

## I TEACH... WHAT'S YOUR SUPERPOWER?

Buy your TEAM TVEA T-shirt TODAY for only \$5.00! Show your support and solidarity with our association and let our community and district know how proud we are of TVEA. Purchase your T-shirt from your Site Representative! Shirts are on sale until February 12th! Don't wait! Buy one TODAY!



## Features

Astronomy Club

Vergara Lawsuit

Common Core News

TVEA News

Grievances

Elections

NEA/CTA News

## The time is NOW

Years of budget cuts, layoffs, furlough days, increased cost of living (including health benefits)... and the challenges of this year's common core implementation have all taken it's toll on us. We are tired, stressed and our pockets are empty. From the emails I've received, from the comments at networking meetings and social hours and at all the site visits I've been to throughout the year, you have made it very clear that a pay increase is what you want and should be the association's number one priority. We hear you, we hear all of you, and we know an increase in pay benefits our entire membership! Our Bargaining Team made it clear in negotiations last month that it's time for a pay increase. **It's time to adjust our compensation to get it back to where it should be.**

None of us became teachers to get rich. We have a desire to make a difference in student's lives and offer them a rich learning experience. The proposals our Bargaining Team presented the district with, over the course of several negotiations sessions, are about more than money. We have also proposed ways to better take care of our students.

- **Caseload management time for all secondary Special Ed teachers**--to enable sufficient time to monitor and assess student progress and prepare for IEPs and other meetings
- **Improving student : counselor ratios** - to better meet student needs
- **A study group/steering committee consisting of teachers and administrators to address and problem-solve Special Ed issues** - to help take care of our special needs students
- **A competitive salary schedule change for Speech and Language Pathologists** - to recruit and retain the best SLP's to provide the consistent therapy to our students who need their services
- **A more consistent and inclusive stipend schedule** - to recognize the many hours our coaches, grade level and curriculum leaders, drama and band leaders put into programs for students

Our team also proposed language to address the problem of personal days adjacent to a holiday weekend or vacation period.

The Bargaining Team will meet again with the district's team on Feb. 20. We expect to discuss their responses to our proposals, along with next year's plan for class sizes TK-3, which by law must continue to move towards the ration of 24:1. A follow-up meeting is also scheduled for Feb. 26.

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**www.tveducators.org**



**Temecula Valley Educators Association**

# President's Meeting Calendar

(Subject to Change)

## February

3

Site visit to RHES,  
IAC Mtg  
IPD Mtg  
Social Events Mtg

4

School Board Member Meeting  
Site visit to RES  
Mtg with Superintendent  
1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher Network-  
ing  
School Board meeting

5

School Board Member Meeting  
Site visit to BVMS  
Co-Teaching Workshop

6

Meeting with HRD, Exec Board  
Bylaw Revision Meeting

7

Site visit to AES

10

Special Ed Mtg with DO  
Site visit to GOHS  
SDC Preschool Open House  
Organizing Committee Meeting

11

PTSA meeting  
Meeting at VES

12

Leadership Council  
PTA Council Mtg  
Site visit to DMS

13

Site visit to NVES

14

Holiday

17

Holiday

18

Site visit to CHES  
School Board meeting

19

Site Visit to TMS  
3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher Network-  
ing

20

Meeting with HRD  
Site Visit to ARES  
CTA Committee Mtg

21

Site Visit FVES

24

Mediation meetings  
PAC Chair Meeting

25

Site Visit to JES  
Special Ed Committee Meeting

26

Site visit to MMS  
PTA Council Mtg

27

Site visit to LES  
Common Core Steering  
Committee Mtg

28 - March 1

CTA Equity and Human Rights  
Conference



## President's School Board Address Jan. 21, 2014

TVEA members are feeling encouraged by the Governor's Budget Proposal, which indicates funding will increase in all California school districts next year at a higher rate than predicted. Although LCFF won't have the same transforming effect on our district as it will in other districts with more needy students, there will be an increase in money to the district budget.

As you know, there hasn't been an increase in the salary schedules for 8 years, beyond adding the 25<sup>th</sup> step for our most experienced teachers. District employees have experienced an increase each year in costs to health insurance plans, and have lost income they had planned on due to furlough days in recent years. This year has been a particularly challenging work year for all teachers implementing Common Core State Standards, with many more hours invested in getting to know the new standards, planning, finding and sometimes purchasing or creating resources, scoring assessments and using new report cards. Teachers, along with other employee groups, feel strongly that negotiating an increase in compensation this year is a necessity.

The district invited us to attend the recent School Services presentation for school districts, where there were suggestions made like adding counselors to secondary schools to better meet student needs, and we support this idea to decrease the overwhelming caseloads our counselors are facing—some of the highest in the country. We are aware that a portion of the increased money must be dedicated to hiring more elementary teachers to work towards the state ratio of 24:1 for TK through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classrooms, and we support this as one way to better meet the needs of our youngest students.

