend, you have got to do something better than you've done already."

—**Cecily Myart-Cruz**, United Teachers Los Angeles president, on what UTLA is demanding from L.A. Unified School District officials during a rally on Oct. 19



1,586

Instances of individual books being banned, affecting 1,145 unique book titles, from July 1, 2021, to March 31 of this year, according to PEN America. During that time, book bans occurred in 86 school districts in 26 states.

"These results confirm what educators have been saying for more than two years: The pandemic has exacerbated racial, economic and other inequities that have long existed in our public education system. We must double down on closing opportunity gaps and meeting our students' needs and the unique needs of their communities."

—CTA President **E. Toby Boyd** in October, following the release of national student assessment data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress

▼ Scenes from "When We Fight," a new documentary that chronicles UTLA organizing efforts as well as the six-day strike in January 2019.



THE STRIKE HEARD ROUND THE WORLD

6 rainy days
30,000+ educators
600,000 students
60,000 rally goers
1 growing movement
#RedForEd

WHO CAN FORGET the remarkable days four years ago when educators in the second-largest school district in the nation went on strike? They were protesting after years of reprehensible classroom and school conditions and shamefully inadequate funding for programs and resources.

The action led by United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) in downtown LA began on Jan. 18, 2019. When it ended six days later, UTLA had reached an agreement with the school district and members had won almost all they had gone on strike for. The settlement included a reduction in class sizes; nurses at schools every day; caseloads of high school counselors cut in half; and psychologists and social workers available at community schools along with other wraparound services.

It was a momentous victory for students, educators and the **#RedForEd** movement that was growing across the country, aided in no small part by parent and community supporters.

"When We Fight" is a new documentary that chronicles the UTLA organizing efforts in the months before the strike and during January. It highlights the leadership of some of the women who led it, from union leaders to classroom teachers.

"When we saw more than 30,000 educators in the second largest school district in the U.S. preparing for a strike, we started filming," say Yael Bridge and Yoni Golijov, who directed and produced. "We filmed from strike vote to contract vote, documenting the democracy and mass participation in the strike, from school cafeterias to rain-drenched picket lines."

The documentary can be rented for private screenings at sliding scale, with UTLA strike leaders available for Q&As. Email whenwefightmovie@gmail.com or view information at whenwefightmovie.com.



▼ The Salinas Surf Club shreds waves in the Monterey area six times a school year, instilling in students' minds that they belong anywhere a wave can be found.



LESSONS *in the Waves*

Educator-founded Salinas Surf Club introduces students to the ocean, life experiences By Julian Peeples

“THIS CLUB is very special because we’re giving students the opportunity to join together with their peers to take advantage of our coastline’s resources,” says Jeff Smallwood, elementary educator and founder of the Salinas Surf Club. “Furthermore, it instills in their minds that they belong anywhere a wave can be found.”

Created in 2017, the Salinas Surf Club gives students an introduction to ocean culture and expands their horizons far beyond the farmlands and fields of the Salinas Valley. Smallwood, a second-grade structured English teacher at Los Padres Elementary School in East Salinas, came up with the idea with a friend who was a California state lifeguard. The Monterey-area native had been a boogie boarder and surfer since a young age and was eager to share his love of surfing with students from his school community.

Seeded with a \$500 regional equity grant from CTA, Smallwood was able to rent wetsuits and make snacks to eat on the beach. That group in 2017 consisted of three instructors and four students. In 2020, the club got a \$3,000 grant from Community Foundation of Monterey County and this September, the Salinas Surf Club took more than two dozen students and volunteers each to surf at Carmel Beach.

“Kids were catching waves right away,” says Smallwood, a

member of Salinas Elementary Teachers Council (SETC). “It’s so much fun to see those kids ride waves. Teaching kids to surf is almost better than surfing.”

Smallwood said it took a little time for students and their parents to warm up to the idea of a surf club in Salinas – most club participants are from low socioeconomic backgrounds, are learning English and do not know how to swim. Smallwood enlisted the help of fellow Los Padres teachers originally from Mexico, who enrolled their children in the club to show that the activity was safe. Though Salinas is only 10 miles away from the Pacific Ocean, many students and their families had never taken the 25-minute drive to walk on the beach and dip their toes in the water.

“The Salinas Surf Club provides students with an opportunity to be part of a sport that is not very common in their community,” says Roberto Zamora, a sixth-grade dual immersion teacher at Los Padres and SETC member, who is from Michoacán, Mexico. “Students benefit from this club because Latino students are less likely to participate in school athletics. Moreover, it teaches students to be disciplined, to develop leadership skills, goal setting and risk taking. The club is crucial to our students because it bridges a gap with the Latino community.”

With enough adults in the water with lifeguard training

▼ Los Padres Elementary School educator Jeff Smallwood started the Salinas Surf Club in 2017, sharing his love of surfing with his students.

▼ Smallwood and dedicated volunteers teach water safety and surfing skills. The club also offers swim lessons, kayaking trips and visits to the Monterey Bay Aquarium.



▼ Students go at their own pace, with many standing up on the board their first time out.



“We want to make sure every single kiddo knows they have a place and deserve to be [on the water] just like anybody else. And it helps if there’s a wave, too.”

—Jeff Smallwood, Salinas Elementary Teachers Council

(several lifeguards and firefighters are regular club volunteers), students learn water safety, surfing skills and how to stand up on the board.

“We put safety first but still give the opportunity for fun,” Smallwood says. “Now, we’re getting kids signed up for swim lessons, kayaking trips and visits to the Monterey Bay Aquarium.”

The club goes surfing six times a school year – once a month outside of winter. Smallwood says they also now offer summer scholarships through the club’s sister surf program, The Wahine Project (thewahineproject.org).

Surf club members are separated into skill-based groups, so students can go at their own pace and comfort level – some ride surfboards, others boogie boards, and some enjoy spending time getting used to being in the ocean. Smallwood says the volunteer instructors are all veteran surfers teaching real techniques to their learners.

“They’re getting good lessons,” he says. “These kids are further along than I was at their age.”

In a sport where most surfers are white, a big part of the Salinas Surf Club is introducing these Latino students to the wonders of the ocean and affirming that they belong there.

“We want to make sure every single kiddo knows they have a place and deserve to be there just like anybody else,” he says.

“And it helps if there’s a wave, too.”

For Smallwood, the club is a labor of love. Building the club from the ground up took great dedication and effort but was completely worth it to be able to share surfing with a new generation of little shredders.

“It’s the one thing that makes my profession complete. I think I’d burn out without it,” he says. “I get to bring a part of what I love to my students.”

Smallwood says SETC is a big club supporter (“they backed me up when we tried to make this work”), with fellow educators volunteering with everything from driving students to and from the beach to taking photos of their outings. He appreciates all the volunteers who help make the magic happen.

Smallwood’s message for educators: Share your passions with your students.

“Don’t be afraid to teach them those things you value. They love to learn the things you love. It’s where the best learning takes off.” ■

Follow the Salinas Surf Club on Facebook at [@SalinasSurfClub](https://www.facebook.com/SalinasSurfClub) and Instagram at [@Salinas_Surf_Club](https://www.instagram.com/Salinas_Surf_Club), where you can also contact Smallwood about starting a surf club in your community. Photos by James Craig, Salinas Elementary Teachers Council.

Thinking *Outside* THE BOX



Often, educators who think a little differently come up with brilliant ways to engage and connect with students and their school and larger communities. Such is the case with the individuals profiled on the following pages. From a new kind of FITE club focused on growing educators to Project LIKE, which connects college students to nonprofits and community agencies, these educators imagined what could be — and made it happen.

Kudos to them, and to innovative educators everywhere!

Our Innovators

- Keith Sprague, p. 19
- Cicely Bingener, p. 20
- Mariana Garcia Serrato, p. 22
- Alma Galapon, p. 23
- Edwina Williams, p. 25
- Maria Cardona De Garza, p. 26
- Jennifer Gomez & Martha Stein, p. 28
- Austin LeMay, p. 30

▼ Students operate a bike wash, lube and flat-tire repair station for students and community members.



▼ Project Dragon Paws helps Sprague's students relax — and work to get shelter animals adopted.



Students get a boost with two wheels, four paws

HOW DO YOU HELP at-risk teens regain their equilibrium, improve their health and reduce their stress levels? It's as easy as riding a bike — in this case a mountain bike — asserts Keith Sprague. Sprague teaches at Alps View High School in Weaverville, a mountain town in the Trinity Alps. AVHS is a small continuation school for students who are not on track to graduate from traditional high school.

In 2021, Sprague, a member of Trinity Alps Unified Teachers Association, received a \$20,000 grant from CTA's Institute for Teaching to buy 16 mountain bikes for his students. The goal: to help break the vicious cycle of apathy, poor health habits and lack of exercise. He also bought an e-bike for students with special needs.

"Despite the pandemic and wildfires, we finally were able to get many of the kids on bikes, using our county's pristine trails that have always been there just calling to us," says Sprague, now in his 17th year as a public school educator. "It was very emotionally moving for me as a teacher to see these students, who are often unmotivated, enjoying a hands-on, outdoor activity with smiles on their faces."

The idea came about when he was talking informally with his superintendent who asked, "Wouldn't it be great to see some of these kids on mountain bikes?"

"I took that as a 'yes,' and applied for the grant," says Sprague.

Riding the mountain bikes during school time counts as physical education. It also ties in with building confidence,



KEITH SPRAGUE

Trinity Alps Unified Teachers Association

"I am striving to be the teacher I wish I had when I was younger. I'll do whatever it takes to support these kids and help them get back on track."

social-emotional learning and encouraging healthy habits.

"When we take a break on our mountain bike rides and find a shady spot and get comfortable, we have some open conversations while admiring the beautiful terrain," he says. "Many of these kids suffer from stress, trauma and anxiety. Some have issues related to substance abuse. When I began teaching here, I came to the realization that I can't touch their academic needs until I start focusing on their social-emotional and physical needs. The mountain bike program is definitely helping with that."

Tenth-grader Trinton Gillespie says it's an "awesome" experience.

"I love it when we get to ride trails that I have never been on before. I definitely focus more on my schoolwork, so I don't lose the opportunity to ride while at school." Sprague used part of the grant money to purchase professional bike repair tools. His students operate a bike wash, lube and flat-tire repair station for other



students and community members, and they keep the bikes in his program fine-tuned.

He created another program, Project Dragon Paws (in honor of the school's mascot) for the 25 students in his classroom. It started when one student smuggled a kitten into class.

"I noticed the calming effect that it had on students and thought, 'How can we incorporate this into our classroom?'"

Sprague formed a partnership with Trinity County Animal Shelter, which brings animals to the school. Alps' students feed, care for, socialize and play with them. They photograph each animal and run a social media campaign to help them get adopted into forever homes.

"Now in our third year, Project Dragon Paws is not only a huge highlight for our students, but it has also afforded them an opportunity to give back to their community."

"Project Dragon Paws has created a more positive environment in the classroom," says 12th-grader Julie Vela. "It has lowered my anxiety levels and taught me a sense of responsibility."

Sprague, who grew up on the East Coast, experienced many of the challenges his students face.

"I didn't care about school, barely graduated high school and had my share of troubles in school. My students pointed out this makes me 'one of them.'"

After graduating from college, he worked briefly as a correctional officer, became a teacher and was also a principal for several years. Three years ago, he decided to work with the student population that needs him the most — and came to AVHS.

His next challenge is creating a garden that will also serve as an outdoor living classroom and a source of nutritious food for his students, who often come to school hungry and craving healthy food.

"I am striving to be the teacher I *wish* I had when I was younger," says Sprague. "These are not 'bad kids.' It's just that their learning has been interrupted. And I'll do whatever it takes to support them and help them get back on track."

▼ Bingener, center, with FITE Club members on a visit to UCLA.



FITE Club advisor battles alternative education stereotypes

CICELY BINGENER SERVES as the advisor for the FITE Club that meets weekly at Inglewood Continuation School. The club's 12 members don't put on boxing gloves and throw punches. Instead, they are fighting for a second chance and better future — while pondering careers in education. The letters stand for Future Inglewood Transformative Educators.

Bingener believes that FITE Club members have the potential to become excellent teachers *because* of the challenges they face, not in spite of them.

"Some of the best solutions to our pressing problems in society rest with those who are 'closest to the pain,'" says the Inglewood Teachers Association member. "Some of the most marginalized students have the most to tell us about what successful and impactful teaching looks like."

While being polled in the game Kahoot!, students shared that relationships are key to student success and that it matters if a teacher is caring and kind. They also said that consistency is important. Many have had numerous substitute teachers and high teacher turnover at their schools.

Bingener was surprised that club members hold teachers in such high respect, despite their academic struggles. She learned that there are many reasons students enroll in alternative education programs including experiencing homelessness or foster care, working to support their family, and being bullied because they're gay, transgender or non-binary.

"FITE Club members are very intelligent and have a unique perspective that doesn't get solicited often," she adds. "We need to mine that expertise rather than dismiss it. Instead of pushing students to the margins, we should pull them in — with caring, inclusive and restorative practices."

She believes that at-risk students can help to solve the teaching shortage and increase the numbers of minority teachers in schools.

▼ Club members, encouraged to consider teaching careers, create and present lessons to kindergartners at a nearby school.



CICELY BINGENER

Inglewood Teachers Association

“One of the ways we can make things better is by reaching out to students from non-traditional backgrounds. We can learn as much from them as they can learn from us.”

“This club is about racial justice and equity. Through outreach, we can cultivate and inspire pathways to careers in teaching among Latinx and African American students in Inglewood.”

Bingener is a transitional kindergarten teacher at Beulah Payne STEAM Academy in Inglewood, and job-shares with another teacher while enrolled in UCLA's Ph.D. Urban Schooling Division program. She remembers being “deeply moved” when she visited the continuation school for her graduate studies. When she noticed the school did not have any clubs, she asked if she could start one.

