

West Contra Costa Unified School District
Office of the Superintendent

Friday Memo
April 19, 2019

Upcoming Events – Matthew Duffy

April 20: Elementary Basketball League Playoffs, Greenwood Academy, 10-12:30
April 24: Agenda Setting, DeJean MS, 4:00 PM
April 24: Board of Education, DeJean MS, 6:30 PM
April 25: PAL Scholars Award Program, DeJean MS, 6:00 PM
April 25: MDAC, Helms, 6:30 PM
April 26: MDAC, Kennedy, 9:00 AM
April 26: SportATHon, West County Mandarin, 12:00 PM
April 27: Elementary Basketball Championship, Kennedy HS, 12:00 PM
May 3: Richmond Promise 4th Annual Scholars Celebration, Richmond Auditorium , 5-8 PM
May 4: Cinco de Mayo Parade, 24th & Barrett, 10:00 AM
May 7: AASAT Meeting, DeJean, 6:00 PM
May 8: Board of Education, DeJean, 6:30 PM
May 9: Spring Concert, Madera Elementary, 6:30 PM
May 10: Ed Fund Soaring to Excellence Event, Richmond Country Club, 6:30 PM

Upcoming Agenda Items - May 8 - Matt Duffy

Roadmap Update
Positive Climate Update
ELA Adoption

Update on Stege Redesign - Matthew Duffy

Over the past few weeks there's been tremendous progress made on strengthening and stabilizing Stege for 2019-20 school year. Stege staff was presented with feedback collected via public survey, staff surveying, and community engagement sessions and structural recommendations were presented for further response. These recommendations and feedback will be the basis for the development of an MOU with our bargaining units.

The recommendations will be the catalyst for continued changes. The Stege design team will be formed at the beginning of the 2019-20 school year with a target for completing its work in time for the 2020-21 school year.

Highlights from the recommendations being made include:

- a longer work year for staff with the focus on professional development and collaboration
- additional specialized courses for students (i.e. PE, visual and performing arts, technology) that can also provide general classroom teachers greater opportunity for daily collaboration
- a longer school day for students
- addition of a full service community coordinator
- increased compensation package to recruit highly qualified and committed staff

West Contra Costa Unified School District
Office of the Superintendent

In addition, school staff is assessing needs that can be filled by volunteers and community organizations during the next school year. It is our hope to develop a community services group that will identify which organizations and engaged individuals can meet the identified needs. This work will be coordinated by the full services community school coordinator.

The recommendations and opportunities to support the school and its students will be shared with the public at a community meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 14, at Stege Elementary School. Staff will begin publicizing this meeting next week.

If you have any questions or suggestions for community groups to be engaged around supporting Stege, please contact executive director Ruben Aurelio at ruben.aurelio@wccusd.net.

Chromebook purchase - Tracey Logan

At the upcoming April 24, 2019 Board Meeting, there are 3 related Consent Agenda items for your approval. These items are on the Consent calendar because over the course of the year we have been discussing the need to replace our end of life student tablets at the end 2018-19. The time has come as the tablets are failing and unreliable. We have not created this item as an open action/discussion item as we believe the work we have done over the year and the additional information here will be sufficient to take the needed action outlined below.

BEFORE YOU WILL BE

1. Two resolutions authorizing WCCUSD to:
 - a. Decrease our Technology Reserve from \$7M to \$1M thus releasing \$6M in funds
[Consent Item #12 Board Resolution 70-1819]
 - b. Utilize the released \$6M Technology Reserve funds to purchase the 15,500 replacement student devices *[Consent Item #13 Board Resolution 76-1819]*
2. A consent item for the purchase of the 15,500 Chromebooks and associated set-up and deployment services for elementary and K8 schools *[Consent Item #14 Approval of CMAS Purchase Agreement]*

WHY CHROMEBOOKS?

- **Secure system** with built-in antivirus and central management, thus **increased safety for our students**
- **Simple design** that means no Windows updates, thus **increased instructional time**

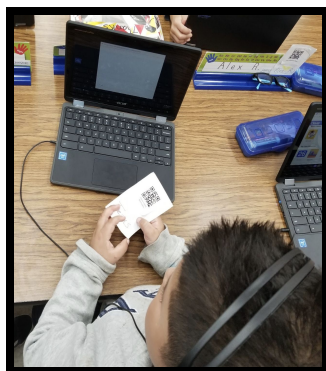
WHY THIS [ACER CHROMEBOOK SPIN 11?](#)

- **Touchscreen with world-facing camera** to function as a tablet, especially good for young learners
- **Long battery life** requiring little to no charging during the instructional day
- **Durable laptop** designed for the education setting to be in the hands (and fall out of the hands) of young people

HOW DID WE COME TO THIS DECISION?

West Contra Costa Unified School District
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Over the past 6 months, staff engaged many stakeholder groups including Technology Teacher leaders, classroom teachers, Principals, Assistant Principals, IT, Library staff, Ed Tech, TLL, Community Engagement, and UTR. As a result of our rigorous review process, we decided on the Acer Chromebook for elementary and K8's, and have been piloting it in grades K, 3, and 6 at Lake Elementary since January 2019. We have received an overwhelmingly positive response from students and staff about the new Chromebooks. See photos and testimonials below.



