



focus

On educators

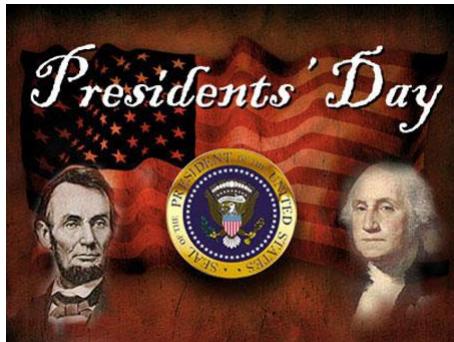
focus on educators is an award-winning publication of the Pittsburg Education Association/CTA/NEA www.peateachers.org

California Teachers Association

Statement of Mission

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

FEBRUARY 2020



Volume XXVIII, Number 6

President's Message

LET'S PUT SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES FIRST!

Once again, we are going into mediation/arbitration with the district over a past due contract. I can't believe this is happening for the THIRD time. As I have said last Fall and I will say going into Spring...THIS IS NOT NORMAL. Many of you fairly new teachers have only known bargaining in this way as this is how we have been bargaining

under Superintendent Schultz. It makes for a feeling of unease to once again need to rally and protest at school board meetings. In all my years of teaching here....25...I have never had a Superintendent willing to put us into this state so many times. You would think that she would want her teachers to not have to fret over such things but it looks like she is not bothered by it. She is the person to not only look out for the best interests of our wonderful students but she is also supposed to look out for the best interests of her team of fabulous teachers. She has fallen short on that part of her job. Part of my job is to make sure teachers have the best contract we can have and to support teachers in as many ways as I can...including their benefits, working conditions and

pay. It would be wonderful to be a destination district like the Linda Rondeau days. We had such a competitive package and such good working conditions people left their district to come here. Now we have so many leaving to go where conditions are better. I hope you can attend one of our rallies and possibly one of our school board shutdowns. Unfortunately, these activities seem to be the only thing that works for a very vanity centered Superintendent. Perhaps she will move on to greener pastures and we will get a Superintendent who not only cares about the students but cares and wants to work with their teachers as well. May this be the last time we have to do this protesting kinda stuff.



Wag More, Bark Less!

Chris Coan, PEA President

PEA Leadership 2019-2020

Executive Board Officers

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Chris Coan – PEA Office

Elementary Vice President

Jessica Maran-Phakonkham – Los Medanos

Secondary Vice President

Nyssa Ton – Black Diamond

Secretary

Nicole Glassel – Los Medanos

Treasurer

Shelly Bascomb – Rancho Medanos

Committee Chairs:

Grievance Committee

Jill Wery – Pittsburg High

Chris Coan – Willow Cove

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Andrea McKinney – Chair – Black Diamond

Jeff Greco – Rancho Medanos

Micaela Gomez - Willow Cove

Celia Medina-Owens - Foothill

Alicia Puzak – Pittsburg High

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Mark Maselli – Hillview

Elections Chair

Nyssa Ton

Equity & Human Rights Chair

Rachel Foster – Foothill

LGBTQ Chair

Marissa Young-Padilla - Parkside

Organizing Chair

Laura Silva - Parkside

Political Action Chair

Tanya Leyden – Parkside

Preschool Committee Advisor

Virginia McGary – Willow Cove

Special Education Chairs

Cookie Freeman – Pittsburg High

Varan Garro – Marina Vista

Claudia Mejia – Foothill

Technical Editor

Susan Harrison – PEA Office Administrator

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Pittsburg Education Association CTA/NEA

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Rep. Council Meeting Calendar (Tuesdays)

February 18

March 17

April 21

May 19

School Board Meeting Calendar

February 12 & 26

March 11 & 25

April 8 & 22

May 6 & 27

June 10 & 24

Are You Getting Your PEA Information?

Having our Site Reps collect your input, attend the monthly Rep meeting and then report back to you is vital in the communication chain of our Association.

Roll call at last January Rep Council Meeting:

Adult Ed. – present	MLK Jr. – present
Black Diamond – present	North Campus – absent
Foothill – present	Parkside – present
Heights – present	PHS - present
Highlands – present	Rancho Medanos – absent
Hillview – present	Stoneman – present
Los Medanos – present	Willow Cove – present
Marina Vista – present	



REMINDER: Please send PEA any updated information such as: change of home address; home email; school site change; name change; etc., so we have your correct information! Thank you!

