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Where's Our COLA? (President's Message)

At every site I've visited this year, teachers have participated in animated discussions about the challenges of Common Core implementation. But, at every school site, there have also been teachers who ask the question, "Where's our COLA?" Because this appears to be the first year in a long time that state funding for education isn't forcing budget cuts to districts, TVEA members want to know if they will see an automatic COLA applied to their paychecks. It's been 8 years since the last pay raise for our employee group. Health insurance costs have risen for us, but our pay hasn't gone up at all—and there have been several years that we've taken furlough days, resulting in a direct loss in earnings.

It's a valid question that has been actively discussed and researched by both our Bargaining Team and CTA's Negotiations and Organizational Development Department and local staff. As we've reported before, financial discussions with our district will begin in earnest in January, when both sides of our negotiations table have better information on this year's finances, based on the brand new system of education funding in California.

In past years, the COLA formula fit in more logically with the simpler funding formula based on ADA (average daily attendance). Although our old school budgets had categorical funds, there was validity in aligning a COLA increase from the state to a similar increase in teacher salary.

However, with the state's Local Control Funding Formula, districts and associations are forced to look at COLA differently. The 1.57% figure for 2013/14 cannot be carved out of the budget in a clear way to go directly to salaries. Due to several factors, there is no "standard" across the state for what a fair cost-of-living increase would be for teachers.

- The new ADA funding structure differentiates amounts of money for grade level spans—so each district has unique funding and current cost commitments.

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Feeling Stressed? This Could Help!

TVEA is bringing a CTA workshop to members who have expressed feeling more stress this year than other years. Here's your chance to learn some strategies to help! You can learn to effectively manage stress through lifestyle and behavioral changes.

When? Wednesday, Dec. 4th from 4 pm to 5:30 pm

Where? At TVEA's newly-renovated office, 29377 Rancho California Road, Suite 206

Who? It's for all members, presented by CTA Human Rights Cadre presenters, Chuck Mendoza and Laura Ancira

RSVP? Yes, please rsvp before Nov. 21 to lhtvea@verizon.net

Questions? Call Chris at TVEA, 699-9970 or email tvea@verizon.net

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Temecula Valley Educators Association



Common Core

Here are 3 useful websites for CCSS math topics:

- “Live Binder” is full of math resources, lessons, assessments, and information compiled by a math educator: <http://www.livebinders.com/play/play/187117#anchor>
- “LearnZillion” offers short video clips of lessons for math that can be sorted by grade level and concept: <http://learnzillion.com/lessons>
- “Achieve the Core” features information about CCSS shifts in math, lesson-planning tools, and model lessons (see more info below)

Archived Smarter Balanced Webinar

The webinar from October 10th, titled “What Is Smarter Balanced? What Will Assessment Look Like?” (part of the Secondary Literacy Partnership’s series “Transitioning to the Common Core State Standards: Spotlight on Instruction, Assessment, and Equity”) is archived online at <http://www.schoolsmovingup.net/cs/smu/view/e/5318>. The presentation reviews both California’s vision and the foundation for the new statewide assessment system; provides an overview of the Smarter Balanced system of assessments; and, in a “fact vs. fiction” section, addressed misinformation that has been associated with the Smarter Balanced assessments. The Webinar also presents a variety of Smarter Balanced sample test items and the Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines.

Resources

The California Learning Resource Network (CLRN), a CDE project since 1999, reviews a variety of electronic resources for their alignment to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English language arts and mathematics, as well as California Content Standards for other core subjects. CLRN’s 6,000 Open Educational Resources (OER) may be browsed by subject, type, standard strand, or standard. You can search by specific standards for online courses and resource reviews. Each content review addresses three questions for each of the CCSS: whether the complete standard is taught (and if not, which components are missing), whether there is an opportunity for student practice, and whether students are assessed on the standard. All of CLRN’s resource reviews may be found at <http://clrn.org>. [Achievethecore.org](http://achievethecore.org) has been redesigned with exciting new features and updated with more high-quality CCSS resources. You can now view resources compiled for their specific position, subject, and grade level. On this site you will find lessons, student writing samples, assessment questions, curricular tools, strategies and materials to support all students, and professional development modules and courses. You’ll also find leadership tools including research and background information as well as parent and community resources. All materials are free for you to “steal.” There is also a section on aligning basal textbook resources to CCSS. [Sharemylesson.com](http://sharemylesson.com) runs a webinar on Wednesday nights, 5 pm – 6 pm, offering tips, advice and strategies from trusted Common Core educational experts.

