



# 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.*

December 17, 2014

Dear Colleague,

The National Council on Teacher Quality has released the 2014 version of its “State Teacher Policy Yearbook.” The report summarizes how the states are doing in developing policies that improve the teaching profession.

*The 2014 State Teacher Policy Yearbook includes the National Council on Teacher Quality’s (NCTQ) focus on state efforts to align their requirements for teacher preparation and licensure with the skills needed to prepare students for college and careers. Five years after the vast majority of states adopted Common Core State Standards or other state-specific standards, NCTQ finds that most states have not done nearly enough to make sure new teachers will be ready for the higher standards their students are expected to achieve.*

Not surprisingly, California gets an overall “D+” in teacher prep because teacher preparation admissions requirements are not selective and the state neither collects meaningful data about the quality of teacher prep programs nor holds programs accountable for the quality of the teachers they produce.

To access the Yearbook go here - <http://nctq.org/statePolicy/2014/statePolicyHome.do> To learn more about why CA gets a poor grade go to <http://us1.campaign-archive1.com/?u=c9b11da2ceffae94e1dc196f6&id=be8a4ed345&e=ce3ceb5485>

NCTQ has also come out with an interesting report on teacher salaries in which it shows where teachers earn the most **after adjusting for cost of living**. It ranks districts first by the lifetime earnings a teacher accrues in each district over a 30-year career and second by the time it takes teachers to reach the maximum salary benchmark. “To accommodate the unique factors in performance-pay districts, we calculate their rank in three ways, depending on whether a teacher is considered average, above average or exemplary.”

No matter how you slice it, CA does not fare well. Fresno, the highest ranking district in the state, comes in at #36 nationally. To see the rankings and learn more, go to [http://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Smart\\_Money](http://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Smart_Money)

Interestingly, at the same time we learn the latest about teacher salaries, we get news that Dennis Van Roekel, in his last year as NEA president earned a cool \$541,632. However, current American Federation of Teachers president Randi Weingarten out-earned Van Roekel, pulling in \$543,679 in 2012. Nice work if you can get it. To learn more about teacher union leader compensation and other places the union spends teachers' money, their income tax returns are a great source and can be found at <http://www.guidestar.org/organizations/53-0115260/national-education-association-united-states.aspx#forms-docs> and <http://www.guidestar.org/organizations/36-0725240/american-federation-teachers.aspx>

If you are not happy paying unions for the pleasure of teaching in public schools, there may be help on the way in the form of a lawsuit. *Friedrichs et al vs. CTA* could get a hearing at the Supreme Court in 2015. If the case is successful, public employee union dues-paying would become voluntary. To learn more about the case, go to <https://www.cir-usa.org/cases/friedrichs-v-california-teachers-association-et-al/>

For those of you who are interested in allowing parents a choice as to where to send their kids to school, there is a new Facebook page called "Teachers for School Choice." If you are so inclined, please go to the page and "Like" it, and feel free to post any content that you think is pertinent. The page can be accessed at <https://www.facebook.com/teachersforchoice>

Speaking of school choice, Dr. Alan Bonsteel, a log-time friend of CTEN, had a very touching op-ed in the Sacramento Bee earlier this month. To read it, go to <http://www.sacbee.com/opinion/op-ed/soapbox/article4287397.html>

The woes of Los Angeles Unified seem to be never ending. First it settled for \$139 million (on top of \$30 million paid last year) in the Mark Berndt sexual abuse lawsuit. Now the FBI is investigating the district over the botched iPad program. Additionally, the district and UTLA are far apart in their contract negotiations, and the union is talking tough and making strike noises. For more info, go here - <http://www.breitbart.com/Breitbart-California/2014/11/23/LAUSD-Agrees-to-Pay-139-Million-to-Settle-Sex-Abuse-Lawsuit>, <http://www.breitbart.com/Breitbart-California/2014/11/23/LAUSD-Agrees-to-Pay-139-Million-to-Settle-Sex-Abuse-Lawsuit> and <http://laschoolreport.com/teachers-union-rejects-pay-increase-offer-from-laUSD/>

For you common core fans and foes, there has been an interesting development in CA. Stanford University has joined forces with CTA to prepare schools "for new learning goals that will change the way California students are taught and tested." The project, launched earlier this month, "initially involves training 160 teachers and 24 administrators, who, in turn, will reach about 50,000 educators over three years." To learn more, go to <http://www.latimes.com/local/education/la-me-learning-20141201-story.html>

While we all know that the effects of good teachers on children are supremely important, we are also aware that their home lives greatly affect their learning potential. In its Winter 2015 edition, *Education Next* has an in-depth study on the effects of single-parenthood.

*(Daniel) Moynihan's claim that growing up in a fatherless family reduced a child's chances of educational and economic success was furiously denounced when the report appeared in 1965, with many critics calling Moynihan a racist. For the next two decades few scholars chose to*

*investigate the effects of father absence, lest they too be demonized if their findings supported Moynihan's argument. Fortunately, America's best-known black sociologist, William Julius Wilson, broke this taboo in 1987, providing a candid assessment of the black family and its problems in The Truly Disadvantaged. Since then, social scientists have accumulated a lot more evidence on the effects of family structure. This article will offer some educated guesses about what that evidence means.*

To read this very important piece, go here - <http://educationnext.org/was-moynihan-right/>

Anyone wishing to make a year-end donation to CTEN can do so very simply through a personal check or PayPal - <http://www.ctenhome.org/donate.html> As a non-profit, we exist and operate only through the generosity and support of others.

It has been another exciting year for CTEN - [www.ctenhome.org/](http://www.ctenhome.org/) and we look forward to an even more vigorous 2015. We remain grateful for your interest and involvement, and wish you and your families the happiest of holidays. See you next year!

Sincerely,  
Larry Sand  
CTEN President