Upcoming CTA Conferences 2019-2020



Good Teaching Conference (North)

February 7-9, 2020

Fairmont Hotel, San Jose, CA

New Educator Weekend (North)

February 21-23

Marriott Hotel, Santa Clara, CA

Equity & Human Rights Conference

February 28-March 1, 2020

Marriott, Irvine, CA

ALCOSTA Events

School Board Breakfast

May 22, 2020

Double Tree Hilton, Pleasanton, CA

Superintendent's Roundtable

When: May 26, 2020

Where: PUSD School Board Meeting Room

Time: 3:30-4:30 PM

Every teacher is invited to come and ask questions and make inquiries. No rsvp is necessary.

Superintendent Schulze will be present.

Need a Grant?

Apply for the NEA Foundation's \$2,000 and \$5,000 grants for individuals and teams of education professionals to support instructional practice or professional development across all subject areas and grade levels. The application deadlines are **February 1, 2020**, and **June 1, 2020**.

Find more resources and programs at neafoundation.org.

Read Across Pittsburg is March 3rd



We are seeking volunteers to read at various preschool and Head Start locations around Pittsburg! Slots are available!

If you're interested in reading to our future students, please e-mail Jessica Maran-Phakonkham at jessicamaran@yahoo.com

by **FRIDAY FEBRUARY 21** to sign up!

The Six Attributes of Courage

Courage is something that everybody wants - an attribute of good character that makes us worthy of respect. From the Bible to fairy tales; ancient myths to Hollywood movies, our culture is rich with exemplary tales of bravery and self-sacrifice for the greater good. From the cowardly lion in *The Wizard of Oz* who finds the courage to face the witch, to David battling Goliath in the Bible, to *Star Wars* and *Harry Potter*, children are raised on a diet of heroic and inspirational tales.

Yet courage is not just physical bravery. History books tell colorful tales of social activists, such as Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela, who chose to speak out against injustice at great personal risk. Entrepreneurs such as Steve Jobs and Walt Disney, who took financial risks to follow their dreams and innovate are like modern-day knights, exemplifying the rewards and public accolades that courage can bring. There are different types of courage, ranging from physical strength and endurance to mental stamina and innovation. The below quotes demonstrate six different ways in which we define courage. Which are most relevant to you?

1. Feeling Fear Yet Choosing to Act

"Bran thought about it. 'Can a man still be brave if he's afraid?' 'That is the only time a man can be brave,' his father told him." - George R.R. Martin, A Game of Thrones

Fear and Courage are brothers. - Proverb

I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does

not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear - Nelson Mandela

There is no living thing that is not afraid when it faces danger. The true courage is in facing danger when you are afraid. - L. Frank Baum, *The Wizard of Oz*

Being terrified but going ahead and doing what must be done - that's courage. The one who feels no fear is a fool, and the one who lets fear rule him is a coward. - Piers Anthony

Courage is about doing what you are afraid to do. There can be no courage unless you're scared. Have the courage to act instead of react. - Oliver Wendell Holmes

2. Following Your Heart

"Passion is what drives us crazy, what makes us do extraordinary things, to discover, to challenge ourselves. Passion is and should always be the heart of courage." - Midori Komatsu

And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary." - Steve Jobs, Stanford commencement speech, June 2005

To dare is to lose one's footing momentarily. To not dare is to lose oneself. - Soren Kierkegaard

"It takes courage...to endure the sharp pains of self-discovery rather than choose to take the dull pain of unconsciousness that would last the rest of our lives." - Marianne Williamson, "Return to Love: Reflections on the Principles of 'A Course in Miracles'"

3. Persevering in the Face of Adversity

When we are afraid, we ought not to occupy ourselves with endeavoring to prove that there is no danger but in strengthening ourselves to go on in spite of the danger. - Mark Rutherford

A hero is no braver than an ordinary man, but he is braver five minutes longer. - Ralph Waldo Emerson

Most of our obstacles would melt away if, instead of cowering before them, we should make up our minds to walk boldly through them. - Orison Swett Marden

Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the little voice at the end of the day that says I'll try again tomorrow. - Mary Anne Radmacher

"Go back?" he thought. "No good at all! Go sideways? Impossible! Go forward? Only thing to do! On we go!" So up he got, and trotted along with his little sword held in front of him and one hand feeling the wall, and his heart all of a patter and pitter. - J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*

"It's not the size of the dog in the fight, it's the size of the fight in the dog." - Mark Twain

CTA NEWS

Detailed information for all the scholarships can be found at cta.org/scholarships



Cesar E. Chavez Memorial Education Awards Program

This awards program provides recognition for educators and their students who demonstrate an understanding of the vision and guiding principles by which César Chávez lived his life. The recipients, both students and sponsoring CTA members, will receive up to \$550 (exact amount will be determined by the Awards committee). Their work will be recognized by posting visual art and written essays online and in various CTA publications.