CDE is Recruiting Focus Group Members for Updating the K-12 Science Framework for California Schools

The California Department of Education is recruiting for 5 focus groups to provide input on the upcoming Science Framework. The Science Framework will incorporate and support the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for California, which were adopted by the State Board of Education in September 2013, to reflect current research in science instruction. Curriculum frameworks provide guidance to teachers, administrators, and parents on how a standards-based curriculum is implemented in the classroom. Completed applications are due no later than 3 p.m. on December 2, 2013. Application forms are available on the CDE Science Curriculum Framework Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/sc/cf/>.

Free Digital Content and Courses for Math and Science

[Njctl.org](http://njctl.org), from the Center for Teaching and Learning in New Jersey, offers resources and courses related to Common Core Math and Science—along with pedagogical guidance. Their ideas and resources begin with Pre-K and go all the way to 12th grade (including AP) courses.

Where's Our Cola continued

- There are huge variances in funding between districts based on supplemental and concentration grants for foster children, English language learners, and low-income students. Our district has a low percentage of students in those categories, so we will not be receiving the increases in funding that more needy districts will get.
- TVUSD currently dedicates 87% of its budget to personnel. This is higher than other districts. Financial advisors have concerns about dedicating more than this amount, leaving such a small percentage for all other expenditures.
- Our district, which keeps a very low funding reserve each year, is not in a position to offer the raises that a district sitting with a large amount in reserves could offer.

Districts within a few miles of us will have significant increases in funding that we will not see. We need to be realistic in looking at our district's available resources. No one in leadership at TVEA believes that our hardworking teachers don't deserve a raise. COLA as part of our funding from the state is not the guide to tell us if a raise is possible.

The Bargaining Team members and I have already met with fiscal management to go over specific budget numbers and to share calculations from CTA. The December 15 first interim report will be a very important document as the shift from the old funding process (that currently appears in the projected 13-14 budget) to local control funding will occur with much more accurate numbers. We will keep you posted as we learn more, and ask for your input to guide negotiations.

RACE for the CURE Team Update

Temecula Valley Educators Association members enjoyed our inaugural year in participating in the Susan Komen 15th Annual Race for the Cure. The Temecula Valley Educators team consisted of unit members, families, district personnel, and students. Our team of 77 members (13th in team size out of over 240 participating teams) raised an additional \$1635 toward breast cancer research, surpassing our goal of \$1500.00. It was a fun morning for all involved and we hope to double our participation next year to over 150 team members. TVEA would like to thank all of our donors who committed to individual participants or team donations. A special shout out to our "First Team All-League" of Fundraising All-Stars: Mike Vaez (CHS), Teri Rentner (RES), Vicki Nye (TES), Belisa Guerrero (TES), Ed Sibby (Past President/CTA) and "Player of the Year" Dianne Cox (CHS). The Site Fundraising Award goes to Chaparral High which raised nearly half of the team total, and the Site Participation Award winner is Temecula Elementary School. Each site will receive a framed certificate to place in their school office or lounge. Congratulations and thank you for setting such a positive example to our community.



What You Need to Know about Routine Pregnancy/Maternity Leave

This information is subject to change, and may not include the specific details you need for each individual situation. Your Human Resources Development Techs and Payroll Techs--and the Risk Management department at the District Office can provide more information.

At your site, speak to your principal as early as possible to start making arrangements for a long-term sub in your absence. Advice from HRD and Risk Management:

1. You will need a doctor's note to file with Human Resources when you go off on disability related to your pregnancy. It needs to include dates the doctor says you are disabled and unable to work, and your estimated due date.
2. Leave should be officially requested 20 days before it starts.
3. When you give birth, you need to let HR know, so they can revise disability information.
4. Call Cherise at 951-591-7928 to request insurance forms for the newborn within 30 days of birth.
5. To return to work, you also need to turn in a doctor's release to HR. You can get this note at your 6-week or 8-week post-delivery check-up. If there are complications that require you to stay out longer, you will need to bring HR a new doctor's note advising of such.
6. If you consider extending your leave of absence beyond the standard maternity leave (this would be unpaid leave, based on the Family Medical Leave Act or California Family Rights Act), you need to consider several things:
 - Probationary teachers who take 47 or more days of maternity leave (that means you worked less than 75% of the year) will continue to be probationary teachers the next year
 - Any teachers who take 47 or more days of maternity leave (that means you worked less than 75% of the year) will not advance a salary step the next year
 - STRS does not give you a full year of service credit if you receive any substitute differential pay while you are on a maternity leave or if you take an unpaid leave of absence. You have the option to purchase the time through STRS so that you can have a full year of service credit.
 - Note that FMLA/CFRA benefits (unpaid leave) are only available if you have worked for TVUSD for one year, and you must have worked 1250 hours in that year (calculated at 7 hours) and have not taken any FMLA or CFRA leave during the previous fiscal year.