Permission was granted in October 2021. A \$5,000 grant from CTA's Institute for Learning funded materials and field trips to elementary schools, colleges and theater performances.

(The club is not a project for her doctorate program; she wanted to keep it as a separate volunteer project so she could help students without using them as case studies.)

The first meeting drew students who heard there were snacks. Many were curious, but doubtful they had teacher potential.

“I explained that everybody knows a lot about something, and we can all teach the things we know, whether it's how to shoot a TikTok video, play the latest online game or kick a football. I told them that their voice is important and that we are building a partnership together.”

The students create hands-on English and art lessons and present them to kindergartners at a nearby school. Last year's presentation was a confidence booster for the club members, who were thrilled to be mistaken for college students by adults on campus.

“It was a very powerful and joyful experience,” Bingener

says. “Students showed great promise — even brilliance.”

Some FITE Club members think seriously about a teaching career. For others, it's an important step toward planning for the future, even if they choose a different path. A few graduates appeared with Bingener at CTA's 2022 Human Rights Conference to share their experiences.

“I never thought of myself as an educator,” says Angel Stormborn, who graduated last June and is enrolled in El Camino College in Torrance. He plans on becoming a teacher.

“Cicely immersed us in the world of education and gave us opportunities and experiences we'd never had. I've never met a teacher who cared more about her students and listened to what they had to say. She would make us feel normal, when a lot of us felt alienated and disconnected from the world. She made us feel loved.”

Presenting at the CTA Human Rights Conference was a great experience, says Stormborn, who believes the confidence he gained from public speaking will be helpful as a teacher.

Bingener has taught in Inglewood for 25 years. She became a teacher because she was dissatisfied with her own educational experience and felt students like herself deserved better. She became the teacher she wished she'd had.

“I have always thought if you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem. And one of the ways we can make things better is by reaching out to students from non-traditional backgrounds. I have discovered that we can learn as much from our students as they can learn from us.”



▼ Garcia Serrato operates a fully gamified, project-based learning classroom.



Making STEM relevant — and fun

A RECENT ASSIGNMENT in Mariana Garcia Serrato's classroom was to "rescue" famous scientists from the evil Time Cruncher. On students' individual computer screens, the scientists appeared as prisoners behind bars. But with every correct answer to a set of STEM questions, the scientists moved closer to freedom.

Instead of taking a test, Garcia Serrato's students were winning a video game — assuming their answers were right.

"It sounds silly, but games instead of tests create an environment where students have fun instead of getting nervous and anxious," says Garcia Serrato, who uses Google Sheets to create video games with superheroes and science themes.

Students gleefully run to her class on test day — or as students call it "Boss Battle Day." Those scoring 100 percent get bragging rights and receive online trading cards. Students with lower scores may retake the test after reviewing the material, and are incentivized by the thought of *winning*.

Garcia Serrato teaches science and STEM to students in grades 5-8 in the AdVENTURE STEM program, which is a school within a school for 240 students at Herman Intermediate School in San Jose. She was one of the program's founders 13 years ago, and today is the lead teacher. In 2019, AdVENTURE was named a California Distinguished School for making exceptional gains in implementing academic content and performance standards.

The Oak Grove Education Association member is a fully certified PBS Media Literacy Educator, a Google Certified Educator, a KQED

Media Literacy Innovator and winner of numerous awards. She enjoys sharing ideas on her blog, Teaching Above the Test, and connecting with other educators using the Twitter handle @MarianaGSerrato.

To make STEM relevant for all students, Garcia Serrato operates a fully gamified, project-based learning classroom, where students are given freedom to come up with ideas on how to make the world a better place.

Her students developed a series of videos to convince people to limit their food waste. They created a cookbook for leftovers. They published tips on how to save and reuse water. They research worthy charities and fundraise for them. Like their teacher, they have created online games and board games on topics such as photosynthesis and genetics.

"My favorite was a genetics game where students created a 'super hero' or 'super villain' using dominant and recessive traits based on characteristics they would like to see in imaginary characters."

Students are always bouncing ideas off each other

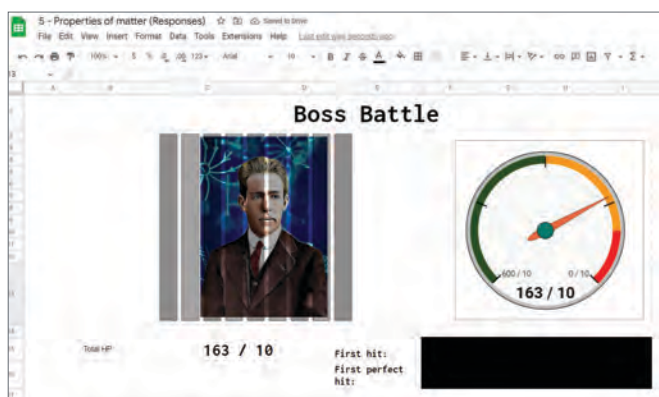


MARIANA GARCIA SERRATO

Oak Grove Education Association

"In my classroom students are not constrained by adult thinking, so they do think outside the box. Instead of asking 'why can't we do this?' they just go and do."

▼ In one assignment, students "rescue" famous scientists by giving correct answers to a set of STEM questions.



and building things together on computers or in the Maker-space area with 3-D printers and robotics.

"In my classroom they are not constrained by adult thinking, so they do think outside the box. Instead of asking 'why can't we do this?' they just go and do."

"Ms. Garcia's class is a great environment for learning. Her curriculum is fun, engaging and ultimately allows us to test to our highest potential," says Ellie Le, a 7th grader.

"I really like this type of class because it helps me learn new things in a fun way," says Sai Vernekar, an 8th grader. "The things we do are interesting because there is always some kind of twist or activity that makes me enjoy the class."

Garcia Serrato was born and raised in Mexico City and learned to speak English as a toddler. Her father is a lawyer in Mexico and her late mother was the only woman in her law school's graduating class. She moved to California in 1998 with her then-husband.

"I was a stay-at-home mom, although I graduated from La Salle University in Mexico City with degrees in science and biochemistry," she recalls. "I began volunteering at my kids' school and saw there was a lack of science in education, because at that time, students were only tested on math and English.

"I would ask the principal, 'Why don't we have science here?' And the principal said, 'Why don't you become a teacher?' So, I went back to school and got my credential at San Jose State University and have been teaching for 15 years."

When she was a student, a teacher in Mexico encouraged her to pursue science, and she emulates his teaching style in her own classroom.

"In his eyes, everybody had the ability and wherewithal to succeed in any area. He told students, 'You are not leaving this class until you understand this material.' I don't think I would have gone into science without his encouragement. And I'm so glad I did. To me, science literacy can be used to combat misinformation. It invites students to wonder about the world around them. It encourages them to use their knowledge to make the world a better place."



ALMA GALAPON

Elk Grove Education Association

▼
"I don't think we should hide our history or be ashamed of our stories. We should learn, accept and recognize just how hard it was, to inspire our students."

Empowering Asian American history lessons

WHEN ALMA GALAPON was growing up in Salinas, Asian American history was rarely covered in school. The few references in textbooks were "cold and dehumanizing," she recalls. The Filipina daughter of immigrant farmworkers wondered why people like her were excluded — and observed that even family members were reluctant to discuss the past.

"My family experienced a lot of hurt and trauma and didn't want to call attention to what they had been through," recalls Galapon, a fourth-grade teacher at Carroll Elementary School in Elk Grove. "But our history is important because it is American history. My family worked in the fields and made enormous sacrifices to succeed, like thousands of other families from the Philippines. I don't think we should hide our history or be ashamed of our stories. I think we should learn, accept and recognize just how hard it was, to inspire our students."

The Elk Grove Education Association member is helping students do just that through focusing on Larry Itliong, a Filipino American labor leader.

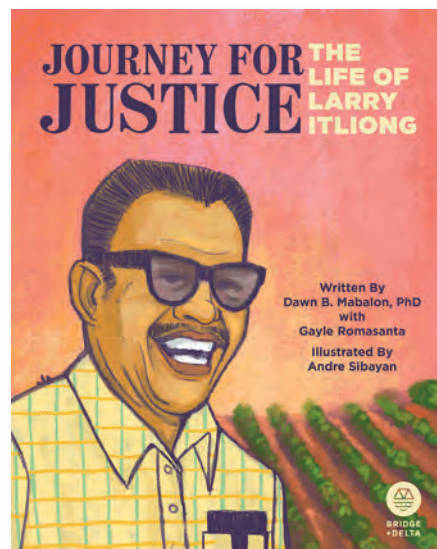
"By the time students reach fourth grade, they have heard about Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta, but not Larry Itliong," she explains. "He organized West Coast farmworkers, starting in the 1930s. He became well-known in the '60s for spearheading the Delano grape strike."

Galapon's project for students, Journey for Justice with Larry Itliong: Problem Solving, Taking Action & Revolution, was funded by a grant



▼ Galapon helps a student read through *Journey for Justice: The Story of Larry Itliong*.

▼ In the book, students learn the story of Filipino immigration to the United States and the life of a key but lesser-known West Coast labor leader.



from CTA's Institute for Learning. The 180 fourth-grade participants received *Journey for Justice: The Life of Larry Itliong*, a book by Dawn B. Mabalon, PhD, with Gayle Romasanta, and illustrated by Andre Sibayan. Galapon created curriculum for the project and held a training for all fourth-grade teachers at her site. Soon she will offer training districtwide.

Last year, during a read-aloud, five Filipino American students in her class were beaming. "Their faces just lit up," Galapon says. "They finally felt seen."

Students admired Itliong's decision to stay in America and fight injustice. They observed that "people with white skin were paid 12 cents an hour to be a janitor while people with dark skin got paid 10 cents an hour to pick vegetables in the hot sun." Some reflected that Itliong was favored more than other Filipinos, yet still spoke out against unfair treatment.

Galapon's project goes beyond Filipino American history: It encourages students to delve into their own cultures, reflect on their own communities, identify oppressors and develop projects that benefit others.

"My hope is that students can talk about injustice and then make their community a better place by helping other people. I challenge them to come up with ways to make their communities better."

Fourth grader Emmerson Noya organized a park clean-up

day with her classmates and family. "It felt great to know that we had an impact on the neighborhood," says Noya.

A culminating activity is planned for the school's multicultural fair later this year, when all students are encouraged to share stories, history, clothing styles and pictures that reflect their heritage.

With rising hate crimes committed against Asian Americans, teaching Asian American history has never been more important, observes Galapon.

"The more you see people as human beings, the less likely you are to dismiss someone that looks different — and the more likely you are to treat others as you want to be treated."

Galapon is vice chair of CTA's Pacific Asian American Caucus. She looks forward to working with fellow educator and caucus chair Jayson Chang, who as a team member of the Asian American Education Project helps create Asian American history lessons for teachers at multiple grade levels throughout the state.

"It's a massive job. But it's exciting to be part of this project."

▼ Project LIKE participants earlier this year.



Creating an ethic of love and community

EDWINA WILLIAMS WANTED her community college students to discover how the classroom material applies to the outside world, and maybe find their purpose. So several years ago she created Project LIKE (Literacy is Knowledge Empowerment), a nonprofit that connects students to nonprofits and community agencies in the larger Northern San Diego County where they can volunteer, intern or do work study.

Williams, who teaches sociology — plus statistics, African studies, ethnic studies, women's studies and more — estimates that approximately 40 students participate each semester. Many of them come from challenging backgrounds, and she can relate to that.

"I never thought I would ever be in a college class, let alone teach one," says Williams, associate faculty at MiraCosta College in Oceanside and adjunct faculty at Palomar College in San Marcos. She shares her story — becoming pregnant at 17, dropping out of high school and eventually earning a master's degree — to show students anyone can transform their life.

Project LIKE participants combat social problems and make communities stronger by serving at food pantries, reading and promoting literacy at the Boys and Girls Club and other agencies, and teaching personal finance and career education to youth at Junior Achievement of San Diego. Some participants conduct fundraisers for worthy causes.

"The students are learning diverse perspectives,"

"The students are learning diverse perspectives, learning about different cultures and meeting people who speak different languages. I am so proud of my students."

says Williams, a member of the MiraCosta College Academic Associate Faculty. "They are learning about different cultures and meeting people who speak different languages. This is what sociology is all about. I am so proud of my students."

She received a \$33,000 grant from Blue Cross to fund a health literacy program, and the health care company kicked in another \$7,000 so students could provide free meals at churches and schools for those experiencing food insecurity.

She also fundraises through her website sites.google.com/view/project-like.

Williams was a student at Ocean Shores High School in Oceanside when she became pregnant and dropped out. Between associating with gang members and caring for her younger siblings, she felt destined to continue living in a cycle of poverty.

The turning point came when her son entered kindergarten, and she found herself struggling to read his homework instructions. She wanted to be a role model for him, so she enrolled in the High School Diploma Program at the MiraCosta College Community Learning Center. She earned her diploma two years later, and then enrolled in MiraCosta College, where she earned an associate degree in psychology, received several scholarships and landed on the President's List. She transferred to Cal State San Marcos, where she earned a bachelor's degree in psychology in 2012 and a master's degree in sociological practice in 2015.



EDWINA WILLIAMS

MiraCosta College Academic Associate Faculty



▼ Project LIKE students read to children to promote literacy.



While earning her master's, she decided to become a teacher, and was awarded a one-year faculty training internship at MiraCosta from the San Diego Imperial Counties Community Colleges Association. She is currently enrolled at the University of San Diego in the education for social justice doctoral program.

Her own role model is a now-retired educator named Susan Daniels, who taught Williams in elementary school and later at a continuation school.

"She was a nurturer and knew what equity and inclusion meant before these words were commonly used," says Williams. "She took time for students who were low-income and had a non-traditional upbringing. She would pull those kids aside and say, 'I see you.' She would ask what we needed and show that she cared for us. She invited us to parties and barbecues at her house."

