

## **CCNews**

## **Quarterly Newsletter of the California Council on Teacher Education**

Volume 34, Number 1, Spring Issue, March 2023

Terrelle Sales (Pepperdine University), Editor Published for CCTE by Caddo Gap Press, 3145 Geary Boulevard, PMB 275, San Francisco, CA 94118

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# Plan to Attend! CCTE Spring 2023 SPAN Conference



March 13-14, 2023 The Citizen Hotel, Sacramento and virtually

See preview, tentative program, registration information, and call for proposals on pages 6-8.



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# Being Seen, Being Heard. Being Represented, Being Respected: Advocacy as a Humanizing Practice

### A Message from CCTE President Betina Hsieh

Last week, I had the privilege of being on the opening plenary panel entitled "Uniting to Advocate for Teachers and the Teaching Profession: Conversations with Cross-Disciplinary Leaders" as part of the Annual Conference of the Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators. On

this panel, teacher educators (including myself) brought perspectives from their work in preparing preservice teachers in literacy, social studies, science, and serving multilingual learners in mathematics. What struck me is that, while teacher education often occurs in siloes, structured and departmentalized in ways that separate us from one another at the university, keep us from working in close collaboration with current educators, families, and communities, and create false binaries between theory and practice, we are struggling with many of the same challenges as we seek to humanize our

profession and our work, as we seek to be recognized for the knowledge, experiences, and expertise we bring to our work, and as we seek to serve teacher candidates and students in increasingly polarized and contentious times.

One of the common issues we are confronting involves reductionist curriculum that is moving away from critical thinking and towards bans on texts, perspectives, scientific topics, and histories deemed as "controversial" or potentially causing discomfort. The irony of discomfort is that we cannot grow without our initial ideas being challenged or without the introduction of new information and perspectives. Many

banned texts involve characters of color or characters from other marginalized communities living their lives; many outlawed perspectives present facts or provide affirming counternarratives of communities that create a fuller understanding of diverse experiences in this country; many

> "controversial" scientific topics help empower young people to confront issues in science that have a dramatic impact on their lives; and many censored histories push us to reckon with more complex, nuanced, and richer understandings of the many peoples whose lives are connected with the land on which, and communities within which, and next to which, we live. Expansive curriculum allows for a fuller picture of our shared humanity. Censorship deprives students of opportunities for learning and growth. Academic freedom is central to our work as educators. In teacher education, we must raise our voices loudly against such efforts to restrict



curriculum (particularly anti-bias, anti-racist curriculum, curriculum that centers the voices and experiences of communities of color and indigenous communities, and practices that encourage critical thinking in the classroom) as the CCTE board has done in their statement in opposition to policies of censorship adopted last November (and available for reading on the CCTE website and in the Winter 2022 issue of *CCNews*).

Another issue which arose on the panel was the deprofessionalization of teaching and teacher education which

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### A Message from CCTE President Betina Hsieh

(Continued from previous page)

comes at a time when more is expected of teachers with no increase in resources. Instead, we have seen only an increase of educators facing the blame for all of society's ills. One only needs to take a quick gander at Teacher Twitter, Facebook or Tik-Tok to see the exhaustion and burnout that teachers are facing. In my own research that surveyed 981 educators and former educators nationwide, nearly three-fourths of respondents (73.39%; N=720) said that the multiple, competing demands placed upon teachers contributed to challenging working conditions. Nearly twothirds (64.22%, N=630) cited a lack of respect for teacher professionalism, and over half noted that challenges related to student behaviors, large class sizes, reform fatigue (in the face of multiple, successive reforms teachers are expected to implement), and differentiation present challenges to their working lives. These challenges point to the need for robust teacher education, grounded in theory-informed praxis that is responsive to both teachers and students, and that honors the very real experiences they are having and the very real supports that they need.

In my presentation and my recent work investigating the current discourse of "crisis" in education and the teacher workforce, I have called into question what we mean when we talk about crisis. While it is critical to address wages and working conditions of teachers, my research leads me to believe that the real crises in education center around dehumanization and de-professionalization of teaching. In the research cited above, 83.5% of respondents reported experiencing mental or physical health challenges which they attribute to their work in teaching. The top three factors these educators cited as playing a role in their decision to leave or consider leaving the profession were: (1) a lack of respect for my professionalism, knowledge, and investment in teaching; (2) a lack of respect for teaching generally (i.e., in society); and (3) the number of expectations my role encompasses. The associated qualitative data tells stories of educators feeling uncared for and disrespected in schools by their administrative teams, colleagues, students, families, and feeling like they have little choice but to leave their classrooms, schools, or the profession itself.

So, what do we do as teacher educators, responsible for supporting those entering teaching and those in classrooms? If we are indeed facing dual crises of dehumanization and deprofessionalization grounded in disrespect for the complex work of teaching, we must resist the narratives and practices that would render our work and educators themselves as irrelevant or lacking expertise. We must see and recognize one another as well as the assets, beauty, and experiences of the educators with whom we work. We must actively listen to what students, families, community members, teacher candidates, educators, our teacher education colleagues, and those served by our programs need to thrive, respecting their perspectives, experiences, and expertise, and challenging

them, when necessary, to push beyond what they know to serve the spirits, intellect, and humanity of those in our learning communities. We must push for representation, access, equity, and inclusion to move towards true belonging and justice for all people. We must model respect for educators, while contributing our own expertise, expecting and commanding respect for ourselves and our field as teacher educators, advocating for the importance of a foundation of strong dispositional, pedagogical, and content knowledge to fully honor students.

We must do this in all the roles and spaces in which we find ourselves: as parents, educators, community members, civic leaders, and teacher educators, and we must do this at many levels: local (school, community, district), state, and national. One way to do this is through legislative advocacy. The goal of CCTE's Spring Policy Action Network (SPAN) conference in Sacramento on March 13-14 (with the Field Coordinators Forum on March 15) is to bring us together to learn from one another, to learn about and contribute to policy decisions that impact our work, and to advocate with state legislators for those areas central to our world and our work as teacher educators. We do this, always remembering and holding on to our humanity and the hope of (teacher) education in which educators and learners alike truly feel seen, heard, represented, and respected in ways that promote and encourage their growth and well-being. I hope to see you at SPAN (either on-site or virtually) or in another capacity soon, and until then, may we walk and work together towards a better world where we can be our most fully human selves, in schools, families, communities, and everywhere we teach and learn together.

