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Site Leaders Shared your Suggestions and Concerns

A couple months ago, TVEA sent out a request for all site reps to ask members for input on concerns and issues that were not related to pay increases, but that they'd like to see TVEA work on through negotiations or committee work. Site reps brought back responses, separated them on charts with different general topics, and then TVEA leadership put together a spreadsheet of concerns/issues and avenues for addressing them. We'll be sharing it with site reps at the Leadership Council this week. You can see your site rep for specific details, but this article generalizes on some of the ideas brought up. Look for a continuation of this article in the May newsletter!

Benefits

- Members requested a change in current health coverage—to allow employees to opt out. Currently, once a year, part-time employees **do** have the opportunity to opt in our out of health coverage. Full-time employees do not have this option; they must take insurance, even if a spouse has insurance, or the military provides insurance. This restriction comes from health insurance companies who bid for our health coverage and require 100% enrollment—not the district or TVEA. The rates would be far higher for all who are insured if employees could self-select to opt out.
- Members requested retiree benefits, like continuing insurance or a golden handshake. The district offered a retirement incentive 2 years ago, and told TVEA that they would not consider a retirement incentive for employees again for at least 5 years (3 years from now). Much of the motivation for the incentive was to save jobs, in the wake of budget cuts that were causing layoffs. CTA has told us that other districts who currently offer retiree benefits have had them in place for many years, from when recruiting new teachers was a challenge. Negotiation proposals from associations who are trying to add retiree benefits now have not been successful. **Currently our district does offer health insurance at a cost to all retirees. You can access information on the retiree health insurance website [here](#).** *Continued on next page.*

Organizing for Bargaining Support

TVEA's Organizing Team asks for your continued support for the Bargaining Team as they work to complete negotiations this year.

- Watch for informational flyers in your boxes.
- Show your support as a silent presence at the April 15th School Board meeting--wear a black shirt! About 300 showed up for a School Board meeting in March. The team challenges you to make that number even greater this time!
- Show unity by wearing green shirts (maybe your new Team TVEA shirt?) on Monday and black shirts on Friday!

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Temecula Valley Educators Association

Site Leaders shared your Suggestions and Concerns continued..

- Members have requested more money from the district be designated for health and welfare benefits. This is an option that could be considered, but members need to be aware that it would reduce the amount of money available for a raise for employees. TVEA has heard loud and clear that a raise is the priority for the huge majority of our members.
- STRS: Some members would like to opt out of STRS. This is not a legal option for teachers in California.
- Dental and Vision: Some members would like the option of taking or not taking this “side-insurance.” The Insurance Advisory Committee is discussing this idea.
- Members asked TVEA to find a way to reduce health and welfare costs. Our IAC (composed of TVEA members, CSEA members, and administration) meets monthly with different plan providers to gather information and listen to and analyze bids. They have not found a plan that would save significant amounts of money from what we currently pay for SISC coverage, or would reduce options from what is currently offered. This is a continuing responsibility for this committee to investigate and identify the best options for members.
- Winter Break: Some members would like a 3-week break at Christmas. There was a survey about this a few years ago, and the district and School Board gathered input from the community. This idea did not receive majority support from either teachers or the community. Currently, we have 2 future school year calendars already planned with 2 weeks off in the winter. As other calendars are being planned, based on how the days fall in the December/January months, this could be considered by our Bargaining Team.

High School “D” Grades

Members have asked us to lobby for restoring D grades at the high school level. The School Board opposes bringing back the D grade. Instructional leaders at the district level also are opposed to D grades, which signify a student is not “at standard” in a subject area. TVEA can survey members to see if this is an issue the majority of members would want us to lobby on.

Combo Classes at Elementary Schools

- Members have requested stipends, instructional aides, or extra prep for teachers who teach combo classes, or a schedule with fewer duties than other teachers. This is something TVEA leadership has discussed with administrators, who do acknowledge the extra time it takes to plan for and instruct 2 grades within one classroom. At some sites, principals have been able to work with combo teachers to provide extra time via spare substitute teacher minutes or other methods. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment administrators have met with combo teachers to work with them to address concerns. Our Bargaining Team has approached this subject in Negotiations and will do so again.
- K/1 combos present special challenges to teachers, including scheduling when one group has different hours than the other group. Members have pointed out the huge difference in skills between a kindergartener and a 1st grader, and how difficult it is to mesh the two groups in one classroom with Common Core expectations. TVEA leadership has brought this problem to district admin and asked to eliminate the model at our elementary schools. However, site enrollment numbers create challenges that make this a very expensive option (more teachers would have to be hired)—something that our members would have to identify as a priority, more important than receiving the highest raise possible. Currently there are five K/1 Combos in TVUSD.

Counselors

- Members have asked for more counselors to be assigned to middle and high schools—and even to elementary schools. The LCAP Advisory has discussed these options, with a concentration on serving the needs of language learners, foster kids, and low-income students. Our Bargaining Team has proposed setting ratios for counselors at the secondary level.
- Counselors have also asked for a “prep period” each day. Currently there is no portion of the counselor work day that is considered “prep.” This is similar to psychologists, nurses, librarians, and TOSAs. (The district perspective is that these employees have flexibility within their day their day to schedule non-student time, and instructional preparation time is for those who teach.) We’re working to schedule a counselors’ meeting before the school year is out.

Next month, we’ll report back on other issues/concerns that members shared with our site reps.

LCAP Will Define Program Priorities for Future

The Local Control Accountability Plan is a 3-year plan that describes the goals, actions, services, and expenditures to support positive student outcomes that address state and local priorities. It tells how the district intends to meet annual goals for all pupils, with specific activities to address state and local priorities. TVUSD has been running meetings of the Advisory for LCAP for months now, followed up by community forums and supplemented by surveys to put the district's plan together. The plan must be adopted by the Governing Board and reviewed and approved by the County Superintendent by July 1st.