“I am very happy to have replaced the Acer tablets with Chromebooks. With the Acers it was a constant battle to get all the students working. With the Chromebooks, I spend the vast majority of my time teaching.”

Eric Swabeck, 3rd grade teacher, Lake Elem.

“I like the Chromebooks, more than the ones we had before because they're easy to access at their age. All they have to do is just open it up, flash their badge, and they're on. So for me it's easy. I don't have to log them in individually because before, that was a big hassle. So I actually love these Chromebooks! Please keep them because they are awesome.”

Erica Johnson, Kindergarten teacher, Lake Elem.

“The Chromebooks have been wonderful because now my kids are getting to an independence level where they don't need me to start working on their computers. They have gotten into the routine of logging in by themselves. There are no update issues, and the computers are not stopping [freezing up.] My class is going very very smoothly when it's time to use the computers.”

Adelina Abril, Kindergarten teacher, Lake Elem.

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“Just wanted to let you know how much we love the new Chromebooks. My Kindergarten students are able to log in with a Clever Badge. This has made the tablets infinitely easier to use. Students are now able to log in quickly without my help. Internet access is super. We use various programs online including: Lexia, Videos of our K Reading Books, Splash Math, ABC Mouse. My class gives the Chromebooks 40 thumbs up!”

Gordon Nadeau, Kindergarten teacher, Lake Elem

We like the fact that the devices load faster, are easier to manage screen brightness, and that the devices are responsive.

Four 6th grade students, Lake Elem.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

In a future Board meeting, staff will bring for discussion the future of our 1-to-1 program given our funding context. In the meantime, we are actively exploring funding options, including corporate sponsorship.

Elementary Soccer League Schedule - Marcus Walton

The fourth and final session of the 2018-19 middle school sports league kicked off this week with coed soccer. This year we have 6 middle schools participating in the soccer league including Mira Vista and Verde.

Attached is a copy of the schedule. All games will be held on Wednesday and Friday afternoons at Helms. There are two games on Wednesday afternoons 3:45 & 5:00, on Friday the game is at 4:00.

We look forward to seeing you out at the games!

Media Stories of Interest - Marcus Walton

The following news stories may be of interest. You can view through the links or PDF copies are also attached.

Teach for America targeted as legislation seeks to limit inexperienced teachers in California - <https://edsource.org/2019/teach-for-america-targeted-as-legislation-seeks-to-limit-inexperienced-teachers-in-california/611089>

Rising rents in coastal California outpace teacher pay - <https://edsource.org/2019/rising-rents-in-coastal-california-outpace-teacher-pay/611216>

I-TEAM EXCLUSIVE: Principal, teacher on leave after girl's beating in Pinole classroom caught on camera - <https://abc7news.com/exclusive-girls-beating-in-pinole-classroom-investigated/5245334/>

WCCUSD

2018 MIDDLE SCHOOL COED SOCCER LEAGUE

Date		vs		Location		Time
WEEK 1	Wednesday April 17, 2019	Crespi	vs	Pinole	Helms	3:45 PM
WEEK 1	Wednesday April 17, 2019	Dejean	vs	Helms	Helms	5:00 PM
WEEK 1	Friday, April 19, 2019	Hercules	vs	Mira Vista	Helms	4:00 PM
WEEK 2	Wednesday, April 24, 2019	Verde	vs	Crespi	Helms	3:45 PM
WEEK 2	Wednesday, April 24, 2019	Hercules	vs	Helms	Helms	5:00 PM
WEEK 2	Friday, April 26, 2019	Dejean	vs	Mira Vista	Helms	4:00 PM
WEEK 3	Wednesday, May 01, 2019	Crespi	vs	Helms	Helms	3:45 PM
WEEK 3	Wednesday, May 01, 2019	Dejean	vs	Verde	Helms	5:00 PM
WEEK 3	Friday, May 03, 2019	Hercules	vs	Pinole	Helms	4:00 PM
WEEK 4	Wednesday, May 08, 2019	Crespi	vs	Mira Vista	Helms	3:45 PM
WEEK 4	Wednesday, May 08, 2019	Verde	vs	Helms	Helms	5:00 PM
WEEK 4	Friday, May 10, 2019	Dejean	vs	Pinole	Helms	4:00 PM
WEEK 5	Wednesday May 15, 2019	Crespi	vs	Hercules	Helms	3:45 PM
WEEK 5	Wednesday May 15, 2019	Mira Vista	vs	Helms	Helms	5:00 PM
WEEK 5	Friday, May 17, 2019	Pinole	vs	Verde	Helms	4:00 PM
WEEK 6	Wednesday, May 22, 2019	Dejean	vs	Hercules	Helms	3:45 PM
WEEK 6	Wednesday, May 22, 2019	Helms	vs	Pinole	Helms	5:00 PM
WEEK 6	Friday, May 24, 2019	Verde	vs	Mira Vista	Helms	4:00 PM

Teach for America targeted as legislation seeks to limit inexperienced teachers in California

Assemblywoman says new teachers with little training can't adequately serve neediest students

APRIL 18, 2019 | THERESA HARRINGTON

A California legislator wants to ban inexperienced teachers in programs such as [Teach for America](#) from working in predominantly low-income schools, saying they lack the preparation to work effectively with the neediest students.