> —**Betina Hsieh**, CCTE President California State University, Long Beach betina.hsieh@csulb.edu

# Plan to Attend! CCTE Spring 2023 SPAN Conference



March 13-14, 2023 The Citizen Hotel, Sacramento and virtually

## **Update from the CCTE Communications Committee**

By Sarah Johnson & Angelica Reynosa
Co-Chairs, CCTE Communications Committee

The Communications Committee of the California Council on Teacher Education (CCTE) is active throughout the year. Our virtual meetings are monthly, and we continue to work to establish a regular cycle of communication with CCTE members in a variety of ways: through *CCNews*, the *CCTE eNews Briefs*, updating the website regularly, listserv e-mails, and social media (Facebook: California Council on Teacher Education; Instagram: calcouncilteachereducation; & Twitter: @CalCouncil).

We are always looking for new Communications Committee members! To get involved contact Committee co-chairs Angelica Reynosa or Sarah Johnson or CCTE Executive Secretary Alan Jones if you are interested in joining us!

> angelica.reynosa@fresno.edu sarah.johnson@fresno.edu alan.jones@ccte.org

## CCNews Call for Articles and News

The goal of *CCNews*, the quarterly newsletter of the California Council on Teacher Education (CCTE), is to serve as a forum for CCTE members to share information and celebrate our successes. We encourage all SIG chairs and concurrent session, roundtable, and poster session presenters at CCTE semi-annual conferences to write about their sessions and presentations for the newsletter. Other brief (5-6 single-spaced pages or 1,500-2000 words maximum, excluding reference list and an abstract) articles about teacher education are also welcomed. Just e-mail your submissions as an attachment to the newsletter editor, Terrelle Sales, at Pepperdine University:

terrelle.sales@pepperdine.edu

The deadline for article submissions for the Summer 2023 issue of the newsletter is May 1.

We also look forward to reports in each issue from CCTE officers and committees and from the associated organizations and SIGs, plus updates on upcoming CCTE conferences and activities, as well as brief articles on new programs, research, and other events in the California teacher education community. The deadline for these news updates for the Summer 2023 issue is May 15. Email your submissions to:

terrelle.sales@pepperdine.edu

## Upcoming CCTE Conferences

Spring 2023 March 13-14 Sacramento (and virtual)

Theme:
Spring Policy Action Network

Fall 2023 October 19-21 San Diego (and virtual)

#### Theme:

"The Ethnic Studies Moment in California Public Education: Preparing the Field for Historic Change"

Spring 2024 March 11-12 Sacramento (and virtual)

Theme:
Spring Policy Action Network

# 2023 Association of Teacher Educators Annual Meeting

March 25-29 Jacksonville, Florida

"Our Professional Journeys: Navigating Roles, Research, Relationships, and Responsibilities"

For information www.atel.org

## From the Desk of the CCTE Executive Secretary

Following are updates on the primary activities of the California Council on Teacher Education as we move through this 2022-2023 membership year:

### **Spring 2023 SPAN Conference**

The CCTE Spring 2023 SPAN (Spring Policy Action Network) Conference will be held March 13-14 at The Citizen Hotel in Sacramento as well as virtually for those who prefer. Elsewhere in this issue of *CCNews* you will find a preview of the Conference, the tentative two-day program, and the registration form. All CCTE delegates, members, and friends are encouraged to register and attend SPAN.

#### **Membership & Sponsorship**

Our membership numbers for the 2022-2023 year are the largest in the history of CCTE. We currently have 63 institutional members and 47 individual members this year, which exceeds our membership goal. Additional members are always welcome, so check the CCTE website for membership information and the on-line portal.

During this 2022-2023 year we are enjoying annual co-sponsorships of CCTE from the College of Education at California State University Los Angeles, the Graduate College of Education at San Francisco State University, the Department of Educator and Leadership Programs at the Office of the Chancellor of California State University, the School of Education at Loyola Marymount University, and the School of Leadership and Educational Sciences at the University of San Diego. Those institutions were listed as sponsors of the CCTE Fall 2022 Conference and will be similarly recognized throughout this membership years. We invite other institutions to join the annual sponsorship program which provides crucial financial support for our CCTE activities.

#### **Associated Organizations/Affiliated Organizations**

During this 2022-2023 year we have the participation of the Association of California Community College Teacher Education Programs (ACCCTEP), the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universites-Education (AICCU-ED), the California Alliance for Inclusive Schooling (CAIS), the California Alliance of Researchers for Equity in Education (CARE-ED), the California Association for Bilingual Teacher Education (CABTE), the California Association of Professors of Special Education/Teacher Education Division (CAPSE/TED), the California Association of School-University Partnerships (CASUP), and the Center for Reaching and Teaching the Whole Child (CRTWC) as CCTE associated organizations. These eight organizations have been recognized by CCTE as sharing our vision, goals, and activities on behalf of teacher education.

CCTE also serves as the state chapter of the two national teacher education organizations, the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE) and the Association of Teacher Educators (ATE), which we classify as affiliated organizations based on our role as their California state chapters. Our two vice presidents serve as our primary liaisons with those national organizations. In addition, CCTE is an affiliated member of Californians Together.

#### **New Faculty and Graduate Student Programs**

During this 2022-2023 membership year we again offer opportunities for participation in the CCTE New Faculty Support Program and the CCTE Graduate Student Support Program. Both programs are available and open to interested applicants for the current membership year and beyond. Information about the programs is available in each issue of the newsletter and on the CCTE website.

#### **Publications**

CCTE continues to be well served by *CCNews*, our quarterly newsletter, and the two journals we sponsor, *Issues in Teacher Education* and *Teacher Education Quarterly*. Members of the CCTE community are encouraged to submit manuscripts to the journals and the newsletter and to sign up as reviewers for either or both journals.

#### **Committees**

CCTE has several committees that operate in such areas as awards, communications, JEDI (justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion), membership, nominations and elections, PD4MT (professional development for mentor teachers), policy, and research, and all members and delegates are invited to participate on committees that interest them. Further information on our committees appears elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter.

#### **Annual Election**

The CCTE annual election in 2023 involves the election of the two Vice Presidents (Vice President for AACTE and Vice President for ATE) as well as three members of the Board of Directors. The Nominations and Elections Committeee has recruited candidates and the announcement of the election along with information on all nominated candidates has been emailed to all CCTE delegates and individual members along with a link to the on-line ballot. Voting will be open until noon on March 14 and the results will be announced that afternoon at the closing session of the SPAN Conference.