The district can grant a one-year unpaid leave of absence (LOA) for child-rearing, and this may be renewed for another 12-month period, but this is determined by district needs (scheduling and replacement are considered). Yes, there is paperwork that must be filed with HR to set up any unpaid leave or voluntary disability!

There is no such thing as a paid maternity leave. Your sick/personal necessity days are used to continue your salary at this time. If you use all your sick days, there is a system called "substitute differential pay" that HR can explain to you and set up.

It's important to note that when an employee is eligible for FMLA/CFRA Leave, health insurance benefits are continued for a period of 12 work weeks. (You are still responsible for the monthly employee premium amounts—the amount you see taken out of your paycheck.) Both the federal and the state Leave Laws indicate that--if the employee chooses not to return at the end of their FMLA/CFRA Leave--they are responsible to repay any premium amounts paid by the employer on their behalf.

If you are thinking about or planning to take an LOA after the birth of your baby, it is best to advise HRD of this at the beginning. This allows Payroll and Risk Management to counsel you individually regarding the financial obligations and provide you with factual information so you can make an informed decision.

It is important that you consider the timing of any unpaid leave you take after the birth of your child. TVEA members get the last paycheck of the current school year in June. July's paycheck counts as next year's salary. Teachers who take unpaid time off next year (under CFRA or FMLA) may have to pay back salary that they didn't realize they would have to pay, because it is really from next year's pay. It is important you talk to your Payroll Tech at TVUSD to make financial plans for the time after your official maternity leave ends. After all, you want the money flow to be coming in your direction! Contact your Payroll Technician for additional information.

Last of all, don't forget to contact Lisa, TVEA's office manager, to arrange for continued reduced rate union membership during time off, available for members on unpaid leave. Maintaining your membership means you hold onto important CTA benefits: the Death and Dismemberment Plan, Group Legal Services Program (legal consultations), the Well-Baby Program, Voluntary Life and Disability Insurance Plans from The Standard, discounted California Casualty Auto and Home Insurance policies you may have, and monthly publications. NEA's benefits include life insurance, legal advising, and monthly publications.

Bargaining Report

Hopefully, you've already read details from our Bargaining Team in the update sent out last week. Here's a quick recap:

- We're proposing a Steering Committee that includes classroom teachers to oversee Common Core implementation in our district.
- We're back to using the old evaluation form until the new pilot version can be modified based on input from teachers who have already used it.
- A Kindergarten MOU clarified hours and prep time for K teachers.
- The stipend schedule from our contract is being revised.
- Negotiations regarding finances will most likely happen starting in January when more information is known.

TVEA Office Has Been Renovated!

Our landlord has remodeled, painted, and recarpeted the TVEA office (at no expense to the association), and we have signed a long-term lease to stay at this location. The remodel expands our meeting space and enables new configurations for meetings and trainings. We are excited about our fresh, redecorated space, and we know the difference will be felt when our members meet for professional development opportunities, committee meetings and especially by our site leaders at their monthly meeting, which fills our office with about 60 bodies.



San Gorgonio Leadership Conference

"I attended workshops on "**Organizing for Power**" and "**Teachers and the Law**". Both were well presented and provided insight. Organizing for Power suggested that association leaders need to speak with and mostly listen to their members in the one on one and small group setting to learn what concerns them. From there, leaders go through the process of "discernment" and follow up with surveys to validate and prioritize the issues reported from members. The overarching goal is for the association leadership groups to develop a culture of being both responsive to and leading the membership. Discussion and debate are accepted as part of the culture as members become comfortable sharing ideas. Teachers and the Law discussed many issues regarding computer use and cell phones at school. It may seem like common sense, but many teachers are put in compromising positions when they use their cell phone within the reach of their students or use the school computer for personal use at school or even at home. Use your best professional judgment in all of these situations. - Jeff Kingsberg, (TVEA VP, CHS)

"Was I in my right mind to give up an entire weekend to learn about educational topics? Was it right to discuss with colleagues around our region the "hot topic" of the weekend, Common Core, and learn how other districts are implementing this change? Was I in my right mind to stay in a luxurious hotel with a poolside view and sit on the balcony and look at the stars? I must admit, I think most of the weekend I was in my right mind, as creative ideas were shared in workshops like "**Common Core: iPads, Apps, and the Common Core State Standards for K-12**" or NEA's presentation of "**Social Justice**." In one short weekend, I learned some great teaching strategies, made several new friends, and felt inspired to return to the classroom on Monday. Was I in my right mind to attend The San Gorgonio Service Center Council's Fall Leadership Conference? ABSOLUTELY!!!! And I hope to do it again next year! Thank you, TVEA, for allowing me to attend this year! It was fabulous!" --Annette Cortez (BVMS)