Williams strives to be that kind of teacher and create an "ethic of love and community" for her students to help them succeed in the classroom. Former students testify to her success.

"Project LIKE gave me the opportunity to explore my interest in the field of art therapy by allowing me to incorporate my art skills and creativity through an internship," recalls Dianne Preciado. "Now as a graduate student in a program for marriage and family therapy with a specialization in art therapy, I am grateful for Edwina Williams' support in my vision of using creativity for community and educational empowerment."

"Project LIKE helped me discover my love for teaching and helped me go from community college to a four-year university," says Angela Harris. "It placed me inside a classroom teaching, tutoring and supporting elementary aged children. I am now student teaching for my state credential certification and I have Project LIKE to thank for the confidence I have."

▼ The publication of Jefferson Elementary School students with work from their 2022 summer session.



Good news: English Learners sharpen skills through journalism

ENGLISH LEARNERS in Compton Unified School District are making headlines — and writing informative articles to go with them. Through enrollment in a summer and after-school journalism program, they are becoming English-proficient more quickly, having fun and thrilled to be earning bylines.

"We have a lot of students who are very eager to learn the English language, and it's up to us to help them get there," says Maria Cardona De Garza, an EL specialist for the district and Compton Education Association member. "Language takes time to develop. The journalism class is a way to move away from the traditional remedial approach to support students in their learning."

De Garza teamed up with Jennifer Graziano, senior director of EL students for the district, to implement an after-school journalism program in 2015, based on curriculum developed by Loyola Marymount University. What began as a pilot program at five campuses expanded to 14 district schools and also a summer program. It received a Golden Bell Award from the California School Board Association in 2019.

The program is aligned to ELA Common Core Standards and designed for youngsters in grades 3-5 who are considered at risk of becoming long-term English Learners. Students who have been in American schools for at least six years but have not become fluent in English and have not advanced in two years on English language proficiency tests are considered long-term English learners in California.

▼ Students from Clinton Elementary School interview members of the Compton Fire Department.



▲
MARIA CARDONA DE GARZA

Compton Education Association

“Language takes time to develop. The journalism class is a way to move away from the traditional remedial approach to support students in their learning.”

Using journalism to prevent students from becoming long-term ELs is an unconventional approach that is showing success, says De Garza, who trains cadres of teachers to use the program throughout the district.

“We have followed students who participated to see how they were performing on assessments, including the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC). Students who participated in the after-school journalism program were moving forward in their scores and were always higher the following year.”

Depending upon the school site, these cub reporters may have their work showcased in a printed newsletter, an online newsletter or a podcast, with staff and students at their campus as the intended audience. Naturally, most students choose to write about things happening at their school and often interview staff members.

With the help of their teacher, students must research topics, formulate well-developed questions and write down interviewees’ responses. When they begin writing articles, students are encouraged to use a “hook” in the headline to grab readers’ attention, and edit their work. They also take photos and write captions. They may work individually or in groups.

The program is a way to bring EL students, who may be on the quiet side and hesitant to ask questions, out of their shell and instill confidence. It strengthens both listening and speaking skills.

Students are taught how to project confidence in their body language, make eye contact, speak clearly and ask follow-up questions if necessary.

Those who participated in the program at Bunche Elementary School before the pandemic, featured in a school newsletter, had good things to say. Among them:

“I loved coming to the program because I learned about newspapers and how to write and interview,” says Andrew Sanchez.

“I enjoyed the program because I got to write neater and learn many things,” says Laney Martinez. “I love learning about reading, writing and how people make newspapers.”

De Garza is a veteran journalist, with a degree in journalism and previous experience at a daily newspaper in her native country, Spain. She learned English at middle school in Spain and honed it as a 17-year-old exchange student in the United States. Recruited to work as a bilingual teacher in Compton in 1999, she has remained with the district ever since, first as a classroom teacher and now as a teacher on special assignment.

“My philosophy is that all students have the ability to learn and we cannot fail them,” she says. “They may take more time and work, but we must do whatever it takes to support them. And a fun, unique and creative way to help them succeed is through journalism.”



▼ Jennifer Gomez, left, and Martha Stein, right, giving feedback to students both face-to-face and digitally.



A stroke of genius: Instant feedback made easy

JENNIFER GOMEZ AND MARTHA STEIN

Claremont Faculty Association



“Since giving and receiving quality feedback becomes part of the classroom culture, students begin to understand how to construct their own feedback that is focused and clear.”

—Martha Stein

MARTHA STEIN AND JENNIFER GOMEZ co-teach a two-hour World History/English class at Claremont High School in San Gabriel Valley, in one large room with 70 students. With so many essays to grade, the duo felt overwhelmed at the amount of time it took to provide specific, helpful feedback to students.

Being tired and cranky from overwork inspired them to create their own app — Keyset for Education — which provides instant, detailed feedback to students at the touch of a button. The entrepreneurial pair have made the app available to teachers everywhere.

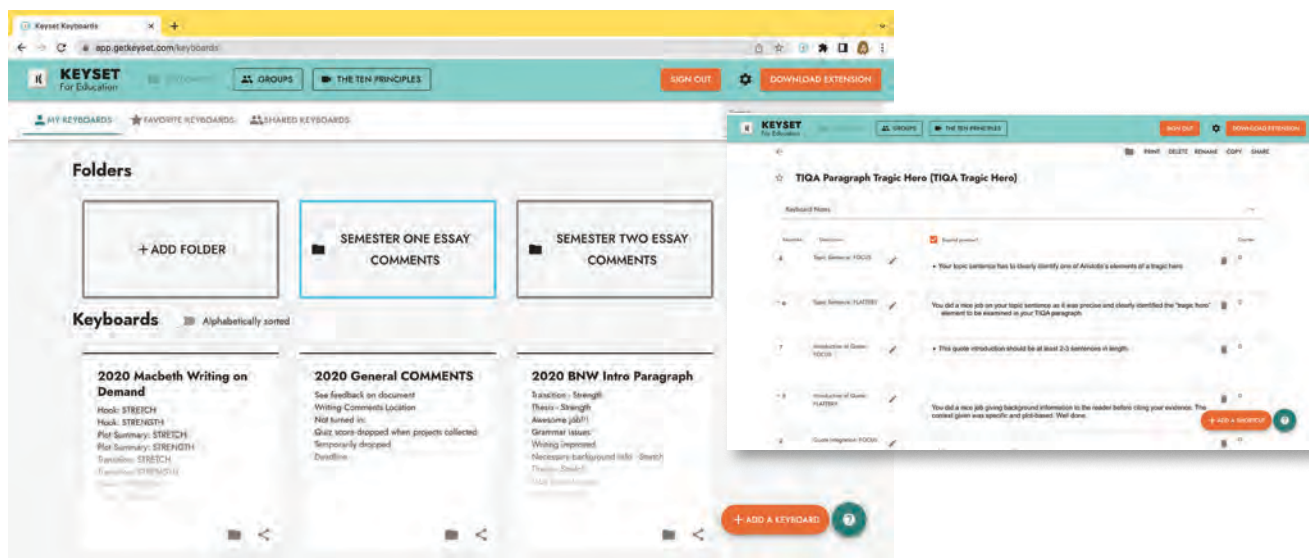
Keyset allows teachers to create a variety of comments, observations and questions — as well as links to articles and videos explaining concepts or showing examples — and insert them into essays or student work with just one keystroke. So instead of writing, “That’s a really good start, and you’re on the right track, but I’d like you to consider exploring the question I’ve posed with more depth. Here’s a link to an example,” teachers just hit a computer key and voila — they can insert that feedback instantly.

Educators can create their own comment banks — and also borrow and modify pre-designed comments by Stein and Gomez, both Claremont Faculty Association (CFA) members. Feedback can also be inserted while students are working on assignments, providing direction as they move forward.

Similar programs allow teachers to insert comments, but only within that particular program. Keyset, however, is a Google Chrome extension, so it can be used in many online programs including Google Classroom, Flipgrid, Canvas, School Loop, Turnitin.com, Remind, Outlook, Schoology and more.

“It allows me to provide constructive, specific feedback to students and have more ‘me time,’” says Gomez, who teaches world

- ▼ Slide at left shows various folders an educator can set up for their comments; at right, teacher comments for specific assignments that can be inserted with a single keystroke.



history. “What used to take hours now takes 25 minutes.”

Teachers aren’t the only ones reaping the rewards; students also benefit.

“My students know exactly what is expected of them, whether they are making progress and what to do next,” says Gomez.

“The feedback I got on my assignments showed me that my teachers valued what I had to say,” says student Navie Davila. “The feedback was so specific that it made me like writing even more because I could tell that I was improving.”

“At first, it’s an adjustment,” says Stein, who teaches English, “because students aren’t used to receiving specific, early feedback, some panicked initially. But now they’re accustomed to it. Since giving and receiving quality feedback becomes part of the classroom culture, they begin to understand how to construct their own feedback that is focused and clear. It makes the class culture very open, kind and growth-oriented.”

It is also a great tool for teacher collaboration, she notes. PLCs (Professional Learning Communities) at her school work together to create comments and criteria for specific grade levels and subject matter using Keyset.

The cost is \$39.99 per year per teacher, with discounts for bulk subscribers such as Upland Unified School District, which purchased licenses for teachers in grades 3-12. So far, a total of nearly 400 licenses have been issued. The

“It allows me to provide constructive, specific feedback to students and have more ‘me time.’ What used to take hours now takes 25 minutes.”

—Jennifer Gomez

program offers video tutorials, email support, a Facebook community and a free course on Principles of Effective Feedback, which includes:

- Directing feedback toward the task, not the student;
- Tailoring feedback to match students’ level of understanding;
- Connecting feedback to learning goals;
- Providing resources to students;

• Giving students time to act on feedback.

Stein and Gomez began working on the app in 2018, and officially launched in 2020, just as the pandemic began. They continue to fine-tune and update Keyset for ease and efficiency, and showcased the app at the Computer Using Educators (CUE) Conference last year in Palm Springs.

“In trying to develop my students’ analytical writing skills, I have found myself providing the same constructive feedback

on student papers for years,” says CFA member Rob Thomas, a social studies teacher at Claremont High. “Keyset has allowed me to provide consistent and effective feedback in less than half the time.”

“I love that my feedback quality does not change when I am nearing the end of a grading session,” says CFA member Maria Zavala, who teaches English at Claremont High. “With Keyset, all of my students receive the same high-quality feedback.”

For more information, visit getkeyset.com.



▼ LeMay and Tenaya Middle School students.



AUSTIN LEMAY

Fresno Teachers Association

“We are working to make sure students feel heard, seen and taken care of. We are trying to make it a great place where everyone feels connected.”



Changing school culture one (dance) step at a time

YOU’RE A JERK is the song students associate with Austin LeMay, a teacher at Tenaya Middle School in Fresno. But don’t be fooled; LeMay is beloved by students for his sense of fun and the hip hop dance moves that he performs to this song by New Boyz.

LeMay, a Fresno Teachers Association member, went viral on TikTok for dancing in the schoolyard, receiving more than 10 million hits since 2021. Snoop Dog even shared the video on his Instagram and LeMay was featured on Ellen.

The fame is nice, says LeMay, but he’s more excited about helping to change the school’s culture so students enjoy coming to school. And he’s doing just that.

He transferred to Tenaya, a diverse, Title 1 school, in 2018 from Bullard High School in Fresno at the urging of the former Tenaya principal, who asked him to serve as “campus culture director” and activities director. LeMay jokingly calls himself the “Czar of Fun” for the spirit, energy and enthusiasm he brings to campus.

He organized Friday dance parties at noon, and students loved it. They were amazed when LeMay strutted his own cool dance steps with kicks, jumps and arms flailing. One of the staff members filmed the performance, posted it on TikTok and LeMay became an overnight sensation.

He teaches leadership classes and serves as a liaison between school staff and Associated Student Body leaders. He also organizes pep

rallies, school dances and multicultural events. He encourages student leaders to advocate for things that matter to them, like the dress code. He helped create a Culture Team of staff and students to come up with “actionable steps” to make Tenaya a happier place. He is striving to make all students feel that they matter and belong at Tenaya.

“When I think of Mr. LeMay, three words/phrases come to my mind: the jerk, campus culture, and fun,” says student Elizabeth Akina. “He hosts lunchtime rallies weekly, where students can get their faces painted in Tenaya colors, play games, and dance to the music playing. Mr. LeMay has been a beam of light in our school.”

“Tenaya needed a jolt of energy and some positivity,” says LeMay. “And that’s happening. Instead of students transferring to other schools, which used to be the case, students now transfer *here* from zip codes throughout Fresno. The word is out: Students are having positive experiences.”

When LeMay attended Tenaya Middle School back in 2003, he did not have positive experiences. He was bullied and often lonely. Most people wouldn’t voluntarily return to a place that holds painful memories. But LeMay says what he went through inspired him to work hard, so that things are better for today’s Tenaya students.

He was instrumental in helping to create the WEB program (Where Everyone Belongs), which encourages eighth graders to make

seventh graders feel welcome at the beginning of the year. If someone is sitting alone, WEB students walk over and talk or eat lunch with them.

"We are working to make sure students feel heard, seen and taken care of. We are trying to make it a great place where everyone feels connected."

The Culture Team has pushed to include social-emotional learning to improve students' mental health. During advisory meetings in homeroom, held the first day of every week for 29 minutes, many teachers now focus on this.

"Before, during homeroom, teachers would do things like silent reading. But now many of us are using the time to offer SEL curriculum that the team has rolled out," LeMay says. "We started anti-bullying lessons that delve into how we all come from different backgrounds. We talk about empathy. We hold class circle meetings where students let their guard down a bit to talk about what they are going through either at school or at home. We talk about how everyone is going through something – and because of that we should be kind to each other, and we can help each other instead of pretending everything is fine."

