



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.

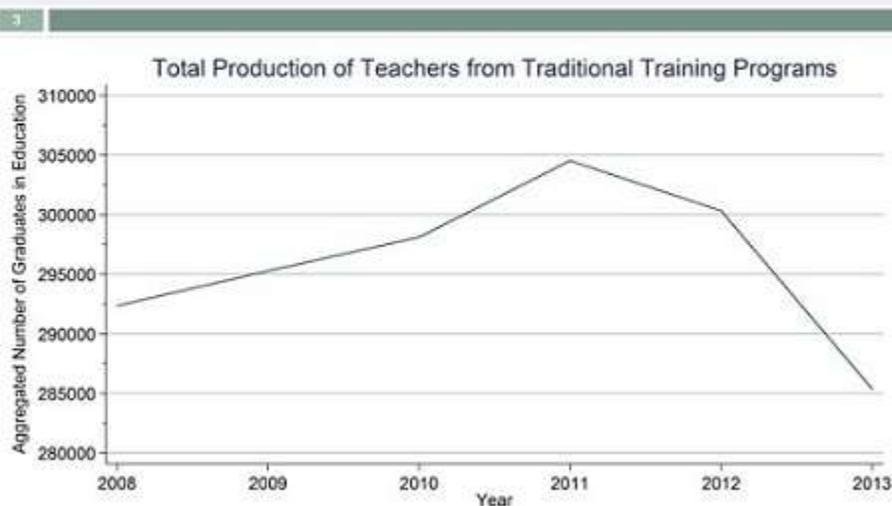
May 18, 2016

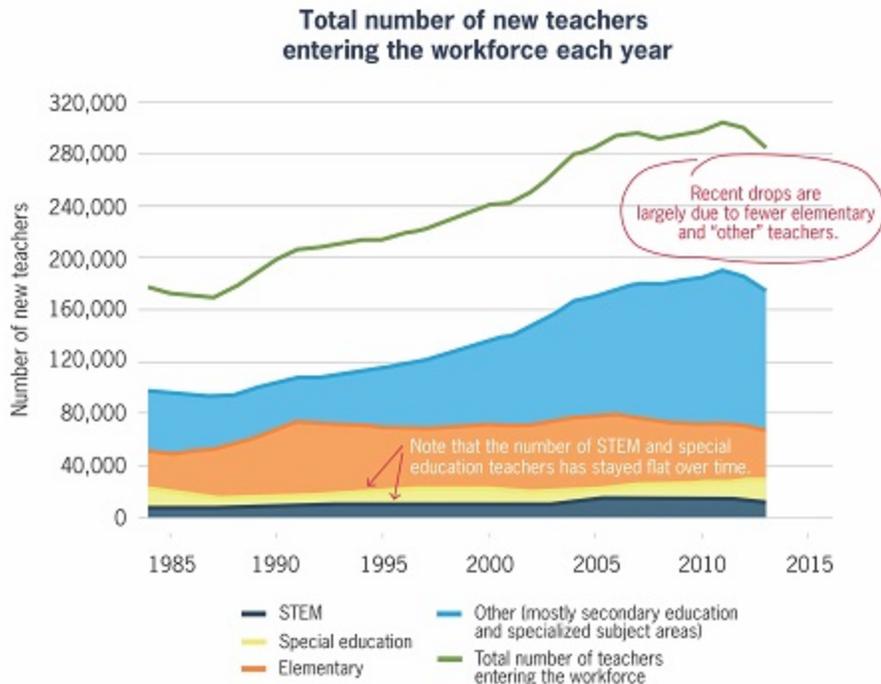
Dear Colleague,

According to American Federation of Teachers president Randi Weingarten, the national teacher shortage could turn into a crisis. She claims that we have a “teacher brain-drain unseen in any other profession.” To explain why this is happening, she adds, “The last 15 years have been marked by top-down education policies that promoted testing over teaching, competition over collaboration, austerity over investment, and scapegoating teachers rather than valuing them.”

But is any of this true? Not according to many reliable sources, the latest of which is economist Dan Goldhaber. As reported in the latest National Council on Teacher Quality newsletter,

The Teacher “Shortage”





This first graph does indeed show that the number of new teachers produced since 2008 has declined. But keep in mind that that drop was preceded by a three-decade period of enrollment growth, far outpacing the demand year-in and year-out (as the second graph shows). America's 1,450+ institutions which train teachers have been OVER-enrolling for years.

The current decline is what we normally see when unemployment dips and the pool of folks looking for work isn't as large as in other years.

And as programs have not traditionally seen it as their responsibility to direct candidates to shortage teaching areas (e.g. special ed), there continue to be massive misalignment between the types of teachers trained and the types of teachers public schools need to hire.

Most notably, programs have been routinely graduating twice as many new elementary teachers as public schools hire each year.