"I was really impressed by the San G conference. The **Common Core sessions** were extremely helpful and clarified why the common core was implemented as well as how to best teach these new requirements. Three important pieces of information I want to share are: There will not be an API score for three years, Math will require more written explanations in their assessments, English will continue to use evidence-based close reading strategies to analyze text. I really encourage our membership and TVEA representatives to attend these CTA-sponsored conferences when possible. The information is awesome and well worth the time." --Chad Yates (GOHS)

"The San Gorgonio Leadership Conference was one of the best I have attended. All of the sessions were informative and interesting. The Common Core sessions gave additional insight beyond what I have learned at TVUSD. Among the topics covered in the CCSS sessions were: **implications of the testing, curricular suggestions, and common core expectations**. The Social Justice session was thought-provoking and enlightening. The **Digital Age session** was a stark reminder of how exposed our lives are in the age of social media and how we need to take precautions when using social media. Overall, the conference was a terrific experience!" --Mitch Brown (NHS)

"I have been asked on several occasions, "What has CTA done for me lately?" My standard reply would be, "They help us with legislation and stuff!" I really did not have a real clear understanding of the "legislation" part until I attended the "**Legislative Update**" seminar put on by Seth Bramble, a CTA legislative advocate. It was eye-opening to hear about all the bills that they support, oppose or watch on our behalf. SB441, a teacher evaluation bill that sought to limit our ability to bargain the topic of evaluations, was just one example of a bill that CTA squashed. So the next time someone asks, "What has CTA done for me lately?"--my response will be, "A lot!!" --Amy Eytchison (TES)

"Going to the Fall Leadership Conference in Palm Springs was a great opportunity to network with other associations and also hear about what other districts are doing. I had the opportunity to attend several presentations --- **Common Core, Member Outreach, Legislative Update and Teaching in the Digital Age** --- and all sessions were interesting and informative. Teaching in the Digital Age offered many helpful reminders and tips on dealing with the challenges of teaching children who are so technologically savvy. There was also very useful information on keeping ourselves safe and aware of the DOs and DON'Ts of networking. It was a very good working weekend." --Belisa Guerrero (TES)

"The San Gorgonio Fall Leadership Conference has me fired up to reach out to members and the community in an effort to help TVUSD provide the best education for our students. In the **Organizing** strand at the conference we learned how to reach out to members through one-on-one meetings and small group settings to assess concerns and the needs of our members. This will be critical in making the most of our collective bargaining power this year and is important to insuring membership feels connected and part of one of the most driving forces of any community, education. Currently the concern for Common Core is great and the need for member input regarding its implementation is even greater. Our new TVEA Organizing Committee looks forward to hearing your concerns and gathering your innovative solutions. We also desire to create opportunities for connecting with all of membership in the very near future." --Dawn Murray-Sibby (TVHS)



“Attending the San Geronio SCC Leadership Conference provided a wealth of information about Common Core State testing and about being an effective TVEA site leader. The most profound opportunity that was recommended was to go to the Smarter Balanced website and actually take the Common Core Practice test. Doing this was an eye-opener! I not only now understand the level of expectations for student responses but I also recognize the students’ need for computer proficiency and word processing skills to complete the tests efficiently. If you haven’t taken the practice test you need to do so. I highly recommend you go to <http://sbac.portal.airast.org/practice-test/> and take the practice test for any grade level listed. You will be astounded, and you’ll walk away with a far better understanding of where we are all headed with the Common Core Assessments. In regards to being a TVEA site leader, I learned that we all need to start having one-on-one short personal and professional meetings with our members. No matter how many members are at your site you can start with just meeting one new member a month or a week. Eventually you will get to know them all. This will be invaluable when it is time for organizing for a common cause within TVEA.” --Cheryl Bryant

Conferences continued on page 11.

English Teacher Plays Music After Hours

Larry Thompson (TVHS) has been an English teacher for 34 years. He started his career in LA Unified School District and moved to Temecula in the early years of TVUSD. For many years, he taught drama, which meant lots of extra hours in the evenings and on the weekends. When he stopped teaching drama, he felt like time opened up for him, and he turned his creative attention to his music. “One day, a few years ago, I kept hearing this blues lick in my head—and a song formed in bits and pieces,” he said. “I realized I had written something. It had never occurred to me that I could do this. That’s when I really started writing songs.”

Thompson has been playing guitar since he was 19—a time of coffeehouses full of acoustic music, and he played regularly. Over the years, he has attended lots of guitar workshops and participated in summer seminars at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, OR—with some of the best guitarists around—purely for his own pleasure. His guitar’s always been in his life, but its role has changed. He’s gone from being a “livingroom player” to being part of the local Temecula music scene, playing at wineries, restaurants, and nightclubs, along with TVHS’s annual event, Empty Bowls.

