



California Teachers Empowerment Network

Standing out from the crowd, fully informed on the issues

April 21, 2009

Dear Colleague,

As we head toward the end of the school year, there is still much in doubt concerning the immediate future of education in California. The federal stimulus money has yet to be parceled out, and while we do have a state budget, much will not be determined until the special election on May 19. On that day, Californians will be asked to say yea or nay on six initiatives which could have a major impact on our state for years to come.

At this point, passage of the ballot measures does not look good. The citizens of California are beginning to sense that these initiatives may not be in their best interest. In fact, the California Federation of Teachers opposes five of the six initiatives. On the other hand, the California Teachers Association is in favor of all six. Moreover, the CTA has thus far contributed over \$5 million to get them passed. We at CTEN do not take a position on candidates or causes. However, we do urge you to avoid the inevitable spin by special interest groups and read these initiatives very carefully to decide for yourself if they will really benefit our state in the long run.

We found a *very interesting* ad in the current edition of the United Teachers of Los Angeles newspaper - http://www.utla.net/utla/unitedteacher/UT_20090320_LR.pdf On page 20 the following ad appears -

2009 CTA State Council Election Notice: At-Large Seat

Are you interested in representing UTLA/NEA members at the state level? CTA (California Teachers Association) State Council, a policy-making body that meets quarterly, has an opening for representatives for an at-large seat **Based on CTA guidelines, candidates must be an ethnic minority (African American, Native American/Alaska native, Asian/Pacific Islander, or Hispanic).** (*Emphasis not added.*) If you wish to run for this position, complete and return the self-nomination form by U.S. mail to Ana Valencia at UTLA. The form must be received by 5:00 p.m. on March 27, 2009. The election will be held at the April 22, 2009, area meetings. For those members who cannot vote at their area meetings, voting will also be held at the UTLA building from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. on April 22, 2009.

Self-Nomination Form

Name _____
Employee number _____
Address _____
City _____ Zip _____

Home phone _____

School _____

School Phone _____

Ethnicity

African American

Native American/Alaskan

Asian/Pacific Islander

Hispanic

I certify that below is the signature of the candidate whose name appears above.

Signature _____ Date _____

(Required)

Return this form by 5:00 p.m., March 27, 2009, via U.S. mail to Ana Valencia, 3303 Wilshire Blvd., 10th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90010. Forms may also be dropped off at UTLA headquarters on the 10th floor during regular business hours from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Form must be received by UTLA by March 27, 2009.

Obviously, the CTA is seating people on its state council by race and according to our sources, has been doing so since the 1970s. It appears that if certain minorities don't have enough representation on the council, the CTA will hold a special election in which only those minorities can run for an at-large seat. The CTA seems to think that the teachers of California who elect these representatives must be racists at heart who just can't be trusted to vote for the best people, irrespective of skin color. If you think this type of racial discrimination should be eliminated, please contact the CTA and let them know.

The always provocative National Council on Teacher Quality has an especially interesting feature in their latest letter. They recently held a research competition, the subject of which was, "The impact of teacher rules, roles and rights on teacher quality." To read more, please go to <http://www.nctq.org/tr3/conference/>

In recent newsletters, we have featured educators who certainly march to the beat of their own educational drum. We have found yet another, Brian Crosby, who not only has his own ideas, but a book, a blog and an alternative professional organization. To learn more about this National Board Certified Teacher, please visit http://brian-crosby.com/Home_Page.html

In the latest edition of *The Chronicles of Higher Education*, Kevin Carey has an excellent article in which he posits that colleges, unless they adapt to modern technology, very well could go the way of newspapers – extinction. There is much food for thought here. To read the article, go to <http://chronicle.com/free/v55/i30/30a02101.htm>

We at CTEN were very happy to learn recently that we have a sister organization in Colorado. Independent Teachers - <http://www.independentteachers.org/> - essentially provides the same service that we do. Under the capable leadership of Ben De Grow, this organization does its best to get information to teachers that they might not get elsewhere. If you know any teachers in Colorado, please send them the above link.

We have upgraded the CTEN website and added a media page, which can be found at <http://www.ctenhome.org/media.htm> (My latest op-ed, published in the LA Times on March 26th, can be found there.) Also, we have updated and personalized our donations page. If you would like to help the CTEN cause by making a small (or not so small) gift,

that is the place to do it. We are a registered 501(c)(3) and all donations are tax deductible.

And finally, if you have any colleagues who might benefit from our newsletters or from being introduced to CTEN in general, please forward this letter to them and ask them to visit our website – www.ctenhome.org Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Larry Sand, President