



# CFT Policies & Positions

## **HANDBOOK**



*A Union of Educators  
& Classified Professionals*

JULY 2019

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**California Federation of Teachers**  
**Policies and Positions Handbook 2019**

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## I. OVERVIEW OF THE CALIFORNIA FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

The California Federation of Teachers (CFT) is a union of education professionals affiliated with the more than 1.5 million-member American Federation of Teachers (AFT), which is an affiliate of the AFL/CIO. The CFT is made up of the state's 130 local unions chartered by the AFT. Each local is affiliated with its regional AFL-CIO Central Labor Council and the California Labor Federation. The CFT represents over 120,000 educational employees working at every level of public and private education from Head Start to the University of California. CFT members are pre-kindergarten (pre-K) and transitional kindergarten-12 (TK-12) teachers working in public and private schools, TK-14 classified employees, full- and part-time community college faculty, University of California librarians and lecturers, and private TK-12 and college faculty and staff.

### History of the CFT

Founded in 1919, the CFT was created to provide a labor union alternative for classroom teachers. The CFT is the first state affiliate of the AFT.

The CFT introduced the first teachers' collective bargaining bill in the California legislature in 1953. It reintroduced similar bills for the following two decades until the Educational Employment Relations Act (EERA) was signed into law in 1975. Also known as the Rodda Act, this law finally brought collective bargaining rights to K-14 teachers and classified employees working in public education. Three years later, in 1978, the CFT helped pass the Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act (HEERA), bringing collective bargaining rights to university employees.

### Our Mission, Beliefs, and Advocacy Priorities

The mission of the CFT is to represent the interests of its members and the interests of the communities they serve through support for local collective bargaining, but also through legislative advocacy, political action, and organizing. By these means, the CFT helps its members to achieve dignity and respect in their workplace, decent lives for themselves and their families, and security in their retirement. The CFT exists to bring its members together to act – on behalf of education workplace rights, academic freedom, legislative solutions to educational policy issues, and full access to quality education for our students. The CFT represents public and private sector educational employees.

Specifically, the CFT stands for the following issues:

- \* First and foremost, the CFT champions the cause of public education. We believe that all children, regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and social, political, or economic status, must be afforded the right to a high-quality education.

- \* Additionally, we believe that all education employees must have the right to organize, join a union, and collectively bargain. Education employees must have the right to bargain fair contracts that provide safe working conditions, fair compensation, and adequate retirement benefits. They must have the right to bargain issues that directly impact the quality of instruction they provide to their students and the well-being of the communities they serve.
- \* The CFT believes that schools must be adequately funded, safe, and clean with well-equipped classrooms and state-of-the-art instructional materials.
- \* We advocate for high-quality instructional services for all students at every level of the education system. This includes early childhood education for all children, small class sizes to ensure personalized learning environments, and a well-rounded curriculum that includes the arts, physical education, and foreign language instruction. In addition, CFT believes that schools and classrooms must be focused on educating the whole child – meeting not only students’ academic needs but also their social and emotional needs.
- \* The CFT believes that all students, particularly those from low-income backgrounds, should receive wrap-around services at their schools, including health and dental care. All students must have access to adequately staffed counseling services, mental health services, librarians, nurses, guidance counselors, and after-school tutoring and support.
- \* We believe that education is integrally linked to the social, economic, and environmental issues confronting the world, the country, and our state and local communities. Students do not learn in a vacuum. Therefore, the CFT advocates for racial equity, gender equality, social justice, civil and human rights, and environmental justice.
- \* We support academic freedom in all classrooms so that students can explore, question, and seek solutions to relevant problems as they work toward becoming successful lifelong learners and active citizens in our society and democracy.
- \* We believe that educators must be engaged politically. Members must advocate at the federal, state, and local levels for policies that support high-quality teaching and learning and play an active role in choosing elected officials who will support those policies.

This *CFT Policies and Positions Handbook* translates these beliefs into actionable items, identifies our priority issues, and clearly articulates our positions so that CFT members can advocate appropriately for legislation and policies that support a high-quality public education system.

## II. PURPOSE OF THE *CFT POLICIES AND POSITIONS HANDBOOK*

This *CFT Policies and Positions Handbook* serves five major purposes. First, it will guide leaders in focusing organizational work and resources by clearly identifying priority policy issues and describing our organizational positions on those issues. Second, it will guide our policy advocacy at the federal, state, and local levels. Third, the handbook and its ongoing development will engage members in the policymaking and advocacy process. Fourth, it will be a resource CFT locals can use to ensure that all members clearly understand what we stand for and why it is important to be active in the organization and to educate new members about its priority issues and positions. Finally, the handbook can help guide CFT committees, councils, and other leadership bodies in reviewing and updating policies as they develop resolutions to be adopted on the annual convention floor.

The *CFT Policies and Positions Handbook* is intended as a living document. It will be continually updated and approved by the organization's leadership to remain current, to encompass the key policy priorities and positions of all CFT constituencies, and to reflect the changing context of our members' work and our organization's role in both national and state policy-making.

### III. THE STATE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN 2019

With the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) signed into law in 2015 and the ongoing and rapidly changing education policy environment in California, we must continue to ensure that the CFT's priority issues and our positions on those issues reflect the most current state of education both in our state and across the United States.

#### National Context for Public Education: A New Era

The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), signed on December 10, 2015, signaled a new era of education policy in the United States. The new federal law replaces the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law that determined the direction of both federal and state education policy for over fourteen years. It gives states greater flexibility in designing their own accountability systems by eliminating many of the top-down federal policies that address education accountability.

The Every Student Succeeds Act ends over a decade of federal policies that relied on excessive high-stakes standardized testing and heavy-handed sanctions for schools that did not achieve unrealistic Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) goals. The new federal law eliminates the requirement that standardized test scores be used in teacher evaluations and prohibits the federal government from mandates related to teacher and administrator evaluations. The ESSA also eliminates prescriptive interventions that resulted in school closings, firing of teachers and administrators, and conversions of traditional public schools into private charter schools. Rather than relying on sanctions for underperforming schools, the intent of the law is to provide technical assistance to those schools that are struggling.

The ESSA maintains a focus on student achievement by requiring that states continue to test students in reading and math annually in grades 3-8 and once in grades 10-12. In addition, the law requires that states test students in science once in each of the following grade spans: 3-5, 6-9, and 10-12. To address equity, the new federal law continues to require reporting of assessment results for individual student subgroups. However, instead of mandating punitive sanctions for schools not making progress on closing achievement gaps, the new federal law requires states to provide support in the form of technical assistance.

The California Federation of Teachers believes that the ESSA is a step in the right direction for federal education policy. It ends years of ineffective and misguided policy that relied too heavily on standardized testing and sanctions, and it holds promise that educators will receive the supports they need for serving their students well.

Despite the enactment of the ESSA, public education faces significant threats by those who want to privatize our public education system, strip all education employees of their collective bargaining and due process rights, and destroy educational employees' unions. These self-serving organizations continue to fund the campaigns of legislators who are bent on enacting both federal and state policies that undermine our public education system. In addition, these groups – funded by some of the wealthiest people in the country – are turning to our state and

federal court systems to overturn hard-fought collective bargaining and due process rights of educators.

As an example, the *Janus v. AFSCME* Supreme Court decision in favor of the plaintiff (June 2018) eliminated fair share provisions in state laws and essentially made all states right-to-work states.

The election of Donald Trump and his appointment of Betsy DeVos to head the Department of Education further builds on this move to siphon funds away from traditional public schools into the hands of unregulated for-profit and private providers. Trump's proposal to use \$20 billion in block grants to states for increased use of private school vouchers could, if passed, cause further diversion of federal funds away from public schools. DeVos, whose husband owns for-profit charter schools in Michigan, has supported unlimited growth of charter schools and voucher programs in that state and is an opponent of the Common Core Standards.

It is for these reasons that the leaders and members of the California Federation of Teachers must be vigilant. We must focus on ensuring that education policy in California serves to support our public education system, our education professionals, and our diverse student population.

### California Context: Challenges

***The Challenge of Diversity.*** The State of California has the largest and most diverse student populations in the country. California public schools educate over 6.2 million students in over 10,000 schools and 1,000 school districts. Students whose first language is not English represent 30 percent of the student population. This diversity brings a cultural richness to the public education system but also poses unique challenges.