LeMay says that while "there is definitely a more positive vibe" at Tenaya these days, "we're not perfect. It's still middle school and there are still fights and kids picking on each other. But overall, the climate is much better and people are nicer to each other. Teachers are more united and have each other's backs. Students come back to visit when they are in high school because they miss Tenaya."

LeMay never had formal dance lessons; he learned from watching MTV, back in the day when the station showed music videos.

▼ LeMay's schoolyard moves in the TikTok that went viral.



"I am an extrovert who is willing to get out there and be silly with the kids. The dance video was a happy accident. But I'm glad it happened, because it brought some positive attention to our school, where good things are happening."

Got a Passion Project?

IFT grants can help fund your great ideas for the classroom or school

SEVERAL OF THE innovators on the previous pages received grants from CTA's Institute for Teaching (IFT) to kickstart or extend and expand their work. If you've got an idea to help your students and school community and could use funds to move forward, consider applying for an IFT grant.

IFT is dedicated to supporting teacher-driven initiatives and helps all students and schools by awarding grants directly to CTA members and local chapters. To date, CTA members have funded 501 grant projects totaling more than \$5.8 million, empowering educators to transform their classrooms and their school communities.



The next open grant application submission period is happening *now* — the deadline for grants that will be implemented in the 2023-24 school year is March 31, 2023. All CTA members are eligible to apply for an Educator grant (up to \$5,000) or an Impact grant (up to \$20,000).

Go to cta.org/IFT for information, including past grant summaries and recipients and a video featuring Cecily Binger, one of the innovators included in this issue (page 20).

In addition, an IFT grant program presentation, "Grants Cultivate Creativity With Strength-Based Learning Environments," will be offered at three 2023 CTA conferences: Issues Conference, Jan. 13-15; Good Teaching Conference-North, Feb. 3-5; and Good Teaching Conference-South, March 3-5. Conference details are at cta.org/conferences.

▼ Just some of the students who attended a beginner cybersecurity camp at Troy High School in 2019.



In Defense of Data

Educator recognized for inspiring, growing student interest in cybersecurity

IT'S YOUR FIRST DAY on the job. You and your team have six hours to protect and defend your company's computers and networks from hackers, viruses and unsafe practices.

And you're 12 years old.

Such scenarios are common in cybersecurity competitions. And while many of high school teacher Robert "Allen" Stubblefield's participating students are teens, growing numbers of middle schoolers are joining his teams in competitions these days. Since Stubblefield started teaching the subject in 2010, he has led 21 teams from Troy High School in Fullerton to the CyberPatriot nationals, capturing first place 3 times.

It's not all about the awards. His monthlong summer camps have drawn 500 students for the past three seasons and now extend to fourth and fifth graders. "No one in the world is teaching 10- and 11-year-olds," he says proudly. He'd like to see even younger students exposed to the basics of cybersecurity — a burgeoning field in our increasingly digital world. A handful of his students have been hired into well-paying jobs directly out of high school.

In mid-October, the U.S. Department of Education announced that Stubblefield was one of two recipients of the 2022 Presidential Cybersecurity Education Award. He and a teacher from Ohio were selected "for instilling in their students the skills, knowledge and passion for cybersecurity."

The award, now in its third year, recognizes outstanding educators and leaders and creates awareness for cybersecurity occupations (there are currently more than 700,000 job openings in the U.S.). Stubblefield will be honored in December at the 2022 NICE K12 Cybersecurity Education Conference in St. Louis.

At Troy, a science and tech magnet school, Stubblefield teaches Cyber Defense. He served in the U.S. Navy for 21 years before becoming an educator — first as a Junior ROTC instructor for 10 years and then

▼ Troy High's team "Runtime Terror" looks optimistic after completing competition at the 2022 CyberPatriot nationals.



▼ Troy High's summer camps offer discounted fees to girls — a way to increase the number of females who study and work in cybersecurity and STEM fields. "Middle school girls are willing to try and do anything because no one has told them yet that they can't or they shouldn't," says Stubblefield.



Allen Stubblefield

"Many days I was a day ahead of the kids. I have degrees in computer science, but they predate Windows. I learned cyber along with my students."



teaching computer science, his college major, in 2016. That year, after seeing increasing numbers of students coming to after-school cybersecurity practices and competitions, he helped Troy launch a four-year cybersecurity academic pathway, along with summer camps for middle schoolers.

"Many days I was a day ahead of the kids," he laughs. "I have degrees in computer science, but they predate Windows. I learned cyber along with my students."

Stubblefield works with two other educators in the pathway program, one of whom also teaches art. "Any teacher with an interest in tech can learn how to do this," Stubblefield says. He and his colleagues serve as coaches and oversee in-person and virtual after-school practices three days a week, where more advanced students teach kids "the finer points of Windows and Linux security."

(Students can choose their practice day, though one day is exclusively for elementary and middle schoolers.)

Practices now host almost 300 high schoolers and 200 middle schoolers from schools as far away as Irvine in south Orange County and parts of Los Angeles, Ontario and San Bernardino counties. "Troy has nine computer labs, and we use eight of them" for the practices, Stubblefield says.

"We saw this as a way for some kids to find their thing in life. Of the students I have right now at Troy, they're all going to be aware of cybersecurity - protecting data will always be important. And 20 percent will be working in the cyber field."

Stubblefield is gratified by the program's growth. But this is his final year at Troy, as he seeks to expand his reach to encourage more young people to try cybersecurity. As he explains, "We need everyone who is interested to learn about cybersecurity." ■

2022

Election Wrap

Victories for students, public education

By Julian Peeples



CALIFORNIA STUDENTS, schools and communities were the big winners of Election 2022 in November.

All of CTA's recommended candidates for statewide office won by wide margins in a clean sweep for the leaders our schools need, including Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond. Educator recommendations on the state propositions were similarly successful, with all five of CTA's endorsed positions victorious (all results were unofficial until Dec. 16, past press time for this magazine). Students and educators alike rejoiced when Proposition 28 returns showed voters agree that there should be more funding for arts and music in schools.

Californians said no to Lyft and no to Prop. 30, a massive victory after polls early in the campaign had shown the misleading measure with a double-digit lead. But after a massive public information campaign powered by CTA educators and Gov. Gavin Newsom, voters realized that Prop. 30 would rob public education of state funding.

"With the defeat of Proposition 30, Californians affirmed their support tonight for public education and the integrity of the minimum school funding guarantee, Prop. 98," CTA President E. Toby Boyd said on election night. "Californians support green energy but were not willing to foot the bill for a private corporation and a deceptive measure."

Educators running for election to school boards across the state were widely successful, with at least 20 CTA members and staff currently winning seats in districts throughout California (including every one of our profiled [#EducationChampions](#); read their stories at cta.org/educator). And one educator will be moving from the classroom to the Capitol — San Luis Coastal Teachers Association member Dawn Addis is handily winning the race to represent Assembly District 30. ■



Students and educators alike rejoiced when Proposition 28 returns showed voters agree that there should be more funding for arts and music in schools.



Congratulations to winning candidates for California statewide offices:

- Governor: **Gavin Newsom**
- Lt. Governor: **Eleni Kounalakis**
- Secretary of State:
Dr. Shirley Weber
- Controller: **Malia Cohen**
- Treasurer: **Fiona Ma**
- Attorney General: **Rob Bonta**
- Superintendent of Public Instruction:
Tony Thurmond
- Insurance Commissioner:
Ricardo Lara
- U.S. Senator: **Alex Padilla**

Results of statewide initiatives:

- Prop. 1 (Reproductive Freedom):
Passed — CTA recommended Yes
- Prop. 26 (Sports Wagering on Tribal Lands): Failed — CTA made no recommendation
- Prop. 27 (Online Sports Wagering):
Failed — CTA recommended No
- *** Prop. 28 (Arts and Music Education Funding):
Passed — CTA recommended Yes
- Prop. 29 (Dialysis Clinics):
Failed — CTA made no recommendation
- Prop. 30 (Lyft Special Interest Tax):
No — CTA recommended No
- Prop. 31 (Ban on Flavored Tobacco):
Passed — CTA recommended Yes

Visit the Secretary of State's Election Results page at sos.ca.gov for final updates to vote counts for statewide office and initiatives, and legislative and congressional races. Visit your county registrar of voters for tallies on local elections.

Educators Ready to Lead

Voters trusted educators on statewide races and initiatives, as well as when it came to casting votes for their local school boards. CTA members and staff went 20 for 20 in school board races we tracked (as of press time). Congratulations to all on the successful campaigns for our students!



- **Maimona Afzal Berta** (Alum Rock Educators Association): Santa Clara County School Board — Winning
- **Dr. Stacy Begin** (CTA Staff):
Oceanside Unified School Board — Won (unopposed)
- **Jennifer Brouhard** (Oakland Education Association):
Oakland Unified School Board — Winning
- **Carlos Cerdan** (United Teachers Los Angeles):
Montebello Unified School Board — Winning
- **Ava Chiao** (East Side Teachers Association):
Cupertino Unified School Board — Winning
- **Mikki Cichocki** (CTA-Retired):
San Bernardino City School Board — Winning
- **Mike Duran** (Palm Springs Teachers Association):
Desert Sands Unified School Board — Winning
- **Cesar Fernandez** (Sweetwater Teachers Association):
Chula Vista Elementary School Board — Winning
- **Demetrio Gonzalez-Hoy** (CTA Staff):
West Contra Costa Unified School Board — Winning
- **Brian Guerrero** (CTA Staff):
Culver City Unified School Board — Winning
- **Tina Gustin-Gurney** (CTA-Retired):
Westminster School Board — Won (unopposed)
- **Dr. Taunya Jaco** (San Jose Teachers Association):
Oak Grove School Board — Winning
- **Tara Jeane** (Western Placer Teachers Association):
Sacramento City Unified School Board — Winning
- **Nancy Licon** (Vista Teachers Association):
Oceanside Unified School Board — Winning
- **Elva Lopez-Zepeda** (Southwest Teachers Association):
Sweetwater Union High School Board — Winning
- **Jorge Pacheco, Jr.** (Menlo Park Education Association):
Oak Grove School Board — Won (unopposed)
- **Kathy Rallings** (CTA Staff): Carlsbad Unified School Board — Winning
- **Amie Stewart** (Teachers Association of Paramount):
Bellflower Unified School Board — Winning
- **Brian Wheatley** (CTA-Retired):
San Jose Unified School Board — Won (unopposed)
- **Erika Zamora** (Alvord Educators Association):
Val Verde Unified School Board — Winning



Your Weingarten Rights

You have a right to union representation during an investigatory interview

By Richa Amar

What are Weingarten rights?

One of a union representative's most important duties is guarding against employer intimidation, particularly during disciplinary investigations, where the employer may attempt to coerce employees into making incriminating statements against themselves or their colleagues. For union-represented employees, one backstop against coercive investigatory interviews is Weingarten rights.

Named for a United States Supreme Court case, *NLRB v. J. Weingarten, Inc.*, 420 U.S. 251 (1975), *Weingarten* rights have been extended to public employees under California's labor relations statutes. Simply put, an employee has a right to request a union representative in an investigatory interview when the employee has a reasonable basis to believe that discipline may result from the meeting. The right to a union representative applies to investigatory questioning that is written as well as oral. *Weingarten* rights must be asserted by the employee — the employer has no obligation to notify employees of these rights, and employees may choose to represent themselves if they wish. Keep in mind that *Weingarten* rights only apply to investigatory meetings that might result in discipline of the employee. They

do not apply to other types of meetings with the employer, such as a meeting where an employer is merely notifying the employee of a disciplinary decision that the employer already made.

Once the right is asserted, an employee is not entitled to their union representative of choice. The employer may proceed with the investigatory questioning as long as another union representative is available at the meeting time. But if an employee's preferred union representative is available, the employer may not insist upon a different representative.

Additionally, the union representative has the right to sufficient information about the nature of the employee's alleged wrongdoing *before* an investigatory interview takes place in order to allow for meaningful representation.

The union representative plays an important role as a witness and advisor in connection with the investigatory interview. While the union representative cannot interfere with the employer's civil questioning of an employee, the union representative can ask clarifying questions, take notes, assist the employee in providing additional information, and provide moral support.

Are employees' communications with their union reps confidential?

A union representative often will privately "caucus" with an employee before or even during an investigatory interview. An employee might wonder if these private representational conversations are truly confidential or whether an employer can pry into them.

Fortunately, they are confidential. Federal courts, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), and the California Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) have long recognized the strong privacy interests in communications between union representatives and union members. Accordingly, they have found that employers who seek disclosure of the substance of conversations between employees and their union representatives "manifestly restrain employees in their willingness to candidly discuss" employment matters with their union, inhibit the union from gathering necessary information from employees, and "cast a chilling effect" over all employees and union representatives who seek to candidly discuss employment matters. ■

Richa Amar is a CTA Staff Attorney.

Victory for Victor Valley Teachers Association!

IN 2020, a school district attorney deposed Katrina Hanson, then president of the Victor Valley Teachers Association (VVTA), as part of a statutory dismissal proceeding against another VVTA member. The attorney questioned Hanson for more than four hours. Over my vigorous objections, the lawyer interrogated the president about her confidential union communications with the member subject to dismissal, other members, and other VVTA representatives regarding VVTA's representation of the member.

VVTA filed an unfair practice charge with PERB. Following an evidentiary hearing and briefing by the parties, the judge ruled in VVTA's favor in a proposed decision that closely followed our arguments and found that the district's intrusive questioning of the VVTA president violated California labor law. The district then challenged the judge's decision with the full PERB Board.

VVTA achieved a complete victory. In 2022, in a unanimous published decision by a three-member panel, PERB denied the district's challenge. Importantly, PERB also adopted our proposed legal framework for analyzing whether an employer's deposition questions unlawfully interfere with

protected rights under California's labor relations statutes. Applying that framework, PERB held that the district's deposition questioning of Hanson was unlawful because the district's interest in the information was outweighed by VVTA's and unit members' strong confidentiality interests in those union communications.