—Alan H. Jones CCTE Executive Secretary e-mail: alan.jones@ccte.org



## Newsletter of the California Council on Teacher Education

Volume 34, Number 1, Spring Issue, March 2023, Section 2—Conferences

Terrelle Sales (Pepperdine University), Editor Prepared for CCTE by Caddo Gap Press, 3145 Geary Boulevard, PMB 275, San Francisco, CA 94118

## **CCTE SPAN 2023 Conference** "Spring Policy Action Network"

By Cynthia Grutzik, Nicol Howard, & Pia Wong Co-Chairs, CCTE Policy Committee

The California Council on Teacher Education's annual spring conference in Sacramento is the Spring Policy Action Network, or SPAN. Designed for capacity-building, advocacy, and learning, SPAN 2023 will continue to position CCTE as a powerful voice for educator preparation. The CCTE Policy Committee, which plans the SPAN Conferences, would like you to take note of three important highlights as you look ahead to March 13-14.

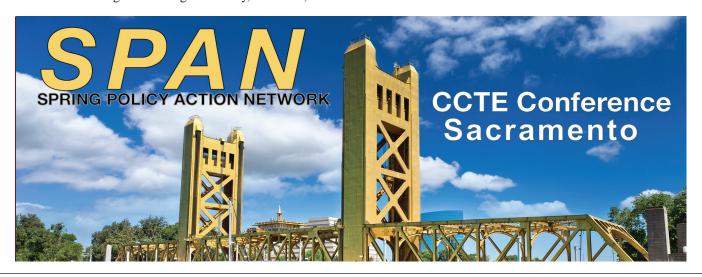
First, we will again meet in person at The Citizen Hotel in 2023, with virtual options. A Conference registration form follows on page 11 of this newsletter. Should The Citizen Hotel be sold out for our dates, there are other hotels available in the downtown area, and meeting at The Citizen puts us right in the middle of the city, within blocks of the Capitol. Nearby coffee shops, restaurants, and parks make it a great place to reconnect with colleagues.

Second, in 2023 we are again meeting on a Monday-Tuesday format. Plan to arrive by 9:00 a.m. on Monday, March 13 and conference sessions will end by 3:00 p.m. Tuesday, March 14. This early-in-the-week schedule reflects feedback we have received from legislative offices about the availability of legislators and staff. Our appointments with legislative offices, which will be virtual via Zoom again, will be scheduled during the morning on Tuesday, March 14, and

will give us more opportunities to talk with policymakers. Otherwise all the same conference features will be present, including: associated group meetings for ACCCTEP, AICCU-ED, CABTE, CAPSE, and CASUP, plus the field coordinators on Wednesday; research roundtables; policy speakers and allies; and of course, our "day on the hill" activities. Please see the tentative schedule on next page of this newsletter.

Finally, we have conducted a CCTE Policy Survey again this year to gather knowledge and insight about the current state of educator preparation from a cross-section of constituencies that underscores CCTE's unique membership and reach. Pre-service and in-service educators and those who prepare and support them have had an opportunity to respond to the survey, thereby allowing CCTE to provide policymakers as well as the CCTE membership with comprehensive insights from educators across the state. The REAL Lab at the University of Redlands has handled IRB approval and data analysis, and will issue summary reports, making this survey an effective tool for our conversations with legislators and staff. Big thanks to all who have helped circulate and respond to the survey.

We are excited about these steps to continually enhance our SPAN Conferences, and are looking forward to seeing our CCTE friends and colleagues in Sacramento on March 13 and 14.



## Tentative CCTE Spring 2023 SPAN Conference Program

Monday, March 13:

9:00 a.m. - Meet and Greet Breakfast: In-Person - With Optional SIG Meetings

10:00 a.m. - Break

10:15 a.m. - Session One: In-Person & Zoom

Welcome to SPAN 2023 - President's Welcome by Betina Hsieh & Policy Committee Co-Chairs and Conference Overview.

10:30 a.m. - Session Two: In-Person & Zoom

California's Educator Preparation Priorities - Presentation by Chelsea Kelley, Lead Consultant to Assembly Education Committee; Overview of SPAN 2023 Survey Results and Analysis;

Introduction to Talking Points and Materials for Legislative Visits; Sign Ups for Legislative Visits;

Noon - Session Three: In-Person

Advocacy Lunch - Speaker: Patrick O'Donnell, former member of the California Asseembly, "Reflections on 8 Years in the Legislature."

1:15 p.m. Session Four: In-Person & Zoom

Research Roundtables: Accepted Proposals and Invited Presenters

1:20 p.m. - Roundtable One; 1:50 p.m. - Roundtable Two; 2:20 p.m. - Roundtable Three

2:50 p.m. - Break

3:00 p.m. - Session Five: In-Person & Zoom (depending on rooms and planning)

Concurrent Associated Group Meetings: Association of California Community College Teacher Education Programs; Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities-Education; California Association for Bilingual Teacher Education; California Association of Professors of Special Education

4:00 p.m. - Break

4:15 p.m. - Session Six: In-Person & Zoom

California Alliance for Inclusive Schooling Policy Summit

5:30 p.m. - Conference Reception

Tuesday, March 14:

8:00 a.m. - Session Seven: In-Person & Zoom

Team Breakfast and Legislative Visit Orientation - In-person participants gather at Team Tables for Breakfast with Team Leads;

Virtual participa nts join one "Team" Zoom Meeting with a Group Lead;

All participants Review the Talking Points and Legislative Visit schedules and materials

8:45 a.m. - Break and Transition to Zoom Meetings

9:00 a.m. - Session Eight: Multiple Zoom Meetings

Legislative Visits and Capitol Walks - Legislative Visits Scheduled Between 9:00 to 10:00 a.m.

Legislative Visits via Zoom, in own hotel rooms or other guest spaces; When finished come back to Main Conference Room to join another group or join a Walk to the Capitol leaving at 10:30; Find legislative offices and leave materials behind.

Noon - Session Nine: In-Person & Zoom

Lunch and Debriefing the Visits - 12:30 p.m. time certain for debrief of Legislative Visits;

Analysis and Next Steps for CCTE Policy Committee; Last Opportunity to Vote in Annual CCTE Election

1:15 p.m. Break

1:30 p.m. - Session Ten: In-Person & Zoom

**Concurrent Sessions -** Session One - "Essential and Timely CTC Information" with Cheryl Hickey, and David DeGuire, Session Two - "Making Teacher Education Possible for BIPOC Candidates" with Kai Matthews, Director of California Education

Diversity Project at UCLA Center for Transformation of Schools.

2:45 p.m. - Continuation of Session Ten: In-Person & Zoom

**Final Session -** Announcement of CCTE Annual Election Results; Preview of CCTE Fall 2023 Conference; Conference Evaluation Adjournment at 3:00 p.m..

