





We protect public schools

New CTA leader outlines to-do list for teachers

Public education is the cornerstone of our

democracy. It's the great equalizer that provides upward mobility for the economically disadvantaged. Public schools have sustained and grown our middle class and have been the foundation for outstanding achievements in science, medicine, literature, the arts and countless other fields where California public school graduates have excelled.

It makes me proud to be the new president of the California Teachers Association. Our advocacy has pushed California to lead the nation on so many key education issues. With CTA support, our state has moved away from the unfair, inaccurate system of measuring school and student success by a single test score. The new California Dashboard provides more meaningful information on school and district progress so educators and parents can make better-informed decisions about how to improve student learning.

We're also funding our schools in a new way. California's Local Control Funding Formula, modeled in part after a CTA-developed program, allocates additional resources to students living with more challenging circumstances, and allows parents in all public schools far more control over how to best utilize funding. Millions of additional dollars have been directed to support students of color, students living in poverty, students with special needs and to students in foster care.

As the parent of a special needs student, I am acutely aware of the role our public schools serve in helping all students excel, regardless of disabilities, language barriers, ethnicity, income levels or zip codes.

CTA is supporting the Schools and Communities First Initiative on the November 2020 ballot, which would close corporate property tax loopholes and generate \$11 billion a year for neighborhood schools and community services.

California is the fifth largest economy in the world, but our state still ranks near the bottom of the 50 states in per-pupil-funding. This is inexcusable. We spend nearly \$2,500 below the national average and a whopping \$10,259



Toby Boyd, who taught kindergarten in the Elk Grove Unified School District, became president of the California Teachers Association on June 26.

below top-ranked Vermont. While Gov. Gavin Newsom's budget has prioritized education, it's still not nearly enough to close that gap.

CTA is also leading the way to counter the waste, fraud and abuse that has poisoned our charter school process. California public schools still face threats from school privatizers and others who put profits before kids. The rapid and unregulated growth of corporate charter schools has devastated some school districts and led to widespread abuse.

In May, one prominent Los Angeles charter school operator was sentenced to 30 months in prison for misspending \$3.2 million in public funds, much of that on expensive clothing and luxury hotel stays. That same month, II leaders of online charter A3 Education were indicted for scamming \$80 million meant for students, with some of that money being used to buy a luxury home in San Juan Capistrano. One A3 co-founder faces more than 40 years in prison; the other may have fled the country. It's time we put a stop to the unregulated growth of charter schools and pass laws to implement greater local oversight and accountability.

California educators invite parents and communities across the state to join us in support of initiatives that bring much needed resources to neighborhood public schools and of legislation that make sure it's used there. We look forward to working with parents and lawmakers in the coming months to advocate for the public education all California students deserve.