Katrina Hanson

PERB's remedies included a cease-and-desist order, a notice posting, and four hours of attorneys' fees to be paid by the district to the union for time we spent defending the VVTA president's deposition. Although the district appealed PERB's decision to the California Court of Appeal, it recently withdrew its appeal petition, which means that PERB's decision is now final. The decision is an important legal precedent for public sector unions and employees that reaffirms the privacy of union communications and protects against their disclosure in litigation by an employer.

All union members should invoke their *Weingarten* rights when facing an investigatory interview and rest assured that their private conversations with their union representative are confidential. —*Richa Amar*

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BARGAINING ROUNDUP

Compiled by Julian Peeples



COVINA:

Strike averted as educators win agreement

On Nov. 30, just hours before the members of Covina Unified Education Association (CUEA) were set to go on strike, the bargaining team ended a marathon negotiations session with a tentative agreement.

The settlement came after hundreds of teachers protested in front of district headquarters that morning, and was a compromise that addressed a key sticking point for CUEA members — a hard-cap on health benefits that would disparately impact newer teachers.

"We are deeply grateful not only for the hard work of the bargaining team," said CUEA President Adam Hampton, "but for every CUEA member who has sacrificed their time, shown up at rallies, and participated in organizing actions to help achieve this settlement."

The agreement included a more than 12.7 percent raise for the 2021-2023 school years and improvements for special education teachers. CUEA members had not voted to ratify the agreement as of press time.



VENTURA:

Teachers, ESPs united for respect, fair pay

The members of Ventura Unified Education Association (VUEA) and Ventura Education Support Professionals Association (VESPA) are united in their demand for respect and fair compensation that attracts and retains the best educators for Ventura students.

The two locals are collaborating as they are both in protracted bargaining with Ventura Unified School District. VUEA and VESPA held rallies to spread the word and show their solidarity, as well as a town hall meeting in late October.

Note: At press time, VESPA posted an update announcing they reached a tentative agreement. Visit venturaesp.org and vuea.net for details. #VESPAstrong #VUEAstrong

SOUTHWEST:

Getting strike-ready as negotiations reach impasse

Southwest Teachers Association (SWTA) is at impasse with South Bay Union School District after management made a "last, best and final offer" on Nov. 1 that does not center the needs of students.

After months of bargaining with little progress, it appeared district management was ready to reach a fair deal, making movement on several key provisions related to class size and special education. But when SWTA made a counteroffer, district management rejected it, saying they didn't have financial authorization from the school board, and declared they had made their final offer.

SWTA members are organizing to support their bargaining team and preparing for the possibility of a strike. Follow SWTA on Facebook (@SouthwestTeachersAssociation) for the latest news and to support Southwest educators and their students.

#WeAreSWTA #SWTACares



SAN RAMON

Valley: Class-size improvements, staffing ratios among wins

The members of San Ramon Valley Education Association (SRVEA) organized and won for their students and schools. For the second year in a row, SRVEA and the district reached a tentative agreement in four bargaining sessions.

SRVEA won improvements in elementary class size, the inclusion of social worker and elementary counselor staffing ratios in the contract for the first time, and an 8.5 percent on-schedule raise with a 1 percent off-schedule payment. SRVEA members already have employer-paid family health care, but approximately 0.5 percent of salary of past cost-shifting to employees was also reversed and those healthcare benefits were restored.

SRVEA also won the elimination of a cap on out-of-district service credit for placement on the salary schedule for new hires. **#SRVEAStrong**



TWIN RIVERS:

Organizing for more student resources, educator recruitment and retention

Twin Rivers United Educators (TRUE) are organizing and building power to win at the bargaining table for their students and schools. In late October, upwards of 800 TRUE members rallied at a school board meeting and called on their district to invest historic funding where it counts: educator retention and recruitment and support for students.

"Our district has spent years disinvesting in educators in Twin Rivers. They've dedicated less and less to educator salaries and benefits and direct support for students. We now have a staffing crisis and poor learning conditions for our students. It doesn't have to be this way," said TRUE President Rebecca LeDoux.

"Our students should be able to count on having teachers in the classroom when they come to school,"



Continued on Page 40

Continued from Page 39

▼ TRUE leadership from left: Bargaining team member Diana Franklin; President Rebecca LeDoux; Vice President and lead negotiator Jackie Howard.



LeDoux continued. "Our district has unprecedented funding and ample resources to bring educators to Twin Rivers and retain them for years to come. We also have an unprecedented opportunity to establish Community Schools in our district with shared governance to ensure their success for our students. The time is now."

Follow TRUE on Facebook at @TRUEAssociation to stay current on their struggle and to show support for Twin Rivers educators. [#WeAreTRUE](#) [#TRUETimelsNow](#)

SANTA CLARA COUNTY:

Contract win nets prep time, resources to attract and retain educators

The **Association of County Educators (ACE)** was victorious in its recent bargain, winning prep time for all members and a 10 percent pay raise for 2022-2023 and 5 percent or more guaranteed for 2023-24. This will help attract and retain dedicated educators. ACE also got the first column of all 13 salary schedules deleted, which combined with the negotiated raises increases the starting salary by an average of \$10,000.

Representing 360 educators who work for Santa Clara County Office of Education, ACE ratified the three-year deal, which includes a reopener on salary for the third year. ACE won a larger district contribution to their health care benefits for each year of the contract, as well as contractually guaranteed stipends for a wide array of items, from working double duty and moving classrooms to being a bilingual Head Start educator and covering another school nurse's caseload. The lengthy list includes \$1,000 per year in tuition reimbursement for all ACE members.

ACE also won contract language improvements in the work hours and leaves articles, as well as an agreement to resume talks about workload issues in January 2024.

ACE Vice President and Bargaining Chair Annie Kretowicz said the deal is huge for educators. "The ACE negotiations team was at the table for 11 months and the outcome was unprecedented," she said. "We are very proud of their efforts to secure a contract that all members will benefit from."

FRESNO:

And the Educator Champions of the Week Are ...



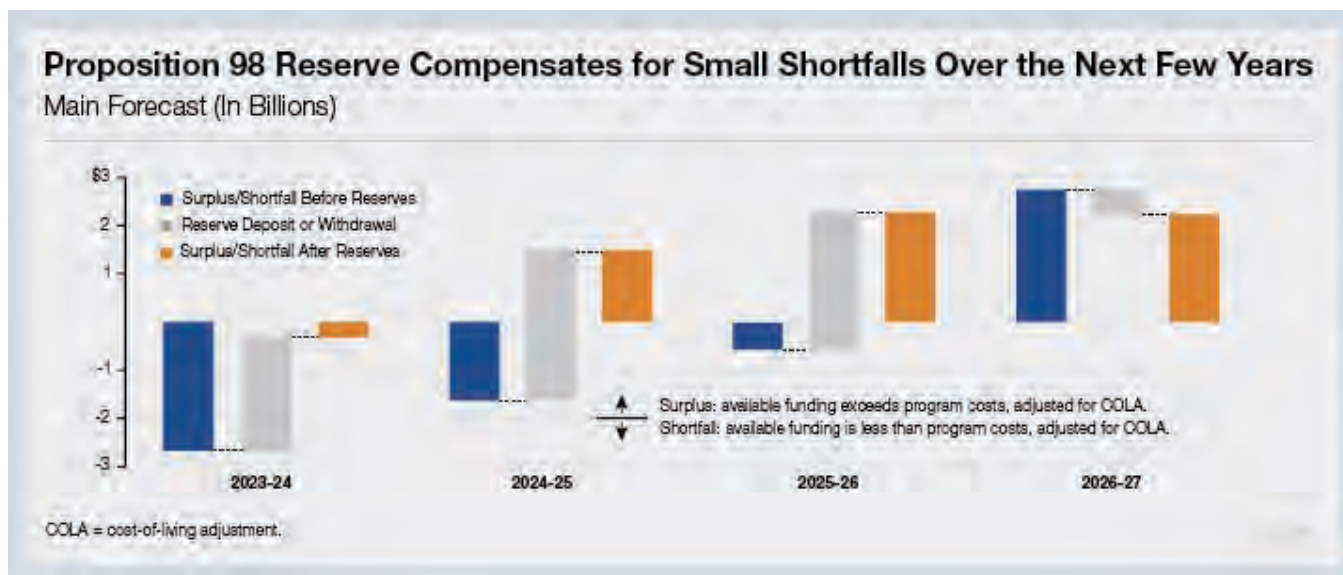
Every week, **Fresno Teachers Association** celebrates Educator Champions who inspire students and colleagues with their hard work and dedication. In November, FTA chose to showcase its Bargaining Team, which recently submitted FTA proposals to Fresno Unified School District.

"This team responded to our call to action to reimagine education," FTA wrote on social media, with an

accompanying photo. "Together, they've spent months truly listening to their colleagues, identifying overarching and specific concerns, and developing solutions that improve student learning conditions, employee working conditions, and ultimately provide the best education we can for our students."

Champions, indeed!

▼ The negative blue bars early in the period correspond with small shortfalls. Reserve withdrawals reduce the shortfall in 2023-24 and eliminate it entirely in the following two years. The orange bars show the surplus or shortfall after accounting for these withdrawals. By the end of the period, the Prop. 98 budget is back in balance and the state makes a small reserve deposit. *California Legislative Analyst's Office*



Weathering the Storm

State education spending should remain stable through economic headwinds

DESPITE A POSSIBLE budget deficit next year, state education spending appears to be stable because of education-specific reserves built up over the past years.

In mid-November, California's Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) announced that the state faces a potential \$25-billion budget deficit next year driven by high inflation and the threat of a recession.

The LAO, which advises lawmakers on California's fiscal outlook, stated that much of the projected revenue shortfall could be offset by lowering spending, but that state revenue could be worse if the nation's economy goes into a recession.

A spokesperson for the state Department of Finance said Gov. Gavin Newsom's administration anticipated the economic slowdown and planned accordingly, which means California is in a good position to weather the impact. Newsom will present a proposed 2023-24 state budget in January.

"Thanks to our responsible approach, we are confident that we can protect our progress and craft a state budget without ongoing cuts to schools and other core programs or taxing middle class families," Senate President Pro Tem

Toni Atkins (D-San Diego) said in a statement. "The bottom line is simple: We are prepared to hold onto the gains we've made and continue where we left off once our economy and revenues rebound."

Proposition 98, passed in 2014, was an amendment to the state Constitution that guarantees a minimum level of funding for public schools and community colleges (approximately 40 percent of the total General Fund budget). The LAO estimated a decline of \$2 billion in state budget education funding next year, but the state could still fully fund schools by reducing some spending in response to a decrease in student attendance and by making withdrawals from a robust "rainy day" fund specifically created for education.

According to the LAO, and "by historical standards, the school funding picture remains strong."

CTA is optimistic about education funding in the future, because of collaborative budgeting and healthy reserves. California remains in a strong position to continue prioritizing equitable teaching and learning conditions and addressing the critical educator shortage.

▼ Oak Grove School District raised the Progress Pride Flag in front of the district office after the Oak Grove School Board adopted a LGBTQ+ resolution in Spring.



BUILDING SCHOOLS

Where Everyone Belongs

Oak Grove educators help craft LGBTQ+ resolution for school district

By **Julian Peeples**

OAK GROVE SCHOOL DISTRICT is becoming a safer place because of the work of educators and elected leaders to create a more equitable and inclusive school community.

In May, the Oak Grove school board adopted a resolution to proclaim loudly that Oak Grove sees, supports and embraces students, educators and staff who are members of the LGBTQ+ community. The resolution, “Supporting the Rights, Freedoms and Equality of Those who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer,” was crafted by a team of Oak Grove educators and school board members to ensure all students, educators and staff feel safe, secure and supported in Oak Grove.

“We have a responsibility as educators to move the needle and make a positive impact for our students,” says Maripaz Berlin, Oak Grove Educators Association (OGEA) president. “How can we leave a space better than we found it?”

The effort started in 2021 when OGEA worked to bring an LGBTQ+ awareness training for all staff to the school district, utilizing contacts from CTA’s Santa Clara Service Center. OGEA sent a letter to the district superintendent formally requesting the training.

“It is time that we provide all staff with the training and educational workshopping to advance the understanding and acceptance of our LGBTQ+ community and the issues they face,” the letter stated. “Educating our staff on these issues will send a clear message to our Oak Grove community that we support and stand by our LGBTQ+ students and staff. It will allow us to celebrate our diversity, ensure the protection and promotion of our LGBTQ+ community, and create an environment of acceptance, inclusion and ultimately a safe space for all.”

Berlin says conversations about how to better support LGBTQ+ students and educators led to the creation of a workgroup of OGEA Equity & Human Rights Committee

▼ Oak Grove Educators Association President Maripaz Berlin (in red) with Oak Grove School Board members and leadership.



“We have a responsibility to move the needle and make a positive impact for our students. How can we leave a space better than we found it?”

—Maripaz Berlin,
Oak Grove Educators Association president

members and school board trustees to develop a board resolution. Starting in Fall 2021, the group met on video-conference every month to craft the language, working to make it a living resolution with ongoing work for all staff.

“The goal was to have a mostly completed resolution ready by May 2022,” says Berlin, adding that the group looked to LGBTQ+ equity work done in neighboring Franklin-McKinley School District (FMSD) for ideas and inspiration. In 2017-18, FMSD updated restroom signage across all schools to create all-inclusive restrooms for students and in 2018, FMSD officials raised the Pride flag.

The diligent efforts of the workgroup paid off on May 19 when the Oak Grove school board approved the resolution, the first of its kind for the district.