TVEA is also intrigued by the Governor's idea to make a "rainy day fund" for education, which could help stabilize funding over time, perhaps helping prevent the layoffs and furloughs and program cuts that we've had to face as a district during tough economic years.

We've asked our site reps to start discussions on campuses about ways that additional money can be used to make our school district stronger and offer a better education to our students. As members of the LCAP Advisory, a group of our members have also contributed to discussions related to best helping students succeed who are language learners, come from low-income families, or who are foster kids.

We look forward to more discussions, some in Negotiations, some in formal committees, and some in informal situations with principals and colleagues, as our district funding increases and

we together decide which programs are most valuable and lead to more student success.

## TVEA Receives Communications Awards from CTA

Karen Bost from CTA Presented President Chris Lindberg and Office Manager Lisa Sisco with 2 awards for Communications. This is the first-time TVEA has won a communications award! Our TVEA Advocate won the Newsletters category for Associations with 1000-2999 members and our "30 Days to Advocate for Public Education" campaign in 2012 for Prop 30, Prop 32, and Measure Y. won the award for Communications to Parents or Community.



### Updates on Local Association Agreements

Three local associations have come to agreement on bargaining agreements recently.

1—**Riverside City** extended their school year by 2 days (to 187) for teachers, adding professional development days. They added additional staff meetings to their year. They agreed to a longer work day (currently 7 ½ hours), adding 15 minutes to each work day next year and 15 minutes more the following year (work day will be 8 hours). This time is for individual planning. They received a salary increase of 6%, starting in January (not August—so for about half the year). They will be paid 3.3% more each year, for the next 2 years, with the new work day time requirements. Note that this district had a HUGE reserve and this district will fare well with LCFF.

2- **Alvord** received a 3% salary schedule increase, retro to July 1, 2013. This district will also fare well with LCFF.

3—**San Bernardino City** restored 5 days and added 1.93% back on the salary schedule. They are also getting a 3% raise (retro to Jan. 22).

### How TVEA Keeps up on what's happening with other local associations

TVEA leadership keeps up with bargaining and other local news several ways:

1—The President meets with a small group of local associations (Murrieta, Lake Elsinore, Menifee, and Hemet) and CTA staff regularly for updates.

2—Our CTA staff keeps us informed of developments with other locals through emails and phone calls.

3—Our TVEA President is the chairperson of the Riverside County Coalition of Presidents, a larger organization, which meets regularly to discuss negotiations, county-wide issues, and other association concerns.

4—TVEA's President and State Council Reps meet regularly with their counterparts across Riverside and San Bernardino Counties at San Geronimo Service Center meetings.

5—Our President, Bargaining Chair and Bargaining Team members meet with other Bargaining Teams several times a year for CBC meetings (Collective Bargaining Council) to hear expert analysis and updates from CTA staff who specialize in Negotiations in our region.



### No more CSR - Now it's GSA

We used to talk about CSR (class size reduction), but the new acronym related to smaller class sizes in lower grades per the Governor's Budget Proposal is GSA (Grade Span Adjustment).

### New Preschool Committee Forming

Special Ed Preschool teachers attended an Open House with President Chris Lindberg on Feb. 10<sup>th</sup> and decided to form a new working committee for their concerns. Their first meeting will be Monday, March 10, at 4 pm at the TVEA office. If you are a pre-school teacher and would like to join this committee, email Lisa at lhtvea@verizon.net.



### Hold Harmless Reminder

TVUSD asks employees to sign a "Hold Harmless and Indemnification Agreement" for non-academic activities that they participate in during the school day and on field trips that don't relate to instruction. Students, too, are asked to sign this agreement to participate in non-academic physical activities at school as well (events like "Jump for Heart," staff/student softball games, or end-of-year field trips to swimming pools or amusement parks). Signing these agreements means that you have made the choice to participate "at your own risk" in an activity that is not required as part of your job. It does NOT mean that you have taken on any personal liability for students involved in these activities.

Note that PE instruction is a required course of study in public school, so no "hold harmless" agreement is required for normal PE instruction/activities.

As you plan end-of-year and other non-academic activities for students, bear in mind that some traditional activities can be reconsidered and new traditions created that do not involve a personal risk to you or students.



The Steering Committee met after school on Jan. 23rd to discuss assessments.

- Our last meeting gave direction to all the cohort groups and the groups working on refinement.
- The feedback forms from teachers and administrators (both electronic and paper) gave direction to the “clean-up” teacher groups working reshaping first semester work.
- The feedback from the first meeting also guided / "steered" the content of the strand leader training the district is now implementing. All grade level / course specific ELA and Math teams K - 12 are represented in this training cycle.