Over 1.4 million, or approximately 23 percent of California's students, are classified as English learners, and 3.7 million, or 59 percent of California students, qualify for free or reduced lunches. Also, the teacher population does not mirror the diversity of the student population. According to the California Department of Education, only 24 percent of the 6.2 million students attending TK-12 schools are White, while 53 percent are Latino, 9 percent are Asian, 6 percent are African American, 3 percent are from two or more Non-Latino racial groups, and 3 percent are Filipino, American Indian, Alaska Native, or Pacific Islander. In contrast, the Legislative Analyst's Office reports that the teaching workforce is 65 percent White, 20 percent Latino, 6 percent Asian, 4 percent African American, and 3 percent Filipino, American Indian, Alaska Native, Pacific Islander, or members of two or more non-Latino racial groups. This mismatch in diversity between California's student and teacher populations is especially challenging in California's most ethnically diverse communities.

Diversity also is a challenge for higher education. According to *Increasing Equity and Diversity*, an April 2016 report by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC):

*Overall increases in enrollment [for underrepresented students] have been driven primarily by two-year colleges. Latinos and African Americans comprise about half of the student population at community colleges and for-profit two-year colleges, but their numbers are lower at public four-year colleges. Low-income student enrollment is similarly distributed. About half of students at*



*California's community colleges and private for-profit two-year schools are from the lowest-income families (incomes less than \$30,000 a year). By contrast, only about one in four students at the University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU) – and one in seven students at private nonprofits – come from the state's lowest-income families.*

*. . . . The proportion of bachelor's degrees awarded to Latinos, African Americans, and American Indians at public universities has been rising slowly since 2010 – from 25 percent to 35 percent at CSU and from 17 percent to 24 percent at UC. Still, there are substantial gaps. The increase in degrees awarded to underrepresented students has coincided with increased spending on student services at public universities – this suggests that additional programs and services for underrepresented students could help narrow these attainment gaps.*

Diversity among the faculty who teach in California's three higher education systems differs widely from that of the student population. Each system is composed of about 60 percent White faculty. African Americans represent between 2 and 5 percent of faculty members in the three systems while Latino Americans represent 4 to 14 percent of faculty.

***The Challenge of Teacher Shortages.*** California is facing a severe teacher shortage. It is estimated that the state will need to recruit between 60,000 and 135,000 new teachers in the coming years. However, teacher credentialing programs have seen a 76 percent drop in enrollment from 2002 to 2014.

***The Challenge of Inadequate Funding.*** One of the most significant challenges that California faces is its inability to fund its public education system adequately. According to *Education Week*, the state currently ranks 43<sup>rd</sup> in per pupil adjusted funding. During the Great Recession, from 2008 to 2012, California school districts laid off over 30,000 teachers. Funding for the K-14 education system was cut by an astonishing \$50 billion during this time. The results were significant cuts in school budgets and elimination of programs. The state issued the equivalent of an IOU to school districts because it could not provide the constitutionally mandated level of funding for its public schools.

Compensating for the public education cuts made during the recession will be difficult. The education funding system of California relies heavily on capital gains taxes, which fluctuate wildly depending on the stock market. This creates huge swings in state revenue for schools and other social programs. Additionally, Proposition (Prop) 13, passed in 1978, limits property tax increases, especially for corporate-owned property. Therefore, the state and its local school districts have limited ability to increase taxes for public education. Given these funding challenges and the needs of a diverse student population, California continues to struggle with adequately funding its public education system.

To address the significant reduction in public education funding, the California Federation of Teachers led the way to pass Proposition 30 in 2012. Prop 30 increased the sales tax by one-quarter of 1 percent from 2013 through 2016 and the tax rate for high-income taxpayers (those

making more than \$250,000) from 2012 through 2018. The California Department of Finance estimates that Prop 30 raised nearly \$25 billion in funding for public education from 2012 through 2016. The state has used this money to restore some of the funding cut from California's schools and classrooms. The sales tax portion of Prop 30 expired in 2016.

Californians extended the increased tax rate for high-income wage earners until 2030 by passing the Children's Education and Health Care Protection Act of 2016 (Prop 55) by a margin of 63.23 percent to 36.77 percent in November 2016. CFT was part of the broad and diverse coalition that supported the measure – preventing a structural deficit of nearly \$3 billion and a \$5 billion shortfall. That would have meant nearly \$4 billion in public education funding cuts in the first year alone with likely results including educator layoffs, larger classes, tuition hikes, and the elimination of art, music, and other programs.

Clearly, California has unique challenges but also exciting opportunities for creating an education system that prepares its 6.2 million students for college and careers. Guided by this *Policies and Positions Handbook*, the California Federation of Teachers will continue to play a critical role in the development of policies leading to a high-quality, world-class educational system that supports student success and teaching excellence.

## IV. KEY POLICIES AND POSITIONS

This *Policies and Positions Handbook* addresses the key issues that have been identified by members of the CFT as being most important to their education sectors and professions. The outline for the document was developed by a Task Force of CFT leaders. Subsequently, writing teams were convened to write the contents of the document. The document was then reviewed by CFT committees, division councils, and the executive council for their input. The document was presented for adoption at the CFT convention in March 2018.

The *CFT Policies and Positions Handbook* is divided into the following sections.

1. Early Childhood Education (ECE)
2. Transitional Kindergarten-Grade 12 (TK-12)
3. Classified Employees
4. Higher Education
5. Retirement
6. Civil, Human, and Women's Rights

Each of the six sections is organized according to important areas that need to be addressed through policy making followed by the policies and positions that are supported and opposed by the CFT.

Policy areas and position statements are numbered for easy reference.

### **Process for Making Changes to the *CFT Policies and Positions Handbook***

In order to ensure that the *CFT Policies and Positions Handbook* is updated on a regular basis, it is important to adopt a formal process by which those changes can be made. Since the *Handbook* guides the organization in regards to the positions it takes on state policy proposals, those positions must be adopted by a CFT policymaking body.

#### **What Bodies Can Submit Policy Change Proposals?**

- Local (via a vote by the body or executive board)
- CFT Standing Committee
- CFT Division Council
- CFT Executive Council

#### **How Should Proposals Be Submitted?**

The president of a local or chairs of committees, division councils and executive council should submit the proposed change to the secretary-treasurer of the CFT using the CFT Policy Handbook Update Form. A separate form should be completed and submitted for each change requested.

### **Who Reviews The Proposals?**

A policies and positions review committee will be established to review proposals and determine whether or not to submit them to a policymaking body of the CFT. This review committee will be appointed by the president of the CFT and will consist of the following members:

- 3 CFT standing committee chairs
- 1 representative from each division council
- 3 members of the executive council
- Chair: officer of the CFT
- Staff liaison

The review committee will meet on an as-needed basis depending upon the number of proposals that are submitted. If proposals are not approved by the review committee, then an explanation must be submitted to the president of a local or chairs of committees, division councils and executive council.

### **What Policymaking Bodies Can Approve The Proposals?**

- State Council
- Executive Council
- Convention

Every convention CFT will re-adopt the full *Policies and Positions Handbook* as amended between conventions.

## 1. Early Childhood Education

The CFT believes that education prior to kindergarten equalizes opportunities for students in all socioeconomic groups and prepares them for academic achievement throughout their schooling. Early Childhood Education (ECE) also provides for early identification of a child's special physical and mental needs. A recent study showed that education of children younger than five years produced adults with better health, higher incomes, and less involvement in crime.

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### 1.1 Child Development

**Infant and Toddler Programs.** The first three years of a child's life are a time of rapid brain growth and development. The brain produces millions of neural connections each second during this period. Relationships, experiences, and environment all influence brain development and build the foundation for lifelong skills. Thus, early learning experiences have impacts that can last a lifetime.

**Pre-Kindergarten Programs.** Pre-kindergarten programs have been demonstrated to provide a strong start toward high academic achievement and social and emotional development, which can positively affect children for life. Research shows that investing in high-quality programs produces results for both the individual student and society. Children who are in high-quality programs excel in all developmental domains beyond their peers who aren't enrolled in such programs.

Studies show that students in high-quality pre-kindergarten programs are less likely to require special education services or retention later and are more likely to graduate from high school. They also are less likely to smoke, use drugs, enter the juvenile justice system, or spend time in prison. Their employment, earnings, and quality of life also are positively affected.

**Head Start.** Head Start is a high-quality developmental program that meets the needs of pre-school children from low-income families and children with disabilities. Prior to entering kindergarten, students may be enrolled for one to two years depending on their age. Funding for Head Start is provided through the Administration of Children and Families (ACF), the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and the State of California.

**Early Head Start.** Early Head Start is a component of the federal Head Start program. It serves infants, toddlers, pregnant women, and their families with incomes below the federal poverty level.

**State Pre-School.** State Pre-School is a state funded pre-school program that serves low income students. It offers both part-day and full-day services that provide a comprehensive early childhood education to eligible three- and four-year-old children. It is the largest state funded pre-school program in the nation. The program is administered through local educational agencies, colleges, community action agencies, and private nonprofit agencies.