The plan includes 3 state categories, and 8 state priorities that LCAPs must address:

1. Conditions of Learning

- Teachers are appropriately assigned and fully credentialed, students have access to instructional materials, and school facilities are maintained
- Implementation of academic content and performance standards adopted by the CA State Board of Education (Common Core State Standards), including how the programs and services will enable English learners to access the common core academic standards and the English language development standards for all pupils.
- Students have access to and are enrolled in a broad course of study, including unduplicated pupils and special needs students

2. Pupil Outcomes

- Student achievement is measured by assessments (standardized tests, API, % college and career ready, % English learners who become proficient and who are reclassified, % students passing AP tests at 3 or higher, % students prepared for college determined by EAP)
- Other outcomes in required areas of study

3. Engagement

- Parental engagement (parents are involved in decision-making and participation in programs for unduplicated pupils)
- Pupil engagement (measured by school attendance rates, chronic absenteeism rates, middle school dropout rates, high school dropout rates, high school graduation rates)
- School climate (measured by student suspension rates, student expulsion rates, and other measures—including surveys of students, parents, and teachers on safety and school connectedness)

**Note that “unduplicated pupils (UP)” are the students who determine the amount of supplemental funding each school district in California receives under LCFF. These students are children from low-income families, and/or are English language learners, and/or are foster children. If a child is in one or more

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What do I need to know about CalSTRS and future funding liability?

You've probably been reading or hearing that there are concerns about CalSTRS funding being insufficient for the future. Ensuring a secure retirement is critical to attracting and keeping quality teachers in the profession. Here's a quick Q & A to help you feel more informed.

How is CalSTRS currently funded?

- CTA members contribute 8% of their salary towards retirement benefits.
- School districts contribute 8.25% of salary towards retirement benefits.
- The state contributes about 3% (although until 10 years ago, the amount was more like 4.6%).
- Returns from investments by the fund do the rest.

Are retired teachers getting Social Security benefits?

Most do not receive Social Security payments; those that do (because they have also worked in the private sector and have paid into the system) are receiving drastically reduced benefits because of offsets.

How much do teachers receive in retirement benefits?

Since everyone has a different career path, it's hard to answer this question. However, a teacher who has worked more than 25 years receives about \$3300 a month. To look at projections for yourself, go to www.CalSTRS.com.

Is there a shortfall?

Yes, but there are funds available to pay benefits until 2044. The shortfall happened because of the global recession, not because of mismanagement of funds—as it happened with other pension plans in other job areas. We need to be proactive to solve future funding problems.

How can we solve the problem of a shortfall in funds?

All the stakeholders need to increase contributions—CTA members, school districts, and the state.

The state should go back to contributing 4.6%.

The plan should not set up unequal tiers of contributions for current and future educators.

The solution should not take money away from students—and money should not be from Prop 98.

What can I do to make sure CalSTRS will be fully

funded for the future? Pay attention to CTA updates regarding legislation and be ready to lobby your legislator. Educate those around you - don't allow others to share misinformation.

Common Core Steering Committee Communiqué from Meeting March 19th, 2014

The Steering Committee met March 19th after school at the District Office. The purpose of the Common Core Steering Committee is to work as a group towards a positive implementation of Common Core standards across the district, with a focus on being solution-minded and results-oriented.

We reviewed the actions approved from our meeting in February.

- All PLC leaders have received information and access for reviewing feedback on UPOs and assessments posted by groups at other sites—and for adding their own feedback on items from team discussions.
- Andree Grey met with elementary teachers from a variety of sites for a report card committee meeting. This core group of teachers made decisions about what the report card will look like as we move to Infinite Campus next year, rather than Pinacle. The meeting was productive and more feedback will be sought on the draft report cards. Input came not only from the group, but also emails and TVEA survey information on report cards.

Concerns and Actions:

The group reviewed and added input to survey drafts for:

- Grades 6 – 12 Math Resources
- Grades 6 – 12 Language Arts Resources
- Elementary Resources

The surveys will help identify which current resources have been useful, and which areas need more resources.

We hope you received an email from your principal linking you to a survey for Elementary Resources, 6-12 Language Arts Resources, or 6-12 Math Resources, if that is what you teach. Thank you for providing valuable feedback and helping guide the district in making wise financial choices on resources to purchase for next year!

*****The survey closed at 4 pm on Friday, April 11th.

Special Ed Concerns and Actions:

Special Ed resources (Gold Book Tool Kit and Basics 2 Curriculum) were also discussed, along with a plan to add a breakdown of identified priority standards for Special Ed teachers and a spiral list of standards for all grades. These will be posted on the google drive for Special Ed. Note that Priority Standards can be found in the Standards and Calendars folder in the Google Drive (Shared with Me) for each grade level. If you are a special education teacher and do not have access to a grade you serve, please email Michelle Bell to request access.

Future Meeting: April 24 at the TVEA office to continue discussion on grading and report cards (focus on elementary and Special Ed)

Common Core News

Unclear about what's true and what's not true about Common Core?

<http://www.educators4excellence.org/common-core/tools-and-resources/Rumor-Or-RealityNew Learning Module>

The California Department of Education is pleased to announce that A Deeper Dive into the California English Language Development Standards professional learning module is now available online [here](#).