- We viewed and added to a flowchart on “Avenues for Feedback and Input.” It will be shared and discussed with all teachers by administrators and at various meetings throughout the district. It outlines where to go with a particular concern; some tasks are the responsibility of the Steering Committee, other tasks must go through the refinement committees, and some concerns must be taken to the site administrator. This will enable all Common Core teachers to send their feedback to the appropriate group that can act on it. (Note we are referring concerns that teachers have shared with us that are specific to “refinement” to those committees working on refinement of resources and assessments at the elementary level--or to secondary curriculum committees.) We encourage you to look at the chart for clarification of where to take a particular Common Core implementation concern.
- We addressed the concern some teachers have had regarding whether feedback has been received (through electronic form or paper forms). We are asking teachers to use the electronic form whenever possible as a reliable and efficient way of providing feedback instantly. A new folder on the google drive will be created at each grade level for Language Arts and Math to save all feedback. “Clean up” teams will communicate after a work day on the progress they’ve made in revisions and how they have utilized the feedback received.
- We addressed the concern that reading levels are not always appropriate on resources and assessments. Future refinement team meetings will address the lexile level/readability of texts chosen for assessments and resources. Teachers will be given a tool for consistently determining reading levels on new resources they are finding to use in the classroom.
- We addressed the concern many teachers have regarding re-testing students on Common Core assessments. Each grade level (PLC) team at elementary schools and each subject (PLC) team at secondary schools will create a policy on re-testing students on Common Core assessments, and then communicate it to parents. (for example: “Math teachers will allow 2 retakes after intervention or make up work has been done” or “5th grade teachers will allow students to retake the writing prompt 1 time before the next unit assessment is given.”) Note that re-testing students on only a portion of a test is often the most appropriate form of re-testing.

Sina Albertoni (2nd grade teacher at TLES), Jenniffer Aynesworth (principal at VHES), Joe Balleweg (ESS), Carleen Cook (5th grade teacher at PVES), Andree Grey (ESS), Marc Horton (principal at GOHS), Karen Hoskins (math teacher at BVMS), Chris Lindberg (TVEA President), Jodi McClay (ESS), Tina Miller (principal at DMS), Kristan Morales (math teacher at CHS), Cara Ramsey (English teacher at TVHS), Breck Smith (Special Ed Assistant Director), Anna Tapley (principal at FVES), Katie Vanderhorst (English teacher at DMS), and Karen Hogan (RSP teacher at BVMS).



## Common Core News

TVEA recommends that you subscribe to the Smarter Balanced bimonthly newsletter. It will bring you regular communication about Smarter Balanced tests and other related news. Send a blank email to the following link:

[subscribe-sbac@mlist.cde.ca.gov](mailto:subscribe-sbac@mlist.cde.ca.gov)

## Now Available: List of State Board of Education-adopted CCSS-aligned K–8 Mathematics Instructional Materials

The California State Board of Education approved the adoption of 30 mathematics programs for kindergarten through grade eight including basic grade-level programs, Algebra 1 programs, and an integrated mathematics 1 program. Local school districts can now begin their own process of reviewing the materials to determine which of the adopted programs best meet the needs of their students. Districts may use some of their CCSS Implementation Funds to purchase the materials.

The adopted programs are on display for public review at Learning Resources Display Centers across the state.

**Want to see some sample resources?** Here are some local sites for the displays (please call ahead for hours):

San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools (Carmen Beck)

4549 Hallmark Parkway, San Bernardino, CA 92407-1834 Phone 909-887-7506 OR

San Diego County Office of Education (Karen Wagner)

5304 Metro Street, Suite C, San Diego, CA 92110 Phone 858-292-3792 OR

University of California, Riverside Rivera Library (Christina Cicchetti)

4301 Watkins Drive, Riverside, CA 92521 Phone 951-827-3715

## ELD Framework and Survey are Available to Review and Comment On

The draft English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework for California Public Schools, K-12 and the online survey have been posted for public review and comment on the [ELA Curriculum Frameworks Web page](#). The draft is not just for ELD specialist teachers! **The draft Framework incorporates and supports the CCSS for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects and the California English Language Development Standards.** We encourage you to review the draft, and then complete the online survey. It allows you to respond to as many or as few of the questions as you choose and to provide comments on the draft chapters. The field review and survey results will be collected and presented to the IQC. The draft ELA/ELD Framework and online survey will be available only through February 13, 2014.

## Recruiting Science Teacher Volunteers

The CDE and the SBE are pleased to announce that they are recruiting applicants for the Curriculum Framework and Evaluation Criteria Committee to assist with the revision of the Science Framework for California Public Schools, K-12. You can access the Science CFCC application on the [Curriculum Frameworks Web page](#).

## Use These Resources!

We're hearing good things about <http://cc.betterlesson.com/>, a new project with over 3,000 CC-aligned lessons. Hundreds of new lessons are being added each week!

[Readworks.org](#) offers teachers the opportunity to search for language arts resources by lexile level and topic ("theme," for instance). There are exciting options here for zero-ing in on texts that are the correct level for a variety of students!

## Virtual Resources

[EdWeb.net](#) offers an online collaborative community where educators can receive information and discuss guidelines and current practices in implementing the Common Core State Standards. Members can be part of free webinars and chats, earn a continuing education certificate, and have access to all of the recorded webinars, presentations, resources and online discussions.