**Severely Handicapped Programs.** Severely Handicapped Programs (SHP) provide care and supervision, age- and developmentally appropriate activities, therapy, youth guidance, and

parental counseling to eligible children and young adults from birth to 21 years of age. Recipients must have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) issued through special education programs.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 1.1.1 High-quality early childhood education as a critical element in children’s development, growth, and success in life
- 1.1.2 High-quality pre-kindergarten as the cornerstone of later educational success
- 1.1.3 Efforts to ensure that recipients of the SHP and their families exemplify our belief that all children can learn and are an integral part of the education community

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## 1.2 Funding

Adequate funding for programs that serve the educational needs of children from birth to school age is critical to ensure that children are ready academically, socially, and emotionally to start school. Pre-school opportunities for all children, regardless of the parents’ ability to pay, must be a priority for the state of California.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 1.2.1 Free public education for children prior to kindergarten
- 1.2.2 High-quality, voluntary pre-kindergarten programs that support brain development, provide safe and nurturing learning environments, and effectively prepare children for kindergarten
- 1.2.3 Stable and dedicated funding for early childhood education that recognizes an ever-increasing cost of living and meets all the educational needs of children younger than five
- 1.2.4 Mandatory ratios of adults to students in ECE
- 1.2.5 ECE class sizes no greater than 20 students
- 1.2.6 Enrollment of disadvantaged students in programs that are shown to enhance their skills, such as the Head Start program

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## 1.3 Parental Involvement

Parent involvement is an essential component in education. When schools and families work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school. Because mothers and fathers are children’s first teachers, they are valuable assets for the child’s later educational growth and success. Developing a strong home-school relationship requires educating parents in how they can support learning and communicating with them about their child’s needs and strengths. The CFT believes that all parents want their children to be successful adults and that children perform better when parents play an active role in their school.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 1.3.1 A variety of avenues for parent involvement in ECE
- 1.3.2 Respect for the diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds of children in ECE programs and of their families

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## **1.4 Curriculum/Instruction**

A high-quality ECE curriculum and its effective use in instruction require the involvement of the program's administration and staff, as well as parents, and the use of a curriculum model that complements the program's philosophy, mission, and goals. Play is an integral part of any ECE program. Playful exploration and experimentation, along with intentional teaching, encourages students in developing necessary knowledge and skills in early childhood education.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 1.4.1 ECE curricula that guide instruction and support the physical, cognitive, and social and emotional development of children
- 1.4.2 Curriculum models that are varied and inclusive
- 1.4.3 Play as an essential element of curriculum and instruction

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## **1.5 Professionalism**

Educating young children requires a different approach, a specific skill set, and a different understanding of human development. It is a view of the whole child. CFT believes educators who teach young children should be highly trained professionals with the appropriate educational training for the specific age and/or subject matter that they teach. Early childhood centers where educators are appropriately compensated and given opportunities to grow professionally are likely to have low turnover, which contributes to greater continuity in staffing, curriculum and instruction, program improvement, and overall climate.

Early childhood educators need a continuum of learning and support activities designed to help them work with, and on behalf of, young children and their families. They need resources and training opportunities that help them strengthen instructional practices, improve job performance, and increase job security, as well as develop new knowledge and apply new educational research. CFT believes that educators are the best judges of their own professional development needs.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 1.5.1 An employment status for early childhood education teachers, associate teachers, and assistant teachers consistent with a career path that provides job security and a reasonable income, exceeding the minimum wage

- 1.5.2 Compensation for early childhood educators that is equal to their TK-12 educational counterparts and other professionals with equal training and experience
- 1.5.3 Paid time for early childhood educators to prepare for classes
- 1.5.4 Clear differences in duties and responsibilities between differently paid ECE positions
- 1.5.5 Appointment of early childhood educators to boards and commissions that alter or change the educational qualifications for that division or subject
- 1.5.6 Ongoing professional development opportunities for early childhood educators that are educator-driven, relevant, developmentally appropriate, and culturally and linguistically sensitive
- 1.5.7 No cost professional development for early childhood educators and release time during the work day to attend

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## **1.6 Standards and Assessment/Evaluation**

Assessments are a method to evaluate and gauge student growth. Assessments can assist in knowing how well children are learning and whether they are progressing and making proficiency benchmarks. Assessments can provide data for planning whole group and individual instruction, as well as for evaluating program quality. CFT believes that assessments and evaluations are useful tools to measure student growth.

Early learning standards define the desired outcomes and content of young children's education. Standards refer to the principles that guide practice to promote quality in education. CFT believes that early learning standards can be a valuable part of a comprehensive, high-quality system of services for young children.

### *The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 1.6.1 Developmentally appropriate standards, content, and outcomes that are developed and reviewed through an informed, inclusive processes
- 1.6.2 Strong support in standards implementation for programs, professionals, and families

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## **1.7 Program Accountability/Licensing**

Program accountability is an effort to promote effective instruction and student learning and provide information regarding program quality to the public, providers, parents, and funders. The collection of child assessment data to determine learning outcomes is one method for achieving program accountability. CFT believes program accountability provides valuable information that leads to program quality.

The Community Care Licensing Division of the California Department of Social Services licenses and monitors family child care homes and child care centers to ensure that they provide a safe and healthy environment for children. The California Education Code, California Code of Regulations, Funding Terms and Conditions, Title 5, and Title 22 also impact the licensing of



facilities in California. CFT believes that licensing by the Department of Social Services establishes an equal foundation for all ECE organizations and supports safe and healthy environments for all children in California.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 1.7.1 Use of data only for the purposes of informing instruction and guiding improvement
- 1.7.2 Program accountability achieved by involving all stakeholders in making decisions about the program and planning the changes to be made

## 2. Transitional Kindergarten – Grade 12

The state of California is revamping TK-12 education to move from a compliance-based system as defined by NCLB to one that sets world-class standards, employs new curriculum frameworks, provides schools with additional dollars to serve those students who are most in need, empowers districts with more local control, aligns performance-based assessments with the new standards, and provides technical assistance for struggling districts and schools.

***Common Core Standards.*** In addition to adopting a new school funding and accountability system, California is implementing new educational standards in English language arts, mathematics, and science, referred to as the Common Core State Standards. Adopted by the State Board of Education in 2010, these new standards are designed to move away from the rote memorization of facts in isolation and instead teach students to develop problem-solving skills through encounters with real-world problems. Teachers around the state have received professional development in the implementation of these new standards and the accompanying curriculum frameworks.

***Local Control Funding Formula.*** As part of the 2013-14 budget package, California enacted a new education funding formula entitled the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). The LCFF dramatically changed the way that California allocates resources to county offices of education, school districts, and schools. The new system for school funding eliminated almost all state categorical programs and instead provides base grants to all school districts and public schools (including charter schools), then adds additional resources based upon student demographics. On top of the base grant, school districts can receive supplemental and/or concentration grants based upon the percentage of students who are categorized as low-income, English learners, and foster youth. A supplemental grant equal to 20 percent of the base grant is provided to districts and schools for every “unduplicated student” (low-income, English learner, or foster youth). In addition, in school districts where at least 55 percent of students are high-need, those students above the 55 percent enrollment threshold generate an extra 50 percent on the base grant. The new funding system was designed to provide more money for school districts based upon the number of students that need additional resources.

***Local Control Accountability Plans.*** California’s funding system calls for the development of three-year Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAPs) with annual updates. It requires that school districts invite broad stakeholder input when developing their plans, including teachers, parents, local bargaining units, and others.

***Smarter Balance Assessments.*** California is also entering its third school year of administering the Smarter Balance student assessments that are aligned with the new rigorous state standards. These new computer-based assessments were first administered to all students in grades 3-8 and grade 11 in the spring of 2015.

***Dashboard.*** The California State Board of Education (SBE) recently approved the new state “dashboard,” including several state and local indicators that are required in statute to hold schools, school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools accountable for the eight state priorities identified in the Local Control Funding Formula.

The purpose of the dashboard is to provide a structure and process for guiding reflection, planning, and actions to improve outcomes for students. They will support local educational agencies in identifying their strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement; assist county superintendents in identifying needs and targeting technical assistance; and assist the State Superintendent of Public Instruction in determining whether local educational agencies are eligible for more intensive state support/intervention.

**Technical Assistance.** As part of the Local Control Funding Formula law, a new state “agency” was created to provide technical assistance to county offices of education, school districts, and schools that need it. This new agency is called the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence. It received \$24 million in the 2016-2017 Annual Budget Act to begin implementation.

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## 2.1 Funding

The California Federation of Teachers believes that public schools must be adequately funded if they are to provide a high-quality education system for all students.

**Proposition 13.** In the 1960s and early 1970s, California, like most states, funded public education primarily through property taxes. Although California’s per pupil spending was above the national average during that time, this reliance on property taxes increased inequality in funding for schools in high-wealth and high-poverty communities. In response, Proposition 13 was passed in 1978.

