

Just Between Us

by Stacie Thurman, OEA President

Prop 55 Extension— Securing Funding for Education



Friends. We have a vital opportunity to protect the future of our schools and our profession. CTA and OEA are currently organizing to qualify the **Proposition 55 extension** for the 2026 ballot, and your support is the key to our success!
What You Need to Know: No New Taxes

It is important things to understand this initiative is **not a new tax**. It simply **extends the existing tax rates** for high-income Californians that are already in place and are currently scheduled to expire in 2031. This proposal ensures that we can continue to fund our schools without adding any new tax burdens.

The Local Impact: \$21 million at Risk for OSD

The stakes for our local community are incredibly high. If this extension does not pass, the **Oxnard School District (OSD) stands to lose over \$21 million in vital funding**. This is money that directly supports our students, our classrooms, and our ability to provide a high-quality education. By making these funding gains permanent, we can preserve the resources our students need to thrive.

Our Goal: 85% Participation

To show the strength of our union, we have set a goal of organizing a supermajority: **85% of our union members signing the petition** to qualify the extension. Reaching this target helps us "build our organizing muscle" so we can continue to win big for our students at the local, state, and national levels.

Take Action Today!

We need your signature to help secure this permanent funding. **Please see your site representative today to sign the petition.** It only takes a moment, but it makes a world of difference for the future of California education. For more information on the Prop 55 extension, visit: <https://www.cta.org/our-advocacy/school-funding/prop-55-extension>
Or click [here](#).

Preserve Education Funding
Support Prop 55

Fund our schools with no new taxes

→ Preserves over \$21 million dollars in funding!

Sign the Petition Today!
See your site rep today to sign!

In other local news, here are the most frequently asked questions coming from members:

What is the hourly rate for intersession? The hourly rate for intersession is 1.5 times your Schedule II hourly rate and therefore, \$75/hour with one hour of prep for every four hours worked.

My site was discussing a site variance for conference schedules next year. When does that need to be completed by if we pursue it? The process for a site variance can be found on pages 64-68 of the contract. Either site admin or members can bring forth a variance, but the entire process including presenting to teaching staff for feedback and voting **must be completed by March 31st**. A site variance requires 2/3 approval by all active members at a site and not just those who voted.

My principal told us this morning that a parent is coming to

Continued on page 3

Making a Difference



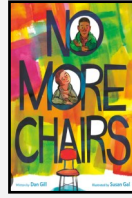
**Diana Martinez
(Lemonwood)**

The ball dropped straight to the ground and stayed there. For a second, everyone froze, then the blacktop filled with laughter. At Lemonwood K-8 School, Diana Martinez just smiled and clapped, her voice rising above the noise with steady encouragement. For the past twelve years, she has been right there as a P.E. teacher, turning simple games like Pig Ball into something more. Around her, students miss catches, laugh at mistakes, and try again without fear. Diana makes sure of that. She is especially intentional about encouraging girls to step forward, believing confidence is built one small, brave moment at a time. In her class, it is not just about the game. It is about creating a space where students feel safe, supported, and willing to take risks. That sense of belonging is something students carry with them beyond the blacktop. Diana's journey began in Oxnard, where shifting school boundaries took her from McKinna Elementary to Kamala and eventually Marina West before continuing on to R.J. Frank Academy and Rio Mesa High School. She describes her childhood as "normal," but it was grounded in a close, supportive family that shaped her belief in the power of relationships, something that continues to guide her

Continued on page 2

Building Literacy in School and Beyond– OEA Celebrates Read Across America

The titles and resources showcased by CTA’s California Reads and NEA’s Read Across America encompass books that allow students to see themselves reflected, as well as those that offer glimpses into worlds and characters different from their own. Engaged readers are those who feel included, recognized, and connected to the world around them. We encourage you to explore these recommended titles, along with many others, to commemorate Read Across America not only in March but also throughout the year. Additionally, in honor of Read Across America, the OEA Equity Team selected books on behalf of the Association to donate to every school library annually. OEA President, Stacie Thurman, recently engaged with several classes across the district, reading to students and contributing books to each teacher’s classroom library. For those seeking recommendations, suggested books can be found on www.readacrossamerica.org and at www.cta.org/californiareads.



OEA Equity Team– “Wrapped in Care” Drive

Shout out to our OEA Equity Team and all of our members for helping make our first ever “Wrapped in Care” drive a success! Members from across our sites donated essential goods for the holidays which were passed onto The Lighthouse Shelter for Women and Children and 805 Undocufund/805 Immigrant to support our families who face immigration challenges here in our community.



Thank you to all of our members who contributed to this worthy cause!

Making a Difference

Continued from page 1

today. Those early experiences helped shape the educator she would become, one who values connection as much as content. Though her mom eventually became a teacher in the same district, Diana did not grow up with a clear path laid out. Instead, she watched her mom work her way up from a teacher’s aide to leading her own classroom, modeling determination and persistence. Inspired by that example, Diana attended Fresno State and began her teaching career at Blackstock Middle School, followed by two years at Soria, before finding her home at Lemonwood.