“I want to make sure we have qualified, experienced teachers with our most vulnerable students,” said Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia, D-Bell Gardens.

Several [studies](#) show a correlation between teacher experience and student achievement, noting that students perform better academically as their teachers gain experience.

GOING DEEPER

[Does Teaching Experience Increase Teacher Effectiveness? A Review of the Research,](#)

by Tara Kini and Ann Podolsky, Learning Policy Institute, 2016.

Yet, many educators from Teach for America or similar programs leave after three years, Garcia said. “So, right when they’re getting to proficiency, we’re losing them. I acknowledge we have a teacher shortage, but is this really part of the solution?”

Garcia, a former high school and community college math teacher from Los Angeles County, has authored [AB 221](#), which starting in 2020-21 would prohibit teachers in so-called third-party credential programs from working in schools where 40 percent or more of the students are low-income. They can teach in those schools only if they commit to working in the organization for a minimum of five years.

This would effectively make it impossible for these schools to hire Teach for America recruits, who are asked to commit to only two years. However, many stay on for a third year. A nationwide [study](#) found that 60.5 percent of Teach for America teachers continued teaching for three years, but only 27.8 percent remained after five years.

Teach for America spokesman Jack Hardy called the bill “a misguided legislative overreach that strips public school principals of local control in hiring of state credentialed teachers” when they are facing “a massive teacher shortage.”

He urged lawmakers “to work on solutions that will increase, not limit, the supply of high-quality public school teachers in California.”

Teach for America is a nonprofit organization that recruits what the program describes as “outstanding” college graduates to commit to two years of teaching in low-income schools. They attend five weeks of summer training before they enter the classroom and receive ongoing support. The program is affiliated with accredited university teacher education programs that offer classes that prepare the teachers to earn a preliminary credential after one year.

Ashley Pangelinan, a Teach for America teacher in 2013 who became a full-time teacher in San Jose Unified, told the Assembly Education Committee on March 27 that she would not have entered the profession without the program.

“It opens doors for smart people who might not otherwise be able to afford to become teachers,” she said. “Why take away teachers like me?”

It is unclear how many teachers would be affected by the bill. This year, 725 Teach for America educators are working on intern or preliminary credentials in low-income schools across California, mainly in the Bay Area, Los Angeles, San Diego and Central Valley.

Many California districts rely on hiring teachers with less than full credentials. Yet the bill does not ban teachers with emergency permits or substitutes without teaching credentials from teaching in low-income schools.

In 2017-18, the state’s Commission on Teacher Credentialing **issued** 4,926 intern teacher credentials out of a 22,407 total. It also issued 7,839 emergency permits. Emergency permits are issued to meet “an acute staffing need” to applicants who have completed bachelor’s degrees, met a basic skills requirement and have completed coursework related to the subject to be taught. Teachers working with emergency

permits are not required to be enrolled in a credential program. Substitute teachers may or may not have credentials, depending on the substitute teaching permit they hold.

Oakland Unified, an urban Bay Area district where nearly three-quarters of students are low-income, is an example of a district that routinely hires teachers who are not fully qualified. This year, about 90 Teach for America teachers are working in Oakland, including about 60 in district schools and 30 in charter schools. The district, which **employs** some 2,328 teachers, has determined it may need to hire up to 220 teachers on emergency credentials next year because “there are an insufficient number of certified persons who meet the district’s employment criteria for needed positions,” according to a resolution approved by the school board earlier this month.



THERESA HARRINGTON/EDSOURCE TODAY

Emma LaPlante, a first-year Teach for America teacher at Frick Impact Academy Middle School in Oakland Unified, is working on an intern credential while taking courses to complete a teacher credential program.

In 2017-18, Oakland Unified hired 85 teachers with intern credentials and 239 with emergency permits.

Ruby De Tie, principal of [Frick Impact Academy Middle School](#) in Oakland Unified, told EdSource that it would be difficult to staff her school without Teach for America teachers because of a lack of credentialed teachers. De Tie hired four new Teach for America teachers this year and has already hired three for 2019-20.

“If this passes, I don’t know how I would staff my school,” De Tie said, adding that nearly all of her students are low-income.

A first-year Teach for America teacher at Frick Academy Middle ...



About 113 Teach for America teachers work in nearby Richmond, including 76 in [West Contra Costa Unified](#) and the rest in charter schools, according to the organization.

The Assembly Education Committee voted 5-1 last month to move the bill on to the Assembly Appropriations Committee in the hopes of continuing discussions about how best to support needy students and new teachers, while helping districts cope with teacher shortages.

