



California Teachers Empowerment Network

Standing out from the crowd, fully informed on the issues

Please note that in addition to the traditional emailing of the CTEN monthly newsletter, we will once again post it on the CTEN blog- <http://www.ctenteachers.blogspot.com/> As usual, there are several controversial issues covered in this letter and we urge you to share your opinions with other teachers.

November 19, 2012

Dear Colleague,

We sincerely hope that if you are an existing agency fee payer, you have sent in a request for your rebate. The November 15th deadline has passed. If you haven't filed by now, you will not get your rebate this year. However, if you are a first time filer, you may resign from the union after the 15th; you will not get the full amount, however, but a prorated one dependent on how long after the 15th you file. For more information, go to <http://www.ctenhome.org/know.htm>

For an interesting and friendly debate on “The Future of Teacher Unions,” the Fordham Institute corralled Stanford Professor Terry Moe and Democrats For Education Reform (DFER) President Joe Williams for an in-depth back-and-forth on the subject. To watch it, go to <http://www.edexcellence.net/events/after-chicago-the-future-of-teacher-unions.html>

Also from the Fordham Institute, in conjunction with Education Reform Now (an arm of DFER), we now have a state-by-state comparison of teacher union power. There are several surprises here. For example, the Alabama (right-to-work state) teachers union is considered more powerful than the union in non-right-to-work Massachusetts. To watch a brief video about the study and to read the study itself, go to <http://www.edexcellence.net/publications/how-strong-are-us-teacher-unions.html>

And one final note about the unions – courtesy of RiShawn Biddle – we now can see where the American Federation of Teachers spent its members' dues money in 2011-2012.

Another year, another LM-2 filing from the American Federation of Teachers. And once again, the nation's second-largest teachers' union is spending plenty to maintain its declining influence over education policymaking. The AFT spent \$27 million on political activities (including lobbying) and contributions to what should be like-minded groups.

To continue reading Biddle's comments go to <http://dropoutnation.net/2012/11/01/the-afts-latest-disclosure-27-million-to-preserve-its-influence/> To see the entire Labor Department document, go to http://rishawnbiddle.org/outsidereports/aft_2012_dol_filing.pdf

From the media and the unions we hear many things about charter schools. But here in this brief video from the California Charter School Association, we hear directly from charter school

teachers on why they prefer to teach in a charter school. Certainly some food for thought here - <http://www.calcharters.org/blog/2012/10/new-video-what-is-it-like-to-teach-at-charter-school.html>

Back in June, we told you about the “Students Matter” case which could have an effect on every teacher in California. This case was filed on behalf of eight students from around the state,

...claiming provisions of California’s education code—rigid tenure rules, a seniority-based firing system that ignores teacher quality, and a “due-process” system that makes it all but impossible to remove incompetent or criminal teachers—violate student rights. As a result of these arbitrary distinctions in hiring and firing, the complaint reads, “children of substantially equal age, aptitude, motivation, and ability do not have substantially equal access to education. Because education is a fundamental interest under the California Constitution, the statutes that dictate this unequal, arbitrary result violate the equal protection provisions of the California Constitution.” To read more, go to <http://www.city-journal.org/2012/cjc06061s.html>

On November 15th, there was a ruling in which the judge said the lawsuit should go forth. Whatever your feelings are about this case, it would behoove you to pay attention to it. To read more, go to <http://www.sacbee.com/2012/11/15/4989297/lawsuit-over-teacher-employment.html> For the Students Matter homepage, go to <http://studentsmatter.org/>

For those of you who were in favor of Prop. 30, you got your way on Election Day. However, please understand this is a very temporary fix in a state that is in deep fiscal straits. For a balanced view of what Prop. 30 can and can’t do, go to <http://collegian.csufresno.edu/2012/11/05/proposition-30-a-smart-move-or-a-gamble/>

And on the subject of spending, the Friedman Foundation has come out with a staggering study which claims that,

*America’s K-12 public education system has experienced tremendous historical growth in employment, according to the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics. Between fiscal year (FY) 1950 and FY 2009, the number of K-12 public school students in the United States increased by 96 percent while the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) school employees grew 386 percent. Public schools grew staffing at a rate four times faster than the increase in students over that time period. Of those personnel, teachers’ numbers increased 252 percent while **administrators and other staff experienced growth of 702 percent, more than seven times the increase in students.** (Emphasis added.)*

To read more and download the study, go to <http://www.edchoice.org/Research/Reports/The-School-Staffing-Surge--Decades-of-Employment-Growth-in-Americas-Public-Schools.aspx>

For a rare and fair mainstream media analysis of education issues facing us in California, Ken Malloy at CBS Fresno put together a five part series that is well worth watching. To watch “The State of Education,” go to <http://www.cbs47.tv/news/local/story/Special-Report-The-State-of-Education/dLDoabahFEm3mMZSszLUGBw.cspX>

The National Council on Teacher Quality has a monthly online newsletter that is worthy of your attention. The current issue has interesting piece, “How We Stopped Guessing and Hired Smart,”

written by a middle school math specialist. To read it and the rest of the November newsletter, go to <http://www.nctq.org/nl/emailPreview.jsp?nlIdentifier=294#Avictoryfortransparency>

As always, we at CTEN want to thank you for your ongoing support. Please visit us regularly at www.ctenhome.org. We do our best to keep our website up-to-date, but if you need information and can't find it there, please send us an email at cteninfo@ctenhome.org or call us at 888-290-8471 and we will get back to you in short order.

Sincerely,

Larry Sand
CTEN President