When students from **Lemonwood** asked how they could advocate for teachers potentially impacted by the Reduction in Force (RIF), Diana supported their efforts to speak to the School Board on behalf of their teachers. See *Students Speak* on page 3 for their speech.

There, she has become more than a teacher. She is a constant presence, celebrating with students in joyful moments and supporting them through the hard ones. She meets students where they are and builds relationships that last well beyond her class.

Over time, Diana’s role has grown beyond the classroom. After attending a conference that left a lasting impression, she set her sights on becoming a National Board Certified Teacher, a goal that has required deep reflection, commitment, and perseverance. The process has challenged her and strengthened her practice. At the same time, she has stepped into leadership through OEA’s PAC committee, advocating for school board representation that reflects the community she serves and supports the needs of students and educators. Even with all of this, Diana stays grounded in what matters most: time with family, connection with friends, and the laughter that has always been part of who she is. Whether she is on the blacktop or beyond, she continues to build what she values most, confidence, connection, and a place where every student feels they belong.

Institute for Teaching and Learning- Educator Environmental, and Impact Grants Available

The CTA Institute for Teaching (IFT) Grant Program applications are open through April 2, 2026! This grant program is one of the many benefits of your union membership.

These grants provide a fantastic opportunity to access funding and support for innovative projects in your classrooms and school communities during the 2026-2027 school year.

Here's what's available:

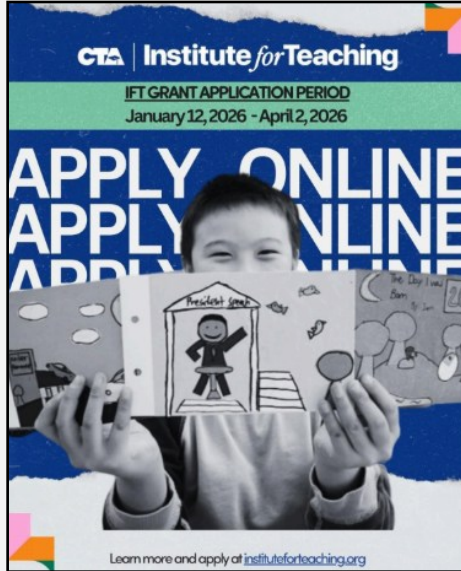
- **Individual Grant** (previously the "Educator Grant"): Up to **\$5,000** for individual educators to impact a classroom or group of students.
- **Team Grant** (previously the "Impact Grant"): Up to **\$20,000** for teams of two or more.

educators (three recommended) to make an impact across multiple classrooms or school sites.

Applications close on Thursday, April 2, 2026.









Learn more and apply at <https://instituteforteaching.org>

If you have questions, please email ift@cta.org.



Calendar



-  **Feb. 12, 2026**
Executive Board
OEA Office
-  **Feb. 18, 2026**
School Board Meeting
District Office
-  **Feb. 20-22, 2026**
New Educator Conference
Orange County
-  **Feb. 26, 2026**
Rep Council
CTA Office
-  **March 11, 2026**
School Board Meeting
District Office
-  **March 12, 2026**
Executive Board
OEA Office
-  **March 12, 2026**
CTA Equity & Human
Rights Conference, Los
Angeles
-  **March 25, 2026**
School Board Meeting
District Office
-  **March 26, 2026**
Rep Council
CTA Office

Congratulations to OEA Grant Winners!

This year OEA was pleased to award two Suzanne Dempsey TK-8 Art Grants to the following members:

Rachel Hayman (McAuliffe)
Maleny Magana (Brekke)

Proceeds from this grant honor the work of Suzanne Dempsey, retired OEA Middle School Director, Bargaining Chair, and long time Middle School Art Teacher. Through these funds members are able to purchase materials for their class to enhance instruction through the arts.



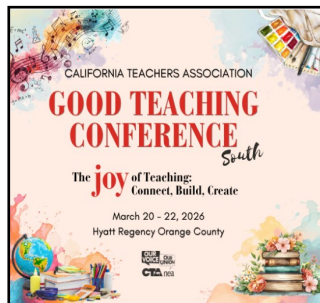
Upcoming CTA Conferences!

OEA is proud to support professional development and conference opportunities for teachers by teachers. If you would like to attend one of the upcoming conferences, please submit your request via email to the OEA office at oxnardea@gmail.com.

Your request must be approved by the Executive Board in order to receive reimbursement for lodging, travel, and meals not provided by the conference.

Priority is given to members who have never attended a CTA conference before.

For more information on each event visit www.ctag.org/conferences.



Contact Us

Oxnard Educators Association
2775 N. Ventura Road, Ste. 108
(805) 981-6424
oxnardea@gmail.com
www.oxnardea.org

Communications Committee

Jesus Cahue...Writer, Editor-in-Chief
Stacie Thurman...Writer, Co-Editor