Deadline: **March 6, 2020** | Award Amount: up to \$550.

Know Your Rights and Wrongs!

By Chris Coan, Grievance Chair

Social Networking: Teachers are held to a higher standard than most other employees.

- A. Posting on Facebook, Twitter, Craig's List, Blogspot, etc. are NOT private or confidential. Students or their parents may see them, and any recipient (even a so-called friend) may disclose your postings to the District or to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Be very careful what you say, show, or tag about yourself, students, administrators, and colleagues. **Advice:** create a separate FB page for your professional self; if you "friend" students on your regular FB page, put them on limited profile with privacy settings at their highest level; only friend, and accept as friends, people you know; change privacy settings so only friends can see your page.
- B. You may be subject to disciplinary action by the school district and /or the Commission on Teacher Credentialing if postings are inappropriate, even when

the entries were not made during work time. However, online postings related to employees' shared concerns about the terms and conditions of employment, including supervisors' actions, should be considered protected, concerted activity for which the employee cannot be subject to discipline.

Work-Time is Work-Time

During work time, do not use your cell phone or computer, and do not socialize with colleagues. You have a duty to supervise students. You can be sued for failing to supervise or for providing inadequate supervision.

The Power of the Grievance...The Assertive Grievance

- Grievances protect an established practice in the workplace and/or set precedent to get an established practice into written policy
- Grieve rules/policy that an employee is held to and if it is not in the contract it does not mean that an issue can't be grieved
- It is important to be consistent and proactive
- Educate members on established/past practice

10 Rules for Successful Grievance Writing

- Keep the text short and sweet
- Stay to the basic facts of the situation
- Do not limit it to contract language
- Allow for reasonable time to respond within contractual guidelines
- When requesting information or asking questions start with a week turnaround - then specify 2 days - 24 hours and if no response an ULP
- Don't limit the desired remedy - be open to different solutions
- Communication is key - Involve and update those involved as well as the group as a whole when appropriate to allow for all member support and involvement.
-
- If you need assistance in starting/writing a grievance, I am happy to help. Contact me at president@peateachers.org I can handle the grievance, but you also can handle it and I can help.

*Chris Coan
PEA President & Grievance Chair*

THE VALUE OF UNION MEMBERSHIP

1. For Public Education

- Belonging to California's leading education organization
- Unity and collective action as tools for better contracts for educators/students
- Communications and political advocacy to be informed and involved
- A voice in your chapter's agenda, such as a voting for contracts/officers or even holding elected office in your local chapter

2. For Your Career

- Professional development
- Certification guidance
- CTA conferences and trainings
- National Board Certification
- Special education training

3. For Your Rights

- Legal representation
- Access to educator rights experts
- \$1 million in work-related liability insurance

4. For Your Wallet

- CTA/NEA Member Benefits and discounts

Resources and Ideas for New and All Educators I Learned at the NEW Educator Weekend ☺

By Maggie Mason, Stoneman Elementary

- ❖ Ron Clark Academy: 55 Essential is a great book resource for dealing with behavior in the classroom
- ❖ Average teacher loses 5-7 hrs./wk. to low level behavior (insignificant things such as pencil tapping)
- ❖ GOOD MANAGEMENT= GOOD TEACHING
- ❖ Building relationships are the most important factor in classroom management
- ❖ Build relationships by connecting with students and their families and being self-reflective
- ❖ Teaching behavioral expectations is JUST AS important as teaching academics
- ❖ Behavior has to be systematically taught and thorough- take the 1st 6 weeks and 20% of teaching time
- ❖ Shout outs- When a student shouts out... teachers can respond by saying
 - Nevertheless
 - You could be right, but
 - Maybe so,
 - I'm sorry..., but
 - We have to _____

After responding with one of these, continue teaching, then follow up with that one student after at a later time.

These are all great diffusers because it gets the kids back on track and show you are not going to waste the rest of the classes' time.

