



# *Your Union, Your Voice* *Your Newsletter*

Hesperia Teachers Association

July 2014

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Tanalee Jackson

**Carmel**

Barbara Beechum

**Cedar**

Krista Rodriguez

Renee Singer

**Cottonwood**

Robert Balder

**Cypress**

Russell Reinhardt

**DO**

Katrina Jackson

Brad Asdel

**Good teaching is more a giving of right questions than a giving of right answers." -- Josef Albers**

## President's Message

Welcome back to a new and exciting school year. I hope the summer was a time to relax and rejuvenated for this up coming year.

Last year we were faced with the challenges of beginning the implementation of new standards which require a different approach in planning, instruction and assessment. We faced that challenge, took it on and bolted out of the gate with new ideas and strategies beginning the change in education that puts us in the forefront of deciding what is best for our students. For the first time in decades we are being given the reigns of instruction that we as professionals have the education, skills and experience to implement.

This November we have three very important elections for our profession and us:

1. The school board election of Niccole Childs, Eric Swanson and Marcy Kittenger, which directly impacts the support we will receive in our classrooms.
2. The passing of Measure M bond for the repair, maintenance and updating of our facilities.
3. The reelection of Tom Torlakson as state superintendent of school who has fought for our rights as teachers and professionals.

We want to take back our profession. This election is our opportunity to do that but we have to take it, it will not be given to us!

Your site reps have the information to give you the opportunity to add your voice to this campaign to reclaim **OUR** profession.

**Eucalyptus**  
 Phoebe Gutierrez  
**Hesperia High School**  
 Ellen Stephen  
 Devon Bostock  
 Jeremy Topete  
 Stephanie Seitz  
**Hesperia Junior High**  
 Cheryl Franks  
 Debbie Herndon  
**Hollyvale**  
 Kathy Brawthen  
**Joshua Circle**  
 Andrew Hammons  
**Juniper**  
 Cynthia Greenlee  
**Kingston**  
 Todd O'Neal  
**Krystal**  
 Vernetta Hansen  
**Lime**  
 Penny Hale  
 Christine Robinson  
**Maple**  
 Virginia Marquez  
**Mesa Grande**  
 Kelly Denny  
**Mesquite Trails**  
 Louise Oliekan  
**Mission Crest**  
 Susana Castillo  
 Teri Jo Muzquiz  
**Mojave**  
 Susan Gaus  
**Oak Hills**  
 Steve Trudeau  
 Sean Shea  
 Jim Kutch  
 Ron Clabo  
 Mike Stayton  
**Ranchero**  
 Irma Campos  
 James Carter  
**Shadow Ridge**  
 Kelly Ford  
**Sultana**  
 Ron Bonner  
 Shane Haldeman  
 Brett Simmons  
**Topaz**  
 Gina Graham

## Election 2014

As stated in the President's Message, November's election results will have a direct impact on our schools. Here is what you need to know.

### School Board Election

After careful consideration and the result of meeting with the candidates, our PAC committee chose incumbents Eric Swanson and Niccole Childs as well as newcomer Marcy Kittenger.

Swanson and Childs have shown their commitment for doing what is right for HUSD and understand the importance of supporting the teachers so that we can support our students. Kittenger is an involved parent in our district who we think is on the same path of common sense as Swanson and Childs.

Of concern to HTA is that Kelly Gregg who is the father of current board member Cody Gregg is running against our candidates. The actions of both Cody and Kelly Gregg on the school board and Park and Rec board have shown a consistency. They continually attack questioning the competence and motivations of staff at board meetings and on social media.

Cody Gregg was the lone board member who voted no on allowing the community the opportunity to vote on Measure M which we know is vital to providing a quality education to our students. Kelly Gregg has made no secret that he is of like mind. Their narrow view on a political agenda overshadows their ability to see the big picture and what is in the best interest of our students. The negative atmosphere they bring hinders our ability to move forward in a positive direction.

We strongly feel that it is in the best interest of our teachers, our students, and our schools to ensure that our candidates get elected. In order for this to happen we need our members to be actively involved. Your site reps will be giving you information on what the dates we are asking you to assist in the campaign. Of course, you can come on more days than asked.

The more unified and active we are in this endeavor, the more likely we will be successful and be able to move ahead in a positive direction.

## **Election 2014 (Continued)**

### **Measure M:**

Measure M is the Bond Measure that our School Board voted (5-1 with Cody Gregg voting no). Here some items for the Measure M Fact Sheet.

### **Measure M**

- Is a local education bond measure on the November 4 ballot to improve local schools and classrooms.
- Will help improve the quality of classroom education and student achievement.
- Is a \$207 million local education bond measure. If approved by voters,
- Will cost approximately \$60/year per \$100,000 of assessed – not market – property value.