But the bill attracted intense opposition as well, with dozens of education-related groups and officials against it including the [Loyola Marymount School of Education](#) in Southern California, the [California Charter Schools Association](#), the [California Association of School Administrators](#), the [Education Trust-West](#) student advocacy group and several school districts and charter schools.

Supporters of Garcia's limit on Teach for America and other teachers with intern credentials include the [California Federation of Teachers](#), the NAACP and the nonprofit [Network for Public Education](#) — a New York-based non-profit that advocates for public education founded by [Diane Ravitch](#), a former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Education, author and education historian who has criticized Teach for America. The California Teachers Association has taken a [watch](#) position, meaning it may take a position in the future, depending on how the bill may be amended.

Although the bill originally singled out Teach for America for the ban, Garcia agreed to amendments that do not name the non-profit but describe it among similar programs. The amendments also require new teachers to commit to working in schools for five years and prohibit the third-party organizations from charging fees to districts to place the new teachers. Teach for America charges \$4,300 to place each candidate.

Assemblyman Patrick O'Donnell, D-Long Beach, said the bill is not necessarily targeting Teach for America as much as it is calling for a five-year commitment.

Hardy said the five-year requirement "is both unenforceable and an infringement on people's right to choose their profession."

Some committee members expressed concerns about how districts would fill vacancies if they were prohibited from tapping into programs such as Teach for America. However, a few said they supported the amendment that would require the intern teachers to make a five-year commitment, saying it's important to create a stable teacher pipeline.

Emma LaPlante, 23, who also got her start with Teach For America, is a teacher for mild to moderate special education students at Frick Impact Academy in Oakland.

LaPlante said the answer to the need for fully qualified teachers is not doing away with Teach For America slots immediately. "What's the contingency plan when all the vacant (teaching) spots are not filled?"

She urged legislators to consider a 10-year plan to expand options for local residents to enter teacher pipeline programs.

Experienced teachers are frequently lacking in low-income schools because charter schools and districts with teachers' unions are often prevented from transferring veteran teachers by their union contracts. Teachers have the right to remain in a school after they are permanently placed there,

although those with the least seniority can be involuntarily transferred out based on declining enrollment or other factors.



THERESA HARRINGTON / EDSOURCE

Demetrio Gonzalez, president of the United Teachers of Richmond union in West Contra Costa Unified, speaks at a rally outside a Richmond school. Gonzalez started his career through Teach for America.

Veteran teachers often prefer to work in more affluent schools where parents raise money for extras, staff turnover is low, students face fewer challenges in their lives, said Demetrio Gonzalez, president of the **United Teachers of Richmond** union in West Contra Costa Unified. Gonzalez, whose first teaching job was with Teach for America, and his union are taking a watch position on the bill to see what happens next.

The union in West Contra Costa is proposing that no educator in the first three years of teaching be placed at Stege Elementary in Richmond where nearly all the children are low-income and the district has embarked on a redesign of the school. The union also proposes that veteran educators be paid additional stipends of \$30,000 to work there during a lengthened school year.

Josh Pechthalt, president of the California Federation of Teachers, said smaller class sizes would also help attract veteran teachers to low-income schools.

“Generally, more veteran teachers, if they have a choice, they’re going to teach in schools where conditions are better,” he said.

Pechthalt said the CFT supports the bill because kids in struggling communities often need more help than those in affluent communities and a few weeks of preparation before entering a classroom is not enough. The California NAACP, in a statement, said the state’s lowest-income children should not “be taught by individuals with exceedingly limited training and no long-term commitment to the classroom, schools and communities.”



THERESA HARRINGTON/EDSOURCE TODAY

Heba Sairafe, 23, one of four first-year Teach for America teachers working at Frick Impact Academy Middle School in Oakland Unified, speaks to an 8th-grade student in her science class.

Loyola Marymount professor Edmundo Litton told the Assembly committee that the college’s teacher credentialing program, which partners with five districts for Teach for America, is one of the most

rigorous in the state. It provides classroom support and helps schools staff hard-to-fill positions in science, math, special education and bilingual education, he said.

“This fails to acknowledge the positive impact of their work,” Litton said.

Comments

Comments Policy

We welcome your comments. All comments are moderated for civility, relevance and other considerations.

[Click here for EdSource's Comments Policy.](#)

EDSOURCE SPECIAL REPORT

Rising rents in coastal California outpace

CALIFORNIA'S TEACHER HOUSING CRUNCH

Starting teachers shut out of affordable rents, data analysis shows

BY DIANA LAMBERT AND DANIEL J. WILLIS

APRIL 17, 2019



The West Contra Costa Unified School District, serving some of the poorest neighborhoods in the San Francisco Bay Area, can use every excellent teacher it's able to recruit.

That is why the decision by Sarah La Due to pack up and leave the district, just two years after winning a [Teaching Excellence Award](#), hurts.

