



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.

August 21, 2019

Dear Colleague,

Mike Antonucci wrote an article last month that should be heeded by any teacher who is planning to quit their union. He writes,

If a member decides to resign and revoke her dues authorization, and it is within the time window, she must send a written notice via U.S. Mail to CTA Member Services at the union's headquarters in Burlingame, according to the application form.

But wait. According to a CTA handbook distributed to local affiliates throughout the state, a resigning member must make a drop request in writing and deliver it by U.S. Mail or in person to the local's headquarters. The letter must contain a formal request to drop membership and an original signature.

Until this bit of union trickery is resolved, we are suggesting that, should you decide you want out, use the form we have linked on the [CTEN home page](#) and send copies by certified mail, return receipt requested to:

- your local union
- CTA Member Services at 1705 Murchison Drive, Burlingame, CA 94010
- your school district

There are other bits of union chicanery that Antonucci includes in his piece. To read it, go [here](#).

In other union news, the Pacific Legal Foundation in partnership with the Liberty Justice Center has filed a lawsuit which has several components. It primarily concerns itself with [SB 866](#) – a California state law signed the same day that the *Janus* decision was made. The law specifies that public employers cannot “deter or discourage public employees, or applicants, from becoming or remaining members of employee organizations.” The bill also prohibits employers from disclosing the date/time/place of the new employee orientation “to anyone other than employees, the exclusive bargaining representative, and a vendor who is contracted to provide a service at the new employee orientation.”

It forbids the university from talking to them about their union membership, dues, or even the *Janus* decision. Enter UC San Diego employees Mike Jackson and Tory Smith who, after the *Janus* ruling was handed down, tried to exercise their rights by resigning from the Teamsters Union.

The union denied their demand, saying they were locked into membership until the collective bargaining agreement expires in 2022. And when Mike and Tory asked the university's human resources department how to resign, they were told a California state law—a Gag Rule statute—expressly prohibits the university from talking to them about their constitutional rights related to union membership and dues.

To read more about the case, go [here](#)

In other union news, CTA took a huge loss when the California Faculty Association, which represents some 19,000 employees of the California State University system, ended its affiliation with both CTA and NEA after a 38-year relationship. Mike Antonucci writes,

There have been tensions between the two organizations in recent years concerning higher education representation on the state union's governing bodies. CFA shared a single seat on CTA's board of directors with the state union's other higher education affiliate, the Community College Association. CFA is CTA's second-largest affiliate, behind only United Teachers Los Angeles.



July 3, 2019

TO: State Council Delegates

FROM: CTA President E. Toby Boyd

On June 14, the California Faculty Association (CFA) sent CTA [this notification](#) that the CFA Board of Directors voted on May 23, 2019 to disaffiliate from CTA and NEA, and to terminate their service agreement with CTA.

Since my election and since receiving this notice, I have reached out to CFA President Charles Toombs. The CTA Board of Directors and I look forward to finding common ground with CFA as labor representatives of education workers. Last week, I ran into President Toombs at an event in Sacramento. I told him I hoped we could discuss how we can work together in the future for the students and educators of California.

CFA's decision to disaffiliate will impact CTA representative structures at State Council. The CTA Board voted to send this information to the Representation Committee. The CTA Board also had to vacate the District Q Board seat held by Susan Green. The Representation Committee and the Board will review this matter to determine how best to proceed. We will keep you informed.

I also want to assure you that CTA will, as we have for 156 years, continue to advocate for all students and educators from pre-kindergarten thru higher education.

To read more about the CFA defection, go [here](#).