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President's Meeting Calendar

(Subject to Change)

April

- 8** Meeting with School Board member
Grant visit with CTA
 - 9** PTA President's Meeting
PTSA Young Prof. Meeting
Meeting with Superintendent
 - 10** Exec Board Meeting
 - 11** Meeting with School Board member
 - 14** Meeting with HRD
Budget Committee Meeting
IAC Meeting
 - 15** Meeting with DO Admin
Special Ed Committee Meeting
LCAP Info Meeting
School Board Meeting
 - 16** Leadership Council Meeting
 - 17** LCAP Draft Unveiling
Murrieta RRC Uniserv Review
TVEA Social Hour
 - 21** AP Survey Committee Meeting
 - 22** Dollars for Scholars applications review
PTA Council Meeting
 - 23** Grade Level Networking Meeting
 - 24** Common Core Steering Committee Meeting
LCAP Community Forum
 - 25-28** Presidents Meeting with Dean Vogel
 - 26** Taste of Temecula
 - 28** Local Presidents Interview candidates for Congressional District 42
 - 29** PAC Chairs Meeting
- President's Schedule does not reflect any Site Visits that are currently being planned.**

Common Core News Continued

Training Tests

The Smarter Balanced Training Tests are available on the CDE Smarter Balanced Assessment System Web page, under [“Practice Tests, Training Tests, and Sample Items.”](#) The Training Tests allow teachers and students to experience most of the features, the functionality, and the item types in the Smarter Balanced assessments in advance of the Field Test.

Unlike the Practice Tests, they are not designed to provide a grade-specific testing experience; instead, their purpose is to help students understand the test format and how they will interact with the technology.

Updated Global Resources

Global education community ASCD has announced new features available on its free Common Core implementation tool, [ASCD EduCore™](#). The tool is a virtual showcase of digital and Common Core–aligned professional development opportunities from ASCD, the Literacy Design Collaborative, Student Achievement Partners, the Math Design Collaborative, and others.

High-quality Professional Development

CTA recommends:

Writing Project (available through UC)—centerx.gseis.ucla.edu/writing-project

Expository Reading and Writing Course (available through CSU)—calstate.edu/eap/englishcourse

UCLA Curtis Center for Mathematics and Teaching—curtiscenter.math.ucla.edu/continuing.shtml

Have you joined these California Department of Education electronic mailing lists?

Science: join-ngss@mlist.cde.ca.gov

Common Core: join-commoncore@mlist.cde.ca.gov

Smarter Balance: sbac@mlist.cde.ca.gov

Great Resources from the CTA Common Core “Pre-Conference”

If you haven’t yet used the www.cta.org/ipd website, you need to check it out. To sign in, you need to have a CTA sign-in set up, and the way to do that (if you’re not already set up) is to have your CTA membership number handy (see your membership card or the latest issue of the CTA magazine). All of the workshops from the Pre-Good Teaching Conference March 14th (Anaheim) Common Core training are available if you click on the link that’s under “Presentations and Hand-outs.” Cara Ramsay (TVHS), who attended, recommended the “Resources, Resources, Resources” and its hyperlinks to useful pages on the CDE website, including lesson plans, learning modules for educators, resources for communicating with parents, videos, and CCSS translated into many different languages.

Field Test Information

The CDE launched its revised Smarter Balanced Field Test Web page, which has been redesigned to provide focused information for specific audiences. The Web page provides easily accessible information through tabs labeled for each of the following audiences: teachers, administrators, students/parents, technology coordinators, and community partners. The Web page is now available at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/smarterfieldtest.asp>.

Useful Websites

This website features Learning Modules. The ELA learning modules include how to teach rhetoric among many other topics. <http://www.myboe.org/portal/default/Group/Viewer/GroupView?action=2&gid=2996>

Teachers in grades 4 -12 may appreciate this website, “All About Adolescent Literacy,” complete with videos and Common Core lesson plans: http://www.adlit.org/common_core/

Principal Survey Coming Up!

Later this month, we’ll be emailing you the Principal Survey for 2013/14. As always, we encourage you to be reflective and honest as you fill out the survey. There are some slight changes from previous years, which we hope will help make some statements on the survey more clear and easier for a principal to understand and respond to.

Common Core “Pre-Conference”

TVEA sent several members of the Common Core Steering Committee and other teachers doing Common Core instruction to this one-day conference in Anaheim on March 14th.

Michele Osinski (LES): The first session I attended was indicated for middle-and high-school ELA teachers, but I was sure that I would be able to modify for upper elementary.

The presenters shared several strategies to assist students in approaching difficult text. One of the strategies they called “Inquiry Blackjack,” which is a tiered assignment where students have to earn 21 points, with activities such as “describe”, “complete”, or “match” earning one point. Activities such as “compare” earn three points and “hypothesize” earn five.

Another activity was to take a difficult piece of text (our example was the *Romeo and Juliet* Prologue) and circle words that were used more than once. Based on those words, we were to create a “summary sentence” about the passage using just those words, with the addition, if needed, of prepositions, articles, and ONE VERB. The sentences shared were DYNAMIC.

I also attended a session called “Resources, Resources” that was facilitated by one of the members of the CDE Common Core Integrated Action Team (CCIAT). Her job is to vet resources to be placed on the CDE website for teachers and parents. There are NINE PAGES of links beginning with <https://www2.cde.ca.gov/ccsr/> including parent translations, SmarterBalanced information, and lessons. She also recommended the following:

Brokers of Expertise: www.boe.org

Council of Great City Schools: www.cgcs.org

Achieve the Core: www.achievethecore.org

Courtney Evans (TAVS): In attending the Good Teaching Conference “Pre-Conference” on the Common Core, I was most interested in learning more about how the Common Core shifts can be supported by technology in various ways. Denesa Menge and Karen Taylor did a presentation about using technology-based tools to support multiple aspects of any classroom, from collaborating via apps like “Padlet” and “Zoho Chat,” to organizing and managing with “Symbaloo” and “Thinglink,” to implementing the components of a “flipped” classroom by utilizing web-based tutorials, such as those found (for no cost) at: www.sophia.org. The multitude of Web 2.0 tools available for low/no cost are too many to count and are constantly growing-- as is the availability of Common Core-aligned materials. Performance Task expert, and former Smarter Balanced Project Manager, Rachel Lagunoff, led a seminar that provided information about the impact of performance tasks in the ELA classroom. Driving home the need to properly align classroom practice with desired outcomes, Lagunoff’s seminar left me feeling as if TVUSD’s secondary ELA is off to the “right start” with some solidly-designed assessments and forward-thought about a consistent revision process. A session with Barbara Murchison of the California Department of Education helped round-out the overall pre-conference offering by walking-through such resources as the Brokers of Expertise site at: www.myboe.org, and the CDE Common Core resource page at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>.