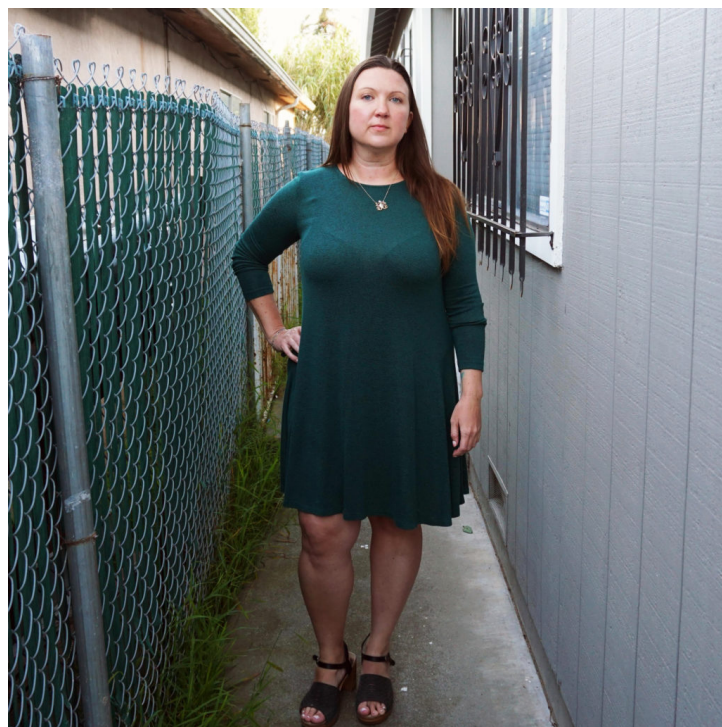
But La Due, after five years in the district, is tired of living with two roommates and sharing a bathroom in order to afford housing. So this fall she will be teaching high school in Las Vegas instead of English at Fred T. Korematsu Middle School in El Cerrito.

"I'm a 35-year-old professional woman and I shouldn't have to live with roommates," La Due said. "Why am I sacrificing so much to live in the Bay when there are other cities with culture and good food?"

La Due is not alone in her frustration.

An EdSource analysis of teacher salaries and rents reveals just how crushing California's housing crisis has become for many teachers.

Teachers at the bottom of the salary scale working in coastal or metro areas of the state are being shut out of affordable housing. Many are spending more than 30



Teacher Sarah La Due at the Richmond, California home she shares with roommates.

percent of their salary on rent, the federal cutoff for affordable housing, the EdSource analysis reveals:

- In nearly 40 percent of the 680 school districts that reported salary data to the state, first-year teachers did not earn enough to rent an affordable one-bedroom apartment.
- In 39 districts, first-year teachers faced the prospect of spending more than 50 percent of their income on a modest one-bedroom apartment.
- In more than a quarter of school districts the highest-paid teachers could not afford to rent a three-bedroom house or apartment.
- Teachers fare better in rural areas, where in nearly 90 percent of the districts, teachers earning an average salary could afford a two-bedroom apartment. But many of those areas have a shortage of rental housing, compounding the difficulty some rural districts face in attracting enough teachers.

Nowhere is the gap between teacher pay and housing costs wider than in the Bay Area. Teachers earning an average salary in nearly 90 percent of districts in the region did not earn enough to rent an affordable two-bedroom apartment. In 47 Bay Area school districts the highest-paid teachers only earned enough for an affordable one-bedroom apartment.

For districts already grappling with teacher shortages, high housing costs pose one more obstacle to hiring. As a result of declining enrollment in teacher preparation programs after the economic downturn and teacher attrition, many districts can't find enough fully credentialed teachers to fill their classrooms, according to the [“Getting Down to Facts II”](#) education research project released last year.

California’s Teacher Housing Crunch

This special report reveals just how crushing California’s housing crisis has become for many teachers. [Find out how teachers are struggling](#) to pay the rent and [how districts are building housing](#) to attract and keep them. Check out [interactive app](#) to find out what teachers can afford to rent in your school district or [view statewide maps](#) showing where teachers can afford to live. Check out [teacher salaries](#) in districts across the state and read more on [EdSource’s analysis](#) and [how it was done](#).

The EdSource analysis compared teacher salary data from the California Department of Education and fair-market rent data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Fair-market rent is the base price for a modest apartment in a given market, so those figures are likely to be lower than actual rents in high-cost communities.

La Due has been teaching for five years, starting as a Teach for America teacher in 2014. She earns \$54,000 a year. To make extra cash to stretch her salary, she took on an extra class and drives for Lyft over the summer and during winter break.

“It’s still not enough,” she said.

Next school year, instead of paying \$900 a month to rent a small bedroom and shared bathroom in Richmond, she can rent a two-bedroom apartment of her own for less than \$1,000. She expects to make about the same salary.

The districts that pay enough for even their lowest-paid teachers to afford a two-bedroom apartment are almost entirely small districts in rural areas of the state. New teachers in Willows Unified in Glenn County and Tulelake Basin Joint Unified in Modoc County would pay about 16 percent of their salaries to rent a two-bedroom apartment.