Wednesday, March 15:

9:00 a.m. - California University Field Coordinators Forum

Morning and afternoon meetings, including breakfast and lunch.

## California Council on Teacher Education Spring 2023 SPAN Conference Registration

Or if you wish to pay by credit card, use the on-line portal on the "Conferences" page of the CCTE website (www.ccte.org).
Name
referred Mailing Address(include ZIP code)
elephone
E-Mail
nstitutional Affiliation
Select Either On-Site or Virtual Registration from the Categories Below
n-Person Registration—for persons wishing to attend the Conference at the Citizen Hotel in Sacramento.  Check the Appropriate Category (all registration categories include Monday lunch and Tuesday breakfast and lunch):  Registration - \$295 Special for P-12 Educators - \$250 Special for Part-Time Faculty - \$225 Special for Retired Educators - \$200 Special for Students - \$100 Special for 4 or more registrants from the same institution - \$275 each (submit a form for each with combined payment)
Additional Option for In-Person Registrants (if using the "4 or more" option above please indicate number and names for our entries below on an attached sheet):  California University Field Coordinators Forum Meeting (Wednesday) - \$100
Virtual Registration—for persons wishing a link to the virtual live-stream of most Conference sessions:  Cach Category Includes Access to Live-Streamed Conference Sessions Via a Link and Password to be Provided to Each Virtual Registrant (check the appropriate category):  Basic Virtual Registration - \$195  Special Virtual for P-12 Educators - \$150  Special Virtual for Part-Time Faculty - \$125  Special Virtual for Retired Educators - \$100  Special Virtual for Students - \$50  Special Virtual for 4 or more registrants from the same institution - \$175 each (submit a form for each with combined payment)
Additional Option for Virtual Registrants (if using the "4 or more" option above please indicate number and names for your ntries below on an attached sheet):  California University Field Coordinators Forum Virtual Meeting (Wednesday) - \$50
<b>Total</b> : Please enter the total you are paying from all options above:
Please mail completed form with check payable to "California Council on Teacher Education" to:  Alan H. Jones, CCTE Executive Secretary, 3145 Geary Boulevard PMB 275, San Francisco, CA 94118
Or for on-line registration and payment via credit card, go to the "Spring 2023 SPAN Conference" page of the CCTE website:
www.ccte.org
for our records those using the on-line portal are also asked to complete and email this registration form to:
alan.jones@ccte.org

## **CCTE Fall 2023 Conference Preview**

By James Fabionar

CCTE Fall 2023 Conference Co-Chair University of San Diego

On October 19-21, 2023, The California Council on Teacher Education will host its annual Fall Conference in San Diego. This year's theme is "The Ethnic Studies Moment in California Public Education: Preparing the Field for Historic Change." The purpose of the conference will be to engage teacher educators in critical dialogue about ethnic studies as an emerging subject matter area and a culturally sustaining and community-responsive orientation to teacher preparation and schooling.

In 2021, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law AB101, requiring secondary students to complete an ethnic studies course to graduate. This law complements policies across the state's three higher education systems (community colleges, California State University, and the University of California).

Fall 2023 Conference events will focus on three pressing issues to bridge teacher education and ethnic studies: mapping the policy context of ethnic studies in California, supporting LEA and school capacity for effective ethnic studies curriculum and pedagogy, and conceptualizing professional learning and teacher preparation in ethnic studies. Conference events will take place both on-site and online and select proceedings will be captured in a special issue of *Teacher Education Quarterly* on teacher preparation and ethnic studies.

Further details about the CCTE Fall 2023 Conference will appear in the Summer 2023 issue of *CCNews* around June 1 and later in June a formal announcement of the Conference including a full preview, the tentative program, the registration form, and the call for research proposals will be emailed to CCTE delegates, members, and friends.

## CCTE President Receives AERA Honor

Betina Hsieh has recently been honored with the American Educational Research Association's Division K Mid-Career Award. Division K is AERA's teacher education division, and the purpose of the Mid-Career Award is to honor an outstanding researcher in the second stage of his or her career (i.e., between 10 and 15 years beyond receiving a doctoral degree). The Award is designed to recognize an individual's significant program of research on important issues in teaching or teacher education.

Betina is a professor and department chair in the College of Education at California State University, Long Beach, and the current President of CCTE. All of us in CCTE who know her will recognize how deserving she is of this honor.

# Spring 2023 Meeting of the California University Field Coordinators Forum

The Spring 2023 meeting of the California University Field Placement Coordinators Forum will be held at The Citizen Hotel in Sacramento and virtually on Wednesday, March 15, the day following the CCTE Spring 2023 SPAN Conference at that same location. The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. and run until 3 p.m. Lunch will be included for those who register for the on-site meeting. Both on-site and virtual registration is available through the SPAN 2023 on-line payment portal on the CCTE website (www.ccte.org) or by check through the mail using the form on the website (that form also appears in this issue of *CCNews*). For those who choose the virtual registration option a Zoom link will be emailed to you prior to March 15.

While the Forum meeting on March 15 will engage in discussion of the work and specific issues related to teacher education field placement, there will also be a special conversation from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. that day coordinated by CCTE Board of Directors members Kara Ireland D'Ambrosio and Antoinette Linton to continue the discussion of university-school district partnerships begun during the past two CCTE Fall Conferences with the goal of addressing and overcoming those issues that complicate such partnerships. Teacher education field placement is of course a central concern of those university-school district partnerships, and school district representatives are being invited to attend that portion of the March 15 meeting of the Forum.

## Update from PD4MT Professional Development for Mentor Teachers

PD4MT 2024 will open in July, 2023

We have worked hard and been fortunate to be able to provide this professional development resource at the same rate over the last four years. At this time, we felt it was important to let you know that there will be an increase in PD4MT fees for the membership year 2023-2024. While the 2023-2024 increase has not been finalized, we estimate the new fee will be \$200.00 per institution. Once again, the fee is for an unlimited number of PD4MT course users within an institution, e.g., mentor teachers, cooperating or master teachers, supervisors, and support providers. Please share this information with those who may be engaged in budget planning for the upcoming year. The PD4MT option will again be included in the CCTE institutional membership renewal materials for 2023-2024 which will be circulated in May.