In general session, CTA President, Dean Vogel, also made it clear that not only is CTA a proponent of the Common Core, but they are also consistently developing ways in which to support teachers through this rather constant bombardment of newness (my words, not his). After experiencing just the “pre” Good Teaching Conference, it is highly likely that any teacher feeling frustrated about this Common Core process would benefit from attending a CTA Training, Seminar, or Conference--if for nothing more than to see some friendly faces who know what you’re going through.

Kristan Morales (CHS): I went to all the technology and Common Core sessions and took notes. I was really excited to learn and revisit many tech tools I learned about while in my Master’s Program for Educational Technology. Some of the things I kept hearing were about how Common core ELA students need to be published, and how tech tools are being integrated into the curriculum in both Math and English. See the TVEA website (www.tveducators.org) CCSS page for an extensive list of tech resources and notes on using them that I collected! The link is called Tech Tools for Common Core.

CTA's "Good Teaching Conference" in Anaheim, California, March 14-16, 2014

TVEA sent 10 teachers to the CTA Good Teaching Conference.

Annette Cortese (BVMS): Does your head feel heavy at the end of the day? Then you are talking too much! "50 Ways to Leave Your Lecture" by Grace Dearborn overflowed with ideas to help teachers move from a lecture format to a discussion format in the classroom. Pausing every 12 minutes was one strategy to chunk learning and encourage summarizing. I stayed for Grace's second workshop, "When Consequences Don't Work" because her blend of humor and great ideas were highly motivating. Making positive connections with challenging students was the theme repeated throughout the second workshop presentation. Before I knew it, the session was over and it was time for lunch.

The keynote speaker at lunch was the president of CTA, Dean E. Vogel. He spoke about the teacher as the leader, the facilitator, and the educator. He encouraged teachers to get involved with the process of Common Core from developing curriculum to selecting materials for the classroom.

Lunch was followed by two more workshops. Erica Cox, author of "Eight Great Strategies to Teach Common Core Writing," reviewed classroom practices to help organize and focus the language arts teacher. Alyson Hoberecht, facilitator of "Positive Classroom Management Strategies and Discipline Techniques," suggested balancing consequences with care.

Sunday morning workshops began at 8:30 a.m. Rick Morris from *New Management* explained "Right Brained Strategies" enhance the classroom environment and help students become better writers. Playing music in the classroom may not be a new idea, but selecting music that fits the assignment is critical for optimal success. Sign language and pictures save teachers from repeating directions. Classroom timers assist with transitions. Rick shared a plethora of creative, interactive ideas that all students would enjoy.

The best part of each workshop was leaving with links to great classroom ideas. Here are a few that teachers may find useful:

Newmanagement.com has a link where teachers can share ideas
Music Central and Freeplay music have free music to download
Remind 101 is a parent/teacher text or email service
www.learningheadquarters.com has great graphic organizers for writing
www.consciousteaching.com is filled with free stuff for teachers

Tara Paul (TVHS): The CTA Good Teaching Conference provided me with opportunities to gather practical teaching strategies and resources that will assist me in refining and expanding my pedagogical repertoire. The "Eight Great Strategies to Teach Common Core Writing Session" was very informative. It featured a standard-based writing system designed to help all students master the Common Core's opinion and informative/explanatory writing. It provided opportunities to educators like me to engage emergent, developing and fluent writers in creating at and above-standard opinion pieces with a clear topic supported by well-chosen reasons and organized in a structure to best convey the author's message. With these tools, Common Core writing can be fun, interactive and dynamic. I thank CTA & TVEA for providing me this opportunity to attend CTA Good Teaching Conference.

Michele Osinski (LES): I attended several VERY good sessions, but one in particular has changed the way I am teaching the final weeks of school. Liza Butler and Dean Teig from Tulelake High School, a small rural school in northern California, spoke on the impact of character education and how we can integrate it into Common Core.

Rather than implementing a character-education "program" such as The Six Pillars, or "Character Counts", they focused on the work of Martin Seligman, Carol Dwek, Paul Tough, and Angela Duckworth in regard to teaching students SKILLS in the form of character traits which are proven to be essential to student success. Similar to the KIPP program, Dr. Butler and Mr. Teig focus their work on seven traits: Curiosity, Gratitude, Grit, Optimism, Self-Control, Social Intelligence, and Zest. The assumption is that by teaching students the traits, and having them focus on the traits in their every-day life, they will also see how scientists, historical figures, as well as literary characters have utilized these characteristics.

To this end, I have shown the students some videos regarding this philosophy and we have started developing a shared understanding of what these terms mean and what they might look like in our lives. Based on an interview video of Paul Tough, my
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Good Teaching Conference Continued

students are highly motivated to see how these traits can co-exist with or even improve their intelligence to help them succeed in middle school, high school, college, and their later lives.

I am hopeful that the work that I am doing with my students over these final weeks may begin to serve as a school-wide model for LES in the future, as our staff has recognized the need for program to improve our students' engagement in and enthusiasm for learning.