“With the rise in intolerant legislation across the country, it meant everything to be able to help create a district that was the antithesis of all of that hate,” says Kristie Morikawa, elementary educator and an OGEA Equity & Human Rights Committee member who worked on the resolution. “Codifying acceptance and love of all students, educators and families sets the tone for all our schools.”

With action items like raising the Progress Pride flag at all school sites every day and mandatory training for all staff, the focus now is on the implementation of the resolution (see list in box). While Berlin had hoped many of the changes — like gender-inclusive restroom signage — would be ready for the beginning of this school year, she says the effort is still a work in progress.

Berlin says she is proud of the collaborative effort to make Oak Grove a more inclusive place for students and staff.

“We have students in our schools who identify as trans or non-binary and we want them to feel ➡

ACTION ITEMS

in Oak Grove's LGBTQ+ Resolution

- Oak Grove School District (OGSD) will create a LGBTQ+ Subcommittee in its Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee (DEIB) to conduct a needs assessment for LGBTQ+ students and staff.
- OGSD will update restroom signage across all schools to include at least one all-gender restroom for students and one all-gender restroom for staff by the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year.
- OGSD will raise Progress Pride flags at all schools and the district office and keep them up all year round beginning in June 2022.
- OGSD will create safe spaces for LGBTQ+ students and staff at all sites serving seventh and eighth grades.
- The DEIB LGBTQ+ Subcommittee will update school forms to include student and family information that is inclusive, including additional nonbinary gender identifiers by Fall 2023.
- The DEIB LGBTQ+ Subcommittee will review, revise and amend bullying policies that address the topic of sexual orientation, gender identification and gender expression on an ongoing basis.
- The DEIB LGBTQ+ Subcommittee will assess the compliance of the content of adopted textbooks and curricula across all grades and classrooms with the FAIR Education Act, and teachers and administrators will receive support in implementation by June 2023.
- OGSD will ensure that family life education and other appropriate curricula include age-appropriate, medically accurate and culturally sensitive information on LGBTQ+ issues.
- Starting in the 2023-2024 academic year, OGSD will provide annual mandatory professional development to all staff, to create learning and work environments where LGBTQ+ students and staff may thrive.
- OGSD will actively engage in the education of families and the community by promoting LGBTQ+ specific resources.

Source: Oak Grove School District



Kristie Morikawa

welcome and know they belong,” Berlin says. “For our educators, they have an association that supports them and is looking for ways to improve the working environment.”

Crafting the resolution that ensures all students and educators are seen and valued in Oak Grove was meaningful on many levels, says Kirat Sachdev, OGEA Human Rights Committee member.

“As a first generation, South Asian, queer woman of color, it was such a special, beautiful, humbling and healing experience to have been a co-author in this resolution,” Sachdev says. “I felt that the resolution was a gesture and an ode to my inner child, my younger self and a reminder to the service that I commit to as an educator — to constantly leave the classroom, the space, the home, the park and the community better and more inclusive than I found it.”

The creation of the resolution was a true collaboration with Oak Grove school board members Carla Hernandez and Jorge Pacheco, Jr., who are both educators and CTA members — East Side Teachers Association and Menlo Park Education Association, respectively.

Berlin says educators are excited about the work and eager to continue pushing it forward to ensure that every student and educator knows they have a place in Oak Grove.

“The fact that it came from this group of people and went through this process is meaningful because we did this as a community,” says Berlin. “We’re trying to change the culture. It feels good to make that kind of impact.” ■



ORGANIZING to Build Inclusive Schools

OGEA leaders shared the following tips on organizing in your local association to create more equitable and inclusive school communities, whether through crafting a LGBTQ+ resolution or requesting awareness training:

- If your local doesn't already have one, create an Equity and Human Rights Committee to help identify members who can contribute to the work.
- Encourage educators to build bridges with school board members.
- Ask “What needs do our students and staff have in this area?”
- Encourage members to attend the CTA Equity & Human Rights Conference (March 17-19, 2023; see cta.org/conferences).
- Continue to invite people to the conversation.
- Once the resolution is passed/goal is achieved, the work isn't over — it continues.
- Stride toward greater goals.

“Visibility is key not just with kids, but with colleagues,” says OGEA member Kristie Morikawa. “Change and progress is contagious and inevitable when we individually take the step to become allies for our students and colleagues.”

“Take note of the time and energy that it takes, but also how transformative it can be to open these pathways for yourself and generations of students and beyond,” OGEA member Kirat Sachdev says. “The students are watching, and the reward of the safety and belonging that we’ve provided in just the short time of this implementation is far beyond the small amount of pushback we got initially.”

Have more questions or looking for specific information about doing LGBTQ+ equity work in your local association? Contact Maripaz Berlin at president@ogea.org or reach out to the CTA Human Rights Consultant in your region.

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS:

Second Round of Grant Funding Opens

By **Lisa Gardiner**



At the core of developing community schools is organizing and building the shared decision-making structures that transform public schools.

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS are collaboratively imagined and democratically run public schools designed to meet the unique needs of local students. Through authentic governance structures and a bottom-up approach, educators, students, parents and community organizations utilize a model of shared decision making to provide academic, emotional and community support for student success.

Over the past two state budget cycles, California has invested \$4.1 billion — more than any other state — to support and expand community schools through the California Community Schools Partnership Program. Funding to support these ground-breaking schools, designed to disrupt poverty and address racial, economic and other inequities, is through grants from the California Department of Education.

Now, a second-round of grant funding for community schools is underway, creating opportunities for organizing and for expanding these transformative opportunities for students.

- Beginning Jan. 17, 2023, the application period for a second round of implementation grants — grants for those districts and Local Education Agencies with an existing community schools program — will open.
- Application deadline is March 17, 2023. Implementation grants are funding for up to five years for up to \$500,000,

depending on a school's enrollment. (A second round of planning grant applications closed on Dec. 20.)

At the core of developing community schools is organizing and building the shared decision-making structures that transform public schools. Districts must work with local chapters when applying for these grants. Be sure to talk to your superintendent if you have not heard from them, and CTA and local staff are available to help.

Around the state, local chapters whose districts received planning or implementation grants during the first round are working with districts to pass school board resolutions, create steering committees, hire community school coordinators, negotiate for community schools as part of collective bargaining agreements, or take steps toward democratically identifying school sites. None of this would be happening without the commitment and hard work of educators invested in the work and promise of community schools.

CTA's recently adopted organizing plan has resources to support local chapters and grant opportunities that can be used to build organizing capacity around community schools. For information, go to cta.org/OrgPlan.

More resources on community schools is at cta.org/communityschools. For details on CDE grants for community schools, go to cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/hs/ccspp.asp.



LEARNING, CREATING WITH STUDENTS' FAVORITE APPS

Having kids use their preferred digital tools can deliver surprising academic benefits By **Paige Tutt**

STUDENTS ROUTINELY USE technology to express themselves, tweeting out snippets of their thoughts and opinions, creating and sharing short videos, posting photos they've taken or music they've composed.

New research argues they should probably be using their favorite digital platforms to demonstrate learning and construct meaning in school, too.

Using applications like Instagram, TikTok and Google Slides to produce materials to teach concepts to peers, for instance, gets students to dig deeper and reinforces learning and memory encoding, according to a 2022 meta-analysis from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. To adequately explain a concept to someone else, the researchers found, students need to ensure they

understand it, surfacing gaps in their knowledge that they need to fill.

Using widely available digital tools to make meaning "outperforms creating textual materials," write the study authors. In an earlier 2021 study, students who created video presentations instead of traditional in-person presentations explored a wider range of narrative techniques as they edited their thinking, took more risks, and demonstrated more creativity.

In fact, using such tools as TikTok and Twitter situationally to demonstrate knowledge is meeting students where they live: It takes the tools they know and challenges them to experiment and explore, provides a built-in method to publish and disseminate their learning,

and converts technology into a canvas on which they can solve problems, rather than simply using tech to find quick answers. In the process, students start to see themselves as producers — not just consumers — of knowledge.

Here are some ideas for infusing students' favorite apps into your lessons:

SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW

Social media platforms are riddled with misinformation, but students can be agents of positive change and join a broader community in conversation — creating content that educates others on topics they've learned in class, while providing a quick glimpse into what they know and still need to learn.

- **In 280 characters or less:** Twitter's character limit could be an interesting challenge for students tasked with summarizing what they've learned, writes educational consultant Jay McTighe. Ask "What is the big idea that you have learned about _____?" and have kids share their responses in the application. Utilizing a class hashtag, such as #DrSmith-ScienceClass, for each class or assignment will help you retrieve responses quickly.

- **Teacher for a day:** TikTok allows users to create videos ranging from 15 seconds to 10 minutes in length, plenty of time to summarize key points from a lesson, highlight important takeaways from assigned reading, or teach a concept to others. Perusing the hashtag #finalproject brings up a trove of student explainer videos on topics ranging from the danger of logical fallacies to the importance of accuracy and precision.

"I'm having students do TikToks or create memes where they can express a theoretical concept or speak to a question and then they might write up a little two-page response to what they've done, explaining their process and thinking," says Shauna Pomerantz, an associate professor at Brock University in Southern Ontario, Canada.

- **Tweet like a historian:** In a social studies or history class, students could create a Twitter account for a historical figure and "tweet about major events in that person's life as they think their historic figure would have tweeted," suggests former educator Dr. Matthew Lynch.

Asking students who their figure might be following on social media, as well as topics that might be "trending" on their feed at the time will provide deeper insight into how much students genuinely understand their chosen figure. This could also work in a science classroom, using prominent

inventors and scientists, or in an ELA classroom using characters from the assigned reading.

ENGAGE WITH THE CONTENT

With sufficient guidance, technology can take students beyond merely googling "Effects of World War I on Europe" to helping them interrogate deep questions, clearing a path toward creating and sharing original, informed answers.

- **Reimagine the essay:** Allowing the option to occasionally create video essays analyzing a specific concept, topic, theme or person flexes a lot of the same muscles as a written essay — and some new ones too, says Tanner Higgin, editorial director for learning content at Common Sense Education. The process requires that students juxtapose "video footage, images, audio and text to make an argument much like a writer would do in a traditional essay," Higgin writes.
- **Beyond written expression:** Some students can easily verbalize their thoughts aloud while others are more comfortable expressing themselves in writing. Exit ticket responses to open-ended prompts or questions at the end of a lesson — for example, "Today was hard because..." or "What are three things you learned, two things you're still curious about, and one thing you don't understand?" — can easily be completed using Flip (formerly Flipgrid) or another video-creation application.

Asking students to record a short video or voice memo on their phones for a quick misconception check or to examine the lesson's muddiest point — the place where things got confusing or complicated — can benefit those who feel uncomfortable asking for help in front of classmates, or who need more time to process their learning.

ENERGIZE ACADEMIC DEBATES

Public speaking often strikes fear into the hearts of students, explains Megan Cooke, a high school theater and English teacher. "Consider that students don't want to feel judged," she writes. "They don't want to appear dumb, weak or afraid in front of their classmates."

But on social media platforms, it's second nature for kids as young as 12 years old to bravely share their thoughts and opinions on a variety of topics with the world.

- **Digital debate:** In their spare time, many students are engaging in TikTok debate livestreams with hundreds, sometimes thousands of viewers. Users choose a topic, generally one that is polarizing, state

"Using such tools as TikTok and Twitter situationally to demonstrate knowledge is meeting students where they live.... Students start to see themselves as producers — not just consumers — of knowledge."





“On social media, it’s second nature for kids to share their thoughts and opinions on a variety of topics with the world.”

their personal view — from the safety of Covid vaccines to the morality of abortions, for instance — and then ask viewers to change the user’s mind in a real-time debate, while non-participants share their opinions in the chat.

This format can be replicated across subject areas using Flip, TikTok or even podcasts. In social studies, students could discuss whether textbooks accurately reflect history, suggests educational consultant Michelle Blanchet, while in math class, students might debate the reliability of statistics. Even in science, classmates could argue whether recycling alone is enough to reduce plastic pollution.

Setting up ground rules regarding civility, objectivity and forbidding personal attacks is important to ensure kids are clear about expectations. Students can then debate using any number of tech tools, like producing Flip or TikTok videos, which opponents can watch and respond to, or debating live on TikTok. They could also sit down together and record a podcast of their debate to be shared later, or create informative Twitter threads detailing their argument, which peers can rebut and respond to on the platform.

This article originally appeared in Edutopia.



MAKING METACOGNITION PART OF STUDENT WRITING

When students are encouraged to think deeply about their writing processes, they become better writers By **Susan Barber**

WRITING CONFERENCES are a staple in many English language arts classrooms today, including mine. Teachers recognize the benefit of conversational feedback, allowing students to feel more agency over their own writing, and the power of building rapport that comes with conferences.

But after realizing that my conferences were primarily centered on a piece with little to no reflection on the thought process of writing, I have added a new layer of complexity.

METACOGNITIVE REFLECTION

Metacognition is a term that describes thinking about one's thinking as a means of reflection. The goal is for students to think more about the process — how they approach writing, barriers to good writing and strategies that help them write successfully — instead of focusing only on content or rubric requirements. Metacognitive reflection can awaken students to be more aware of their thinking during writing, resulting in a deeper understanding of who they are as writers and of how to transfer their knowledge to any genre of writing.

So what does metacognitive thinking on writing look like, and how can teachers build this type of reflection into writing conferences?

A whole-class conversation about the importance of metacognition is a good starting place, since students are often focused on assignments rather than their thinking while completing them. These strategies can help students become aware of their thinking while writing and are easy to incorporate in assignments.