—Virginia Kennedy & Melissa Meetze-Hall Co-Chairs, CCTE PD4MT Committee virginia.kennedy@csun.edu & mhall@rcoe.us



## Newsletter of the California Council on Teacher Education

Volume 34, Number 1, Spring Issue, March 2023, Section 3—CCTE Activities

Terrelle Sales (Pepperdine University), Editor Prepared for CCTE by Caddo Gap Press, 3145 Geary Boulevard, PMB 275, San Francisco, CA 94118

### **CCTE Committees**

### An Invitation to Get Involved

The California Council on Teacher Education (CCTE) has several standing and special committees that spearhead the organization's many areas of activity, and each of these committees will welcome additional volunteers to join in. The committees are:

**Awards Committee**: The CCTE Awards Committee oversees the organization's awards program, receives and evaluates nominations for awards and selects award recipients, moderates the awards luncheon at conferences, and recommends creation of new CCTE awards when appropriate to the CCTE Board of Directors. Committe Chair: Shadi Roshandel (California State University, East Bay).

**Communications Committee**: The CCTE Communications Committee coordinates such ongoing activities as the quarterly newsletter, the monthly CCTE eNews Briefs, the CCTE website, social media postings, emails to the CCTE membership and beyond, and liaison with all of the other CCTE committees and associated organizations to assist in dissemination of relevant information to the membership and beyond. Committee Co-Chairs: Sarah Johnson & Angelica Reynosa (Fresno Pacific University).

**JEDI Committee**: The CCTE Committee on Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion explores and recommends policy and action to the Board of Directors and membership. Committee Chair: Eric Engdahl (California State University, East Bay).

**Membership Committee**: The CCTE Membership Committee works with the CCTE Executive Secretary on annual membership renewal and membership expansion as well as fostering involvement of all delegates and members in ongoing organizational activities. Committee Co-Chairs: Deborah Hamm (California State University, Long Beach) & Mona Thompson (California State University, Channel Islands).

**Policy Committee**: The CCTE Policy Committee monitors all relevant policy issues at the state and national levels, engages in policy analysis, develops policy papers, recommends CCTE policy positions, coordinates policy advocacy efforts, and works in tandem with the annual Spring Policy Action Network (SPAN) Conferences in Sacramento. Committee Co-Chairs: Cynthia Grutzik (San Francisco State University), Nicol Howard (University of Redlands), & Pia Wong (California State University, Sacramento).

**Professional Development for Mentor Teachers Committee (PD4MT)**: The Professional Development for Mentor Teachers Committee coordinates and develops programs for professional development of supervisors and mentor teachers. Co-Chairs: Virginia Kennedy (California State University, Northridge) & Melissa Meetze-Hall (San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools).

**Research Committee**: The CCTE Research Committee is responsible for inviting and reviewing proposals for research presentations at each CCTE semi-annual conference, selecting and scheduling the presentations, and encouraging presenters to also submit their work in written form for publication in *CCNews*, the two CCTE journals, and elsewhere. Co-Chairs: Marni Fisher (Saddleback College) & Kimiya Maghzi (University of Redlands).

If you wish to join any of these committees please contact the committee chairs or email CCTE Executive Secretary Alan Jones at: alan.jones@ccte.org

## CCTE New Faculty Support Program Available for Interested and Qualified Applicants

Each year the California Council on Teacher Education (CCTE), through its New Faculty Support Program, assists new faculty to become CCTE members, to attend CCTE semi-annual conferences, to become active with CCTE activities and committees, and to receive mentorship about the teacher education community from experienced members of the CCTE organization.

For purposes of this support program, a new faculty member is defined as any person who is in their first five years of employment as a teacher educator, full-time or part-time, at a CCTE member institution and who has not previously received support from the CCTE New Faculty Support Program. The purpose of the program is for new faculty to become a CCTE member and to participate in CCTE activities. Participation in the program typically is for a two-year period.

Applications and nominations are encouraged from or on behalf of new faculty, and those who are selected for the program will receive the following benefits and will commit to the associated responsibilities:

Participants in this program will receive a CCTE individual membership for a period of two years at a 50% discount, so that the individual dues are reduced to \$62.50 per year.

Participants in this program will attend at least one CCTE Conference (either a Fall Conference in San Diego or a Spring SPAN Conference in Sacramento) and the conference registration fee will be discounted 50%. Participants will be responsible for all other costs involved in attending the Conference. Participants are also encouraged to attend multiple conferences during their two years, with the same 50% reduction in registration fee each time.

Participants will submit a proposal for a research or poster session at whichever Conference(s) they decide to attend.

Participants will each be linked with a CCTE veteran who will meet with and mentor the participant prior to and at Conferences.

To be considered for this program, please use the application/nomination form available on the CCTE website or request a copy from CCTE Executive Secretary Alan H. Jones at alan.jones@ccte.org.

Applications will be accepted and considered at any time. Former CCTE Board of Directors member Ernest Black at CalStateTEACH is the coordinator of the New Faculty Support Program and he may be contacted via email at: eblack@calstate.edu

Also, within the CCTE New Faculty Support Program a special support group entitled "New and Aspiring Faculty of Color" has been initiated and coordinated this year by Heather Michel at CalStateTEACH. This group meets monthly (first Friday of the month virtually) and will center the experience and success of new or aspiring faculty of color in California teacher education/higher education. The special group is currently accepting members and guests. If you:

- Have someone in mind who might benefit from these meetings, both in your department or in the K-12 context;
- Identify as a faculty of color professor and would like to participate as a fly on the wall or meeting participant; then please reach out to Heather at heathermichel@calstateteach.net for general information, scheduling, and questions.

CCTE is excited to offer this new intentional focus to recruit, support, and recognize new faculty of color within California teacher sducation.

Participants in the New Faculty Support Program held a luncheon meeting on the Saturday of the CCTE Fall 2022 Conference and similar meetings may be scheduled at future CCTE conferences.

## CCTE Associated and Affiliated Organizations

There are eight California organizations that the California Council on Teacher Education (CCTE) Board of Directors has recognized as "associated" with CCTE, thus indicating that while independent of CCTE these organizations share similar goals and commitments with respect to the field of teacher education. There are two national teacher education organizations with which CCTE is "affiliated," since CCTE serves as their official California state chapters. In addition CCTE is a member of CalTog.