The BEST news is that ALL of the handouts provided at the pre-conference and conference general sessions (including research and activities) can be found on the CTA website:

<http://ctaipd.ning.com/page/pre-good-teaching-conference-march-14-2014-anaheim>

Darlene Dormanen (LES): I had an amazing time at the Good Teaching Conference March 14-16 in Anaheim. After 14 years of teaching, I'm still always looking for ways to improve my writing instruction and classroom management skills in particular. There were several great workshops focused on writing instruction with a Common Core emphasis and so many different classroom management workshops, it was hard to choose. I wish there was time to attend many more of the workshops that sounded so interesting, but it was nice to know that many of the ones I couldn't attend had materials posted on the CTA website. I learned a lot of interesting ideas I hadn't thought of before, while many of the things I was already doing were validated. I came away with a lot of great ideas and purchased some helpful resources to enhance my teaching. The accommodations and food were wonderful as well. Thanks to TVEA for making my attendance at the Good Teaching Conference possible. It was a weekend well spent!

Joyce Schmidt (TES): I am grateful for the opportunity I had to learn helpful information about different areas of teaching. I attended one workshop on "handling stress with alternative methods" because many teachers (including myself) are feeling overloaded and experiencing stress. Too much stress MAY cause adverse psychological, physical, behavioral, and/or organizational consequences, which often lead to lower performance at work.

Quick tips:

a) Breathe in slowly to the count of 6 (in 6 steps) and then breathe out in 4 steps. b) Reflexology --tightly pinch the web of skin between your thumb and pointer finger. c) Drink water to provide oxygen to your brain. (This has also been shown to help students' brains/thinking).

Since overwhelming stress causes the immune and digestive systems to shut down, some nutritional information is helpful. Many of our "go to" foods at stressful times do not reduce stress, and we should avoid sugars, candy, soda, caffeine, alcohol, and a lack of water. Craving sugar is often due to a lack of protein (so include nuts, seeds etc. with meals and snacks). Many additives lead to toxic build-up, which in turn leads to more stress. Alzheimer's patients have often lacked oil and fats in their diets, so we need some of those to be healthy. Coconut oil is best for cooking because olive oil and grape seed oil change to trans-fats when heated. Finally, if you take fish oil to improve brain function, be patient because it takes 3 months for it to reach the brain and make a noticeable difference there. I hope you've found something helpful in reading this!



Blaine Boyer (RVHS) and his Green Energy class hosted a visit from CTA's Anita Benitas, representing the Institute for Teaching, who granted him \$5000 to buy solar equipment.

Robotics Club Inspires Middle School Students

Rick Boyd, TMS science teacher, coaches a LEGO Robotics Club for 7th and 8th graders.

How did you start this club?

I had been a judge at a regional competition and become aware of an organization that gives grants to start robotics clubs. I applied for and received a grant—and along with donations of equipment from another middle school whose club had disbanded—we got enough to get started. The grant lasts for the first 2 years, and then there is a partial grant for next year.

What do kids learn from being in this club?

They learn how to research a problem and come up with a unique solution, and do public speaking, along with advancing their building and programming skills. The work they do in Robotics Club matches many of the Common Core goals and fits easily into STEM curriculum. Students have the freedom to make mistakes and then correct those mistakes. They are active in problem-solving and working as a team.

Who are the students who choose to join?

Students must undergo an interview process to join the club at the beginning of the school year. Many are interested in engineering, learning about robots, or they love LEGOs. The students spend almost every lunch in the lab, and we capture some time during what we call the “Drop Everything and Robotics” time of the day. During the competition season, students meet after school weekly, too.

(Several students added that they joined the club because “I get to meet people just like me” and “Mr. Boyd, our instructor, is great” and “only our lunch period gets to do it.”)

How are your projects set up?

LEGO sets goals for the students, and they have to figure out how to achieve them. There are continual works in progress in this club, and LEGO MINDSTORMS® Education EV3 provides lessons and projects throughout the year on their website. The projects involve measurement, calculations, physics, and engineering skills.

How has your team done in competitions?

The TMS team, called “Insert Name Here” (an upside down turtle is their logo), placed 1st last year in the smaller group category. We won 4th place in regional's out of 36 teams. In 2 ½ minutes, the robot that students construct must complete as many tasks as possible. Next year, teams within the group may compete with each other, too.

If teachers at other middle schools are interested in starting a Robotics Club, what should they do?

Call me, and I'd be willing to help them get started. It would be a great project to continue into high schools, too.

How does running this club make you a better instructor?

Along with making me more harried *(Boyd smiles)*, it opens up things that are opportunities—real life problems—not just academic ideas. Ideally, this moves learning from the classroom into the community, which is the way learning should happen.



State Council Report

The following business was conducted at the March State Council meeting:

- The Budget committee approved a balanced budget and presented it to the Board of Directors for approval. It will be presented to the State Council for approval in June.
- CTA annual dues will be reduced by \$3.00 in 2014-15. (Because of the improved state economy and increases to teacher salaries state-wide, annual dues are anticipated to increase by approximately \$3.00 in the following 2015-16 year.)
- A new dues structure is on the way based on salary rather than percent of assignment.
- Candidate recommendations were voted on for the June 2014 Primary Election.
- Reports, discussion, and recommendations were made on New Business Items.
- Positions were taken on over 100 pieces of pending legislation in the State Legislature.
- Approval of the allocation of funds were made for local, county, and state election campaigns.
- The election of candidates to the NEA Board of Directors, the CTA Board of Directors and the CTA/ABC Committee took place.
- Speeches were given by candidates for NEA President, Vice-President, and Secretary-Treasurer.
- We enjoyed a Women's History Month Presentation.
- CTA recognized California's Teachers of the Year.
- The Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction gave a presentation on California's piloting of an assessment to replace CAPA to the “Assessment and Testing” and “Special Ed” committees.
- Online applications are available for Instructional Materials Reviewers and Content Review Experts for the 2015 ELA/ELD Instructional Materials Adoption: to review K-8 instructional materials and textbooks. Applications are available on the CDE website, www.cde.ca.gov.