California's coastal communities, from the Bay Area to San Diego County, have the most expensive rents in the state, according to the EdSource analysis. First-year teachers in the Lompoc Unified School District, near Santa Barbara, spend 40 percent of their pay for a one-bedroom apartment at fair market rent, about \$1,600. Farther down the coast, in the Carlsbad Unified School District, north of San Diego, a 10-year teacher has to spend about 41 percent of his or her salary to afford a three-bedroom apartment at the fair market rent of about \$2,600 per month.

Elementary teacher Arnold Fenton, 28, spends about a quarter of his \$69,000 salary on his portion of the rent for a two-bedroom apartment he shares with his partner and a roommate in the Rancho Bernardo area of San Diego. The total rent is \$2,140.

It's less than he paid for a one-bedroom before, but the trade-off is a roommate and a 40-mile commute to [Arroyo Vista Charter School](#) in Chula Vista — where he teaches kindergarten — doubling his insurance and requiring him to buy a new car.

“I have to deal with children all day and sometimes I come home and have to get after him (the roommate) to do the dishes,” Fenton said. “There are days I grind my teeth and try not to lash out. Sometimes they bring friends over and I have just come back from work and I don't want to deal with people who are rowdy.”

Fenton said he has thought of leaving the profession he has been in for six years in order to earn more money. Instead, he plans to earn his administrative credential and become a district or school administrator in five or 10 years.

The couple also have considered relocating. “We talk about Portland,” he said. “We talk about south Seattle. The cost is relatively cheaper than here.”



San Diego teacher Arnold Fenton

The situation is even more dire for new teachers, who have less money to spend on housing and other necessities.

Roxana De La O Cortez, 25, who teaches 5th grade at Oakland's dual immersion [Manzanita SEED Elementary School](#), moved back to her family's two-bedroom, one-bath apartment in Hayward in June.

She lives with her parents, her 23-year-old sister and 18-year-old brother. Her living quarters — a loft-style bed, bookcase and a portable clothing rack — take up half the living room. The bed has a built-in shoe rack and space underneath for the bins filled with De La O Cortez's belongings.

"It is disappointing and it's heartbreaking," she said of the situation, which includes a 40-minute commute to work.



RANDALL BENTON

Teacher Roxana De La O Cortez, center, at her home in Hayward, Calif., Saturday, Mar. 2, 2019. Behind her are her sister Odalis De La O Cortez, left, brother Manual De La O Cortez, and their mother Antonia Cortez Garcia who all live together in the apartment.

De La O Cortez had been living with another teacher in Oakland, but she couldn't afford the \$1,100 monthly rent, bills and \$1,100 monthly tuition for a master's degree on her then \$47,000 salary, and still save for her dream of buying a house.

Things got financially worse for De La O Cortez in October when she lost her provisional internship permit and was bumped down to substitute pay — about \$170 a day — after she failed one of the tests required to earn a teaching credential. Teachers on internship permits must pass all the required tests within a year of receiving their permit or it is revoked.

She's hoping to fulfill her dream of home ownership in either Sacramento or Stockton in two or three years.

Housing advocate Sarah Chaffin, founder of [Support Teacher Housing.org](https://www.supportteacherhousing.org), would like to see Bay Area teachers living in the communities in which they teach, but it isn't easy. Teachers usually earn too much to qualify for typical subsidized housing programs and don't make enough to rent a median-priced apartment or buy a home, she said.

California residents caught in the middle — between low and high incomes — spend a substantial amount of their salaries on housing, according to a Legislative Analyst's Office [report](#) on the governor's 2019-20 budget, which includes proposals to improve the affordability of housing in the state. About 1 million households at or above the state's median income — earning above \$70,000 annually — are cost burdened, meaning they are spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing, the report states.

High housing costs impact everyone in the Bay Area, Chaffin said. “We need more moderate-income housing for everyone — teachers, social workers, dispatchers,” she said.

Joel Smith, 40, a high school ceramics teacher at [Luther Burbank High School](#) in Sacramento, started hunting for a house two years ago. He didn't have much of a down payment, so he needed to find something in the \$250,000 range.



SNAPJACKSON

Sacramento City Unified teacher Joel Smith with his partner Kaytie Hensley and son Saia Smith. He teaches ceramics at Luther Burbank High School in Sacramento.

The median-priced house in Sacramento County and the city of West Sacramento in February of 2019 was \$360,000, up from \$260,000 in 2014, according to the [Sacramento Association of Realtors](#). The increase in the cost of housing in Sacramento has been attributed, in part, to the number of Bay Area refugees moving to the city.

“All the houses we can afford are in dangerous neighborhoods,” Smith said. The family looked anyway. They discovered they had to bid for homes against numerous potential buyers, many offering well above the asking price.

Smith shares a \$1,150-a-month, 800-square-foot one-bedroom duplex with his partner, Kaytie Hensley — a full-time college student — and their son. It’s tight quarters, but the family has little choice.

He’d like to save more money for a down payment to buy a house in a better neighborhood. As the sole family income and with student loan debt, Smith said he doesn’t feel like he can get ahead.

“It’s pretty hard to save money when you barely make it month to month,” Smith said.