Prop 13 decreased property taxes by limiting the assessed value of real property, both home and business, and required a two-thirds vote in the legislature for any state tax increase and all local special tax increases. Consequently, the property tax burden has shifted onto private residences and away from California businesses and corporations. It also has shifted responsibility for education funding to other state taxes and state government. The result was dramatic cuts in funding for education.

**Proposition 98.** The response to this reduction in education funding was Proposition 98. The passage of Proposition 98 by voters in 1988 was intended to move California to the top ten of states in terms of per pupil funding. Proposition 98 determines the minimum funding level for K-14 education. As a result, the strength of the state’s economy and state tax revenues are key factors in determining the minimum level of funding for K-14 education under Proposition 98.

Since the passage of Proposition 98, the cyclical nature of California’s economic condition has resulted in several legislative changes to the Proposition 98 guarantee. Growth in Proposition 98 funding per student has fluctuated significantly over the last two decades due primarily to this cycle of prosperity and recession. Following the “dot-com” bust from 2001-02 to 2004-05, for instance, Proposition 98 showed minimal gains – far less than the amount needed to keep up with inflation. Significant increases in Proposition 98 funding – averaging 8 percent each year – accompanied the state’s rapid economic recovery in 2005-06 and 2006-07, but those gains were wiped out during the Great Recession of 2007-08. Proposition 98 funding per student dropped 12 percent from 2007-08 to 2011-12 and remained flat for 2012-13.

In 2012-2013, per pupil funding stood at \$7,518. Since that time, per pupil funding increased to \$8,694 per pupil. Despite this increase, according to an *Education Week* survey, California per pupil funding is \$3,462 below the national average of \$12,156 per pupil. According to *Education Week*, California ranks 43<sup>rd</sup> in adjusted per pupil funding for TK-12 education.

***The California Federation of Teachers supports:***

- 2.1.1 Efforts to increase per pupil funding for TK-12 education so that California moves into the top 10 of states
- 2.1.2 The continued integrity of Proposition 98 as opposed to diversion of Proposition 98 dollars to other non-related programs and services
- 2.1.3 Full state and federal funding of special education, including needed support services, trained paraprofessionals, one-to-one aides, access to technology, and access to adaptive equipment and accessible facilities
- 2.1.4 Direct state payment for mandated professional development programs
- 2.1.5 A cap on school district reserves
- 2.1.6 A simple majority vote to pass facility bonds by the local electorate in funding higher education
- 2.1.7 Adequate funding that will allow all public education students to learn in the best possible environment
- 2.1.8 All stakeholder groups that consult with districts or LEAs during the LCAP process shall be responded to in writing in regards to what the District or LEA will or will not do in regards to the consult and a majority of stakeholder groups must approve the LCAP process and all expenditures thereof

The California Federation of Teachers opposes:

- 2.1.9 Manipulation of the Proposition 98 guarantee
- 2.1.10 The use of deferrals to Proposition 98 funding
- 2.1.11 Excessive school district reserves above statutory limits
- 2.1.12 Setting education funding levels at the bare minimum required by Proposition 98
- 2.1.13 Cuts to education funding over multiple years in anticipation of the next economic downturn

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## **2.2 Professionalism**

The CFT believes that high-quality educators are the key to ensuring that students become successful and contributing adults. Providing teachers with access to rigorous and robust educational preparation programs prior to their entering the classroom is essential in ensuring a highly qualified teacher for every child. Additionally, ongoing professional development opportunities help teachers maintain the skills appropriate for understanding and implementing

the curriculum and continue improving their practice. CFT also believes that valid and reliable teacher evaluations, designed to support educators throughout their careers, are essential to their continued growth as professionals. Finally, CFT believes that school employees must be compensated fairly and equitably.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 2.2.1 Annual cost-of-living increases for all educational staff
- 2.2.2 Lifelong learning for all educational employees
- 2.2.3 Employer-supported continuing education for all educational staff so they may keep current in their fields
- 2.2.4 Adoption of a true professional development model in which teachers and education workers create communities of learners for ongoing professional growth
- 2.2.5 Sufficient time and support to empower teachers in taking charge of their own professional development and supporting that of colleagues
- 2.2.6 Induction programs that are meaningful to and supportive of teachers
- 2.2.7 Induction programs that are created in concert with the union
- 2.2.8 Compensation or reimbursement for any teacher who participates in a New Teacher Induction program instead of the expectation that they pay for the program out of pocket to get their clear credential

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## **2.3 Teacher Evaluation**

Teacher evaluation is a critical component of education policy and will assist California in developing a world-class education system that serves all children well. Faced with a severe teacher shortage, California has a critical need to develop a robust teacher evaluation system that helps to attract, train, and retain high-quality educators.

Currently, California school districts develop their own teacher evaluation systems with guidance from the Stull Act, passed by the Legislature in 1971. Under this law, districts and schools have tremendous flexibility to determine their system of teacher evaluation. Because of this, the process for evaluating teachers varies widely across the state. In some districts, evaluation systems do little or nothing to help teachers improve their practice – the goal of any teacher evaluation.

The CFT believes that every child has a right to a high-quality education in a school that is staffed by competent and caring education professionals. To this end, the CFT believes that the primary goal of any teacher evaluation system is to provide a process for teachers to improve their practice throughout their careers.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 2.3.1 Teacher evaluation systems that are focused on assisting teachers to improve their practice over the course of their careers
- 2.3.2 Teacher evaluation systems that are based upon the California Standards for the Teaching Profession
- 2.3.3 Development by the California Department of Education, in collaboration with practicing educators, of a model teacher evaluation system that districts can adopt or modify when developing their own systems
- 2.3.4 Evaluators who are well-trained and knowledgeable about what constitutes high-quality teaching and learning
- 2.3.5 Teacher evaluation connected directly to professional learning opportunities
- 2.3.6 Consideration of the context within which the teacher is teaching when evaluating the instruction being provided
- 2.3.7 Adoption by school districts of Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) programs that pair exemplary veteran teachers with teachers who are new to the profession and those who may be struggling and needing assistance
- 2.3.8 Teacher evaluation systems that are collaboratively developed by teachers at the local level and collectively bargained
- 2.3.9 Use of multiple measures of student achievement, which may include, but not be limited to, formative and summative assessments, in evaluating teachers
- 2.3.10 Teacher evaluation systems that are fair, valid, reliable, and based on sound research about adult learning and professional growth

*The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 2.3.11 Use of standardized test scores or Value-Added Measures (VAM) to make high-stakes decisions about teachers
- 2.3.12 Use of teacher evaluation systems that are not focused on assisting teachers in improving their practice throughout their careers
- 2.3.13 Teacher evaluation systems that are not thoughtfully and effectively implemented, that are designed to punish teachers, or that are tied in any way to compensation

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## **2.4 Student Support Services**

The CFT believes that all students have the right to high-quality student support services to ensure that they receive a safe, well-rounded educational experience beginning with transitional kindergarten and continuing through high school. These should include: access to well-funded and adequately staffed library services, health services, and guidance counseling services (with

manageable caseloads), universal food services, and safe options for transportation to and from school.

**Health Services.** CFT believes that all schools must strive to provide the best quality health care services for all students. This must include adequate space and supplies in health care rooms.

Considering the current shortage of credentialed nurses, CFT believes that the California Assembly and Senate must put forth legislation to encourage increased enrollment in licensing/credentialing programs for nurses.

**Library Services.** CFT believes that all schools must have adequately staffed libraries with funding sufficient for continued enhancement of media collections. Each middle and secondary school must have a credentialed librarian with sufficient technical and clerical support. There must be at least one district librarian to oversee staffing and library collections at all elementary sites.

**Academic Counseling.** CFT believes that all middle and secondary schools must have credentialed counselors to provide high-quality counseling in the areas of academic achievement, personal/social development, and the identification of goals and opportunities for careers and/or postsecondary education. CFT agrees with the American Counseling Association that the recommended counselor-to-student ratio be maintained at 1:250 rather than the current nationwide average of 1:457.

**Before- and After-School Programs.** CFT supports effective before- and after-school programs that are designed to provide safe and enriching environments and support the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development of children.

**Universal Food Services.** CFT supports the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, which became available nationwide in 2014-2015. The CEP allows high-poverty schools to serve breakfast and lunch at no charge to all students. This eliminates the administrative burden of school meal applications and the stigma that students endure when faced with unpaid school lunch bills.

**Physical Education.** CFT believes that physical activity during the school day is vital to addressing the growing crisis of obesity and Type 2 diabetes among students and improving all students' physical and mental well-being. However, Prop 13 and the federal emphasis on testing are contributing to cuts in physical education and increases in class sizes.

