



Your Union, Your Voice Your Newsletter

Hesperia Teachers Association

December 2013

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Education is the most powerful weapon
which you can use to change the world—
Nelson Mandela

President's Message

Education in America has always been called in to question. The latest PISA test, Program for International Student Assessment, is being used to add fuel to the fire in support of those who are advocating against our profession. On the surface the results place the United States just above average. This is nothing new.

For years "experts" have claimed that we have a national crisis in education. Yet the products of our educational system are the ones that landed and returned safely from the moon, travelled to Mars several times, digitized information, put a computer in your hand, and increased survival rate of some cancers to 90 percent to name a few accomplishments. This year alone, graduates of our educational system won 9 Nobel prizes, while countries like Singapore have never won. In total we have 350 Nobel Prizes; 3 times the number of any other nation.

We have been able to do this in spite of all the politicians with their "experts" holding sanctions over our heads, constricting our resources and curriculum and disparaging our profession. What we do cannot be measured on a test in a momentary snapshot. It is in the nurturing of growth and development of learning over a lifetime that is the true measure of what we do.

Members Benefits

Did you know there are over 325,000 members of CTA? Because of our purchasing power, we are able to negotiate valuable benefits, programs and services for our members.

Of all the benefits and programs available to CTA members, our long list of discounts on retail shopping, entertainment and vacation destinations are probably the most popular among our members. Because when it's time to go see a movie, get away for the weekend, plan a family vacation or just do some shopping, CTA members have an array of discounts and travel services right at their fingertips.

<http://www.cta.org/Member-Services/Member-Benefits/Discounts-and-Travel.aspx>

Your Rep. Council

Canyon Ridge

Tanalee Jackson

Carmel

Barbara Beechum

Cedar

Krista Rodriguez
Renee Singer

Cottonwood

Robert Balder

Cypress

Russell Reinhardt

DO

Katrina Jackson

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

Vernette Hansen

Did You Know?

Did you know that one of our own, **HTA Vice President Gordon Williamson**, has a long history of supporting union causes and civil rights?

In the mid 60's Gordon left his home in New York to support voter rights for blacks in Mississippi. As an election worker in 1964 he worked to ensure that blacks in the south would be able to vote and was arrested for his efforts.

Normally we would not celebrate the civil disobedience of one of our members, but in this case we are proud to know someone who fought for justice in such an important part of our nation's history.

Soon after, while running a tutoring program for inner city youth in New York City, Gordon interviewed with the National Farm Workers Ministry. He moved to Delano and began working in the Huelga School which is the school attended by the children of the striking farm workers led by Cesar Chavez. (Chavez's children also attended the school.)

A young Psychology graduate who spent some time working with Gordon at the Huelga School in the early 70's wrote that...

"Gordon was really into Cuisenaire rods to help the kids understand math relationships. He was also into Jean Piaget and modeled our teaching to this theory of child learning. The Huelga School was not just some "nice" program. It was a serious academic/experiential school with specific goals."

<http://www.ufwstories.com/story/view/the-huelga-school-and-more>

Gordon and his work at the Huelga School were highlighted more than once in the Farm Workers publication "El Marciano" You will find his picture in the February 1970 edition.

<http://farmworkermovement.com/ufwarchives/elmalcriado/1970/February%201-28,%201970%20%20No%20.PDF.pdf>

http://farmworkermovement.com/ufwarchives/elmalcriado/SFSU/January_15_1971.pdf

(If you are interested, more editions are available at <http://farmworkermovement.com/archives/>)

We are proud to have someone with such a rich history choose HUSD as a place to continue to fight for social justice and workers' rights.

Your Rep. Council
(con't)

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
Mike Egan
Shane Haldeman
Brett Simmons

Topaz

Gina Graham

Dates to Remember

December 20 - Teacher Workday
December 23-January 3 - Winter Break
School Resumes on **January 6**
January 20 – MLK Day (no school)

By the numbers...

What do Voters Think?

1. Voters continue to have a favorable view of public school teachers (**70%-76% favorable**)
2. Most voters think the quality of teaching has stayed the same over the past 5 years (**60% say better or the same**)
3. Teacher unions continue to be well liked by voters (**around 40% favorable**)
4. Voters blame elected leaders for failing to adequately fund schools (**30%**) & parents who are not involved in child's education (**19%**) for the problems facing public schools.

Source: *California Teachers Association*



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.