The "associated" organizations are:

Association of California Community College Teacher Education Programs (ACCCTEP)

Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities-Education (AICCU-ED)

California Alliance for Inclusive Schooling (CAIS)

California Alliance of Researchers for Equity in Eduation (CARE-ED)

California Association for Bilingual Teacher Education (CABTE)

California Association of Professors of Special Education/Teacher Education Division (CAPSE/TED)

California Association of School-University Partnerships (CASUP)

Center for Reaching and Teaching the Whole Child (CRTWC)

The "affiliated" organizations are:

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE)

**Association of Teacher Educators (ATE)** 

Californians Together (CalTog)

Information about and reports from many of these organizations appear in this issue of *CCNews* and links to their websites can be found at the bottom right hand corner of the home page of the CCTE website at www.ccte.org

All CCTE delegates, members, and friends are encouraged to learn about and get involved with any of these organizations that correspond with your areas of interest, teaching, research, and service. Typically the "associated" organizations will hold meetings, workshops, or other sessions in conjunction with CCTE conferences while AACTE and ATE hold annual national meetings and CalTog is active within California as an advocate for language education and equity.

## **CCTE Special Interest Groups**

There are eight CCTE Special Interest Groups which meet at most CCTE Conferences. All CCTE SIGs are open to any interested persons. The eight SIGs are:

*Arts and Education.* This SIG explores issues and developments related to the integration of the arts into teacher education and K-12 education.

**Coordinators/Directors of Credential Programs:** This SIG offers an opportunity for coordinators and directors of credential programs to exchange information, discuss issues, and develop coordinated plans.

*Equity and Social Justice:* This SIG is closely aligned with the mission of CCTE in general, and seeks to offer augmented support for a democratic vision in the field of teacher education.

*Lives of Teachers:* The Lives of Teachers SIG features programs that highlight the current and evolving roles of teachers at all levels of education.

*Inclusive Education:* This SIG offers an opportunity for discussion and exchange between teacher educators interested in and involved in the field of special education.

**Teacher Induction:** This SIG provides an avenue for continuing exploration of the work of induction in the California teacher education continuum and the relationship and integration of those efforts with preservice teacher education.

**Technology and Teacher Education**: This SIG explores issues and innovations in technology that impact and offer promise to the field of teacher education.

*Undergraduate Teacher Education:* This SIG examines issues related to the undergraduate preparation of teachers.

Since CCTE Fall Conferences in San Diego are again being held on site, with a virtual option, the SIGs are meeting concurrently at two scheduled times and some of the SIG on-site sessions will also be available via Zoom. Those SIGs which choose to also meet at the beginning of the Spring SPAN Conferences in Sacramento.

This year the SIGs are also being encouraged to develop and schedule additional virtual programs as a way to share information with the CCTE membership. Be alert for notices about such programs which will be shared by email with the CCTE community.

## CCTE Graduate Student Support Program Welcomes New Applications

Graduate students at any CCTE member institution interested in the field of teacher education are encouraged to apply for participation in and support from the CCTE Graduate Student Program for any academic year.

The CCTE Graduate Student Support Program was established to provide financial assistance to encourage greater involvement of graduate students in CCTE activities. The program operates in the following manner:

- 1. Each year the opportunity to apply for support from the CCTE Graduate Student Fund is disseminated to all CCTE members and delegates, with the request that such information be shared with graduate students at all institutional member campuses. Applications will be accepted at any time throughout the membership year.
- 2. Students seeking support from the CCTE Graduate Student Fund will submit their application to the CCTE Executive Secretary, accompanied by an endorsement from their graduate advisor. In making an application the student will commit to attending one of the CCTE semi-annual Conferences during the coming year and submitting a proposal for a research or poster session at that conference.
- 3. The only limitations on students wishing to make an application are that they be doctoral or masters candidates at a CCTE member institution, that they are considering the field of teacher education as a career goal, and that they be endorsed by a faculty advisor on their campus. Students are asked to indicate their graduate field of concentration, the degree they are pursuing, and the expected date when they will complete that degree.
- 4. Program participants are awarded the following benefits: (a) The applicant will become a CCTE student member for the year, with 50% of the \$60 membership dues waived; and (b) The student registration fee for the Conference the applicant chooses to attend will be reduced by 50%. Other expenses related to attending the Conference will remain the responsibility of the student. In years when more students apply than there are funds available for support in the CCTE Graduate Student Fund, priority will be given to doctoral students over masters students, and additional preferences will be based on how close students are to completing their degree programs.
- 5. No more than five students will be awarded support per year from any given institution, again with preferences among applicants based on level of degree sought and closeness to completion of their degree programs. The limit of five students per institution may be waived if there are not enough applicants from other institutions to fill the number of awards available from the Fund in any given year.
- 6. It is not guaranteed that all of the Conference research or poster proposals submitted by recipients of CCTE Graduate Student Fund awards will be accepted, but all participants in the program will still be committed to attend the Conference of their choice even if their proposal is rejected. However, it is assumed that most if not all graduate students will be submitting proposals that meet the expectations of the CCTE Research Committee for inclusion in the Conference poster session, and the Research Committee is asked to make every effort to include all proposals from awarded graduate students in the relevant poster session.

Please use the form on the CCTE website to apply for participation in the program, or request the form from CCTE Executive Secretary Alan H. Jones at alan.jones@ccte.org

Students interested in participating in the program during the current membership year are encouraged to apply as soon as possible, although applications will be received and considered at any time during the year, and those accepted to the program later in the academic year will be rolled over to the next membership year as appropriate to assure they receive the full benefits of the program.

## CCTE Reader on Social Justice Available for Course and Individual Orders

The California Council on Teacher Education produced a special *CCTE Reader on Social Justice* in conjunction with the Fall 2017 Conference. The volume, which is available in electronic (PDF) format, includes 18 outstanding articles selected from issues of the two CCTE journals—*Teacher Education Quarterly* and *Issues in Teacher Education*—pub-

lished during the period 2004 to 2015. The collection was edited by Juan Flores, CCTE Past President, and Donald Cardinal, CCTE Board Member, in association with Thomas Nelson, editor of *Teacher Education Quarterly* from 1999 to 2010, and Suzanne SooHoo, co-editor of *Issues in Teacher Education* from 2009 to 2015.



# The CCTE Reader on Social Justice

Edited by Juan Flores & Donald Cardinal

With Associated Editors Thomas Nelson & Suzanne SooHoo

Published in 2017 for the California Council on Teacher Education by Caddo Gap Press, Alan H. Jones, Publisher

> Containing 18 Outstanding Articles about Social Justice and Teacher Education Selected from Teacher Education Quarterly & Issues in Teacher Education



From the introduction to the reader by Juan, Don, Tom, and Suzi: "It is our hope that this *CCTE Reader on Social Justice* will give our teacher education faculty an opportunity to invigorate social justice dialogues in our classrooms and offer our credential candidates and graduate students tools and frameworks to move beyond the bystander model and enact and realize the social justice theories, lessons, skills, and goals that must be acquired in our classrooms."