**Community Schools.** CFT believes that every community in California has unique local needs and that districts should be encouraged to research how community schools can specifically address those needs. Community schools form strong partnerships with businesses, local social service agencies, and non-profits to provide wrap-around services for students. Examples of successful community schools (Oakland, CA; Baltimore, MD; Portland, OR) show how schools can serve as hubs for efforts by educators, families, and community partners to offer a range of opportunities, support, and services to children and youth, as well as to students' families and communities. By providing those expanded services, community schools can help create a climate and culture that will have a positive impact on the areas they serve.

**Transportation.** CFT believes that school districts must ensure each student has the safest possible route to school. According to the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services, school buses provide “unparalleled safety” for students traveling to school. Unfortunately, funding for Home-to-School Transportation (HTST) has not kept pace with rising costs. Many districts cannot make up for increased costs out of general funds and have been forced to make major cuts. LCFF has addressed many inequalities in school funding, but not the maintenance of HTST. In February 2015, the Legislative Analyst’s Office published a *Review of School Transportation* and suggested several options to address the shortcomings of the state’s existing funding approach.

***The California Federation of Teachers supports:***

- 2.4.1 Nurses in every school to carry out necessary health procedures and provide universal screening for vision, hearing, and social-emotional health
- 2.4.2 The following maximum ratios of credentialed registered nurses per student: 1:750 for TK-6 general education/special education; 1:1,000 for 7-12 general education/special education; 1:100 for special education students requiring medical technology
- 2.4.3 Case management for students who are fully included and involvement of case managers in IEP development and implementation, consultation, in-service training with general education staff, and interaction with parents and community
- 2.4.4 Increased funding for the enhancement of library collections, credentialed librarians in middle and high schools, sufficient technical and clerical support, and district librarians to oversee staffing and library collections at all elementary sites
- 2.4.5 Integration of cross-curricular enrichment instruction
- 2.4.6 Before- and after-school activities and services that are age- and developmentally appropriate, that support the cultural, linguistic, and other special needs of the children and families being served, and that provide extended learning opportunities in safe and enriching environments
- 2.4.7 Partnerships in which before- and after-school programs, parents, and classroom teachers support student achievement
- 2.4.8 A counselor-to-student ratio of 1:250
- 2.4.9 Meal periods that allow young students adequate time to eat and digest a healthy meal
- 2.4.10 Continued participation in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010
- 2.4.11 Advancement of a Community School model
- 2.4.12 Increased funding for pupil transportation



*The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 2.4.13 Performance of specialized medical procedures by personnel who have not received up-to-date training
- 2.4.14 Mandates for non-medical personnel to complete specialized medical training

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## **2.5 Class Size**

The California Federation of Teachers believes that funding for smaller class size is an important component of a high-quality education. The opportunity to learn in smaller classes improves academic achievement for all students, regardless of age or subject taught. Younger students benefit the most and experience powerful and long-lasting positive effects, including overall student engagement, academic success, and life success. In addition, teacher quality, which is considered the most important variable in students' academic success, drastically improves when class sizes are smaller. Thus, reduced class sizes are directly related to hiring and retaining effective teachers, as well as attracting and keeping students. Increased enrollment, coupled with increased need for interventions, makes smaller classes an essential component of education for all California students.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 2.5.1 Grade K-3 class sizes no greater than 20 students
- 2.5.2 Grades 4-12 class sizes no greater than 30 students
- 2.5.3 A limit of 150 contacts per semester for secondary teachers (Grades 7-12)

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## **2.6 Special Education**

The California Federation of Teachers believes all children have the right to a quality education in the least restrictive environment that can provide the curriculum, training, skills, and experiences needed to maximize their potential for independent living and prepare them for careers and college. "Success for All" refers to ALL students, including those with IEPs and 504 plans.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 2.6.1 Full implementation of and funding for the *Americans with Disabilities Act* and the *Individuals with Disabilities Act* (federal law)
- 2.6.2 Education of students in early learning/preschool programs through postsecondary programs that prepares them for independent living, as well as careers and postsecondary education
- 2.6.3 Appropriate assessment and identification of students with disabilities accompanied by a continuum of educational options, including specialized programs for disabilities that are low-incidence or hard to identify and programs to support adult transition

- 2.6.4 Access to quality educational and behavioral interventions for all students, including Response to Intervention, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, Positive Behavior Interventions Support, and Student Study Teams (RTI, MTSS, PBIS, SSTs)
- 2.6.5 The use of RTI and MTSS to assist students who are English learners and students of color – both historically over-identified for special education
- 2.6.6 Preparation and professional development for teachers, paraprofessionals, clerical staff, and administrators to keep them current with curricular practice in general education classes, new findings in the field of transition and disability studies, and new information from medical and health perspectives
- 2.6.7 Credentialing programs that prepare teachers to educate all students, including students with disabilities
- 2.6.8 Specialized credentialing programs for teachers of students with disabilities that include supplemental training for teachers of pre-school aged children and teachers of students with low incidence disabilities, such as visual impairments, hearing impairments, and orthopedic impairments
- 2.6.9 Preservation of current language in the California Education Code which specifies a ratio of no more than 28 students to each Resource Specialist
- 2.6.10 Manageable caseloads and class sizes to enhance student learning and allow for the appropriate level of service for students
- 2.6.11 Consultation between special education and general education staff to ensure that classrooms are integrated and that students with special needs are evenly distributed among all classrooms
- 2.6.12 Adequate funding to provide needed support services, including trained paraprofessionals, one-to-one aides when needed, equitable access to technology, and access to adaptive equipment and accessible facilities
- 2.6.13 Access to functional technology for all students with disabilities, as well as internet access equal to that of their non-disabled peers

*The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 2.6.14 Any legislation, regulations, policies, or resolutions that would seek to deny or restrict equitable access to students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment, as called for in the federal law
- 2.6.15 Special education referrals without prior use of high-quality educational and behavioral interventions
- 2.6.16 Use of RTI and MTSS when referrals for special education services are more appropriate
- 2.6.17 Segregation of students with special needs

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## 2.7 English Learners/Bilingual Education

Given the rich diversity of California’s student population, and the significant number of students who enter school not speaking English, CFT’s support for bilingual instruction and multilingual education is essential.

Proposition 58, the California Education for a Global Economy Initiative, passed by 73 percent of the California electorate on November 12, 2016, signaled a new era of multilingual education in California. The new state law repeals key provisions of Proposition 227 and adds new provisions regarding English language instruction.

Proposition 227 established English as the sole, designated language of instruction for English learners and required parent waivers to enroll students in any alternative bilingual program. Conversely, Proposition 58 affirms multilingualism as an essential skill for participation in the global economy of the 21st century and removes the requirement for parent waivers for students who participate in bilingual programs.

While Proposition 227 stipulated English-only programs as the sole means of English instruction for English learners, Proposition 58 affirms multilingual programs as highly effective in the instruction of English learners. Additionally, Proposition 58 requires school districts to solicit input from parents and community members regarding how English learners will be taught and to respond to parent requests for specific language programs.

Another indicator of California’s commitment to support and promote multilingualism is the California State Seal of Biliteracy, effective January 2012. This state diploma designation recognizes high school graduates who attain a high level of proficiency in one or more languages in addition to English.

Finally, the Local Control Funding Formula identifies and targets the distinct educational needs of English learners with supplemental and concentration grants that explicitly acknowledge those students’ need for highly effective instruction.

### *The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 2.7.1 Access to quality bilingual education for all students, both native and non-native speakers, in a targeted dual-language program
- 2.7.2 The use of appropriate materials developed for dual-language programs
- 2.7.3 Quality training for certificated bilingual teachers assigned to dual-language programs
- 2.7.4 Equal access to support resources and services for students in dual-language programs
- 2.7.5 Full implementation of the California Non-English Languages Allowed in Public Education Act (Senate Bill 1174)
- 2.7.6 Credentialing programs that prepare teachers to educate all students, including English learners

*The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 2.7.7 Limited student access to dual-language programs
- 2.7.8 Limited access to core curriculum and/or elective classes due to students' participation in dual-language programs
- 2.7.9 Limited access to support resources and services due to students' participation in dual-language programs
- 2.7.10 Segregation of students in dual-language programs

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## **2.8 Parent and Community Engagement**

The California Federation of Teachers believes that parental involvement and community engagement are critical to ensuring that students are successful in school.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 2.8.1 Implementation of strategies that actively engage parents in the education of children
- 2.8.2 Creation of community partnerships that bring resources, both human and financial, into the school in support of students
- 2.8.3 Development of Community Schools that provide wrap-around services, including healthcare, vision screening, tutoring, before- and after-school enrichment activities, mental health services, counseling services, and other services that provide critical supports for students
- 2.8.4 Use of properly trained interpreters, including sign language interpreters, for Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings and assessments

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## **2.9 School Safety**

Ensuring that schools are both safe and welcoming is critical to the success of all staff and students. To learn effectively, students must feel safe in their schools. To educate effectively, staff must feel safe in their schools. Education employees at all levels of the system are responsible for providing a safe and secure environment. From the time that students leave their homes in the morning until they return home at the end of the day, they must be cared for and protected from harmful situations.