The way Thompson plays is “finger-style,” and his music fits into the blues and folk genres. “It’s not strumming,” he explained. It’s playing bass and melody at the same time.”

Thompson put together recordings for Tim Moyer a year or two ago, who was looking for quality artists to perform at “open mike” events. Thompson was asked to come down and play, and he had a good set with a good crowd reaction. From there, he’s made recordings, working with Naked Acoustic, Moyer’s company—and his music is available on iTunes. He’s about to begin making a second CD, this one with other musicians (a bass player, a mandolin-player, and a singer who will add harmony).

How many guitars does this musician own? He counted 7. “Two are performance guitars,” he described, “and they’re all set up for utility when I perform. Some I just play at home. I have 3 resonator guitars—made of steel for a very specific sound. Each instrument has a different voice and function.”

One of Thompson’s favorite musical experiences was meeting musician John Sebastian at the West Coast NAMM (National Association of Music Merchants) convention. He was able to share with Sebastian that he’d been the single most important influence for him in making music. “It was great to be able to thank him and tell him he’d made a difference in my life.” (Other musicians who have had a strong influence on him are Mississippi John Hurt, Bob Dylan, Randy Newman, and John Prine.)

Is making music a form of stress relief for Thompson? “Actually, it adds good stress,” he smiled. He added that it has made him a better teacher because “writing songs puts me more in tune with my students’ creative process—working on clarity, communication, and understanding your audience.”

To see Thompson perform, catch his next show on Sunday, Nov. 17th, at 5 PM @ Callaway Winery in Temecula. You can follow him on Facebook and hear clips of his music at:

<https://www.facebook.com/larrythompsonmusic>. Right now 50% of sales from his songs on reverbnation go to the charity “Keep a Child Alive.”



State Council Had Many Highlights in October!

By Mitch Brown (NHS), State Council Rep

Among the highlights of the business conducted at CTA State Council:

- There was a presentation and approval of the CTA Board Redistricting Plan
- There was a presentation of CTA's Long Term Strategic Plan, which will be voted on at a future State Council meeting
- The Special Ed Committee discussed the number of special ed students being pushed into regular ed classes, and the committee has asked all members to take a survey on the impact of the increasing number of special ed in general ed. the survey can be found at: www.cta.org/CTASoeEd2013
- The Credential and Professional Development Committee, on behalf of the Teacher Evaluation Work Group has asked that members take surveys on Teacher Preparation and Support, found at www.cta.org and www.surveymonkey.com/s/teacherevaluationworkgroupsurvey.com
- There was a long discussion on whether or not to support separate single subject credentials for Dance and Theatre...Council voted to oppose the position for single subject credentials
- The Curriculum and Instruction Committee asked on behalf of the State Board of Education that any science teachers wanting to be appointed to the Instructional Quality Commission apply by November 15 at 5pm online at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/cc/ab/index.asp> (See Common Core page for more info on this.)
- The Retirement Committee is following developments on the recently-filed anti-public pension initiative, the Pension Reform Act of 2014
- The Assessment and Testing Committee responded to the 8 principles of the Local Control Accountability Plan template with suggestions for clarification and improvement. They received an update on AB 484. AST discussed Education Secretary Duncan's proposal that would eliminate the 2% rule that allows students with moderate to severe disabilities to be tested with alternative assessments. The elimination of the 2% rule would require all students to take the SBAC assessments.

In addition, a gala dinner was held Saturday evening, with guests from CTA's history and Gov. Brown attending.

Two Members Join Exec Board

Alexa Ingram-Dupart, Political Action Committee Co-Chair. Alexa has been involved with TVEA for the past year and enjoyed being active with the union political campaigns during the fall of 2012. She has been an SLP at LES for 5 years, and previous to that, for 11 years in the Desert near Yucca Valley. She has a fantastic husband and 2 busy boys ages 10 and 7, both in TVUSD schools. She loves to travel and is currently planning a trip to Australia. She was fortunate to be an exchange student in the Canary Islands in Spain and speaks fluent Spanish to this day. Hobbies include: photography, scrap-booking and stamping, swimming and bicycling with the whole family. Her favorite thing to do in the summer is to go camping at the beach.



Jeanine Wulfenstein, Middle School Area Rep. Jeanine has been in education for 14 years, teaching in TVUSD for the last 7. She has taught science in grades 6, 7, & 8 and has been involved in the creation of a S.T.E.A.M Elective (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) at the middle school level. Prior to teaching in Temecula, she taught in Northern California for Dublin Unified School District for 4 years, and in Los Alamitos Unified in Orange County. Before teaching became her career, she worked as an environmental biologist, an accountant, a motion picture script editor at Warner Brothers Studio in Hollywood, and a legal assistant at MGM pictures. She enjoys being involved on the board of CSTA (California Science Teachers Association) in supporting teachers in quality science education. She has 4 children who attend TVUSD schools. When she isn't busy with work and family, she enjoys hiking and being outdoors.