## California's New Statewide Assessment System Renamed

Just when you get to know one acronym, they change it on you! Previously referred to as the California Measurement of Academic Performance and Progress (CalMAPP), California's new statewide student assessment system has been renamed the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP). The CAASPP assessment system encompasses the following required assessments:

- Smarter Balanced system of assessments for mathematics and English–language arts
- California Standards Tests for Science in grades 5, 8, and 10
- California Modified Assessment for Science in grades 5, 8 and 10.
- California Alternate Performance Assessment for Science in grades 5, 8, and 10 for mathematics and English–language arts in grades 2 - 11.

## New CCSS Professional Learning Module Available from the CDE

The California Department of Education's new professional learning module, "The Multi-tiered System of Supports: A Comprehensive Framework for Implementing the California Common Core State Standards," is now available online. This module is part of the CCSS for California Educators series and was developed by the CDE in collaboration with WestEd. The module provides guidance on the systematic integration of instructional supports to support the learning of all students and provides an overview of supports as a framework for designing and organizing system-wide resources, strategies, and practices. For more information, [click here](#).

## Need More Common Core Guidance?

CTA will be presenting "Common Core and Beyond: A Practicum on Literacy and Mathematics Curriculum, Instructional Strategies, and Assessments" at a pre-conference for the Good Teaching Conference in Anaheim March 14. Contact Lisa at [lhtvea@verizon.net](mailto:lhtvea@verizon.net) if you are interested in attending. TVEA can sponsor a limited number of attendees.

The sessions will include topics like Common Core Basics, Common Core Literacy Strategies, Common Core Mathematics, Common Core Assessments, and LCFF. The sessions are designed for all levels of common Core awareness, and include extensive practice for CCSS in the areas of curriculum, literacy strategies, technology, assessments, and performance tasks.

## New Training Tests are Out

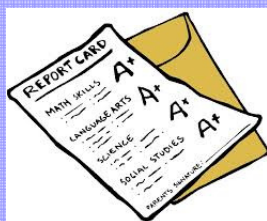
On January 30, Smarter Balanced released a set of Training Tests to provide a means for students and teachers to:

- Quickly become familiar with the features of the Smarter Balanced assessment software interface.
- Experience new item types that do not currently appear on the Practice Tests.
- Preview universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations.

A Training Test is available for each of three grade bands: grades three through five; grades six through eight; and high school. There are six to nine items per grade band per content area (i.e., English language arts and mathematics). The Training Tests contain the same item response types as the Practice Tests, but unlike the Practice Tests, there are no performance tasks or scoring guides for the Training Tests. The Smarter Balanced Training Tests are available [here](#).

### Take our Survey about Common Core Grading and Report Cards

Go to TVEA's website and click on surveys to participate in our survey for teachers regarding grading and report cards. The Common Core Steering Committee will be discussing and taking actions regarding these topics on Feb. 27<sup>th</sup>. We need your input on concerns, what's working, and suggestions on improvements. We thank the many teachers who gave us input on our last topic of discussion, assessments! The survey closes at 4pm on the 25th.



### CTA Special Education Survey

Have you responded to the CTA Survey on Special Education yet? This survey is for General Ed and Special Ed teachers. CTA is surveying members to collect information about how students with disabilities are being provided special education instruction. The information collected will be used to help CTA provide expedient assistance to local leadership and staff.

Go to [www.cta.org/stasped2013](http://www.cta.org/stasped2013) to complete the survey.

## Grievances

**Several grievances have been denied this year based on “timeliness.”** Please note these deadlines, should you feel you need to file a grievance. The countdown begins the day after the event, or “act.” Note that a “day” = a day that the school district is open for business. Timelines are suspended over any official district break longer than 5 days.

You can contact your site rep or the TVEA office for assistance on grievances, but you can also submit a grievance on your own. Forms for grievances are found in Appendix D-1 of the contract. The forms do not go into an employee’s HR file at the district office.

Note that the grievant and immediate supervisor must be present at every step in the process.

**Grievance Step 1**—Within 20 days of the event, meet to problem-solve with your immediate supervisor.

Not solved?

**Grievance Step 2**—Within 20 days of the event (this can happen at the end of that first problem-solving meeting, should the administrator not be able to offer a solution), file a formal written grievance with your immediate supervisor. The district has 10 days to respond.

Not solved?

**Grievance Step 3**—Within 10 days of the district’s response, file a Level III grievance with the Superintendent or designee (in our district, this is usually Henry Voros in HR). The district has 10 days to respond.

Not solved?

**You can request an optional step of mediation.** A trained mediator from PERB (Public Employee Relations Board) meets with both parties to attempt to resolve the grievance.

Not solved?

**Grievance Step 4**—Within 10 days of the mediation decision, file a Level IV grievance with the School Board. In a closed meeting, you may present your case to School Board members. They must render a decision and respond within 20 days of the meeting.

Not solved?