Smith has been teaching for seven years and earns \$53,000 a year. He supplements his income by teaching an extra period at the end of the school day, as well as summer school and Saturday school.

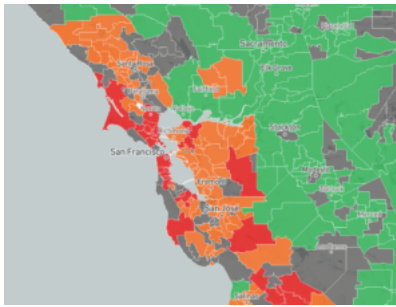
California's Teacher Housing Crunch



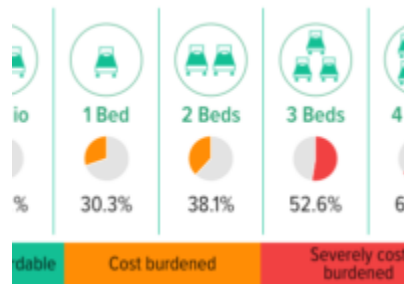
In need of teacher housing, more California school districts building their own



California teachers share their stories



Interactive Map: Where teachers find affordable housing in California



How much housing can California teachers afford?

The high cost of housing in California has pushed many teachers, as well as residents in other professions, out of state in search of less-expensive housing, according to an EdSource analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data. Between 2013 and 2017 the [Census Bureau](#) estimates that 40,000 teachers left the state, although it is not clear that they left because of housing costs. That was an increase of 22 percent over the previous five-year period. In 2017 the most popular destination was Texas, followed by Oregon, Washington and Arizona.

Housing costs were definitely part of the equation as teachers staged strikes in Los Angeles and Oakland, said Eric Heins, president of the [California Teachers Association](#). “It is impacting everybody. The raises they were asking for were nowhere near going to meet their needs — to afford rent or put food on the table or pay their mortgage or anything like that.”

Despite her excitement at the new opportunity in Las Vegas, La Due, a native Californian, is sad to be leaving the state. She said almost every young teacher she knows has a short-term plan to move somewhere that costs less or pays more.

She doesn't blame the school district. Teachers in the West Contra Costa Unified District received a big pay raise recently, but it was not enough to offset the high cost of housing, she said.

"It was a good raise and I don't think the district could pay us any more," she said. "They literally don't have the funds."



Teachers: Share your housing story

EdSource wants to hear from California teachers about their ability to find affordable housing.

Comments

Comments Policy

We welcome your comments. All comments are moderated for civility, relevance and other considerations.

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▶ **Phyllis Orrick**

1 day ago



Thanks for highlighting this study. An important component of the problem is that California has underfunded K-12 Ed for nearly half a century and got away with it until reality caught up and the pink collar ghetto of married women content with earnings secondary to their spouses became scarce. Key to this is reform of prop 13 AND massive injection of budget surplus to bring salaries in line with professional expectations. California currently ranks near the ... [Read More](#)

▶ **Todd Maddison**

2 days ago



Good analysis, but one big thing missing - are teachers any worse off than "everyone else" in California? If you compare the teacher pay with the median pay reported in the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey's "Educational Attainment" report and look at the income of comparably educated residents of the same areas, we find that teachers often make MORE than the median pay of those residents. In Oceanside - where I'm from, for instance - the ... [Read More](#)

▶ **Laurie A Hilderbrand**

2 days ago



Also, they do not mention that many teachers are kept at 50%,60%, or 80% FTE Contract which renders you unable to qualify for benefits at the 50-60 and even sometimes 80% range. So if you are only teaching 3 days a week that really hurts! Sadly they won't hire you on at full time. Honestly, earning a Masters Degree in Education does not help you at all in the San Francisco Bay Coastal areas which ... [Read More](#)

GJ

2 days ago



This is exactly why, as other comments have mentioned, the LCFF needs to be adjusted for local cost of living. The vast majority of a school district's budget goes to salaries, yet the only adjustments to LCFF are based on percentages of Unduplicated students. While additional funds are certainly needed for Unduplicated students, neglecting the higher cost of living in some parts of the state is simply unreasonable and illogical.

Todd Maddison

2 days ago



That would only make sense, but logically that would mean that districts in areas with a low cost of living would see a reduction in LCFF per student funding, offsetting the increase in districts with a high cost of living.

Katherine

2 days ago



Educate Our State has proposed original cost supplement for LCFF for the counties for the highest cost of living in the state. More info here: <http://www.educateourstate.org/impact>

▶ **Todd Maddison**

2 days ago



Would that not logically mean that districts located in low-cost living areas would see their LCFF allocation per student decline, then? If one looks at the state's "J90" report of teacher compensation, there are often not huge differences between average pay rates between low cost areas vs. high cost areas, and if one browses the Transparent California database for administrative salaries - particularly Superintendent - one finds the same effect. If we're saying, for instance, that it ... [Read More](#)

Ann Tiedemann Halvorsen ,EdD

2 days ago



Surprised not to see any specific mention of San Francisco ...likely the worst for anything affordable and always getting worse.

