



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 16, 2018

Dear Colleague,

With a decision in the *Janus v AFSCME* case expected within weeks, there is no shortage of opinions on how the world will change if the Supreme Court comes down on the side of the plaintiff. The lawsuit, which could make dues paying for public employees voluntary nationwide, has the California punditry opining in vastly different directions. Writer Tom Elias warns that the Janus decision “could change California politics.”

If Janus wins, politics and civic life in California could change dramatically. For decades, public employee unions have been a driving force in this state's politics, financially and in providing campaign manpower. They are one big reason for the Democratic dominance in virtually all aspects of state government.

However, teacher union watchdog Mike Antonucci has a very different take. He writes, “...those expecting large-scale changes in a post-Janus world may be sorely disappointed. However, there may be individual regions (he mentions Los Angeles and San Diego) and job categories that are disproportionately weakened.”

To read the Elias piece, go to <https://www.theunion.com/opinion/thomas-d-elias-janus-decision-could-change-california-politics/> Antonucci's thoughts can be found here - <http://laschoolreport.com/antonucci-where-will-the-effects-of-a-janus-ruling-fall-fastest-and-hardest/>

Also, on the subject of unions and California, veteran *Washington Post* writer Jay Mathews recently took the California Teachers Association to task for playing it fast and loose with the truth. “Maybe this teachers union needs a crash course in truth in advertising” takes the union to task for running a radio ad that is somewhat less than honest. Part of the spot claims,

They're lining up against our local public schools. One after another, out-of-state billionaires are trying to buy our politicians. Following the lead of Donald Trump and Betsy DeVos, billionaires like Koch brothers allies Jim and Alice Walton have their own narrow education agenda to divert money out of our public schools and into their corporate charter schools. It's

true. Out-of-state billionaires investing millions into politicians who will protect corporate-run charter schools that lack accountability.

To read Mathews' piece, go here - https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/maybe-these-teachers-need-to-take-a-crash-course-in-truth-in-advertising/2018/04/29/97578000-49df-11e8-827e-190efaf1f1ee_story.html?utm_term=.0566f761da69 To listen to the CTA ad, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YCagrWqUhd4>

The above CTA ad is an attempt to discredit Marshall Tuck who is running against Tony Thurmond for State Superintendent of Public Instruction. In a pitch for union members to tune in to a tele-townhall on May 9th, the union's website claims, "... corporate billionaires are pouring millions into the races of candidates who share their agenda to divert funding away from neighborhood public schools to privately-run charter schools."

In fact, Tuck is adamantly opposed to privately run charters and has stated so many times, claiming, "Profit has no place in our public schools...."

To see CTA's page on the SPI race, go to <http://view.cta-mailings.org/?qs=f1861e9d778baf4d02396bc9e03d43dc8a037c12f221f242ce210083da06c5208a67a5c33aaa0a0359c9a2cbeb6b92265ba6f6082de1e156f3f0f769e772239578f4c4162a93c1cbb788452e9aa6c746>

To read what Tuck has to say on charters, go here - <http://laschoolreport.com/marshall-tuck-support-nonprofit-charter-schools-ban-for-profit-charters/>

Also, CTA's actions notwithstanding, "Charter schools are booming in California" as the *Sacramento Bee* headline reads.

California's charter school enrollment continues to skyrocket, growing by more than 25,000 students during each of the past 10 years.

Almost 630,000 students attended California public charter schools at the start of this school year — about one in every 10 students, according to new data from the California Department of Education. California charter school enrollment has increased 150 percent in the last 10 years.

To learn more and see where charter school growth has been the most dramatic, go here - <http://www.sacbee.com/news/local/education/article208863954.html>

In recent days, the news has been filled with stories about teachers' strikes, which have been widespread in West Virginia, Oklahoma, Colorado, Kentucky, and Arizona. AFT President Randi Weingarten claims "Teachers rising up in rebellion of everyday heroes" in which she writes,

Teachers are standing up for their students and themselves against largely red states with weak labor laws and where governors and legislators have opted for tax cuts for the wealthy instead of investments for children. This has left education conditions deplorable and educators pauperized.

However, writing in *City Journal*, Jason Richwine and Andrew Biggs have a different take. In “No, Teachers Are Not Underpaid,” they write,

Contrary to myth, teachers are generally not foregoing higher salaries by staying in the classroom. Data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation show that teachers who change to non-teaching jobs take an average salary cut of about 3 percent. Studies using administrative records in Florida, Missouri, Georgia, and Montana showed similar results; the Georgia study found “strong evidence that very few of those who leave teaching take jobs that pay more than their salary as teachers.”

To read the two very different points of view, go here -

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2018/04/16/education-oklahoman-west-virginia-teachers-walkout-column/518686002/> and <https://www.city-journal.org/html/no-teachers-are-not-underpaid-15867.html>

On the subject of teacher pay, researcher and economics professor Benjamin Scafidi found that between 1950 and 2015, the number of teachers increased about 2.5 times faster than the uptick in students. Also, the hiring of other education employees – administrators, teacher aides, counselors, social workers, etc. – rose more than 7 times the increase in students. Scafidi adds that despite the staffing surge, students’ academic achievement has stagnated or even fallen over the past several decades. Scafidi also has written that instead of this wasteful spending, had non-teaching personnel growth been in line with student growth, and the teaching force had risen “only” 1.5 times as fast as student growth, our schools would have had an additional \$37.2 billion to spend. He asserts that we could have raised every public school teacher’s salary by more than \$11,700 per year, given families of each child in poverty more than \$2,600 in cash per child to attend the private school of his or her parents’ choice, more than doubled taxpayer funding for early childhood education, etc.

To read more about the “staffing surge,” go to <https://www.edchoice.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/11-2012-Staffing-Surge-WEB.pdf> and <https://www.edchoice.org/research/back-staffing-surge/>

Senate Bill 1150 has been introduced in Oklahoma, which would “require that a majority of educators in the district vote every five years to keep their collective bargaining unit. More than half of the eligible employees would have to cast a ballot for the union for it to gain recognition in the district. If not, the entire school district would lose union representation.” The bill would also prevent school districts from deducting union dues from teacher paychecks. Instead, teachers would have to make arrangements with their union to pay their dues.

To read more about SB 1150 go to <http://newsok.com/bill-is-revenge-for-teacher-walkout-unions-say/article/5593286>

The online Western Governors University (WGU) is offering 100 scholarships to current and aspiring teachers and school administrators seeking a bachelor’s or master’s degree in education. The school’s press release, in part, reads,

In recognition of Teacher Appreciation Week, Western Governors University (WGU) is offering 100 scholarships to current and aspiring teachers, and school administrators, seeking a bachelor’s or master’s degree in education. WGU is also waiving the \$65 application fee for

prospective students who apply to a Teachers College degree program by June 30 using the code: NOWFREE.

Each WGU Teacher Appreciation Scholarship is valued at up to \$2,000—\$500 per six-month term for up to four terms. New students can apply for these scholarships now through June 30 at www.wgu.edu/teacherappreciation. To be eligible, scholarship applicants must be officially admitted to WGU, complete the scholarship application, and be interviewed by a WGU scholarship counselor. While WGU will award up to 100 scholarships, recipients will be selected based on academic records, financial need, readiness for online study, and current competency, among other considerations.

To learn more about the scholarship and apply, go to www.wgu.edu/landing/teachersweek18

And finally, as you well know, data and solid information are very useful in scoring political points and making cases for various causes. To that end, CTEN has a “cheat sheet,” which has been updated on our website – all 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. As always, thanks for your continuing interest and support.

Sincerely,
Larry Sand
CTEN President