**Grievance Step 5**—This is the final step in the process. Within 10 days of being notified of the School Board’s decision, you may request in writing that TVEA submit the grievance for binding arbitration. The TVEA Executive Board meets to discuss the case, and within 15 days, responds to whether the association will move the grievance forward. The grievance at this point belongs to the association, not the individual. The Exec. Board follows a protocol, with input from a CTA-referred attorney and research done by CTA staff, and vote to decide whether to move onto a legal decision. If the grievance is submitted for arbitration, the cost of the arbitrator is shared between the district and the association. The arbitrator must deliver a decision within 30 days of the hearing. Both parties are legally bound to accept this decision.

TVEA is currently working with the district on a grievance related to subbing during prep time.

## Read Across America Day is March 3!

TVEA has posted some resources on our website to help you make a memorable celebration of Read Across America Day, a holiday begun by teachers’ unions. Take charge of your class’s special day by heading to the TVEA website for pdfs of certificates, bookmarks, and posters. (If you’re close to your copy limit, call our office for assistance in getting some copies made and sent to you!)

TVEA’s also ordered multiple copies of the CTA-recommended books for Read Across America/California Reads this year—email Lisa if you would like a copy sent to your school the week of Feb. 27 or the week of March 3. (The books will then be donated to school libraries.) The PreK/K/1/2 book is called *The Day the Crayons Quit* by Drew Daywalt and the 3/4/5 book is called *Thankyou Mr. Falker* by Patricia Polacco. The Middle school book is *Wonderstruck* by Brian Selznick We hope you’ll find ways to share the books throughout your school!

THANKS, Traci Pawlak, Belissa Guerrero, and Karie Shorack for helping School Board get in the mood for Read Across America Day!



## Who to invite to be a guest reader for Read Across America Day:

Your Custodian  
Front office staff  
Principal  
Community Heroes—fire fighters, police officers, medical professionals, military personnel  
Crossing Guard  
Health Clerk  
Lunch Duty Aides  
PTA volunteers  
Parents or Grandparents of Students  
Whoever is a “celebrity” at your site  
Another teacher—trade classrooms for a readaloud



## TVEA Executive Board Elections

TVEA will be holding its election for the offices of President, First Vice President, Secretary, Upper Elementary School Area Director and Middle School Area Director. Nominations are open to any active unit member of the TVEA. Any unit member can nominate any other eligible unit member, including himself/herself. The term for each office is for two years.

### Candidacy Forms

**Candidacy Forms** for Executive Board are available at the TVEA Office or online at [www.tveducators.org](http://www.tveducators.org). Anyone interested in running for office should file a declaration of candidacy form with the TVEA office no later than 5:00pm on February 21st, 2014. If you have any questions contact the TVEA Office 699-9970

### Election Timeline

February 21st ~ Declaration of Candidacy forms due  
February 24th~ March 12th—Candidates may Campaign  
March 13-19th ~ Voting for TVEA Exec Board/NEA Reps  
March 19th~ Ballots due, Ballots are Counted  
March 20th ~ Election Results Posted  
April 14-17th ~ Run Off Election if Necessary\*  
March 30th ~ Last day to contest Election results\*  
April 28th ~ Last day to contest Run Off Election results\*

### NEA Representative Election

The Local Delegate for NEA Representative Election will run simultaneously with the Executive Board election. The timeline will be the same as the Executive Board Election.

### Summer NEA Representative Assembly Denver, CO July 1 - July 6

The Representative Assembly consists of some 9,000 delegates representing local and state affiliates, student members, retired members, and other segments of the united education profession. It is the primary legislative and policy making body of the Association. Delegates vote by secret ballot on proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws.

Any member may run for local delegate at this time. If you are interested in being a candidate, please visit our website and go to Elections. The Declaration of Candidacy form can be found online.



### Open Position Descriptions

#### President

Duties include; Act as the chief executive officer of the Association and its policy leader; Call and preside at meetings of the Association and the Executive Board; Prepare the agenda for the meetings of the Association; Be familiar with the governance documents of the Association, CTA and NEA; Appoint all Chairpersons and members of committees with the approval of the Executive Board; Suggest policies, plans, and activities for the Association and be held responsible for the progress and work of the Association; Attend meetings of the Service Center Council of which the Association is a part; and Attend other CTA/NEA meetings as directed by the Executive Board.

#### First Vice President

Duties include; Serve as assistant to the President in all duties of the President; Assume the duties of the President in the absence of the President; Be responsible for the information and distribution of the Association's calendar of activities; Serve as coordinator of committee activities at the direction of the President.

#### Secretary

Duties include; Maintain a careful and accurate record of the proceedings of each meeting, regular or special, of the Association and Executive Board; Be responsible for distribution of all notices, agendas, and minutes of meetings to members of the Representative Council, and to the membership when appropriate; Maintain an accurate roster of the membership of the Association and of all committees; Carry on the correspondence pertaining to the affairs of the Association as directed by the President; and Prepare ballots for all elections

#### Area Directors - Upper Elem. School (4/5) - Middle School

Duties include serve on the Executive Board as voting members; Serve on the Leadership Council as non-voting members; and be responsible for coordinating grievance processing at each appropriate elected level; Serve as first contact for teacher issues brought from site leaders at your specific level whenever appropriate.