Diana Lambert

2 days ago



Hello Ann,

Thank you for reading. The second story in the package discusses a proposed housing project for teachers in

San Francisco. Here is the link: <https://edsource.org/2019/in-need-of-teacher-housing-more-california-school-districts-building-their-own/611220>

Michael Kirst

2 days ago



This article underlines that the state finance system may need to be adjusted for local differences in cost of living. New York, Texas and Florida all do this. I helped design the system in Florida in 1973 to adjust for the different costs in a state that spans the Alabama border to Miami.

Todd Maddison

2 days ago



Which makes sense. Did your system result in lower per ADA spending in areas with lower costs, or was it just more money for higher cost areas...?

I-TEAM

I-TEAM EXCLUSIVE: Principal, teacher on leave after girl's beating in Pinole classroom caught on camera

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The principal and a teacher from an elementary school in Pinole have been disciplined and placed on administrative leave while the West Contra Costa Unified School District investigates an alleged case of bullying.

Friday, April 12th, 2019 6:38PM

PINOLE, Calif. (KGO) -- A 12-year-old girl, attacked in an East Bay school, says her classmate has been bullying her for months. After the I-Team's Dan Noyes demanded answers this week about the school's

handling of the case, the district has now suspended the principal and the teacher in that classroom.

We know how serious bullying can be. In fact, on the same day as that attack in Pinole, a 10-year-old girl was beaten in South Carolina and died from her injuries two days later.

TAKE ACTION: [Get help with bullying and teen mental health](#)

What sets this attack apart from others we've seen is the teacher's response. At the beginning of the video, you can see Stewart Elementary's 7th-grade history teacher, Jeremy Cooper, raising his hands and walking away.

7th Grader Valeria Delao told Dan Noyes, "I was really shocked that he didn't do anything because most teachers go and try to stop it, but he didn't do anything."

The beating that 12-year-old Valeria suffered continued for 40 seconds until a PE teacher came to her aid.

"She called me and told me, 'Mom, she hit me,'" said Carla Gamboa, Valeria's mother.

Valeria's mother rushed to the school, saw her daughter's bruises, and took her to the hospital for evaluation. Thankfully, no serious injuries. The enormity of what happened didn't really sink in, until she saw that video the next day. It circulated among students and on social media.

"I never thought I would see my child having to go through this," said Gamboa.

Valeria added, "It made me sad that my mom was crying."

Gamboa tells us she first complained to the school five months ago about her daughter being bullied-- describing the teasing about Valeria's height, her hair, her friends-- even during class.

"I couldn't focus," said Valeria. "I want to learn and not just always hear her talking about me saying stuff."

The mom started keeping a list of alleged incidents and says the pressure on Valeria escalated when the other student sang an obscene diss track, posted on Instagram. The girl sang, "Oh, she's a ho, ho, ho, ho, ho, ho."

Gamboa wants people to see the video. She's a school bus driver herself. Gamboa tells the I-Team after she complained to the West Contra Costa County Unified School District again, the bullying stopped for a

while. Then came the classroom beating on March 25. She confronted Principal Peter Aloo.

Gamboa told Dan Noyes, "I said, 'Now what are you gonna do? I told you last time, that I wanted to avoid something like this to happen. And it was just a matter of time.' He goes, 'I don't know, I can't tell you what I'm gonna do,' and I was like, 'Are you serious?'"

Gamboa kept Valeria home for two weeks, and she tells me the school never called to check on her daughter or to provide makeup work. So, the I-Team went to the school this week, and with their parent's permission, spoke with students who were there during the attack.

Cierra Connelly told us, "She started beating her back and everything, her head, pulling her hair and stuff."

"I just thought it was crazy, like stupid," said Isaac Johnson. "Why do you need to fight her?"

Maddox Krashna added, "Val was trying to avoid the fight, but she got beat up really bad."

Principal Aloo and the teacher, Jeremy Cooper, would not come out to discuss what happened. The I-Team waited for hours and they left without us seeing them. We returned the next day to find the principal's parking space empty and to watch Valeria return to school. Her mother met with a district official.

Dan Noyes asked, "Was there an apology?"

Gamboa answered, "Definitely, they accepted they dropped the ball."

The school district told the I-Team they would email a statement about the case, but Dan Noyes went to the headquarters to press for an interview and caught Superintendent Matt Duffy coming out of a meeting.

"We are certainly disturbed by what happened in that classroom," he said. "And we've taken disciplinary action, both the principal and teacher are on administrative leave at this time which should give you some idea how we feel the handling of the situation went."

The family has obtained a temporary restraining order. A judge ordered the alleged bully to have no contact with Valeria, and to stay three yards away from her. But they both still go to the same school.

We've been unable to reach the other family in this story. Valeria's mom filed a police report and wants to press charges, and is talking to a lawyer about suing the school.

Take a look at for a look at more stories by [Dan Noyes and the ABC7 News I-Team](#).

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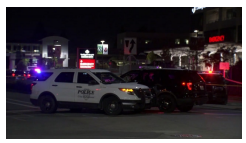
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