All schools must be prepared for emergencies in accordance with the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS). Schools should collect and communicate data on indicators of school safety to all stakeholders and include input on school practices that create safety for all students.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 2.9.1 Violence prevention and mitigation in and around schools and communities

- 2.9.2 Violence prevention education for students and families
- 2.9.3 Weapon-free schools
- 2.9.4 Bully prevention in schools
- 2.9.5 Comprehensive support for students and families who are exposed to violence, abuse, and/or threats to their physical and mental health, as well as those living with trauma
- 2.9.6 Comprehensive mental health, medical, financial, housing, transportation, and other support for homeless and foster students and their families
- 2.9.7 Comprehensive school emergency plans
- 2.9.8 Wrap-around services for students
- 2.9.9 Schools and classrooms that are well lit, clean, and safe
- 2.9.10 Adequate staffing for classified staff who maintain clean and safe schools
- 2.9.11 Equitable practices and systems for discipline
- 2.9.12 Restorative Justice and other alternative disciplinary practices
- 2.9.13 Engagement of all stakeholders in safety practices and policies
- 2.9.14 Adequate funding for all disaster preparation, risk reduction, and mitigation practices
- 2.9.15 Appropriate training for all staff in disaster risk reduction
- 2.9.16 Active and equitable participation in implementing school safety plans by school communities, including students and elected representatives

*The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 2.9.17 Use of armed school staff
- 2.9.18 Insufficient health and mental health services for students and families
- 2.9.19 Insufficient safety training and technical assistance for staff

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## **2.10 School Climate and Discipline**

School climate refers to a school's quality and character and to how students, parents, and school personnel experience school life. It reflects a school's norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures. School climate and discipline policies affect all levels from early childhood through high school and postsecondary schooling.

All students at publicly funded schools have the right to learn in a fully inclusive, academically engaging, and socially and emotionally nurturing environment. In such a climate, adults understand the social, cultural, physical, cognitive, and neurological diversity of the school community and address the many factors that affect student performance and behavior. They

recognize that students can bring emotional issues and trauma into the school environment that require significant attention and support.

Regardless of age, exclusionary and zero tolerance discipline policies and practices have been proven to discriminate disproportionately against students of color, those who identify as LGBTQ, those identified with special needs, and those who experience any of the following: poverty, homelessness, foster care, former incarceration, or immigration issues.

All students at publicly funded schools have the right to an education, regardless of family circumstances. That includes students' immigration status and that of their family members. Freedom from the fear of potential deportation and the emotional burdens of punitive discipline policies and practices are essential to that right.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 2.10.1 In-depth training for all educators in Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, Positive Behavioral interventions and Supports, Response to Intervention, Restorative Discipline, and Trauma-Informed Practices
- 2.10.2 Use of restorative practices at all levels of schooling
- 2.10.3 Use of systems science and adherence to the implementation blueprint for MTSS/PBIS/RTI
- 2.10.4 Establishment of an MTSS system and practices from district to school site to classroom level, utilizing all the key features of MTSS systems and Implementation Science
- 2.10.5 Full funding for social-emotional support staff at all school sites, including social workers, counselors, and mental health professionals
- 2.10.6 Alternatives to suspension that reflect evidence-based interventions for differing levels of defiant or disruptive behavior, including behavior de-escalation support
- 2.10.7 Protection of students' due process rights in their classrooms and schools
- 2.10.8 Guarantee of a safe working environment for all educators
- 2.10.9 Availability of appropriately staffed alternative learning environments for students who need time away from their classrooms
- 2.10.10 Creation and support of Community Schools following the Community Schools model

*The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 2.10.11 Zero tolerance and exclusionary discipline policies that push students out of the classroom and away from the social-emotional and academic environments they require
- 2.10.12 Insufficient funding for staff training or best professional development practices related to school climate and discipline

- 2.10.13 Truncated implementation of timelines, practices, or the Implementation Science framework, which undermine staff effectiveness and student outcomes
- 2.10.14 Policies or practices that discriminate against or violate student or staff rights or safety
- 2.10.15 Retaliatory practices used on staff or students for exercising rights or speaking against safety violations or discriminatory practices, as well as any other actions or policies that create a negative environment or outcomes for students and staff
- 2.10.16 Any regulations, policies, or resolutions that place the burden on educators who have been physically injured by students
- 2.10.17 Withholding of information from educators regarding past disciplinary actions for inappropriate behavior in students' histories
- 2.10.18 Lack of counseling support for educators who work with students that are diagnosed as emotionally disturbed or have a history of physical abuse towards others

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## **2.11 Technology**

The educational community widely recognizes the importance of modern technology within our communities and classrooms. However, it is imperative that all stakeholders identify and agree upon best practices for using technology in the classroom.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 2.11.1 Use of technology that is appropriate to students' ages, skill levels, and academic goals and compliant with privacy laws such as FERPA, COPPA AND SOPIPA
- 2.11.2 Equal access to the technology students and faculty need including broadband internet at school and home
- 2.11.3 Equipment, training, and professional development that will enable teachers to use technology effectively
- 2.11.4 Requirements to ensure that instructors in distance education courses are certified in California and in the disciplines central to the courses taught
- 2.11.5 Teaching environments where faculty are free to determine the appropriate use of technology
- 2.11.6 State and local education budgets that incorporate the cost of effective and sustained technology use, including support staff, maintenance, and training
- 2.11.7 Teacher-ownership of teacher-created materials and class structures as their intellectual property

*The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 2.11.8 Mandated use of technology in classrooms as well as the practice of excluding teacher selected supplemental technology

- 2.11.9 Online classes that exceed the class maximums as outlined in local bargaining agreements
- 2.11.10 Learning that is driven primarily by the capabilities and limitations of technology

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## **2.12 Career Technical Education**

Career Technical Education (CTE) is a program of study involving a multi-year sequence of courses that integrates core academic knowledge with technical and occupational knowledge to provide students with a pathway to postsecondary education and careers. California's 74 Regional Occupational Centers and Programs (ROCP) are integral in preparing California's youth and adults to be successful in the workforce.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 2.12.1 Career Technical Education (CTE) as an essential part of the EC/TK-12 system
- 2.12.2 Equal rights for CTE teachers with their peers
- 2.12.3 Acknowledgement of the importance of CTE to California's economy
- 2.12.4 Tenure rights for all CTE teachers
- 2.12.5 Investment in raising the visibility of CTE

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## **2.13 Charter Schools**

Since the passage of legislation to allow for the creation of charter schools, California has seen a significant expansion of charter schools in the state. Currently, there are over 1,200 charter schools in California. Although they are funded by public dollars, charter schools in California are exempt from nearly every provision in the education code.

CFT will work to change state law allowing for co-location of charters on school campuses. Creating two schools on the same campus not only sets up an "us and them" dynamic but also takes away space that the existing school could use to reduce crowding or provide additional green space, a parent center, or smaller classes.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 2.13.1 Increased charter school accountability and transparency
- 2.13.2 Admission policies that do not exclude certain groups of students from attending charter schools, including students with disabilities, English learners, low-income students, foster youth, or homeless students
- 2.13.3 Increased oversight of charter schools by authorizers
- 2.13.4 Local authorization of charter schools by school districts within which they will be located
- 2.13.5 Fully credentialed teachers in every classroom



- 2.13.6 The right of educators in charter schools to organize and join a union
- 2.13.7 Charter school compliance with the California Open Meetings Act and the Public Records Act
- 2.13.8 Charter school boards that comply with conflict-of-interest requirements
- 2.13.9 Compliance by charter schools with all state accountability requirements
- 2.13.10 Due process rights in suspension and expulsion proceedings for charter school students

*The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 2.13.11 For-profit charter schools
- 2.13.12 Charter schools that are managed by for-profit corporations, for-profit Charter Management Organizations (CMOs), or for-profit Education Management Organizations (EMOs)
- 2.13.13 The location of charter schools outside the school district of the charter school authorizer
- 2.13.14 The expansion of charter schools

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## **2.14 Privatization of Schools**

Segments of the business community, along with wealthy individuals, are aggressively seeking to privatize the public education system in the United States. They see education as a multi-billion-dollar industry that is virtually untapped. They wish to impose upon our public schools a business model that eliminates organized labor, reduces costs through low wages and reduced benefits, and uses public dollars for corporate profit.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 2.14.1 A free high-quality public education for all children
- 2.14.2 Keeping public tax dollars in our public schools and classrooms
- 2.14.3 Highly qualified education professionals in every school and every classroom with the freedom to organize and collectively bargain adequate wages, benefits, and working conditions

*The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 2.14.4 The privatization of public schools
- 2.14.5 A business model applied to the organization of public schools
- 2.14.6 Compensation based upon student standardized test scores

### 3. Classified Employees

The CFT represents classified employees in the ECE, TK-12, and community college educational systems. The CFT Council of Classified Employees (CCE) is committed to ensuring that the voices of support staff are heard in the decision-making processes of our educational systems, both locally and statewide. Classified employees play an integral and indispensable role in early childhood centers, schools, community colleges, and universities. They hold years of valuable experience and have sound ideas about the delivery of high-quality education. Job roles performed by members of the classified service include those in administrative services, maintenance and operations, food service, academic and classroom assistance, library and media services, computer and technology services, transportation, and campus security – all essential to providing the highest quality education to California’s students.

