



# WASHINGTON TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

## STATE COUNCIL REPORT

21 – 23 October 2011

Don Stauffer

### CTA COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Alternative, Career and Technical Education Committee

- ▲ This committee received a report that showed that Finland, which is considered to have one of the best education systems in the world, has 40% of its students enrolled in vocational/technical programs.

#### Budget Committee

- ▲ Zero projected dues increase for next year, with decrease projected for following year.
- ▲ Program Budget Survey is online at the CTA site until Thanksgiving – all members are encouraged to participate.

#### Civil Rights in Education (CRE) committee

- ▲ US Department of Education has issued a report titled "Our Future, Our Teachers – A Mini-Blueprint for Teacher Education Reform and Improvement". This report proposes that K-12 student performance not only be tied to the classroom teacher, but also to that teacher's preparation program, institution of higher learning, and its professors.

#### Political Involvement Committee

- An initiative that would ban unions and corporations from using member/employee money for political purposes without approval will be on the Nov. 2012 ballot. CTA calls this the "Paycheck Deception Initiative". As things stand now, corporations already do not use employee funds for political purposes. Corporations are, however, free to spend corporate funds. The initiative would not change this. The intent is to thwart the political power of unions. This is similar to Proposition 75, which was sponsored by Governor Schwarzenegger.
- The committee recommended that up to \$8 million from CTA's Initiative Fund be authorized for initiatives in the 2012 election.
- The committee presented recommendations for political endorsements for both state and California-based political offices. The recommendation process included placing candidates into tiers, based upon their support for education issues. The tiering process might be useful for WTA, if WTA decides to become

active in the political arena.

- For more information on individual lawmakers as well as how they voted on legislation of interest, go to the CTA web site and enter "making the grade" in the search box.

### Retirement Committee

- ▲ The GASB (Governmental Accounting Standards Board) has issued new rules that require school districts to disclose future liabilities related to teacher pensions. Depending upon the calculated rate of return, these disclosures would range from \$56 to \$150 billion for districts located in California. Since pensions are paid by CAL-STRs and are backed by the State, CTA believes that these liabilities are not local districts' responsibility. The major impetus behind the new rules seems to be the attempt to make government employee pensions appear as a major source of our current economic problems.

### Student Support Services Committee

- SB 161 was signed into law by the governor. This is the law that will allow non-medical trained "volunteers" to rectally administer Diastat to students suffering certain types of seizures.

### Teacher Evaluation and Academic Freedom Committee

- ▲ The committee strongly recommends all CTA members take the CTA Evaluation Survey. The results of this survey will be used by the Evaluation Workgroup to make recommendations. The survey is located at:  
<http://surveymonkey.com/s/CTAevalSurvey>.
- ▲ The committee is searching for strong teacher-advocates to serve on the Commission on Professional Competency panels. Nominations should be submitted by January 2012. (Application is available from Don Stauffer).

### COUNCIL Highlights

- CTA has joined the battle in Ohio to repeal S.B. 5, which bans public employees from being able to collectively bargain for benefits and requires employees to pay a certain percentage of their health and pension benefits. The repeal measure is known as "Issue 2". The election is on Nov. 8.
- The documentary film, American Teacher, was shown at State Council. It is considered by some to be the response to Waiting for Superman, and follows the lives of four teachers as they deal with low salaries, paltry classroom resources, and other related issues.