



STATE COUNCIL REPORT - JANUARY 2022

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Dear Members,

This past weekend was my 7th virtual State Council meeting, and while I was disappointed that we couldn't be in person, it was clear that there is much work to be done over the coming months. Council is asking that all teachers contact our **State Legislature to urge them to extend the supplemental paid sick leave for workers**. It will only take a few minutes. This is an important part of stopping the spread of COVID-19. Your assemblymember can be reached at **1-877-959-1867**. Please take a couple of minutes to call. The current assembly bill, if passed, would at least be retroactive to January 1, 2022, and would provide paid sick leave for up to two weeks for anyone who needs to stay home due to a COVID positive test of themselves or a child who they are caring for.

Schools are still being held harmless to a loss of ADA based school funding so as not to disrupt the school system. There is also current legislation and ongoing budget discussions around altering the ADA component of school funding formulas but for now, ADA "hold harmless" has been extended.

Several CTA policy changes have been made available for first read. This means that we bring these potential policy changes back to local chapters so teachers can weigh in. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any input, concerns or questions.

The Teacher Education & Academic Freedom Committee is recommending for first read the following language. They intentionally avoided adding the word "controversial" but this language clearly stems from the **pressures that districts have been placing on teachers due to fear mongering** over whether educators are teaching critical race theory or having hidden Marxist agendas.

"Recognizing that our knowledge regarding many academic subjects will continue to evolve, educators must have the academic freedom to teach topics that reflect the emerging body of academic and/or scientific knowledge and understanding in their respective curricula and select instructional materials as well as methods to meet those educational goals."

The Retirement Committee had some good news to report. While the last quarter of 2021 showed significant market volatility, **CalSTRS will soon be fully funded through 2041, 5 years ahead of schedule**. Our CalSTRS fund remains quite strong. 76% of our assets have been in US real estate. Furthermore, of our foreign investments, 2% has been in China, but yielding 10% of our revenues.

To help with sub shortages, the **Governor has suspended the 180-day return-to-work prohibition for retirees** who wish to come back into our schools as subs.

The Testing Committee alerted us that districts should not be using **Interim CAASPP test results** for any high stakes markers. These were meant to be **purely formative** assessments. The State Board of Education approved **modifying the Physical Fitness Test by removing BMI from the FITNESSGRAM** because of concerns about its fairness to students with disabilities and those students who identify as gender-nonbinary, as well as negative impacts on students' body image.

There is new policy language to give our **Special Education teachers protected time**. Many districts have been pulling Special Ed. teachers away from their other duties and this has impacted them very negatively.

“CTA believes all educators retain the right to participate in the development of IEPs for students for whom they serve and be invited to participate in such IEP meetings. CTA supports a unified and consistent approach to IEPs. CTA supports student-centered IEP meetings that utilize measurable current data, are strength-based, and validate parent and student feedback. CTA believes that all special education staff need protected time during the contracted school day for IEP testing, training, preparation, collaboration, and other IEP casework duties, in addition to the contractual mandatory preparation time provided to all certificated educators and Education Support Professionals.”

Chapter members have until **January 28th to run for the NEA Representative Assembly**. Any member can run and attending the RA is a wonderful experience. This summer, they moved the location to Chicago and hopefully it will be in person. More details can be found [here](#). The application for candidacy can be found [here](#).

Chapters that would like to apply for **PAC money for a school board candidate may apply through the end of April**. Please consider applying early as it is anticipated that there will be high demand for these funds.

There are quite a few **scholarships available** to educators and their children. Please check them out [here](#).

Several **conferences** have been moved virtual or postponed. Please check [here](#). These are great opportunities to get some professional development. Those that have moved on-line are free of charge.

Black History Month is coming up and CTA has some amazing resources. Please check them out [here](#). The popular Tuesday Takeover meetings are also videotaped and can be found in a link of this page.

A link to the entire January State Council Report is [here](#).

On Sunday morning, during the 2nd General Assembly, **CTA's Executive Director, Joe Boyd delivered an amazing speech** to the Representatives. I have a link to his speech [here](#). Joe helps connect the dots between the assault on Americans' voting rights and the assault on public education. His speech is a precious call to action and it is incredibly eye opening.

Educator and Author Stephen Covey once said, **“Progress will travel at the speed of trust.”** Thank you for trusting me to represent you at the State Council these past couple of years. It has been a great honor to represent my fellow teachers who are working their craft in the hardest of times. I'm so proud to be a teacher.

Sincerely, Samantha Weiss,
Teacher and State Council Representative