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#### 3.1 Equitable Representation

The CFT Council of Classified Employees is the division of the Federation that advocates on behalf of support staff and paraprofessionals working in California’s schools and colleges. The issues of classified employees are often, but not always, the same as those of EC/TK-12 teachers and college faculty. Support staff are sometimes treated as though they are “last in line,” both at the worksite and in labor relations. They are often overlooked or are not included in shared governance and professional development systems even though their participation in and support of any plan is essential to its success.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 3.1.1 Inclusion of classified employees in shared governance systems
- 3.1.2 Inclusion of classified employees in planning staff development, developing student conduct codes, and any other policies that affect campus communities
- 3.1.3 Inclusion of classified employees in the EC/TK-12 and community college systems as equal partners on statewide task forces, working groups, consultation councils, and decision-making boards

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#### 3.2 Living Wages and Benefits

Classified employees deserve to be fairly compensated for the experience, talents, skills and efforts they bring to the job, yet they are among the lowest paid workers in public employment and receive some of the smallest benefit packages. Frequently, when school budgets are tight, support staff are the targets of budget cuts and often end up subsidizing public education through reduced wages and benefits. This threat creates undue tension in the workplace.

*Living Wages.* While all education workers have been affected by the chronic underfunding that has plagued California schools, the salaries of classified workers have suffered the most. Even when sufficient funds became available, compensation for some groups of classified employees, such as paraprofessionals, pre-school workers, and employees in part-time positions, have remained at exploitative levels. Salaries and benefits should be set at levels that allow

employers to attract and retain the best personnel and that provide workers a living wage and the ability to live in the communities in which they work.

**Healthcare.** Rising costs of healthcare put great financial pressure on classified employees and their dependents. All employees should have access to employer-provided healthcare coverage for themselves and their families. To protect access to affordable, high-quality healthcare, efforts toward a single-payer healthcare system should continue.

**Retirement.** Most classified employees in the CFT participate in the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS). These support staff work toward a defined-benefit pension to retire with dignity after a career of service. The benefit should be sufficient to provide an adequate standard of living, based on an equitable formula of employee and employer contributions and the fund's investment earnings.

**Survivor Benefits.** Within CalPERS, the death benefit for a survivor of a classified school employee is only \$600. That amount was established many years ago and has not been updated to keep pace with today's burial costs. Currently, the CalPERS death benefit for the survivor of a state employee is \$2,000, while survivors of teacher members of CalSTRS receive \$5,000. Classified employees contribute a substantial portion of their salary to CalPERS, and their families deserve better.

***The California Federation of Teachers supports:***

- 3.2.1 Salary schedules that reflect levels of preparation, experience, and education
- 3.2.2 Fair and equitable salary schedules and benefits for all categories of employees
- 3.2.3 Protection of the CalPERS defined-benefit plan through sensible reinvestment of earnings
- 3.2.4 Equitable survivor benefits for classified school employee members of CalPERS
- 3.2.5 Providing unemployment benefits to classified employees during the holiday break and summer break

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### **3.3 Job Security**

Working in an environment free from personal persecution or favoritism allows for classified employees to focus on supporting students and their campus community. The opportunity to attain seniority reaffirms that education systems value experience. Collective bargaining, seniority rights, progressive discipline, and permanent employee status ensure a secure and committed workforce.

***The California Federation of Teachers supports:***

- 3.3.1 The protection of collective bargaining rights that include binding arbitration and progressive discipline with just cause termination

- 3.3.2 The use of seniority, beginning on day one of employment, as an objective standard for benefits, layoffs and recalls, assignments, and overtime
- 3.3.3 A reasonable policy on obtaining permanent status as soon as possible
- 3.3.4 Bringing workers into the bargaining unit who may have been excluded from the classified service but provide consistent and ongoing support to students and campuses
- 3.3.5 Longer period for notice of layoff to classified employees

*The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 3.3.6 Hiring, firing, and rehiring workers as temporary employees in perpetuity to avoid providing them with adequate wages, benefits, and due process rights
- 3.3.7 Layoff procedures that unfairly target classified positions

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### **3.4 Merit System**

The merit system found in some California school and community college districts is a method of personnel management that is meant to ensure efficiency, fairness, and impartiality in the selection, retention, and promotion of classified employees.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 3.4.1 Equal pay for work of equal value, considering rates paid by comparable employers
- 3.4.2 Protections of employees from arbitrary action, personal favoritism, or political coercion
- 3.4.3 Recruitment from all segments of society and advancement based on relative ability, knowledge, and skill under fair and open competition

*Teachers opposes:*

- 3.4.4 Limiting employees' ability to vote for a merit system in their district
- 3.4.5 Attempts to remove merit systems without the requisite vote of the classified staff or local electorate
- 3.4.6 Any threat to the independence and autonomy of a personnel commission

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### **3.5 Adequate Staffing**

To meet the goals of our education system, schools and colleges must be staffed at levels that provide students with the attention and services they require for their success.

**Nutrition Services.** Nutritious food is critical to good health, general well-being, and enhanced learning for students of all ages. Research shows that low-income students in EC/TK-12 schools receiving free or reduced-price school lunch experience reduced rates of food insecurity,

obesity, and poor health. In addition, updated school meal nutrition standards are having a positive impact on student food selection and consumption, especially of fruits and vegetables. Lunch periods should provide no less than 20 minutes of table time, and meals should be nutritionally sound, appealing, and affordable. Food services in schools should be staffed at a level appropriate to meet those requirements.

In the community colleges, menu choices continue to evolve and are producing healthier options for young adults, many of whom are juggling college, work, and family obligations. Food service workers need ongoing training to meet those changing needs. College cafeterias and dining spaces must be appropriately staffed to meet the rigorous demands of campus schedules.

**Health Services.** Health needs of children in EC/TK-12 schools are best met through the services of a credentialed school nurse. Only nurses fully credentialed under the Education Code and Commission on Teacher Credentialing should carry the title of school nurse. No employee should be coerced into providing medical services that should be performed by highly skilled healthcare professionals, such as giving injections and administering complex dosing procedures.

**Transportation.** The Home-to-School Transportation program has been severely underfunded within the state budget. Busing provides EC/TK-12 students with safe access to their schools and should be funded at levels that provide transportation options for all students. The bus driver, often the first adult a student encounters each morning, can provide students a welcoming and supportive start to each day.

**Special Education.** EC/TK-12 students who require special education through Individual Education Plans require extra attention inside and outside of the classroom. Paraprofessionals provide focused attention for students with special needs so that those students may succeed academically and socially and remain safe. Staffing ratios must consider the safety of students and the abilities of paraprofessionals to monitor students.

***The California Federation of Teachers supports:***

- 3.5.1 Funding of school health programs to include credentialed nurses with daily access to every site at student ratios promulgated by the National Association of School Nurses
- 3.5.2 Expansion and proper funding of the Home-To-School Transportation program
- 3.5.3 Full staffing to meet the needs of Individual Education Plans for special education students

***The California Federation of Teachers opposes:***

- 3.5.4 Coercion of classified or certificated staff to perform health services without training or release from liability
- 3.5.5 Requiring families to shoulder the burden of student transportation costs

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### 3.6 Health and Safety

School facilities have a profound impact on both employees and students. The condition of facilities affects recruitment, commitment, and retention of staff and the health, behavior, engagement, learning, and achievement of students.

**Air Quality.** Schools and colleges may be located near agricultural areas, industrial areas, or areas that have unsafe levels of air pollution. Many students and staff members learn or work in portable classrooms or offices that are vulnerable to rot, mold, and other airborne pathogens. The facilities are often crowded and poorly ventilated, which increases occupants' risk of exposure to communicable and infectious diseases.

**Campus Renovations.** Fortunately, many schools and classrooms are being renovated and modernized, but much of the renovation is done when school is in session. This potentially exposes the staff and students to roofing fumes, construction dust, and solvents.