To see more of the NCTQ newsletter, go here [-http://www.nctq.org/commentary/article.do?id=262](http://www.nctq.org/commentary/article.do?id=262) To read Weingarten's piece, go to http://www.huffingtonpost.com/randi-weingarten/how-the-teacher-shortage_b_9712286.html

The peripatetic Weingarten turned up in England in April to protest Pearson. The AFT has a long and complex relationship with the global education company. Twenty-seven of its affiliates have holdings in Pearson, including retirement systems in California, New York, Arkansas, Colorado, etc. According to the union's press release, "The American Federation of Teachers, along with teachers unions and nongovernmental organizations throughout the world, will speak out during

Pearson's annual general meeting Friday, April 29, in London to call for a review of its business model that pushes high-stakes testing in the United States and privatized schools in the developing world."

Pearson's board considered the unions' resolution but recommended that its shareholders vote against it. And indeed they did. Only 2.4 percent bought what Weingarten was selling, and the resolution was defeated by 578,510,587 votes to 14,016,634. To read Weingarten's statement, go here - <http://www.aft.org/press-release/aft-joins-global-allies-lobby-pearson-shareholders-meeting> To see the results of the Pearson vote, go to <http://shares.telegraph.co.uk/news/article.php?id=5332426&epic=PSO>

Coincidentally at the same time as AFT's confrontation with Pearson, the latest NAEP scores were released and they did not paint a pretty picture. As reported by *US News & World Report*, "Only about a third of U.S. high school seniors are prepared for college-level coursework in math and reading. And while the performance of the country's highest achievers is increasing in reading, the lowest-achieving students are performing worse than ever." To read more, go to <http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2016-04-27/high-school-seniors-arent-college-ready-naep-data-show>

On the school reform front, Students First, the creation of Michelle Rhee, has merged with 50Can. Both organizations have similar goals. Current Students First president Jim Blew said, "The move makes sense because with the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act, the replacement of the No Child Left Behind Act, state legislatures are crucial in determining the future of education in America." Blew added that Students First is "stronger on the lobbying side, and 50Can is stronger in advocacy." To learn more, go here - <http://www.latimes.com/local/education/la-me-edu-michelle-rhee-studentsfirst-50can-20160329-story.html>

CTA and SEIU announced last week that they have collected nearly a million signatures in hopes of placing a measure on the November ballot that would extend part the Prop. 30 taxes for an additional 12 years. (The sales tax hike will expire at the end of this year.) The so-called "temporary tax to fund education," passed in 2012, was due to expire in 2018. For more, go here - <http://www.sfgate.com/politics/article/Unions-gather-1-million-signature-for-Prop-30-7462916.php>

On the school choice front, University of Arkansas professor Patrick Wolf and his team released a meta-analysis of 19 "gold standard" experimental evaluations of the test-score effects of private school choice programs around the world. "The sum of the reliable evidence indicates that, on average, private school choice increases the reading scores of choice users by about 0.27 standard deviations and their math scores by 0.15 standard deviations. These are highly statistically significant, educationally meaningful achievement gains of several months of additional learning from school choice." To examine the study, go here - <http://www.uaedreform.org/downloads/2016/05/the-participant-effects-of-private-school-vouchers-across-the-globe-a-meta-analytic-and-systematic-review-2.pdf>

Paul E. Peterson, editor-in-chief of *Education Next* and director of the Program on Education Policy and Governance at Harvard, claims, "The Bush-Obama era of reform via federal regulation has come to an end." He maintains that reforming the system from within is unlikely to succeed in the years ahead. "If school reform is to move forward, it will occur via new forms of competition—whether they be vouchers, charters, home schooling, digital learning, or the transformation of district schools into decentralized, autonomous units." To read more of this

provocative article, go to <http://educationnext.org/end-of-bush-obama-regulatory-approach-school-reform-choice-competition/>

Not surprisingly, anything that smells of privatization is anathema to the teachers unions. Courtesy of Mike Antonucci, we can see just how the National Education Association plans to go about fighting off the threat to its pocket book. “This ‘step-by-step crisis action plan’ is designed to help local union activists defeat efforts by school districts to privatize support services. They are advised not to argue about cost savings and insist ‘You can’t get the *same* service for less!’” To see NEA’s anti-privatization combat manual go to <http://www.eiaonline.com/NEABeatPrivatizationToolkit.pdf>

And finally, as you well know, information is frequently used to score political points and make cases for various causes. To that end, CTEN has a “cheat sheet” on our website – with original sources. To see it, go to <http://www.ctenhome.org/cheatsheet.html> If you have information that counters what’s there or would like to see something added, please let us know.

Anyone wishing to make a 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. Many thanks to CTENers who have already donated and a special shout-out to those of you who do so on a regular basis.

Sincerely,
Larry Sand
CTEN President