## Hinrichs Leads Astronomy Club

Dave Hinrichs, science teacher at TMS, has been coaching an astronomy club there for 5 years. "I don't think anyone should grow old without putting their eye to an eyepiece to see the heavens...The farther you look, the more amazing it is," he says about the night sky. The TMS astronomy club is composed of students who learn about the size of stars, the size of galaxies, and the speed of light. All these things fit perfectly into 8<sup>th</sup> grade science standards: chemistry, astronomy, physics, and the scientific method. "It is awe-inspiring for students to get out of the textbook, out of the classroom to spend time with the content that we teach," says Hinrichs. "I love working with middle school students because they are old enough to understand what we see in the universe, and they haven't been exposed to it before."

The astronomy club started off with three 6" Dobsonian telescopes donated from a local AstroCamp. PTSA gave money to the club to fix the telescopes to working order; the optics needed a lot of work. (The organization has been helpful about other expenses that come up from time to time, too.) "The telescopes are basically cardboard tubes on a pivoting and rotating base," described Hinrichs. The telescopes work by reflecting and magnifying light. They are resistant to damage, so kids can handle them, and they can be transported in the teacher's family van for viewing nights.

"I had one parent who was persistent about volunteering and urging me along, Richard Dierking. He was also instrumental in donating equipment and helping us get outfitted. We started doing astronomy nights about 3 years ago, once a month, in a park in Paloma del Sol, away from the city lights. There are 2 times in the lunar cycle that are particularly good for viewing. When the full moon rises in the East, we can watch that happen on the horizon and see the craters in the moon. When the moon is a waxing crescent in the West, only a sliver, the sky is so dark that you can see a lot of the sky, and many stars. So we time our astronomy nights to go with those events." Hinrichs uses charts to figure out the calendar dates for club viewing. Earlier this year they were able to use Peltzer Farms as a venue, far away from the lights of Temecula.

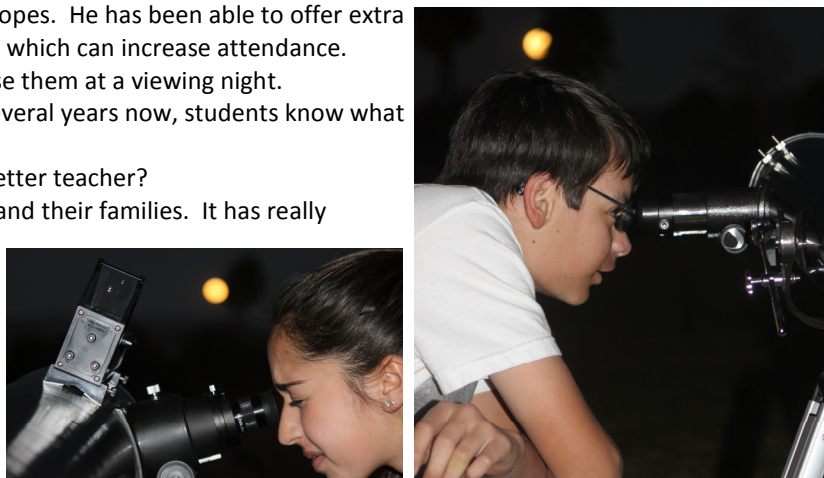
The Temecula Valley Astronomers, a community club, comes to their night viewings sometimes, and other members of the community join in. Hinrichs handles school video announcements at TMS, so he makes sure the events are announced to all students. In December, the group had 200 people at Peltzer Farms, lined up to use 7 telescopes. He has been able to offer extra credit to students who are part of the event and write about it, which can increase attendance.

Sometimes kids bring their own telescopes and learn how to use them at a viewing night.

Since the club has been a solid part of the culture at TMS for several years now, students know what to expect and look forward to the events they sponsor.

How has running the astronomy club helped Hinrichs to be a better teacher?

"I look at kids differently after spending an evening with them and their families. It has really helped build relationships. And seeing kids' reactions in the field has helped me realize how to get students really tuned into learning in the classroom. It would be a shame not to take science out of the classroom."