Workplace Bullying

By Mitch Brown (NHS), State Council Rep and Chris Lindberg, TVEA President

Have you witnessed any of the following situations?

- A student being bullied by other students
- A colleague being bullied by an administrator
- A colleague being bullied by another colleague

Have you interceded or have you stood by because you did not know how to intervene?

At the CTA-GLBT Conference in October, and at a recent Riverside County Coalition of Presidents meeting, one session dealt with workplace bullying. The session discussed the difference between harassment and bullying, how workplace bullying is defined, myths and facts about workplace bullying, characteristics and behaviors of bullies, anti-bullying legislation, electronic bullying, the impact on the person being bullied, the costs of bullying to the employer, and how to have a bully-free workplace.

The training included information about the many different types of **harassment** (one form of bullying) that can and do occur. Harassment must be related to gender, race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, age, disability, or other legally protected status. Federal and state harassment laws outline specifically what does and what does not constitute harassment. Bullying (not always covered by harassment laws) is repeated, health-harming abusive conduct to individuals. It can involve:

- work sabotage or tampering with someone's property (can even be "pranks")
- verbal abuse, insults, threats
- coercion, intimidation, excessive criticism
- gossip, humiliation

35% of employees experience bullying, and 15% have witnessed bullying behavior towards co-workers, especially women. 72% of bullies are bosses, and 55% of bullies are co-workers. 66% of workplaces have bullies. 45% of people who were bullied developed stress-related health problems.

Two important anti-bullying laws in California are AB 9 and AB 1156. AB 9 requires districts to have a process for receiving and investigating complaints of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying—including requiring personnel who witness such acts to intervene. AB 1156 requires school safety plans to include anti-bullying policies (including electronic bullying acts).

If you feel that you have been a victim of workplace bullying, or want to assist a colleague you've witnessed being bullied, here are some suggestions:

First, take care of yourself and name the bully/bullying techniques.

- Stay calm and alert, and try to avoid getting emotional
- Take care of your physical health
- Build a network of people/friends who know you, and don't let yourself get isolated
- Don't blame yourself
- Consider counseling
- Don't assume mediation will help with the problem; bullies often don't change in this process
- Don't do anything to escalate the problem
- Report co-worker bullying to your administrator
- Document incidents in a timeline, using bulleted patterns of behavior you experience

Then, expose the bully.

- Confront the bully in a professional manner
- Reveal the tactics being used and question the need for such tactics
- Make others around you aware of bullying
- Do your job well—and make sure supervisors are aware of your work
- Hold management accountable for providing a safe working environment

Don't be a bully yourself!

- Don't criticize or gossip behind colleagues' backs.
- Confront criticism or gossip of colleagues and ask it to stop.
- Don't criticize colleagues or speak negatively about them with administrators. *Continued on Page 11*

Workplace Bullying continued..

- Always try to work out an issue or disagreement with a colleague before complaining to administrator.

Support bullied colleagues.

- Be a friend
- Take complaints seriously and don't judge or discount
- Make time to listen

Resources that may be useful for you if you are experiencing workplace bullying include:

www.bullyfreeatwork.com

www.workplacebullying.org

LCAP Continued...

of the groups listed, he or she is still only counted once in determining an unduplicated pupil count for a district. Supplemental funding to districts, under the Local Control Funding Formula, is based on the UP count. There are districts with more needy pupils than TVUSD who are also receiving concentration grants in addition to supplemental funding to serve UP counts of 55% or more. TVUSD's plan, still not finalized, must be analyzed each year and adjusted based on progress reported towards goals. A draft of the plan will be discussed by the group April 17th.

California's in 50th Place for Funding

In January, *Education Week* reported the rankings of states (and the District of Columbia) in per-pupil spending (latest figures based on 2010/11, adjusted for cost of living). California came in 50th. California is \$3,523 below the national average in education spending per student. We need to continue our work to move California up the ranks to provide funding that can meet our students' needs!

Taste of Temecula

The Taste of Temecula Valley is an annual event sponsored by the Temecula Valley Foundation for Excellence in Education. It's a fundraiser that brings in money that enables this education support organization to offer mini-grants to classroom teachers and provide enrichment programs at different sites.

TVEA encourages you to support this great organization that SUPPORTS US by volunteering on Saturday, April 26th in Old Town. To volunteer, contact Jeannie Hardy at totv.volunteers@gmail.com. To read more about TVFEE, go to their website: www.tvfee.org.

TVEA Executive Board Election Results

Congratulations to next year's Executive Board Members

President - Jeff Kingsberg

First Vice President - Edgar Diaz

Secretary - Carla Kestler

Elementary Representative - Michelle Stevens

Middle School Representative - Jeanine Wulfentstein

TVEA Exec Board & State Council Elections

Two elections are coming up in May for TVEA members.

We will be running a second Executive Board Election with two open positions:

1. Second Vice President (one year to complete term that will be vacated by current 2nd VP)
2. High School Area Rep (By-laws have changed to include 2 High School reps on next year's Exec. Board—2 year term)

We will also be running our State Council Representative Elections with two open positions (3 year term)

If you are interested in running for office, you may officially declare candidacy between April 11 and April 25. Campaigning may occur from April 28 to May 7. The election will take place at sites from May 8 to May 12 (3 voting days).

To declare candidacy, please fill out the form on the TVEA website (www.tveducators.org) under the Elections tab or stop by the office to fill out a paper form.

For information about any of these positions, please see the TVEA website or contact the TVEA office.

