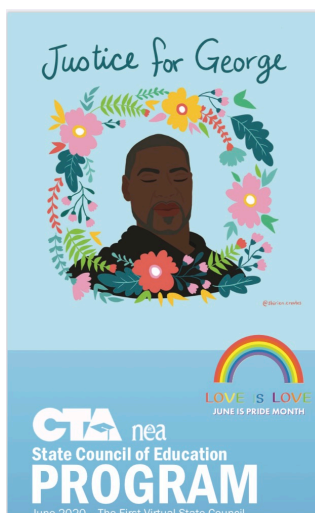


JUNE 2020 STATE COUNCIL REPORT

By Kathleen Sullivan, Ph.D. & Samantha Weiss



Program Cover from June 2020
State Council

Dear CTA Members:

Our virtual State Council was held last week and it was impressive to see some 800 teachers be included in a series of virtual meetings and assemblies in which we were able to all participate and vote. Here is our report.

CTA has been working to ensure the safety of students and staff as we look to plans for reopening our schools. Since the ides of March, our educators have worked day in and day out with our families to make distance learning happen. We educators have turned a series of historic events into a series of empowering teachable moments. CTA has been working hard with the Governor, our State Superintendent of Schools, Tony Thurmond, and other key Covid-19 task force members to make sure that educators play an integral part in the decision-making that will allow local districts to reopen. Educators and their unions will negotiate with school districts to ensure the needs of their students and communities are met as we look to the 'how' and the 'when' of reopening our schools.

As you embark on some well-deserved summer breaks, please remain in close contact with your Association representatives and leadership teams. There will be a need for information to flow as local chapters survey membership and formulate plans for the fall.



The 2020-2021 budget for CTA passed and will include an increase of \$17 per member annually but it is necessary that we invest resources in passing the Schools and Communities First initiative, which will be on the November ballot. This initiative will force corporations to pay their fair share of taxes. While they may try to cry poor in these shaky economic times, we will do whatever is needed to defeat their efforts to confuse the public. This tax will only effect large corporations and CTA will continue to help other community stakeholders in ensuring that our parks, schools, hospitals, and other essential services can be adequately funded moving forward. Education friendly candidates at every level of government are identified and get support from CTA. Your union works year-round to ensure that governing bodies all across the country are making decisions that benefit education and educators.

The funding of career technical education has been identified as being disproportionately affected by recent budget cuts. CTA has made a major policy action to protect Technical Education, Alternative Education, and Adult education. These programs are a lifeline for many of our students and the essential supports that these schools provide to our communities must not be allowed to be dismantled.

Our very own Temisha Brame, of the Centinela Valley Secondary Teachers Association, and Chair of the African American Caucus of CTA was featured at the beginning of Saturday morning's First General Session. We close with her powerful speech, putting CTA on notice. May her words resonate in our hearts as we all re-examine what it means to each of us to be an ally in this cause:

"The California Teachers Association African American Caucus and its members have experienced oppression and racism in this country, in this state and within the power structure of this organization, for many years.

Our strength and resolve to endure in the face of injustice, is no more and today we demand action.

The merger of the American Teachers Association (ATA) and National Education Association (NEA), can trace the historical injustices faced by those who surrendered so that the NEA could and remains in existence. Today the NEA boasts being the largest labor union in the nation. It must not be lost that the compromise of that merger DID NOT include the systematic push out of educators of color, nationwide. The merger DID NOT intend to segregate educators of color to the most impoverished areas of this country to deliver instruction to what many describe as the most impoverished students. The merger DID NOT intend to allow California to historically miss the mark on achieving the 3-1(g) goal because of a structural deficit that undermines accomplishment.

While many organizations, across the world, recognize and grieve with Black people, it is time to DO THE RIGHT THING! In 1989, in the fictional film by Spike Lee, with the same title, we witnessed Radio Raheem be smothered to death by a law enforcement agent while claiming I CAN'T BREATHE. In 2014, in real life, we witnessed Eric Garner render the same fate as Raheem...proclaiming, I CAN'T BREATHE before his life was extinguished. Even more recently, we saw George Floyd, pleading for his life and uttering the same words...I CAN'T BREATHE, before dying at the hands of a law enforcement agent (while others looked on).

Now, like all the times before when law enforcement agents used deadly force to execute their sworn responsibility; we say Enough is Enough and we demand accountability.

The CTA African American Caucus calls on the California Teachers Association for immediate action to begin the restoration of communities and school campuses, statewide.

We call for:

- The creation and implementation of policy that denounces police brutality;*
- The creation and implementation of policy that encourages restorative practices rather than law enforcement on school campuses in California;*
- The creation and advocacy for legislation calling for accountability of law enforcement agents who exercise excessive force;*
- Ethnic Studies to be infused in all curriculum taught in California schools, starting in the Fall 2021;*
- The necessary steps to be taken to advocate for Implicit Bias training as a credentialing requirement for those seeking credentials in California beginning January 1, 2021.*
- Investigation of the structural deficits that enable California to historically fail to accomplish the 3-1(g) goal. Take action to revise the existing model to ensure achievement of the 3-1(g) goal in preparation for the 2021 NEA Representative Assembly and beyond*
- The development and implementation of racial justice trainings on anti-racist teaching, that is member led and available for educators, staff and management at every CTA level (state, region and locally).*

If CTA is truly “grieving and outraged by the hateful racism and white supremacy that continues to terrorize our communities of color”... and “the murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor; we must confront the institutional racism that exists in our systems and structures”...NOW.

The California Teachers Association is hereby challenged to lead the way of Racial and Social Justice in education in California. In the fell clutch of circumstance....yet unbowed.



Temisha Brame Carter –BVSC President & Chair of the African American Caucus for CTA