6/5 Grievance Solved!

Teachers at GOHS filed a grievance last month related to payment for 6/5 assignments (teaching a 6th class instead of having a prep period), and were successful in coming to an agreement. Chad Yates, High School Area Rep, collected 25 signatures of teachers affected, put together talking points in support of the grievance, and presented the grievance to GOHS co-principals. TVEA President, Chris Lindberg, met with HRD and Business Services assistant superintendents and worked with them to come up with a plan that met both teacher and fiscal needs. Meanwhile, the Bargaining Team also discussed the problem in Negotiations. As a result of the agreement, teachers on 6/5 assignments who were absent earlier this year (for school business, illness, or personal reasons) will receive a stipend for those periods they were not paid for previously, and moving forward, the district will not subtract any pay when a teacher with a 6/5 assignment is absent.

CTA and NEA Board Members Visit Leadership Council Meetings

Kendall Vaught, CTA Board of Directors for our area, visited our Leadership Council meeting in September to discuss her role representing members at statewide meetings. Kendall has been an advocate for issues in our region and has been a vital part of planning for many CTA conferences, political campaigns, and programs (like Read Across America).

Eric Padgett, NEA Board of Directors for our area, visited our Leadership Council meeting in October to discuss national legislation related to education, the NEA fund, and his role in the structure of NEA representing members. The NEA fund is a national voluntary payroll donation program that funds national political campaigns for candidates and issues. He reminded teachers that NEA is now matching Donors choose fundraising up to \$250 per TVEA member. He also shared information about the grants for NEA Great Public Schools, which are being funded by the \$3 annual increase in dues this year from NEA.

Dick Gale, CTA's Institute for Teaching Director, Visited with Site Reps

At our October site rep meeting, Dick Gale shared information about projects that IFT sponsors across our state, including the "Solar for Success" program run by teacher Blaine Boyer (RVHS). IFT awards grants to teachers who put together plans that focus on student strengths, and sponsors several "think tanks" in California to discuss issues in education. He encouraged site leaders to share with members that there are opportunities they can apply for to fund projects based on IFT goals. Dick is a former TVEA president. For more information, go to ctaift.org.

All Members are Invited to Participate in CTA's Statewide Education Survey on Special Education

CTA is running a short online survey to collect information from all educators about how students with disabilities are being provided special education instruction. Please respond to the email TVEA sent you regarding this—it provides the "click" to get you to the survey.

TVEA Welcomes New Members

TVEA welcomes 2 new teachers this month to our membership:

Amie Charney (CHS)—English

Karen Martin (VRMS)—Language Arts and English Language Development

CTA Issues Conference Coming Up Jan. 17 – 19

The CTA statewide committee planning the Issues Conference has announced that first-time conference-goers will not have to pay the registration fee for the conference. This may enable TVEA to sponsor more attendees (paying for hotel stay and transportation to Las Vegas). The conference carries the theme: "Be the Change—Our Voice, Our Union, Our Profession!" Please contact Lisa at lhtvea@verizon.net by Dec. 4th if you are interested in attending.

Nominate a Leader in Human Rights/Civil Rights!

You can nominate exemplary individuals, schools, and organizations for NEA Human and Civil Rights awards. Information is available at <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/GeneralNominationApplication.pdf>. The application process involves sending supporting materials to NEA, post-marked by Dec. 10th. There are 12 award categories, including: students active in civil rights fight; following in the footsteps of Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, Reg Weaver (former NEA President) or Cesar Chavez; and making an impact on communities of Hispanics, Asians and Pacific Islanders, Blacks, Women, and others facing discrimination.

TVEA Eyeglass Collection for Lion Club Begins this Month

Last month, we told you about the great impact members made last year in collecting eyeglasses for the community, working through the Lions International "Knights of Sight" program. This month our collection of glasses starts in earnest. Your site rep will have an envelope in which you can deposit glasses that TVEA will collect to give to the Lions. Yes, you can share this project with classified and administrative staff—and the students and families you work with!

American Fidelity Visiting Campuses

American Fidelity continues to visit campuses this month, allowing substitutes to fill in for teachers, during brief meetings with agents to set up 125 plans and sign teachers up for disability and other supplemental insurance policies. We encourage you to take advantage of the opportunity to meet with an agent and discuss your needs.

TVEA's Professional Development Survey Guides IPD Team to Offer Workshops that Members Need

Thanks to everyone who responded to the survey in September about professional development needs! 421 members shared their interests and professional needs in a variety of topics, and our Instruction Professional Development Committee is responding by scheduling free workshops and seminars. Respondents who said they are interested in joining a TVEA committee will be contacted by committee chairs in November and December.