The volume is designed for classroom adoption by teacher educators, and all sales proceeds go to support the activities of CCTE.

The *Reader* was officially introduced at the Fall 2017 Conference during a special research session which featured the editors and graduate students at the University of the Pacific who used the volume with their class that summer.

A second session featuring another group of graduate students at the University of the Pacific presented their experiences with the *Reader* at the Fall 2018 Conference.

Preview copies of the *Reader* are available to any CCTE members who wish to look it over for possible adoption for use with classes or programs. If you are interested in obtaining a preview copy, please contact Alan Jones at alan.jones@ccte.org with your request.

All CCTE members and delegates have been emailed information about the publication and how to order the *CCTE Reader on Social Justice* and information remains posted on the CCTE website at www.ccte.org where there is an on-line order form if you wish to purchase via credit card or a form that can be downloaded and submitted with payment by check.



## Newsletter of the California Council on Teacher Education

### Volume 34, Number 1, Spring Issue, March 2023, Section 4—Articles from the Field

Terrelle Sales (Pepperdine University), Editor Prepared for CCTE by Caddo Gap Press, 3145 Geary Boulevard, PMB 275, San Francisco, CA 94118

### **Articles and Reports**

CCNews features articles related to teacher education by members of the California Council on Teacher Education (CCTE) community. Many are based on presentations at concurrent, roundtable, and poster sessions and Special Interest Group meetings at CCTE semi-annual conferences by presenters who submit reports of their conference presentations. The newsletter also welcomes other articles related to teacher education from CCTE delegates and members and others in the California teacher education community.

All CCTE delegates, members, and friends are encouraged to write about any aspect of their teacher education work—teaching, research, or service—to share in future issues of *CCNews*. Please address submissions to *CCNews* editor Terrelle Sales at: terrelle.sales@pepperdine.edu

In this issue of the newsletter you will find on the following pages an article based on a presentation at the Lives of Teachers Special Interest Group (SIG) meeting at the CCTE Fall 2022 Conference, entitled:

## A Window at 45th and Market Street: The Rhetoric and Reality of My Teaching Experience and Why It Matters

By Thomas Courtney

Along with a brief introduction by Leslie Young, Co-Chair of the CCTE Lives of Teachers SIG.

See pages 17-19

## Be Sure to Check the CCTE Website Regularly

www.ccte.org

The CCTE website offers information and background on all of our activities. All delegates, members, and friends of the organization are encouraged to visit the site regularly.

You will find news, announcements, membership information, previews and retrospectives on our semi-annual conferences, policy updates, and invitations for participation in such programs as the CCTE New Faculty Support Program, the CCTE Graduate Student Support Program, and the CCTE Intersegmental Project.

A continuing feature of the website is a listing of teacher education position openings and special events at our member institutions. The link to this listing is near the top of the right hand column of the home page.

Recent additions to the website are a PowerPoint presentation offering an overview of CCTE, initially prepared for and presented at the Newcomers Meetings at Fall Conferences and updated annually, and the "Member Spotlight" feature that offers profiles and photographs of various CCTE officers and Board of Directors members, with a new individual added each month.

Be sure to check it all out frequently.

## Introduction to Lives of Teachers Article

By Leslie Young

Co-Chair of CCTE Lives of Teachers Special Interest Group

Thomas Courtney has been a classroom teacher at Chollas-Mead Elementary School in southeast San Diego for 24 years. He was selected as a San Diego Unified School District Teacher of the Year in 2021. In addition, Mr. Courtney frequently writes about educational issues, and offers practical advice in a variety of educational journals and publications. He also presents at a number of educational conferences.

The following article is based on his presentation at the "Lives of Teachers" Special Inteest Group (SIG) at the California Council on Teacher Education Fall 2022 Conference in San Diego. Mr. Courtney can be contacted at tcourtney@sandi.net and for information about the Lives of Teachers SIG please contact me at leslie.young@cgu.edu

### A Window at 45th and Market Streets

### The Rhetoric and Reality of My Teaching Experience and Why It Matters

### By Thomas Courtney

Recently, I discovered that I am *not* someone who has all of the answers in education. To be honest, the realization has been a bit embarrassing. I have spent the good part of my teaching years telling everyone in the teacher's lounge that I *did* have all of the answers. Like salt in a wound, I have also discovered that I may just be the perfect person to talk about what we should *not* do in education. After all, I am the guy who caused an entire fire station to roll out to my school on Halloween because I had to use a fog machine for our "spooky poetry reading."

But the stories I need to tell are not about fog machines and fire trucks. Now, I find I need to tell stories about when I failed to understand my students as humans as well as be a better human for them. These stories are at times hard for me to relate because they come with no small degree of shame, but I believe they are often difficult for all educators to discuss. They are things that teachers, like me, do not want to talk much about.

And yet, I believe that we *must* tell the stories of failure now, more than ever. Many of us have been witness to the lack of humanity in our classrooms, despite our students' and their parents' trust in us. We must come full circle with what we have actually allowed to happen in our classrooms: in my case, in the name of achievement on ELA and math exams. Why? Because we are about to repeat many of these mistakes again. When I think about these admitted mistakes, *my* mistakes, *my* rhetoric, *my* students' reality, over more than two decades, they are essential for others to hear—painful as they are—and for me to tell.

Let's start with who I am since it's going to be relevant to all my mistakes. I've been a guide teacher with San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) for many years, and a classroom teacher at 45<sup>th</sup> and Market for 24 years. I surf and I garden. I am a husband to an archaeologist and a father to two great kids (both of whom attack me with water weapons of some kind if I step foot outside my home). I am a CODA,

or "Child of a Deaf Adult." In fact, the earliest memories I can recall are of my mother looking to me for help in translating what people said. That's the first time I can remember teaching.

In February of 1999, I was hired by SDUSD for the following year as a probationary 1 teacher. When I say I was eager to be a teacher then, I have to tell you that I wanted to teach like a fish wants to swim. I had a lot of teachers in my family, and I had inherited plenty of their boxes filled with activities, group projects, and reader's theater (complete with costumes) all taking up space in my little garage. You see, in my first teacher life I was going to move mountains. I was going to be the teacher that others were for me: the ones that changed my life.

In early July of 1999, I got my first call from a principal, Mr. L., at Chollas-Mead Elementary at 45th and Market Street off the 805 freeway in southeast San Diego. I was living in Mission Beach and had never been east of the 805 freeway. The day of my interview I was hired on the spot. Afterwards, I drove around the neighborhood. I saw homeless people, trailer homes, run-down duplexes, and trash piled up in the gutters. *Rough neighborhood*, I thought. I didn't know then that Chollas-Mead had the highest murder rate in the city, and was home (and still is) to two gangs.