## Highlights of the CTA State Council meeting January 24-26, 2014

- Council approved CTA's Long Term Strategic Plan--information about the Plan may be obtained at [CTA.org](http://CTA.org)
- Council approved the NEA Board Redistricting Plan. California lost one seat on the NEA Board due to the reduction of the number of teachers in California
- Council approved the Preliminary Report on the 2014-2015 State Council Representation Redistricting Plan. This has been necessitated due to the reduction of the number of teachers in California
- Council approved recommendations for State offices, State Assembly and State Senate candidates.
- Council voted to denounce the Vergara vs State of California lawsuit which threatens educators' professional and due process rights. The trial began January 27th.
- Council authorized up to \$3 million from the CTA Initiative Fund to support CTA's position on initiatives that will be on the 2014 election ballot.
- State Council Committees reviewed the Teacher Evaluation Workgroup draft Introduction and Guiding Principles for teacher preparation and early career support.
- State Council Committees discussed the LCFF and LCAP templates.
- CTA is offering free in-service trainings on AB 1266
- CalSTRS will no longer be mailing hard copies of members' Annual Progress Reports starting in 2014. PLEASE check your report, because if there are errors, you will be liable for any money owed as a result of an audit. YOU are responsible financially even if the district makes a reporting mistake, so check your Annual Report for accuracy!
- Check out [ctaipd.org](http://ctaipd.org) for information about AB 484 and about the Smarter Balanced Field Test

Please check out articles in **California Educator**, [cta.org](http://cta.org), and [ctaipd.org](http://ctaipd.org) for more information about business conducted at State Council and important issues impacting our profession.

## Civic Education Teacher Award Available

NEA co-sponsors an award for the teaching of civics—the American Civic Education Teacher Award. The awards are given annually to elementary and secondary teachers of civics, government and related fields who have demonstrated exceptional expertise, dynamism and creativity in motivating students to learn about Congress, the Constitution, and public policy.

The ACETA program is jointly sponsored by the Center on Congress at Indiana University, the Center for Civic Education, and NEA. Each year the ACETA program selects and showcases three teachers who are doing exemplary work in preparing young people to become informed and engaged citizens. Applicants must be full-time classroom teachers of grades K–12. They are due April 1. More information can be found at this link: <http://new.civiced.org/community/teachers/civic-ed-awards>

## Nominate a Student for a Scholarship!

Kohl's Cares Scholarship Program is open to young volunteers aged 6 to 18 who have made a difference in the community. Students can receive scholarships of \$10,000 or higher. Nominations are being accepted until March 14<sup>th</sup>. For more information, go to [Kohlskids.com](http://Kohlskids.com)

## Eyeglasses are Still Being Collected!

Encourage your students and their families and school staff to be part of the collection process! Our local Lions International "Knights of Sight" program cleans, repairs, and matches prescriptions for those eyeglasses donated to be distributed in our community at a free eye clinic. We'd love to match or beat our record of collecting 400 pairs of eyeglasses last year! Please give any eyeglasses you'd like to donate to your site rep!

## Want a Professional to do your Taxes

H&R Block, the nation's largest tax preparation company, offers a discount to NEA members from January 1 through March 31. NEA Member Benefits offers discounts and special pricing on tax preparation for members through H&R Block. You can redeem the discounts at retail offices or online at [Block LiveSM](http://BlockLiveSM).

- \$15 off tax preparation services
- Special pricing on software and online programs—you can even do your federal return for free!

To find out more, go to <http://www.neamb.com/shopping-discounts/nea-h-and-r-block-discount.htm>

H&R also offers some free advice for educators filing their taxes at: <http://www.neamb.com/finance/dont-miss-these-educator-tax-deductions.htm>

## Sea World Free Annual Pass

Register for a free pass to San Diego's Sea World! Your current credential document # is required, so look it up at <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/> before you head to the [Sea-World pass form](#) to request it.



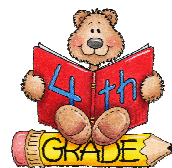
## Office Depot Offers Teacher Extra Rewards Points on Sundays in February

You can get 25% back in rewards points on most classroom supplies this month—Sundays only! Just show (or sign up for) your Star Teacher membership card.

## Temecula Teacher Exchange Helps You Share Resources

Calling all teachers! Are you looking for the perfect resource to add to a new unit of study? Have you switched grades and find yourself with classroom materials that you don't use anymore? Maybe you just need some advice from colleagues in similar circumstances...Then join the **Temecula Teacher Exchange** on Facebook. This group has been created to give teachers an avenue to buy, sell, trade, inform, or request items for their classroom. Join today...and share away!





## Elementary Networking Meetings

Please join us for Grade Level Networking meetings for teachers at all elementary levels!

This month, Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers met at the TVEA office on Feb. 4<sup>th</sup> to share resources and ideas. Their next meeting will be March 4<sup>th</sup>.

3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers are meeting at the TVEA office on February 19<sup>th</sup> to share resources and ideas.

Copying is free and available! All meetings start at 4 pm. Snacks and beverages are served.

If you are unable to attend, but you have resources you'd like to share, send them through inter-district mail to "TVEA" or as attachments to an email to [lhtvea@verizon.net](mailto:lhtvea@verizon.net). We have started binders of resources here at the office that are available to anyone to look over and make copies from.

This is your chance to share your strengths and find out how colleagues are making success happen for students at other sites. You should go home feeling energized, with new ready-to-go resources!

## What is the Vergara lawsuit we've been hearing about?

The Vergara versus State of California lawsuit is currently being heard by the U.S. Supreme Court. It was brought forward by "Students Matter," and funded by wealthy "reformers" (a group of billionaires and special interest corporate groups). Michelle Rhee's Students First and the parent trigger organization, Parent Revolution, are part of the efforts. CTA and the California Federation of Teachers have joined in as defendants in the case.