80% of those who replied said they are open to after-school workshops, and 55% said they would come to Saturday workshops. The IPD team will focus on after-school workshops to meet the preference of most members, probably running a "marathon" TVEA Good Teaching Conference "serial-style," for about 2 weeks in January, when we'll offer workshops on a variety of topics that our survey identified. Some TVUSD teachers have indicated they are willing to present a workshop in an area of expertise. We'll fill you in more in December about the schedule we're working on for this.

Workshop ideas that had a lot of interest:

- Anything Common Core-related
- Whole Brain Teaching
- Gen Ed Training on Working with Mainstreamed Special Ed Students
- Technology (see last page for a CTA-sponsored class later this month!)
- Differentiated Instruction
- Classroom Management that addresses changes in instruction related to Common Core
- Stress Reduction
- Bullying
- National Board Certification

Members also noted a need for more training on Pinnacle, and the District has already responded to this.

Here's information on retirement (STRS) and CTA/NEA Member Benefits workshops:

- In October, a CalSTRS "Fundamentals" workshop was held at our TVEA office. The district has arranged 2 more CalSTRS workshops on different topics (including "Retirement Check-up"—which many members requested) later this school year. We encourage members close to retirement to make appointments to go over individual needs with a counselor, and use the tools on-line that give very good estimates of what payments will be in retirement.
- The most popular CTA or NEA workshops chosen were "Will I be able to retire...or am I going to die at my desk?" and the "Importance of supplementing your retirement with 403(b) and 457 plans." It sounds like people need help in planning ahead! We're requesting a combined workshop on these topics in the near future.

85% of those who responded to the survey would like to attend district-wide meetings for grade levels or subject areas. Watch for an initial meeting for each grade level or subject area, starting in January!

57% are interested in a materials exchange, which we will try to coordinate towards the end of the school year. We hope this will be especially helpful for those changing grades!

Apply for a Grant or Scholarship to Promote Understanding, Respect, and Safety

You can apply for a Guy DeRosa "Safety in Schools" grant (up to \$2000) to support projects and presentations that make public schools safer for GLBT students. Applicants must be CTA members, students sponsored by CTA members, or districts sponsored by CTA members.

You can apply for a "Safety in Schools" scholarship (up to \$2000) to help pay for a teacher/counseling credential or graduate program. Applicants must be CTA members who address experiences and personal philosophy, and how it benefits the GLBT public school community in an essay as part of the application. Nov. 20 is the deadline for both opportunities. You can apply by going to <http://www.cta.org/en/About-CTA/CTA-Foundation/Scholarships.aspx>.

Guy DeRosa was a CTA member and educator who was an advocate for civil and human rights, particularly GLBT rights.

Conferences Continued

“Have you ever typed a text message to a friend or loved one and your "smartphone" auto-corrects a word or phrase to something ridiculous, silly, or even inappropriate? Some of those auto-corrections make for funny reading when it hasn't happened to you! In this technological age it is easier and faster to communicate via text messaging and email, but what are we really saying? At the conference I attended sessions that addressed 2 very important issues regarding digital communication: 1) tone and 2) the legality of using district email. I can summarize by saying it is nearly impossible to relay tone in an email or text with 100% accuracy, so we should limit response length and revert to phone calls or in-person communication. Also, all digital communication via the district server is not ours—it belongs to the school district. Knowing our district's internet/server usage policy and enforcing it on yourself can save you from trouble in a variety of ways.” --Sarah Cisneros

“Stress Management: Stress provides growth! Stress is always an indicator of growth. There will be stress in our jobs, but we have a lot to say on how we will be affected by it. If you look at a situation differently, you may experience a different reaction. Putting a positive “spin” on something, or even choosing a positive facial expression, can positively impact how you and others around you feel.

Elections: CTA has clearly defined how elections are to occur. Time lines, distribution of elections materials, collection of elections materials, and counting ballots are well regulated. Local chapters have bylaws which also need to be followed. The only things that are secret about elections are the ballots!

Safe Schools: Safe Schools start with a Comprehensive School Safety Plan. The plan should outline disaster procedures as well as prevention and intervention strategies for concerns from bullying, gangs, internet safety, to campus security. If you see something, say something!

Tech Tools for Common Core: There are a plethora of websites and apps that teachers can use in teaching common core. There are so many, it may be frustrating to think you are not keeping up with all of them. A suggestion is to find one or two to implement, use them regularly until they are part of your repertoire, then add one or two more.” -Traci Pawlak

Know Your Contract--Articles 7, 8, and 9

Article 7 deals with salary and compensation, and refers to the appendixes that detail salary schedules for different certificated employees.

