

Council Decides

Council Votes to Support Governor's Tax Plan

Following a thoughtful and spirited debate, the State Council of Education accepted the recommendation of its Political Involvement Committee and [voted to support](#) the governor's tax plan on the November ballot, which provides additional funding for schools and pays down the state's debt.

The governor's initiative, known as the Schools and Local Public Safety Protection Act of 2012, raises about \$7 billion annually for education and other essential services by raising income taxes on the wealthy and instituting a temporary half-cent sales tax hike. In signing on in support of the initiative, CTA joins what promises to be a broad coalition of labor, education and business groups that have gotten behind the proposal.

Following the Council meeting Sunday, January 29, CTA President Dean E. Vogel stated, "Educators know that California cannot continue to cut its way out of ongoing budget problems. We also know that not everyone in California is paying their fair share, and that's why we are supporting the governor's tax proposal, which taxes the wealthiest Californians in order to bring additional revenue to our schools, colleges and other essential public services.

"The governor's initiative is the only initiative that provides additional revenues for our classroom, closes the state budget deficit, and guarantees that local communities will receive funds to pay for the realignment of local health and public safety services that the Legislature approved last year. It's time to put California back on track, and this initiative is the best way to do that. It's the right choice for our students and their families, our communities and our state."

CTA President Vogel Describes Challenges Ahead

In his address to State Council on Saturday morning, CTA President Dean E. Vogel described the political landscape facing CTA during what is promising to be a very challenging and demanding year leading up to the November 2012 election. He described what's at stake, with particular emphasis on a new Corporate Power Grab initiative (also known as the [Paycheck Deception initiative](#)) that has gained steam thanks to the backing of the super-wealthy.

This initiative must be defeated, said Vogel, as he described the very real scenario on the horizon if this corporate power grab initiative were to pass. He asked Council to imagine 50 kids in a classroom, the elimination of bargaining rights, no public education supporters on local school boards, and vouchers, merit pay and more high-stakes tests.

"If we left it up to the CEOs, how long do you think we'd have a 40-hour work week, a secure retirement, and safe working conditions — all things our union and others fought hard for? Those behind this deceptive initiative aren't seeking to protect your voice as an individual; they are seeking to annihilate it. They know that as a union of educators we will always put students before profits and learning before mandates," he said. [Read full speech.](#)

CTA Executive Director Describes Why It's Critical to Be Involved in Politics

Looking ahead to the upcoming elections this year, CTA Executive Director Carolyn Doggett told Council she holds hope for a successful campaign because of the work CTA members do every day in the face of challenges. "You are the heroes of this generation. I have hope because I know that when we all come together and work as a team, we are successful," she said.

"It's what makes us a stronger union, a stronger state and a stronger nation. I have hope because I know, despite whatever obstacles those who want to destroy unions and the middle class throw in our way this November, they will not break us," she said. "We will take action! We will make our voices heard! And we will not be silenced! So today, I want to start with the hope I draw from all of you. You are real heroes. You open minds and inspire greatness."

Perhaps the greatest challenge for CTA is the "Paycheck Deception" initiative. She called the initiative nothing but a corporate power grab that would prevent CTA from contributing to state or local candidates and initiatives.

Doggett said the initiative “is an attack that goes to the heart and soul of everything we do,” and told Council, “We’ll stay out of politics when they stay out of our classrooms.” [Read full speech.](#)

Other action: Council elects NEA directors, Approves Candidates for Statewide Election

Council welcomed this year’s [Read Across America](#) honorary co-chairs James Burks, Neil Klayman and Barry Chung, the authors and illustrators of Gabby and Gator and Boris Ate a Thesaurus. The annual Read Across America celebration takes place on March 2.

- Greeted Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship winner Cathy Creasia, a classroom teacher and member of United Teachers Los Angeles.
- Congratulated the San Ramon Valley Education Association, winner of the Jose Colmenares Award for Outstanding Chapter Communications, for its successful campaign to elect three school board members in a highly contested race.
- By waiving the secret ballot, elected: NEA Director – District 7 Gerri Gandolfo; NEA Director – District 8 Karl Kildow; NEA Director – District 9 Eric Padget; NEA Director – District 16 Gilda Maria Bloom. Padget was elected to the unexpired term until Aug. 31. Also elected by waiving the ballot was CTA/ABC Committee member Loren Scott (District J-LA). Colleen Briner-Schmidt was elected NEA Director for District 5.
- Approved a recommendation from the Early Childhood Education Committee: “That CTA will take every step necessary to combat the threatened elimination of Early Childhood Education (ECE) and all Preschool programs.”
- Endorsed and called upon local chapters to support the Occupy movement’s [Statewide Week of Action in Defense of Public Education](#), March 1-8, 2012, including the March 5 rally at the state Capitol.
- Took an Oppose position on the Government Spending Limit Act of 2012, on the recommendation of the Political Involvement Committee.
- Approved [candidate recommendations](#) for state Legislature and U.S. Congress in the June primary.
- Voted to support efforts to pass a constitutional amendment to overturn the recent Supreme Court “Citizens United” decision which allows corporations to contribute unlimited amounts to political campaigns.

Delegates Videoed about the Importance of Political Involvement

To help launch the upcoming campaign, CTA State Council members were invited to be filmed giving [short messages](#) about why it was important for CTA to be politically involved.

Among those delivering a strong message were Dennis Kelly and Susan Solomon, president and secretary of United Educators of San Francisco. They each talked about the UESF-sponsored Prop. A, a \$28 million per year parcel tax that voters approved in 2010. The new funding has allowed the district to recruit and retain quality teachers with increases in base pay, bonuses for working in hard-to-staff schools and in hard-to-fill subject areas, and retention bonuses.

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