- ❖ Refocus strategy
 - Buddy classroom
 - Don't give warnings
 - After numerous redirections, send to refocus
 - No punishment
 - No office visits
 - No phone call home
 - Can be for something small (ex. Shout outs)
 - Pair with a worksheet
 - 2-10 strategy is a strategy that can reteach wanted behavior at recess as punishment but students don't know it's a "punishment"
 - Keep student (more likely will be for Tier 3 students) in during morning recess for 10 minutes 2 days in a row. Take this time to find

out their interests, build rapport, and reteach the wanted behavior. Then dismiss them to recess so they don't miss their whole recess. (Since the conference, I've done this with two students and it worked like magic!)

- For any kid
- ❖ Schools and Communities First and what it will do for schools and communities
- ❖ Be THOROUGH about classroom procedures (can't say this enough)
 - Procedures are ALWAYS your goal
 - ALWAYS give kiddos a rationale
 - Teach in classroom, practice outside, practice the opposite yourself (This was very interesting to know because I've always been encouraged to have the students model the opposite, but I learned the teacher should model the opposite and students should always model the desired procedure)
- ❖ CTA offers amazing benefits and you can access all benefits through the www.ctamemberbenefits.org website and has a digital magazine available at californiaeducator.org
- ❖ CTA also offers way better retirement plans than many companies out there (Another thing I wish I would've known this before I signed up for my plan. will be changing ASAP)
 - Learned if there is someone offering pizza or coming to campus trying to sign teachers up for a retirement/savings plan...DON'T DO IT! They get commission to sign you up for a bad plan and you end up being taxed or being stuck in the plan.
- ❖ California is 45th in the state for identifying kids with disabilities ☹
- ❖ Self-care is NOT selfish, it is SURVIVAL
- ❖ 17% teachers quit every year due to feeling inadequate and negative emotions
- ❖ CBA: Collective Bargaining Association- district and local have to agree (doesn't apply to every state)
- ❖ Learned where to find contract and information about leaves, hours, salary, transfers, grievances, transfers, progressive discipline, health benefits, class sizes, and evaluations

Thank you for allowing me to go to the preconference. I learned this information in just 3 sessions and got so much information I wish I would've learned my first year! ☺

Union Code of Conduct

- ✓ I will not criticize any union colleague except to the individual directly.
- ✓ If any union colleague is being criticized in my presence, I will confront the criticism and ask that it stop.
- ✓ I will not participate in any conversation with management that criticizes, or negatively speculates about, any union colleague.
- ✓ I will settle my differences with colleagues within my union.
- ✓ I will engage in debate, offer others every opportunity for debate and respect minority viewpoints, but I will observe and support the majority mandate of my union.

PEA UNITY ACTION

WEAR YOUR PEA SHIRT EVERY WEDNESDAY!

“Hire the best. Pay them fairly. Communicate frequently. Provide challenges and rewards. Believe in them. Get out of their way and they’ll knock your socks off.”



Calendar

February 2020

- 4 PEA Executive Board - PEA Office - 159 East 4th St. - 3:45 PM
- 7-9 Good Teaching Conference - Fairmont Hotel - San Jose, CA
- 12 PUSD School Board Meeting - 2000 Railroad Ave. - 6:30 PM
- 14 Valentine's Day
- 14 Lincoln's Day - No School
- 17 Presidents' Day - No school
- 18 PEA Rep Council - PEA Office - 159 East 4th St. - 3:45 PM
- 18 Gen. Membership Mtg. - PEA Office - 159 East 4th St. - 4:00 PM
- 18 Exec. Board & NEA-RA Candidacy forms due
- 21-23 New Educator Weekend - Marriott Hotel - Santa Clara, CA
- 26 PUSD School Board Meeting - 2000 Railroad Ave. - 6:30 PM
- 28-1 Equity & Human Rights Conference - Marriott - Irvine, CA

March 2020

- 3 Read Across Pittsburg - 2:30-5:00 PM
- 3 PEA Executive Board - PEA Office - 159 East 4th St. - 3:45 PM
- 4-17 PEA Exec. Bd. & NEA-RA Election
- 11 PUSD School Board Meeting - 2000 Railroad Ave. - 6:30 PM
- 11 Rally at District Office
- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 17 PEA Rep Council - PEA Office - 159 East 4th St. - 3:45 PM
- 25 PUSD School Board Meeting - 2000 Railroad Ave. - 6:30 PM
- 20 Spring begins
- 31 Holiday - Cesar Chavez Day

Next Deadline for Articles is Tuesday, March 10, 2020

STAY INFORMED @ peateachers.org AND cta.org & nea.org