### **Measure M will:**

#### **Job Readiness**

- Upgrades and expands career and vocational education programs that train students for jobs in automotive, agriculture, manufacturing, health care, and technology
- Ensure that students who choose not to go to college are prepared and ready to compete for jobs when they graduate.

#### **School Safety and Security**

- Upgrades insufficient security features including security fencing, cameras, lighting, and security systems to keep students safe and prevent destruction of school property.

#### **Quality classroom education**

- Provides funds that will improve classroom education and student achievement by upgrading classrooms, science and engineering labs, computers and libraries – providing the technology and tools students need to learn, raise test scores and retain and attract quality teachers.

#### **Fiscal Accountability Safeguards**

- Requires Independent Citizens' Oversight and annual independent financial/performance audits to ensure funds are spent as promised. By law, every penny helps local schools--no money can go to Sacramento
- Makes Hesperia schools eligible for its fair share of state funds that would otherwise go to other districts

HTA and HUSD are unified in understanding the importance of passing this measure. Should it fail, we could once again be looking at cuts. We hope that all members will join us in our support of Measure M starting with the kick off meeting at Cedar Middle School on September 9<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm.

## Election 2014 (Continued)

### State Superintendent:

HTA joins CTA, in our support for Tom Torlakson for state superintendent. Torlakson's opponent, Marshall Tuck, believes that teacher evaluations should be tied to standardized test scores, is against due process rights for teachers and he wants to expand charter schools, vouchers and online schools. Unlike Torlakson who was a public school teacher for 9 years, spent 30 years as a HS coach and 8 years as college faculty, Tuck has never been a teacher.

The following is from the latest edition of "California Educator" (Myslinski, Mike (2014, August) State Council sees dangers posed by schools chief candidate Tuck, *California Educator*, Vol. 19(1), pg. 52):

*Voters must re-elect Tom Torlakson, a proven leader and advocate for our students, as state superintendent of public instruction, or face the dangers that corporate education reformer Marshall Tuck poses to our public schools, CTA President Dean E. Vote told State Council delegates just days before the June 3 primary election. Torlakson has "led efforts to expand career and technical education. And he knows how important it is for our students to develop critical thinking skills, rather than just learning how to bubble in a standardized test," Vogel said.*

*Thanks to CTA members turning out the vote, Torlakson secured about 46.3 percent of the votes cast in the primary and will face Marshall Tuck in the November runoff. A remarkable 94 percent of CTA-endorsed state and federal candidates prevailed in the election, and 76 percent of CTA-backed local candidates, school bonds and parcel taxes won.*

*"My opponent says teachers have way too much to say in California, and he wants to roll back your rights so private interests can step in," Torlakson told delegates. "Our message is clear — our schools are no place for Wall Street speculation, and the trading floor of Salomon Brothers is no training ground for the superintendent of public instruction of California."*

*Members noted Torlakson's dedication to students of greatest need — he authored the acclaimed Quality Education Investment Act of 2006 to spend \$3 billion for low-performing schools on proven reforms like smaller class sizes over eight years. High school graduation rates are at their highest level ever. "Do we keep California moving forward in the right direction?" he asked. "Or do we take a huge step backwards?"*

### HTA Mission Statement

*The Hesperia Teachers Association exists to protect and promote the well-being of its members; to improve the conditions of teaching and learning; to protect and advance the cause of quality public education; and to ensure that the human dignity and civil rights of all children and youth are protected.*

## Survey Results

This summer, membership was sent a survey asking for feedback. We received over 300 replies, which helped us to gain insight into what members were thinking and to give us some direction for where membership would like us to go. Overall, the survey responses were mostly positive. Most sites reported that end of year checkout had been streamlined and most members were not being asked to do clerical or custodial work. While we were pleased with these outcomes, there is still work to be done at some of the sites. There were some great suggestions for the website ([www.hesperiateachers.com](http://www.hesperiateachers.com)) which is always a work in progress. Look for new additions to the website over the coming months.

There were many comments, which were mostly positive though concerns were brought forth as well. Leadership is currently looking at what would be the best way to address those concerns and get the information out to members.

We were most pleased to see that membership in general had a positive view of leadership with almost 86% of responding members rating leadership at "Doing Moderately Well" or higher. Less than 11% of membership chose "Slightly well" or "Not at all well." Clearly there is still work to be done, but we are glad to know that we are on the right path.

Look for a link to the survey results to be posted on the website soon.

## Dates to Remember

### September 8<sup>th</sup>

School Board Regular Meeting @ 6 pm

### September 9<sup>th</sup>

Yes on M Campaign Kick-Off  
Cedar Middle School @ 5:30 pm  
(Wear your school shirts)

### September 12<sup>th</sup>

**HTA Social** – Beef O'Brady's in Hesperia  
3 pm – 6 pm

Remember that important dates are also posted on the website