It stipulates that the district pays \$743.50 monthly towards health benefits to each full-time employee-- and that employees pay any additional costs for health insurance, including vision and dental.

The composition and purpose of the Insurance Advisory Committee is explained.

Death Benefits: The district buys \$25,000 in term life insurance for each full-time employee. If a member dies, the surviving spouse and/or dependent children shall be eligible to receive fully paid health, vision, and dental benefits for 6 months.

Article 8 is about reimbursement by the district for mileage. If a member is required to use his or her own automobiles in the performance of duties, or if a member is assigned to more than one school a day, he or she shall be reimbursed for all such travel at the standard IRS computation rate. (This is currently \$.565/mile.) If requested to use one's personal car for a field trip or other district business, reimbursement benefits will be provided.

Article 9 states that the district promotes individual professional development. To advance on the salary scale, fill out the form in Appendix F and submit to your administrator and then to HRD to get courses pre-approved. If denied, you can appeal through the Professional Growth Committee. You must receive a “C” or “Pass” grade for any credits to qualify. Courses must meet parameters for Content Areas, Enrichment Areas, Methodological Areas, or Effective Areas Of Interpersonal Relation, and 6 of the 15 credits needed for column advancement must be taken from the following:: Reading Strategies, Math, Technology, CLAD/SDAIE/BCLAD, Writing (Writing Strategies), Teaching Special Needs Students, Classroom Management and content specific to teaching assignment.

EVENTS



Upcoming Events

Nov. 7	Executive Board Meeting
Nov. 8 – 9	CTA Ethnic Minority Leadership Development Event
Nov. 11	No School
Nov. 12	School Board Meeting
Nov. 13	Leadership Council Meeting
Nov. 14	Negotiations Meeting
Nov. 16	Murrieta CTA Workshop--Advocating for Special Education
Nov. 21	Negotiations Meeting (Day)
Nov. 21	Special Ed Committee Meeting (after school)
Nov. 21	Murrieta CTA Workshop Tools for Tech
Nov. 25 – 29	No School/Thanksgiving Break
Dec. 5	Executive Board Meeting
Dec. 9	Organizing Committee Meeting
Dec. 10	School Board Meeting
Dec. 11	Leadership Council Meeting
Dec. 21 – Jan. 5	Winter Break/No School

Shout Out!

- Thanks to the fine folks who dedicated their week-end Oct. 11 – 13 to attending the San Geronio CTA Leadership Conference: Dawn Murray-Sibby, Lisa Hudson, Bob Rollins, Belisa Guerrero, Annette Cortese, Traci Pawlak, Jeff Kingsberg, Amy Eytchison, Sarah Cisneros, Mitch Brown, Cheryl Bryant, Mark Harnetiaux, Chad Yates, Karie Shorak, and Chris Lindberg.
- A successful Astro Camp Weekend in the mountains was held a couple weekends ago where dedicated teachers, Frank Bantle, Rob Dreibelbis, Leanne Cornwell and Patti-Jo Picinich camped with Vail's 5th graders.

Changes on Executive Board

There are 3 exciting new changes to TVEA's Executive Board!

- Robin Orner (LES), former PAC Co-Chair, has moved over to chairing our Instruction and Professional Development Committee.
- Alexa Ingram-Dupart (LES) has moved up to co-chairing PAC.
- Jeannine Wulfenstein (GMS) has taken on the Middle School Area Rep position, previously held by Heather Polk (GMS).

These changes were approved by both Executive Board and Leadership Council at the October meetings.

Catastrophic Leave

Gayle Trout (CHS), an English teacher, is currently on a medical absence and needs "sick leave" contributions. **Mau-reen Weeks** (TVHS), a classified employee, is also on a medical absence, and needs time donated. Any TVUSD employees (classified, certificated and administrative) may donate "sick leave" hours on their behalf by filling out the Catastrophic Leave Donation form and submitting it to Payroll. A donor may donate up to a maximum of 2 days' worth from his or her own "sick leave" bank, and a donor must be able to maintain a minimum of 20 days' worth of "sick leave" for himself or herself. The form is available from site secretaries or on the tveducators.org website under "Forms."

TVEA is on Facebook!

Please "like" [TVEA-Temecula Valley Educators Association](https://www.facebook.com/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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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

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





This is how sharing technology tools works.

Come to an interactive session where the trainers and participants will share strategies, gadgets, apps, and resources to increase effectiveness, enhance classroom practice and assist with common core instruction.

All experience levels welcome.



CTA CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Murrieta RRC ~ 4:00 - 5:30

25114 Jefferson Avenue, Suite D

RSVP: tdulak@cta.org

(951) 461-2183

If you have a tablet, a laptop or iPad, bring them with you and use them during our session. There will be free wifi in our meeting room