In the fall, I met my first fourth grade class. I was determined to survive *them*. It never occurred to me, that they would have to survive *me*. That was also when I met Martral,¹ a sweet boy with a bright smile. He did not have a mother at home. In fact, neither Martral's mother nor father had been in the picture much. Martral barely read CVC words, wasn't able to calculate simple arithmetic on his fingers, had IEP goals, and often got into fights. One day, when I walked him home, I met his uncle and his grandmother, and it was then that I began trying to process what life was really like for him. Or I thought I did.

That year, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) hit Chollas-

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## A Window at 45th and Market Streets

### The Rhetoric and Reality of My Teaching Experience and Why It Matters

(Continued from Previous Page)

Mead like a hammer hits an anvil. We all knew that the hammer blow would strike soon at our school like it had at another district elementary school that failed to make its annual yearly progress goal. NCLB mandated that most of the content, activities, and modalities of instruction that Martral would love wouldn't ever be used. It also eliminated our general education teaching aides while funding a dozen clipboard-wielding professionals who could observe a lesson to ensure what and how we taught at any moment in time. I did not have the appropriate materials to teach yet, but I had the now-obsolete health, art, music, history and science books that didn't meet the new ELA or math standards. My boxes filled with my aunt's human body models and my grandfather's rock collection would have to sit untouched.

On his interest inventory at the start of the year, Martral had somehow found a way to print out in his version of inventive spelling what he liked best: volcanoes, art, rapping, and basketball. Martral *did* love basketball, but he got to play little of it. I kept him in at morning and lunch recess as well as after school to practice the types of activities that would help him pass his benchmark exam. PE never happened: we didn't have time for it. These non-negotiable subjects were printed on a red piece of paper that I along with my colleagues kept taped to the classroom wall so that I wouldn't forget to teach the "important" things.

My educational philosophy, so finely crafted in the credential program, completely changed to match the new rhetoric at the school:

They'll get the rest later. Every minute counts. We must close the achievement gap.

Martral could be an astronaut, a basketball player, or a rapper, but he'd have to pass the standardized test first. And then he'd have to do it again, year after year after year.

By 2008, I felt the rhetoric change, and it kept me somewhat hopeful. Common Core was on the horizon: we were going to learn from the mistakes of NCLB and give kids back more by broadening what we had narrowed. I could finally open my aunt's box of human body models and give kids a chance to bond through group projects and games. There had been a shift in the system and me, or so I thought. My new mantra became:

Education will fix everything, if we just work hard and smart enough.

As if it were a premonition, that same year I was invited to join a team of teachers traveling to Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya. We visited many schools where the overwhelming

poverty struck me. So, too, did the instruction, but in a different way. On dirt floors, a hundred kids to a windowless room, I watched students singing from notation on a chalk board. I saw them learning history and doing science in labs. I saw them playing sports, performing music and dance, and participating in clubs. I even saw them growing vegetables and making food. The teaching practices here did not look like the NCLB-approved ones back home. Something in East Africa felt right, even with all of the poverty.

On the last school visit, my colleague Krista and I were left in a classroom of high school students without a host. The students—all 16- and 17-year-old Black Ugandan boys—were studying and ignoring us completely. I started my usual prompting and asked them some questions, but they didn't seem interested. Finally, I said, "Guys, it's just us on our last school visit. Can you give us something important to take home?"

One young man looked at me. "I asked you in front of the principal how I could find a job when I graduate."

"Yes," I replied, "I suggested..."

"You suggested," he interrupted me, "that I study, study, study. You told me how Uganda is changing and how hope is coming. How hard work is all I need. But that is not how I will *get* a job. That is how I will *do* a job if I am very very lucky. Why are the two of you traveling around here giving such ridiculous advice? We work hard. Every day. We are great students. But when we graduate, we will all become laborers like our fathers. We know who runs things here. Why don't you not understand that studying means nothing without opportunity?"

I had flown halfway around the world, but something about the entire conversation felt so relevant to my own classroom and students' experience. What is education without opportunity, without empowerment, without equity, without fulfillment, without respect for a child's humanity? What is education if we say ridiculous things like "they'll get the rest later," but deny it to them now? What is education if we attempt to close a gap in achievement, but it just keeps the status quo in every single thing that matters to our students? More importantly, if education isn't closing the achievement gap, why are we still so fixated on the gap?

A year later in 2009, a colleague handed me a newspaper clipping. In it, I learned that Martral was accused of attempted murder and conspiracy with gang enhancement as well as fleeing the scene of the crime. He served more than a decade in a prison in Blythe, California, where he had filed motions and appeals for a lesser charge of voluntary manslaughter.

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## A Window at 45th and Market Streets

### The Rhetoric and Reality of My Teaching Experience and Why It Matters

(Continued from Previous Page)

I knew instantly over a decade ago that Martral had needed something that his school and home had never given him. Today in light of our pandemic recovery, I know many others like him who will need that something too. What keeps me up at night is that we will deny it to them, the way we did to Martral.

As I followed Martral's story over the years, the rhetoric that I had lived by as a teacher has come back to haunt me time and time again. There is no denying the number of former students who have told me that I am right to be so haunted. Martral didn't need to get the rest later: he needed it then. All of it. He needed PE. He needed phonics. He needed praise, not punishment. He needed what I and the system never gave him: opportunity and help that went beyond standardized testing.

I have learned from the tragedies of students like Martral. I know today that I cannot bring humanity back to our classrooms with good-intentioned rhetoric. I know that because for nearly all of my teaching years, it never did.

In an attempt to understand more, I have also taken on a road trip of sorts in order to find my former students like Martral. When I find these now grown students and sit down with them—whether it be with a table between us in a coffee shop or a window in a state prison—I tell them what they did not know as students in my classroom. I tell them about my rhetoric—the words I never wrote on the board—but which I lived by as their teacher. It's then that a new kind of rhetoric appears: one of truth. When you've spent your career eliminating excuses from kids, you can't just come up with excuses for why you did not see through your own lack of experience, whether it be through your own privilege or disinterest in what your student's truth was. You can't excuse failing to act on what was right for a kid in the name of something that doesn't matter to their future selves.

I have been gifted at 45th and Market Street even if it is over two decades too late. I have learned that in every teacher's classroom—veteran or rookie—there is a window, and I hope this one has appeared just in time.

#### Note

<sup>1</sup> Names in this article have been changed for privacy reasons.