6 ACTIVITIES TO ENCOURAGE METACOGNITION

- **Keep a journal.** Encourage students to take metacognitive breaks of two to three minutes during writing to record their thoughts. *Describe your process to this point. What was a barrier to your writing? How did you overcome this? What do you think you could do to prevent this from occurring next time?* These breaks can and should occur at different points in the writing process.
- **Record troubleshooting ideas.** Encourage students to keep a list of strategies and ideas they have found successful in the past that they can use during writing to help them push through when they're experiencing difficulty.
- **Write collaboratively.** Provide opportunities for students to work on writing assignments together. Students can discuss why they are making the choices they make along the way. Thoughts can be addressed in comments in a Google Doc or on sticky notes placed on the student's paper.
- **Use graphic organizers.** These can also serve as tools to guide students to think about their thinking while writing and to identify successful strategies. The object is not to fill the entire graphic organizer but to provide multiple

"Metacognitive reflection can awaken students to be more aware of their thinking during writing, resulting in a deeper understanding of who they are as writers and how to transfer their knowledge to any genre of writing."

entry points to think about their thinking while writing.

- **Highlight papers.** This strategy adds a visual component to reflection and opens opportunities for students to think about what leads to strong components of a piece and why other components are weaker.
- **Record post-writing thoughts.** Writing a paragraph on the thought process during an assignment can be particularly helpful for the big-picture process. *What would you do differently if writing again? Why? What would you keep the same? Why? What strategies did you employ that worked well that you can use for future writing?*

Insights gathered from these metacognitive tools can carry over into writing conversations. In your next writing conferences, try adding some of the italicized questions to questions already commonly asked.

- **What do you like best about this writing?** *Why do you think this section is strong? What did you notice as you were writing this section?*
- **Where did you struggle with this piece?** *Why did you struggle with this section? What could have helped you while writing this particular section? Let's review your list of troubleshooting ideas and strategies. What can you add to these?*
- **Where is an area you took a risk or experimented with something new?** *Why did you decide to do something different here? Was it successful? Why or why not? If so, how could you incorporate this into other writing?*
- **How do you feel about the piece overall?** *How did you feel about the overall process? Are there particular things in your learning environment or mindset that contribute to successful writing? Identify one or two concrete strategies to use moving forward.*

Metacognition is an important step in writing instruction and where the real magic happens in learning. Students do need feedback on specific pieces of writing but should be given the opportunity to think beyond the product. This, and the opportunity to discuss their thinking, strengthens their writing not only in class but for years to come.

This story originally appeared in Edutopia.

Assessments Designed by Students

Increase student accountability and personalize learning

By Lindsay Mitchell



STUDENT-DESIGNED ASSESSMENTS and personalized learning are two popular trends in education that often come across as complicated and overwhelming for many educators. These practices are difficult to figure out how to begin, but you can incorporate them without requiring a lot of additional prep time through a focus on simple student-designed assessments.

Student-designed assessments are where students have a say in how they will be assessed and/or what will be on their assessment. In this case, simplified student-designed assessments are those that do not require any additional technology nor in-depth planning on the part of the teacher. Instead, these assessments are created in 15-20 minute chunks in the class period and do not require the use of new platforms or technology.

Here are three useful and practical methods that can be applied to all grade levels and across different content areas:

1. PICK AND CHOOSE

As you approach an upcoming assessment, give students a series of practice questions (or tasks). Have groups identify a few questions that they feel everyone should be able to do (the “baseline questions”) and others that would be a challenge – but doable (the “challenging”). Then, scan what they chose and compare it to what is already on the assessment or what is planned.

Do the students seem to understand what they should know? If yes, then the assessment could go well. If not, perhaps some re-teaching or extra review would be necessary.

2. CREATE A QUESTION/TASK

Have students think of a topic that you have been studying. In small groups or pairs, have students generate a few questions,

prompts or tasks in the same categories mentioned above: baseline and challenging. They can submit this to you through small groups or as part of a whole-class meeting. You can use these to generate your questions for the assessment.

What surprises educators with this approach is that students can identify what they all should know and recognize doable challenges as appropriate assessment questions. When they take the assessment, there is a stronger sense of accountability — since they had a part in generating it. I have found that, as a result, they will give very thoughtful and engaged answers.

3. RUBRIC DESCRIPTORS

Give groups a blank rubric for an upcoming performance-based assessment. Have students come up with bullet point items of what “meets expectations” looks like. Discuss them together and generate a descriptor for that section of the rubric together.

Depending on the class’ ability to focus, you then fill in the other sections of the rubric. When students actually do the task (where they will be graded), there’s a stronger sense of what they should be able to do since they created the expectations.

BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES

There are benefits to incorporating simple student-designed assessments into your pedagogical practice:

- **Ownership.** Students feel that they have a voice in the process.
- **Demonstration of knowledge.** Creating an assessment allows students to show what they understand and is an assessment in and of itself. Even by identifying potential questions, they are still showing that they understand what’s

ONLINE BILINGUAL AUTHORIZATION PROGRAMS

AT WHITTIER COLLEGE

relevant to the topic of study, and this requires critical reflective skills.

- **Time efficiency.** Making assessments can be time-consuming, as is re-teaching content when students do not perform well on assessments. Therefore, taking any steps at the onset to mitigate either of these outcomes can be beneficial for teacher and student alike. There are also obvious challenges to implementing this into a classroom, but the good news is that these can be overcome.
- **Knowledge of content area.** Students may feel that they are unable to generate questions for an upcoming assessment due to lack of knowledge about the content area. But with guidance from classmates, most should be able to at the very least identify questions or tasks that they should be able to do.
- **Lack of curriculum control.** Some educators don't have a lot of control over what will be on an assessment, so letting students design the assessments is challenging. However, the process discussed here can be used as a way to review topics that will be assessed and you can reinforce those critical topics through discussion.

TIPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Here are suggestions for incorporating student-designed assessments in your classroom on a regular basis:

- **Start small.** For many educators, the first option of picking and choosing questions is the easiest.
- **Be concise.** This does not need to be an extensive classroom activity. Allot 15-20 minutes maximum for the activity, and then move on with the rest of the instruction.
- **Use the questions.** If you want to create buy-in and ownership in the process, the students need to see that their feedback is useful.
- **Make it timely.** Do this enough in advance to address any confusion or be willing to adjust the date of the assessment.

A more personalized learning (and assessment) experience does not need to be complicated nor stressful. As educators, it can be difficult to relinquish some of the control that we have in the classroom. However, perhaps sharing some of this control with our students can lead to a more personalized and engaged experience. ■

This article originally appeared in Edutopia.



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ORGANIZING TO WIN

CTA values at the forefront of October State Council

By **Julian Peebles**

ORGANIZING IS KEY to defending public schools, supporting our students and standing up for honesty in education, CTA President E. Toby Boyd said to CTA State Council of Education during its first meeting of the school year in October.

“Our greatest resource is each other,” Boyd said as part of his report to State Council.

Organizing was an ongoing theme of the meeting, whether to build power and fight for equity or win at the bargaining table. Boyd, in his final year as president, delivered a rousing report to the near-800 educators in attendance — bringing them to their feet as he underscored some of CTA’s values.

“CTA fights for immigrant rights and for DACA. We stand for

▼ The CTA American Indian/Alaskan Native Caucus reception featured a presentation on Native American art.



“Our greatest resource is each other.”

—CTA President E. **Toby Boyd**

Black Lives. Black. Lives. Matter. We stand against Asian Hate,” Boyd said. “We fight for LGBTQ+ equality and inclusion, so that each one of our students and educators has an overall sense of safety and support in our schools. We have zero tolerance for bullying, harassment and hate speech.”

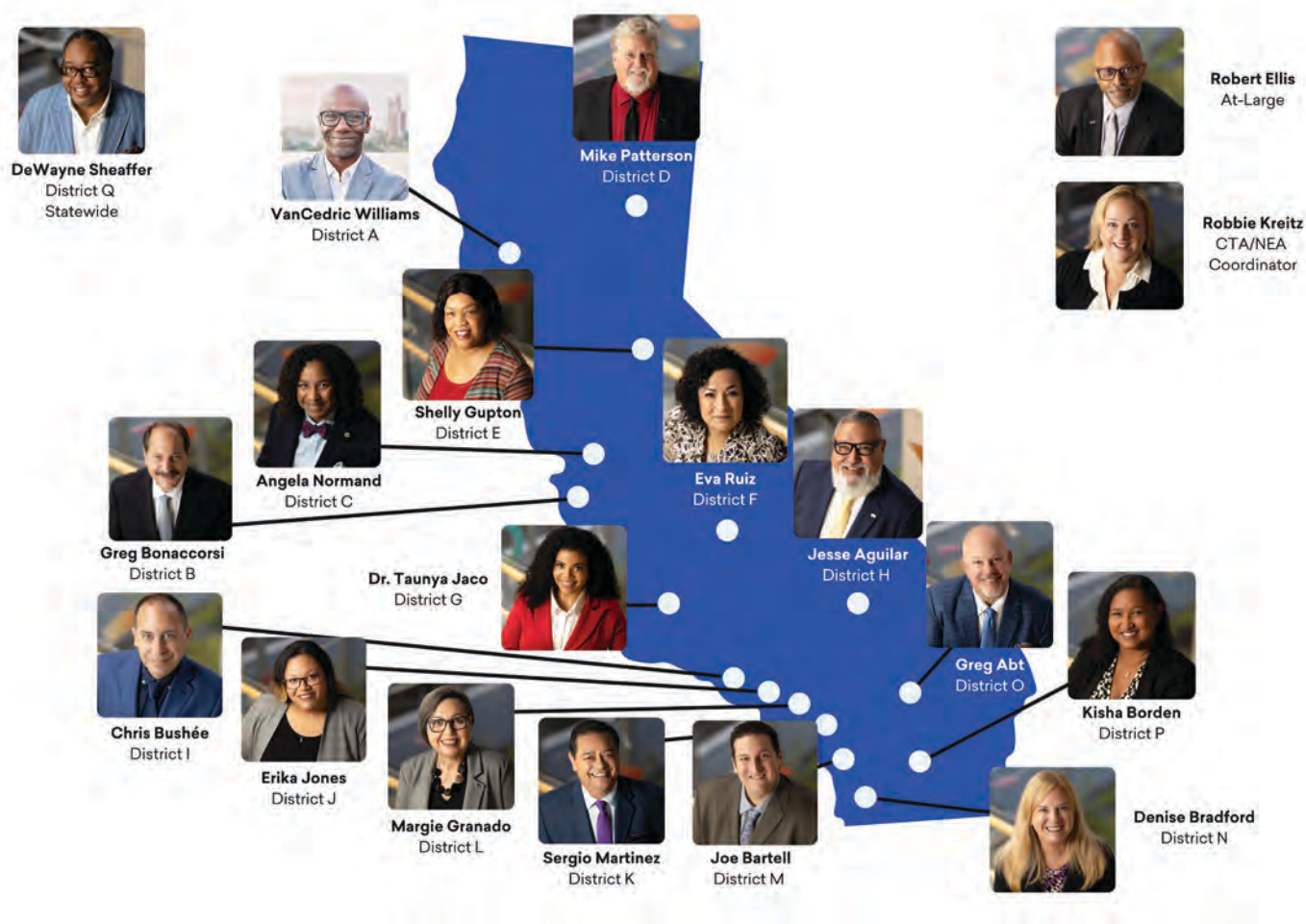
In that vein, CTA State Council unanimously called on Los Angeles City Council members Kevin de León and Gil Cedillo to resign immediately for their racist and anti-Black comments during a discussion with other Los Angeles officials, who have since resigned. De León and Cedillo have refused to step down, despite repeated calls from constituents, community leaders and elected officials at every level all the way up to President Joe Biden. UPDATE CLOSER TO PRESS TIME

“Our communities are hurting,” Boyd said. “It’s during these difficult moments that we look to elected leaders for support and comfort and yet, in this case, we are met with politicians who care more about themselves than the well-being of the community,”

Get Out the Vote

Victory on Election Day was on the minds of educators at State Council, with efforts ongoing to get out the vote for good propositions, to defeat bad ones, and to elect candidates who understand the value of public education. State Council members participated in a very successful member-to-member texting campaign to spread the word about No on Prop. 30 (Lyft Special Interest Tax) that saw one member text more than 20,000 fellow CTA educators during the weekend.

▼ The CTA Board of Directors, updated as a result of the election at State Council.



▼ CTA officers, clockwise from left, Vice President David B. Goldberg, President E. Toby Boyd, Secretary-Treasurer Leslie S. Littman.

Honors and Observances

There were a number of special presentations and observations during the weekend, including a reception by the CTA American Indian / Alaskan Native Caucus honoring California Indian education and culture.

State Council members also acknowledged Breast Cancer Awareness Month in a touching presentation and paid homage to former United Farm Workers Organizing Director Fred Ross Sr., who trained generations of organizers including César Chávez and Dolores Huerta.

“Fred Ross Sr. changed my life,” Huerta said previously of Ross. “He inspired and taught me how to organize. He had so much faith in the power of ordinary people to make history.”

State Council also elected leaders:

- VanCedric Williams, a social and ethnic studies teacher from United Educators of San Francisco, was elected to the CTA Board of Directors, District A, to complete an unexpired term ending in June 2023.
- Erika Zamora, a school counselor from Alvord Educators Association, was elected to the NEA Board of Directors, District 13, to a term expiring Aug. 31, 2025.

CTA State Council will next meet on Jan. 27-29, 2023, in Los Angeles. ■





The 2023 California Teachers of the Year

CONGRATULATIONS TO the 2023 California Teachers of the Year, announced in October by State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) Tony Thurmond.

All five are CTA members. They have been recognized for their outstanding work and their impact on students, schools and communities.

"These five educators receive the prestigious honor of 2023 California Teachers of the Year for their extraordinary talents and efforts to teach young people in California during historically challenging circumstances," said Thurmond in his announcement. "Using their exceptional skills, creativity and

experience, they continue to create positive learning environments and make meaningful contributions to the academic and social-emotional needs of their students."