### What does the lawsuit intend to accomplish?

It will make parts of California Ed Code unconstitutional. Attaining permanent status as a teacher, preserving seniority protections in the lay-off process, and due process steps will all be redefined. These changes could mean new teachers will be harder to recruit and current teachers will worry about job security and protections in due process.

### Why is this a lawsuit instead of a legislative vote or initiative on the ballot?

Those pressing the case are trying to avoid public input on the matter and push an agenda in a way that teachers and the public can't be involved in. But Educational reform and changes are better suited to legislation or ballot referendums, not through the courts.

### What can I do when I read something or hear people asserting the lawsuit will solve problems in education?

Don't allow their claims to be asserted, because they take away the focus from what can really improve education for today's students: better funding for public education to provide necessary resources, smaller class sizes, parental support for all students, and improved teacher training.

### Will this lawsuit help get rid of "bad teachers"?

The lawsuit claims the changes needed to fire bad teachers can only be solved through the courts. Not one teacher in California is guaranteed a job for life because of permanent status in a district. There are current procedures districts can go through to terminate teachers who are ineffective or not meeting professional standards. Due process must be guaranteed in any disciplinary matter, so teachers are not falsely accused.

### How will the lawsuit hurt teachers?

Teachers will lose current protections related to due process, and layoffs could become a subjective process (decisions directed by admin instead of Cal Ed Code). Layoffs because of decreasing enrollment or budget cuts should not be based on favoritism. The lawsuit ignores all research that shows teaching experience contributes to student learning. Studies show that teacher experience enhances teacher effectiveness and increases productivity at all grade levels in reading and in math. Seniority is a more fair way of determining who must be laid off.



# EVENTS

Feb. 5	Co-Teaching Seminar at TVEA
Feb. 6	Executive Board Meeting
Feb. 10	SDC Preschool Open House at Pat and Oscar's
Feb. 10	Organizing Committee Meeting at TVEA
Feb. 12	Leadership Council Meeting
Feb. 14 and 17	No School
Feb. 18	School Board Meeting
Feb. 19	3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , and 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher Networking
Feb. 20	Negotiations Session
Feb. 25	Special Ed Committee Meeting
Feb. 27	Common Core Steering Committee Meeting
Feb. 27	Social Hour TBD
Feb. 28 – Mar 2	CTA Equity & Human Rights Conf in Irvine
March 3	Retirement Open House, Read Across America Day
March 4	School Board Meeting
March 6	Executive Board Meeting
March 10	Preschool Committee Meeting
March 11	Stress-Free Workshop
March 12	Leadership Council Meeting
March 14 – 16	CTA Good Teaching Conference in Anaheim
March 18	Special Ed Committee Meeting
March 18	School Board Meeting
March 20	Bowling
March 22	CTA San Geronio Regional Meeting
March 24 – April 4	Spring Break
March 28 – 30	CTA State Council

## Shouts

A big shout-out goes to the staff of JES, who attended the January School Board meeting to support an amazing first grade teacher being attacked by the media. Tammy Williams, Principal Ami Paradise, and a parent spoke at the meeting. Visitors who intended to speak out at the School Board meeting were caught by surprise, realized they had been misinformed by the media, and had nothing to say after hearing from JES folks!

Chad and Jenny Yates (GOHS) gave up a weekend to attend CTA's Issues Conference. We appreciate their dedication and time.

Thanks, Robin Orner, for hosting our first series of "Grade Level Networking" afternoons at the TVEA office! We hope this program grows as more teachers find out about it!

Thanks, VES folks, for inviting me (Chris) to your January 10-minute meeting!

Thanks, Bob Rollins, for donating the prize of one free CTA conference registration to the association to award to a member!

Thank you to the Organizing Committee for designing and selling T-shirts for our Association.

Thanks to Jeff Kingsberg (CHS) & Dawn Murray-Sibby (TVHS) for visiting many sites for discussions.

Congratulations to Tonia Jackson, who went from "temporary" employee to "permanent"!

## Welcome, New Members!

TVEA welcomes Martha Campbell (GOHS, English Teacher) and Sara Poteet (VRMS Art Teacher) into membership!

## Catastrophic Leave

TTES classified employee Trudi Miller and Special Education Department classified employee Debra Staylor have been approved for catastrophic leave for current medical absences. You can donate "sick leave" hours (up to 2 days' worth) on someone's behalf by filling out the Cat Leave Donation form and submitting it to Payroll. (You must be able to maintain a minimum of 20 days' worth of "sick leave" for yourself.) Site secretaries can provide this form or you can print one from "Forms" on the TVEA website ([www.tveducators.org](http://www.tveducators.org)).

## 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

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### 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

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

### CTA State Council

Mitch Brown

Bob Rollins

Marcia Varner

NEA Delegate

Marcia Varner



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