Election Timeline

April 25th ~ Declaration of Candidacy forms due

April 28th-May 7th—Candidates may Campaign

May 8,9, 12th ~ Voting for TVEA Exec Board/State Council Reps

May 12th~ Ballots due, Ballots are Counted

May 13th ~ Election Results Posted



EVENTS

April 9	Organizing Committee Meeting
April 10	Executive Board Meeting
April 14	Insurance Advisory Committee Meeting
April 14	Budget Committee Meeting
April 15	Special Ed Committee Meeting
April 15	School Board Meeting
April 16	Leadership Council Meeting
April 17	LCAP meeting
April 17	Social Hour
April 22	Dollars for Scholars Scholarship Review
April 23	Elementary Grade Level Networking
April 24	Common Core Steering Committee Meeting
April 25	Declaration of Candidacy Forms due
April 25	TVEA President meets with CTA President
April 25 – 27	CTA Region 4 Leadership Conference
April 26	Taste of Temecula Event
April 28	Interviews for Candidates for CD 42
April 29	PAC Chairs meeting
April 30	Organizing Committee Meeting
May 1	Executive Board Meeting
May 5-9	Teacher Appreciation Week
May 6	School Board Meeting
May 7	Leadership Council Meeting
May 8,9,12	Voting at Sites
May 12	Dollars for Scholars Community Event (TVEA Scholarships)
May 13	Election results announced
May 14	CA Day of the Teacher
May 16	WHO (We Honor Ours) Awards Event
May 17	CTA San Geronio Service Center Meeting
May 20	School Board Meeting
May 21	Presidents' Lobby Day in Sacramento
May 26	No School/Memorial Day
May 30 – June 1	CTA State Council Meeting

Shouts

- Congratulations to Nicolas Juhl, son of Suzanne Juhl (TLES) and Gregory Juhl (DMS), who won a scholarship from Indoor Environmental Services, presented at the March 18th School Board meeting.
- Thanks to the 100 + folks who showed up on March 18th to show unity outside Temecula Middle School before the school board meeting.
- Thank you to the members of the Organizing Committee who have been working hard to come up with ways to show support to our Bargaining Team and show TVEA's unity.

Welcome!

TVEA is happy to announce 4 new members:
 Krista Earle (TTES)—2nd Grade Teacher
 Teresa Johnson (VES) – SDC Teacher
 Randi Skelton (FVES) –1st Grade Teacher
 Angela Whittle (ARES/TES) – RSP Teacher

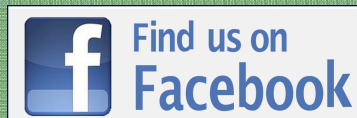
Catastrophic Leave

We have several TVEA members out on catastrophic leave right now, and in need of donations of sick time. **Ann Hollins**, 3rd grade teacher at CHES, is now on catastrophic medical leave; **Dan Ford**, social studies teacher at CHS, is caring for a family member; and **Robin Bull**, 2nd grade teacher at VES, is caring for her husband. In addition, MMS Classified employee, Misty Lies, has been approved for Catastrophic Leave for her current medical absences, and she really needs some donations. Any TVUSD employees (classified, certificated and administrative) may now donate "sick leave" hours on her behalf by using the Cat Leave Donation form, available from your site secretary or on the TVEA website (www.tveducators.org) and submitting that to Payroll.

You may donate up to a maximum of 2 days' worth of your "sick leave" to an approved Cat Leave employee. Keep in mind that you must be able to also maintain a minimum of 20 days' worth of leave for yourself. Thanks for helping out these folks going through tough times!

TVEA is on Facebook!

Please "like" **TVEA-Temecula Valley Educators Association**, and you'll be kept up to date on events, relevant news to educators, and perspectives on education issues! It's more important than ever to be informed about public education!