Teachers of the year are ambassadors for the profession and serve as representatives of the state for the calendar year. Presented by the California Department of Education and supported by the California Teachers of the Year Foundation, the California Teachers of the Year Program began in 1972 to honor exceptional educators and encourage and inspire new teachers to enter the profession.

The 2023 honorees:

JASON TORRES-RANGEL

United Teachers Los Angeles/NEA

Torres-Rangel teaches AP English at Theodore Roosevelt High School and ballet folklórico at several campuses in the LA Unified School District. Named the LAUSD and an LA County Teacher of the Year in 2022, he has been an educator for 19 years. "As the son of two retired Los Angeles Unified teachers, I am humbled, moved and touched, and am so excited to uplift the voices of my students and the work of my colleagues," he said in a statement. "The work of teaching is the work of love and family; no teacher works alone, it is truly a family effort, and I am blessed to work with some of the best educators out there, serving the incredible students of Los Angeles."

In fact, according to a local news story, a Roosevelt student and her parent nominated him for teacher of the year, writing that while she never felt accepted after attending five different schools, she found herself welcome, challenged and supported in Torres-Rangel's class. Thurmond has nominated Torres-Rangel as California's representative for the National Teacher of the Year competition, which will be announced in the spring.



LAUREN CAMARILLO

Mountain View-Los Altos Union High School District Teachers Association

Camarillo teaches Spanish and the Ambassador Class and serves as an advisor for the Ambassadors Club and the Spartan Dance Club at Mountain View High School in the Mountain View-Los Altos Union High School District. She is also the 2022 Santa Clara County Teacher of the Year. In her role for the Ambassadors Club, which fosters connections among students on campus, she has helped advocate for student mental health. Last year, a cohort of Ambassadors went before the MVLA Board of Trustees to ask for more therapists, including diverse therapists, to meet student needs. The end result: three new Spanish-speaking therapists.

"I am so grateful to my students whose curiosity, commitment and leadership push me to make as positive an impact as possible every single day," Camarillo told the Los Altos Town Crier after being named a teacher of the year.



“Using their exceptional skills, creativity and experience, these educators create positive learning environments and make meaningful contributions to the academic and social–emotional needs of their students.” —State Superintendent of Public Instruction **Tony Thurmond** on the 2023 California Teachers of the Year



CATHERINE BOREK
Compton Education Association

Borek is an AP English literature, drama and AVID teacher at Dominguez High School in the Compton Unified School District. She is the district’s 2022 Teacher of the Year, as well as one of LA’s County Office of Education’s Teachers of the Year. Borek came to Dominguez High in 1996 and in 1999 reestablished the long-defunct drama program, co-producing a play whose behind-the-scenes drama was the subject of an award-winning documentary. In her time at Dominguez Borek and her students, which she calls her family, have completed the LA Marathon, collaborated with the LA Opera, starred in a Keurig commercial, published a play and started a rugby club.

“What makes Compton special and what test scores don’t show is that we have some really creative students and some true problem-solvers,” Borek said in a district video (youtu.be/-xZRICJm_qU). “That’s something to be celebrated.”



BEN CASE
Irvine Teachers Association

An instrumental music and music theory teacher at Northwood High School in the Irvine Unified School District, Case was named Orange County Teacher of the Year in May. He is also Irvine Unified’s 2022 High School Teacher of the Year and was a Grammy Music Educator Award semifinalist in 2015. He has helped grow Northwood High’s instrumental musical program, which is now one of the largest in the state with nearly 800 students in its band and orchestra program, including more than 120 musicians in one of Northwood’s four jazz ensembles.

“These past few years have brought us challenges we could never have imagined, but they have also reinforced the reasons why I got into teaching to begin with — the inspirational relationships we foster with students and colleagues alike,” Case said in an Orange County Register news story.



BRIDGETTE DONALD-BLUE
United Teachers Los Angeles/NEA

Donald-Blue, a 2022 LA County Teacher of the year, is a fourth-grade multiple subject teacher at Coliseum Street Elementary School in LAUSD. She holds a degree from Howard University; she deferred law school to fulfill a two-year commitment to Teach for America, and 30 years later, is still teaching in the classroom. “I just stayed because I felt [my] success was there in the classroom, working with students and their families and helping children really see their potential and how amazing they are,” she said in an LAUSD video (youtu.be/wiFIDS3hceU). When you do that — it’s a great day every day.”

This is the 50th year that California has selected a teacher of the year. County offices of education nominate California Teachers of the Year applicants through their county-level competitions. California Department of Education (CDE) selection committees review applications; evaluate teachers’ rapport with students, classroom environments, presentation skills, and teaching techniques; and interview the teachers. The State SPI then selects the five California Teachers of the Year and the National Teacher of the Year nominee. For more information on the award program, go to cde.ca.gov/ta/sr/ct/. ■

YOU can represent CTA at NEA's convention

CTA members (including ESP), Student CTA members and CTA/NEA-Retired members who wish to run for state delegate to the 2023 NEA Convention must fill out a Declaration of Candidacy and file it by the deadline, Jan. 31, 2023, at 4 p.m. Find the form at cta.org/racandidacy. The CTA Elections Committee will begin accepting state delegates' declarations of candidacy on January 5, 2023. Each candidate filing a declaration will receive an acknowledgment of receipt.

The convention, known as NEA Representative Assembly, will take place the first week of July in Orlando, FL. In keeping with CTA's commitment to minority involvement, members who are people of color are urged to become candidates.

For more information, or if your chapter has not initiated an election by March 17, 2023, contact the CTA Elections Committee at 650-552-5300, or email RA@cta.org.

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



CTA DIRECTORIAL DISTRICTS



ABT (O)	\$2,928.97
AGUILAR (H)	\$5,160.75
BARTELL (M)	\$2,683.66
BONACCORSI (B)	\$2,367.18
BORDEN* (P)	\$2,452.98
BOYD	\$3,456.60
BRADFORD (N)	\$2,387.55
BUSHEE (I)	\$2,278.75
EATON* (A)	\$1,444.79
ELLIS (At-Large)	\$2,541.33
GOLDBERG	\$2,150.59
GRANADO (L)	\$2,907.99
GUPTON (E)	\$1,617.54
HOUSE*	\$1,673.21
JACO (G)	\$1,909.83
JONES (J)	\$2,706.60
KREITZ*†	\$2,146.30
LITTMAN	\$2,311.06
MARTINEZ (K)	\$3,957.29
NORMAND (C)	\$2,141.57
PATTERSON (D)	\$5,099.77
RODRIGUEZ* (P)	\$244.58
RUIZ (F)	\$3,912.90
SHEAFFER (Q)	\$3,435.48
TSE (At-Large)	\$3,046.28

†CTA/NEA Coordinator

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

CTA Board Expenses

Amounts represent a monthly average for fiscal year 2021-2022. During the reporting year, the normal and statewide activities include CTA Board meetings, State Council, Service Center Council meetings, Equity and Human Rights Conference, Good Teaching Conferences, various task force meetings and other business-related functions. Some differences in expenditures may be due to the widely varied geographical sizes of directorial districts, distances traveled for Regional, Service Center and other meetings, and the varied number of functions CTA Directors are responsible for attending. Expenses of Board members with partial-year service are averaged based on months served and delineated with an asterisk.

A Most Excellent Teacher

Educator receives national recognition for her work

IN OCTOBER educator Guadalupe Carrasco Cardona, a member of UTLA and teacher at Edward R. Roybal Learning Center in Los Angeles, was announced as a recipient of The NEA Foundation's prestigious California Casualty Award for Teaching Excellence.

Carrasco Cardona was one of 46 educators nationwide who were nominated for their leadership, excellence in the classroom, family and community engagement, a commitment to equity and diversity, and advocacy for the teaching profession.

"Each of the awardees reflects the promise and power of public education through a commitment to creating equitable and inclusive learning environments," said Sara A. Sneed, president and CEO of The NEA Foundation, in a statement. "All are exemplary educators who have inspired colleagues through their example and made a lasting positive impact in the lives of countless students."

Carrasco Cardona and the other awardees will be honored at the NEA Foundation Salute to Excellence in Education in May 2023 in Washington, DC. Five of the awardees nominated

by NEA's state affiliates will be chosen as finalists for the top national award and receive \$10,000 each. The educator selected for the top award will be revealed at the Salute to Excellence in Education event and receive \$25,000.



Carrasco Cardona

Earlier this year, Carrasco Cardona received the 2022 CTA Cesar Chavez "Si Se Puede" Human Rights Award. The award recognized her commitment to promoting educational equality, her work in underserved communities and her excellent mentorship of teachers and students. She has helped develop statewide ethnic studies curricu-

lum and organized community-wide support for students and families struggling to make ends meet. As chair of the Association of Raza Educators of Los Angeles, she supports teachers through professional development opportunities and helps secure scholarships for Dreamers. She also created "La Trenzita" (The Braid), a YouTube channel for Latinx youth.

For more information about The NEA Foundation California Casualty Awards for Teaching Excellence, go to neafoundation.org.



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Safe Winter Driving

Tips to navigate the roads in bad weather

MOST OF US Californians enjoy year-round good driving weather. But that's also a double-edged sword, because it means we're unaccustomed to driving in stormy and snowy road conditions.

Snow and ice accumulation on roadways reduces tire friction and vehicle maneuverability and greatly increases the risk of accidents. Here are safety tips for driving in inclement weather to ensure you arrive at your destination safely:

- Decrease your speed and leave yourself plenty of room to stop.
- Allow at least three times more space than usual between you and the car in front of you.
- Brake gently to avoid skidding.
- If your wheels start to lock up, ease off the brakes.
- Turn on your lights — this will make you more visible to other motorists.
- Keep your windshield clean. Once it has defrosted, keep the windshield wipers on to wipe away falling snow and avoid it freezing over again.



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- Use low gears to keep traction.
- Drive especially slow on hills to avoid rolling backward.
- Steer *into* a skid to avoid a crash. This means if your rear wheels are going right, gently steer in that direction.
- Keep an emergency kit in your car. This should include a first aid kit, flashlight, water, blankets and snowmelt or sand/kitty litter.
- Be on the lookout for black ice — a transparent, thin layer of ice that is barely visible and makes roadways, bridges and overpasses extremely slick.
- Don't pass snow plows. The drivers have limited visibility, and you're likely to find the road in front of them worse than the road behind.
- Don't assume your vehicle won't have problems. Even 4-wheel drive automobiles can have issues on ice and snow!

If your rear wheels skid...

- Take your foot off the accelerator.
- Steer in the direction you want the front wheels to go.
- If your rear wheels start sliding the other way as you

recover, ease the steering wheel toward that side. You might have to steer left and right a few times to get your vehicle under control.

- If you have standard brakes, pump them gently.
- If you have anti-lock brakes (ABS), do not pump the brakes. Apply steady pressure to the brakes. You will feel the brakes pulse — this is normal.

If your front wheels skid...

- Take your foot off the gas and shift to neutral, but don't try to steer immediately.
- As the wheels skid sideways, they will slow the vehicle and traction will return. As it does, steer in the direction you want to go. Then put the transmission in "drive" or release the clutch, and accelerate gently.

From California Casualty, a CTA preferred provider for auto and home insurance to educators.

See CTAMemberBenefits.org/calcas for details.

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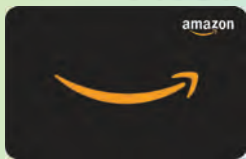
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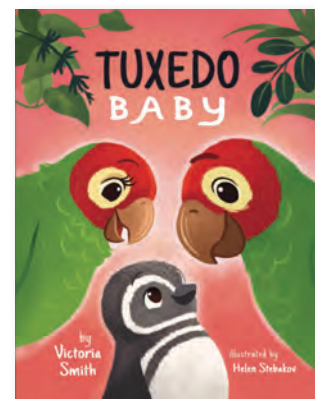
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Often educators' creativity spills over into a book, blog, app or other work. We're happy to showcase members' talents.

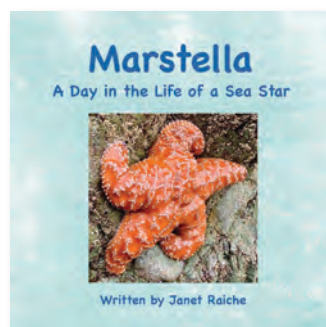
FAMILY LOVE

Victoria Smith, a CTA/NEA Retired member, has written *Tuxedo Baby*, the story of a lonely Magellanic penguin from Chile adopted by cherry-head conure parrots. The loving parents welcome him into their home, and he tries hard to please them. More than anything, *Tuxedo Baby* wants to fly like they and his conure friends at school do, but he is the only bird who can't fly. Then — a surprise.... A story of unconditional love and acceptance for grades K-3. On Amazon.



INTERGALACTIC HERO

The second installment in a science fiction/space opera series by Lance Novak finds teen Sophia Sanchez, the hero who saved Centauri Station from disaster, about to leave for a prestigious starfighter pilot training program on Mars. Meanwhile, Tristan Crawford and his comrades are tracking down the masterminds behind the battle that nearly destroyed Sophia's home. It turns out Centauri Station — as well as the planet it orbits — may be in trouble again. Can Sophia help stop an invasion of her solar system? *Miss Sophia Sanchez: Leezhahi Conqueror* (Book Two in the Kabookian Chronicles) is the fourth young adult novel by Novak, a high school English teacher and member of Las Virgenes Educators Association. On Amazon and Barnes & Noble.



STAR OF THE SEA

Take a walk at the beach and learn — with a book, that is. During the pandemic, Janet Raiche wrote *Marstella, a Day in the Life of a Sea Star*. The CTA/NEA Retired member has one side of the book tell the tale of *Marstella*, a talking sea star. On the opposite side are fun facts about sea stars, including photographs of the echinoderms from the tidepools at Dillon Beach in Marin County, where Raiche lives. It is geared towards K-3. On Amazon.

Got something for *Lit From Within* — a book, blog, album, video series, podcast or something else? 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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