PDK released the results of its yearly poll recently, and it seems that teachers are not collectively happy. From the summary of the report:

- *60% of teachers say they're unfairly paid, and 55% say they'd vote to go on strike for higher pay.*

- *Pay isn't the only concern. Seventy-five percent of teachers say the schools in their community are underfunded. Fifty-eight percent say they'd vote to strike for higher funding for school programs, and 52% say they'd vote to strike for greater teacher say in academic policies on standards, testing, and the curriculum.*

- *Parents and the public overall stand with them; 74% of parents and 71% of all adults say they would support a strike by teachers in their community for higher pay. Even more — 83% of parents and 79% of all adults — say they'd support teachers striking for a greater voice in academic policies. Similarly high percentages of teachers say they would support teachers in their own communities if they went on strike for any of these reasons.*

However, the problem with this – and many surveys – is that they assume those questioned have enough information to give an informed response. For example, how many of those polled know that for the 2016–17 school year, the average [salary](#) of full-time public school teachers was \$58,950 in the U.S. But this figure excludes hefty benefits like health insurance, paid leave, and pensions. According to the Department of Labor, such [perks](#) comprise an average of 33 percent of total compensation for public school teachers. When they are added in, teachers' [average annual compensation jumps to \\$87,854](#). And even that amount does not include unfunded pension liabilities and certain post-employment benefits like health insurance, which are not measured by the Department of Labor.

Additionally, how many of those polled know how much K-12 educators actually work compared to other professionals? According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, [teachers work 1,398 hours per year on average](#), whereas lawyers put in 2,036 hours per annum, almost 50 percent more time on the job than teachers. Dentists (1,998 hours/year) and accountants (2,074 hours/year) also work many more hours than teachers.

To see the results of the PDK poll, go [here](#). To get another take, go [here](#).

Bill Evers, research fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution, has written an alarming piece for *The Wall Street Journal* concerning California's proposed "Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum." The "guide," written by an advisory board of teachers, academics and bureaucrats, is for teachers to use as a resource. A few examples:

...Capitalism is described as a "form of power and oppression," alongside "patriarchy," "racism," "white supremacy" and "ableism." Capitalism and capitalists appear as villains several times in the document.

... Teachers are encouraged to cite the biographies of "potentially significant figures" such as Angela Davis, Frantz Fanon and Bobby Seale. Convicted cop-killers Mumia Abu-Jamal and Assata Shakur are also on the list.

Also, many Jewish groups were outraged that the curriculum supported the BDS (boycott, divestment and sanctions) movement, never mentioned that anti-Semitism has been a problem, and gave scant mention to the Holocaust.

Well, the good news is that enough sensible people were outraged, and deluged the state board of education with complaints. The leaders then admitted the curriculum “falls short and needs to be substantially redesigned.”

To read Evers’ *WSJ* piece, go [here](#). On the decision to reevaluate, the *Jewish Journal* weighed in [here](#) and the *Los Angeles Times* [here](#).

Kerry McDonald, senior education fellow at the Foundation for Economic Education, is a big proponent of “unschooling,” which opposes the traditional public school model. Her preferred method of school choice is to home school, which is how she and her husband educate their four children. In a recent interview with *The Epoch Times*, she talks about the first time she walked into a homeschooling situation and found it enchanting.

This was in stark contrast to a student-teaching practicum I was doing that same semester. There I experienced a local public elementary school with its forced socialization, command-and-control environment, age-segregated classrooms with a static handful of teachers, and disconnection from the larger world. I never realized this contrast, of course, because my childhood had been spent in public schools; but witnessing these two entirely different learning environments for the first time triggered my fascination with alternatives to mass schooling and education choice more broadly, and is what prompted me to attend graduate school in education policy at Harvard University.

To read more, go [here](#)

The new school year is a very busy time for teachers, and CTEN will do its best to keep up with post-*Janus* doings in addition to any other issues pertinent to education and teachers, and keep you informed as things happen. If you have any questions, or have experienced any problems because of your decision to leave your union, please let us know and we will do our best to help you in a timely manner. We will also be able to share your concerns with other teachers across the state. And talking about sharing, please pass this email along to your colleagues and encourage them to join us.

Also, anyone wishing to donate to CTEN can do so very simply through check, money order or PayPal - <http://www.ctenhome.org/donate.html> As a non-profit, we exist only through the generosity of others. Thanks, as always. And happy new (school) year!

Sincerely,
Larry Sand
CTEN President