Temecula Valley Educators Association

29377 Rancho California Rd. #206

Temecula, CA 92591

(951) 699-9970

(951) 699-4771

www.tveducators.org

TVEA Officers

Chris Lindberg, President

Edgar Diaz, GMS, 1st VP

Jeff Kingsberg, CHS, 2nd VP

Bob Rollins, RVHS, Treasurer

Carla Kestler, TES, Secretary

Area Representatives

Chad Yates, GOHS, High School

Jeanine Wulfenstein, Middle School

Theresa Thompson, PVES,

Upper Elem

Upper Elementary

Tammy Iverson, LES,

Primary Elementary

Karen Hogan, Special Interest

Committee Chairs

Edgar Diaz, GMS, Bargaining

Chad Yates, GOHS, Grievance

Marcia Varner, FVES,

Equity & Human Rights

Gary Check, VES, Insurance

Lynn Breen, LES, Insurance

Belisa Guerrero, TES, Social Events

Traci Pawlak, VHES &

Mark Harnetiaux, GOHS, Elections

Alexa Ingram-Dupart, LES, &

Sean O'Hara, DMS, PAC

Robin Orner, LES, IPD

Jeff Kingsberg, Interim Organizing

Chris Lindberg, CCSS Co-Chair

CTA State Council

Mitch Brown

Bob Rollins

Marcia Varner

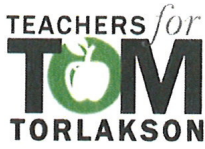
NEA Delegate

Marcia Varner

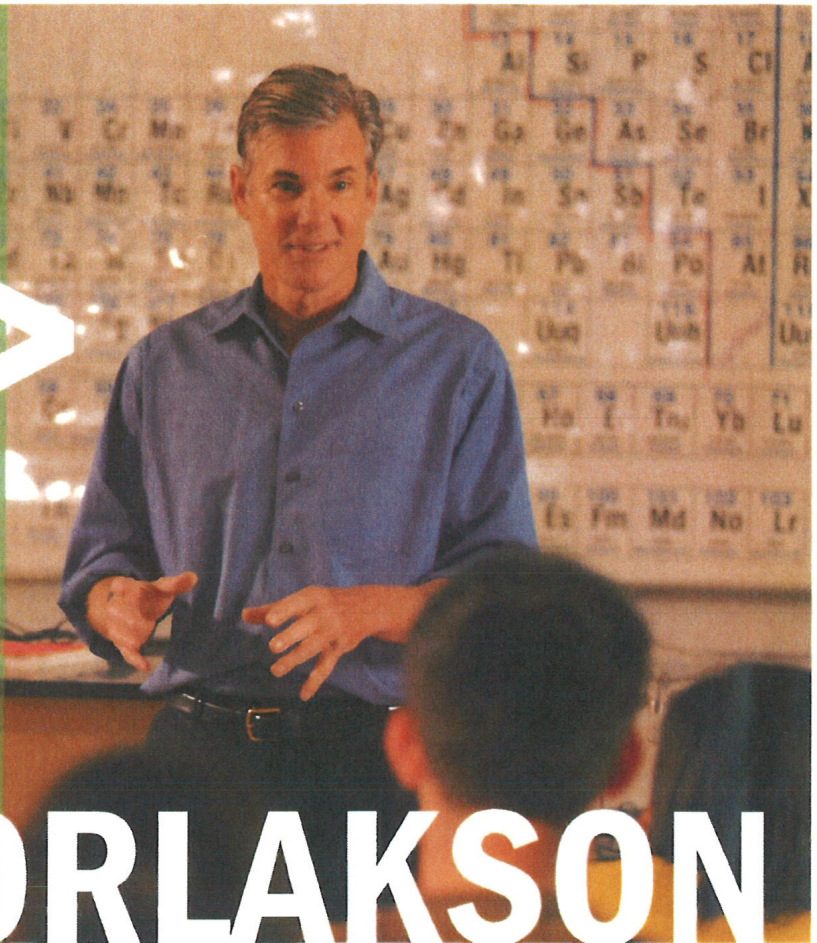


CTA Regional Resource Center
 25114 Jefferson Ave. #B Murrieta,





**TEACHER
PARENT
LAWMAKER
PROVEN LEADER** >



THIS ELECTION, VOTE FOR

TOM TORLAKSON

Supports adequately funding public education so that all students have a chance to succeed.

Supports learning over testing.

Supports assistance, not sanctions to help lower-performing schools.

Supports smaller class sizes and the continued improvement of our neighborhood schools.

Supports accountability for all schools, including charter schools.

Supports teachers and parents having a voice in the implementation of the Common Core State Standards.

Opposes paying and evaluating teachers based solely on student test scores.

HE FIGHTS FOR ALL STUDENTS

AS SUPERINTENDENT of PUBLIC INSTRUCTION and a STATE LAWMAKER, TOM CHAMPIONED:

More funding for ALL students with Local Control

Tom championed Proposition 30 to stop the cuts to education, repay the money owed to students, and bring \$47 billion to our schools and colleges over the next few years. He also believes decisions about our education tax dollars should be made by local parents, teachers and principals, not by state politicians.

The Quality Education Investment Act

Tom authored the Quality Education Investment Act, which dedicated nearly \$3 billion to our lowest-performing schools to support proven reforms that have increased student learning, reduced class sizes and closed achievement gaps between white and minority students.

Implementing the Common Core State Standards

Tom believes teachers and parents must have a voice in implementing the new education standards. He helped lead efforts to eliminate outdated state tests, and believes educators must have the instructional resources and support they need to help students succeed.

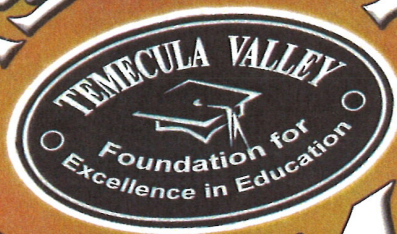
A Well-Rounded Education

Tom knows students need a well-rounded education that includes history, art and music. He wants to expand career and technical training for those kids who don't go to college, and he recognizes the importance of strengthening math and science education to keep California competitive in the emerging high-tech economy.



4TH ANNUAL

TASTE OF TEMECULA VALLEY



A gastronomic adventure awaits, with menu selections from the best Southern California restaurants, vintners, beverage makers, and specialty gourmet shops. Attendees also can browse unique booths, meet friends, and enjoy all-day live entertainment. Children 12 and under will enjoy a designated, child-friendly KID ZONE.

INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?

You must attend ONE mandatory volunteer training (choose ONE session):

Wednesday, April 16, at 6 PM
in the TVUSD Conference Center,
31350 Rancho Vista Road, Temecula
OR

Saturday, April 19, at 10 AM
at Chaparral High School,
27215 Nicolas Road, Temecula

Supporters who wish to pour ABC-regulated beverages must be 21+ and must complete ABC Training, which will be **Tuesday, April 22, 6 PM**, at the TVUSD Conference Center. Contact Jeannie Hardy at totv.volunteers@gmail.com if you have questions. Sign up to volunteer at www.tvfee.ivolunteer.com.

Winners of the 2014
"THINK GREEN" CONTEST
will be announced and cash prizes awarded. Contest is open to TVUSD students in Grades 4 through 12 and runs March 15-April 15.

See www.tvfee.org
for more info
on how to enter!



SATURDAY APRIL 26, 2014

TOWN SQUARE - OLD TOWN TEMECULA

11:00 am - 7:00 pm

ADMISSION \$10 / Children 12 & under - FREE

Presented by Temecula Valley Foundation for Excellence in Education in conjunction with the Temecula Valley Unified School District & the City of Temecula.

Proceeds benefit the students of TVUSD.

The Temecula Valley Foundation for Excellence in Education (TVFEE) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. TVFEE provides financial resources to support K-12 programs for students within the Temecula Valley Unified School District.

Temecula Valley Foundation for Excellence in Education

31350 Rancho Vista Rd., Temecula, CA 92592-6200 www.tvfee.org