**Green Campuses.** Climate change is increasingly putting the health of workers and students at risk with hotter temperatures, historic droughts, catastrophic wildfires, more infectious diseases, and worse air quality. Implementation of specific environmentally sound actions on campus can help reduce pollution and encourage prudent use of precious resources.

**Proper Equipment.** Classified employees may be assigned to perform work without proper ergonomic equipment, resulting in injuries that could have been prevented. Many staff routinely apply dangerous chemicals and need the proper protective gear and training.

**Campus Safety.** Classified employees may have to deal with student behavior issues, as well as the behavior of unwelcome campus visitors. Violent, or potentially violent, incidents on school and college campuses and in their surrounding neighborhoods are increasing at an alarming rate. "Lockdowns" are an effective way to facilitate the safety of both students and staff during a violent or potentially violent situation.

***The California Federation of Teachers supports:***

- 3.6.1 Structurally sound facilities that offer safe learning environments
- 3.6.2 Public posting of annual Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning inspection reports to ensure compliance with the law and air that is safe to breathe
- 3.6.3 Detailed renovation policies and protocols that guarantee staff and students are not overexposed to toxins during construction
- 3.6.4 Lowering greenhouse gas emissions by building greener buildings, using cleaner transportation, and developing renewable energy sources on campus
- 3.6.5 Mandated use of proper ergonomic and safety equipment, along with training in its use
- 3.6.6 Adherence to universal precautions, as well as all safety protocols and regulations
- 3.6.7 Prevention and removal of any environmental health hazards, such as mold, fungus, and asbestos

- 3.6.8 Implementation of techniques proven to increase campus safety
- 3.6.9 Installation of mechanisms that allow the doors of classrooms, offices, or other rooms where students and school staff gather to be locked from the inside
- 3.6.10 The simple majority vote by the local electorate to pass facility bonds in funding TK-12 and higher education

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### 3.7 Contracting Out

Contracting out of services, such as transportation, maintenance, and food services, can cost classified employees their jobs and undermine the quality of services provided to the community.

**Less Accountability.** All too often, privatized and volunteer services mean less accountability to governing bodies and substandard products and services. Private companies with no experience in education have a poor record of improving student achievement. Frequently, the interests of contractors win out over the needs of students, employees, and the public. Also, the danger of patronage, financial improprieties, and failure to comply with labor standards can increase when services are performed by contractors.

**Lack of Commitment.** The pressure to balance budgets by replacing competent career employees with workers who have little or no commitment to the success of the educational system can result in false savings. Also, some contractor employees are not held to the same accountability standards as career education employees, who are accustomed to working around children and young adults.

***The California Federation of Teachers supports:***

- 3.7.1 Careful examination of solutions to problems in public education by the local stakeholders when considering contractors
- 3.7.2 Retention of public monies for the use of public institutions

***The California Federation of Teachers opposes:***

- 3.7.3 Contracting out for any service currently or customarily performed by school employees
- 3.7.4 Use of contracts with private vendors for food preparation
- 3.7.5 Any attempt to limit or roll back portions of the Education Code that specify strict requirements to which districts must adhere prior to contracting for services

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### 3.8 Professionalism

The process of creating a well-functioning, supportive educational environment requires skills, know-how, and ideas from the entire staff. Providing classified employees with opportunities to

learn, develop, and advance in their professions demonstrates the expectation that their participation is expected and valued.

***New Employee Orientation.*** It is essential to provide orientation meetings for new employees immediately after hiring. Orientations provide valuable information regarding policies and procedures of the employer, expectations and responsibilities of the work to be performed, and the rights and benefits contained within a collective bargaining agreement. Under California law, public employers, including school and college districts, must provide the exclusive bargaining agent the ability to address and inform all new employees of their rights under their collective bargaining agreement.

***Professional Development.*** The CFT stresses the importance of professional development opportunities in recognition that educators are deeply committed to improving and progressing in their service. Classified employees and paraprofessionals need a broad range of professional development to update their skills and learn best practices in areas such as improving student academic achievement, food management, environmental safety, education technology, and student and campus safety. Professional development includes, but is not limited to, staff training and in-service days, conferences, advanced training in one's field, and continuing education courses.

***Evaluation.*** Evaluation of education workers exists to improve the quality of education and delivery of services. Evaluations allow for improved communication between management and classified staff to avoid disciplinary and grievance issues.

***Career Ladders.*** The CFT supports the development of career ladders for classified employees and paraprofessionals so that workers who are already committed to student success can continue their formal education to become credentialed teachers if they desire. These proven programs keep the people who are best suited to the work of teaching in the classroom, as well as help fill the gap during teacher shortages. Such programs may be negotiated locally in collective bargaining contracts and legislated in statewide programs.

***The California Federation of Teachers supports:***

- 3.8.1 Useful new employee orientation with time mandated for the exclusive bargaining agent
- 3.8.2 Funding of professional development programs for classified staff
- 3.8.3 Ongoing training for classified employees and paraprofessionals on topics ranging from student achievement to educational technology
- 3.8.4 Standards for paraprofessionals to enrich the learning experience for students
- 3.8.5 Collaboration between paraprofessionals and teachers to provide a safe teaching and learning environment and foster the development of wrap-around services
- 3.8.6 Adoption of a wide range of evaluation methods using the best current practices
- 3.8.7 Continued state funding for the Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program to assist support staff who want to become credentialed teachers



## 4. Higher Education

The CFT is committed to strengthening the academic preparation and success of all college students and opening the education door to the most socially, economically, and educationally disadvantaged students through free high-quality public postsecondary education.

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### 4.1 Funding

Because public higher education is the cornerstone for individual attainment and human flourishing, CFT views affordable higher education and open access to community colleges as critical. Therefore, California's community colleges, the University of California (UC), and the California State University (CSU) system need to be funded at levels that guarantee equal access to all students.

The cost of attending California colleges and universities has become so high that many students cannot afford to enroll. Student debt has now exceeded credit card debt in the nation, and the rate of defaults has been increasing to all-time highs. California's disinvestment from public higher education has saddled students with excessive tuition and crushing debt. It is critical that we address this funding crisis.

#### *The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 4.1.1 Progressive tax policies that provide funding for higher education
- 4.1.2 Full funding of the community college split of Prop 98 (10.97 percent), Prop 98 maintenance factor, Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA), and property tax backfill
- 4.1.3 Legislative efforts to restore CSU funding to historic levels
- 4.1.4 Efforts that enhance debt-free student financial aid to reduce the overall cost of attending college
- 4.1.5 Funding for student support services that address factors negatively impacting student success, such as homelessness, joblessness, mental health, food insecurity, and abuse
- 4.1.6 Healthy, affordable meal options for college students
- 4.1.7 Funding for immigration resource centers at every college
- 4.1.8 Funding for more full-time faculty and more faculty professional development

#### *The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 4.1.9 Any use of public funds to support for-profit colleges
- 4.1.10 Use of deferrals for community college funding
- 4.1.11 Further cuts in the shrinking fraction of the state budget devoted to all public higher education

## 4.2 Representation

The CFT represents both full-time and part-time faculty at the community colleges within California's Community College Council, non-tenure track faculty and librarians at University of California campuses, and private college and university faculty.

The CFT Community College Council (CCC) plays the major role in shaping educational policy on behalf of California's community colleges by presenting a unified voice and a strong, coherent, and consistent image for community college faculty in California.

The University Council-American Federation of Teachers (UC-AFT) represents private college and university faculty. The primary goal is negotiating improved working conditions and representing academic employees who have employment-related concerns. UC-AFT publicizes its concerns to faculty and librarians, as well as to advocates who address those concerns at the state level.

### *The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 4.2.1 Efforts to organize and assist locals that defend and advance faculty interests by obtaining for them all the rights and benefits to which they are entitled, including bargaining for salaries and other employment rights, regardless of an individual's membership status within CFT
- 4.2.2 High standards and professional development to maintain and raise the standards of the teaching profession and secure the conditions essential to the best possible educational experiences for community college and UC students
- 4.2.3 Organized efforts by members to influence state and federal governments on all legislation and policies pertaining to higher education, as well as all educational policies, other related policies, and labor in general
- 4.2.4 Improved efforts to organize and educate members and unrepresented academic employees and to represent members at the local level in collective bargaining and contract enforcement
- 4.2.5 State legislation that benefits the students, faculty, classified staff, community college districts, academic appointees, and the UC campuses of the state of California
- 4.2.6 Coalitions with students and community/labor partners to promote public higher education
- 4.2.7 The principle of equal pay for equal work and the ending of the two-tiered wage system

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### 4.3 Equity and Inclusion

Promoting equity and inclusion in public higher education means not only working for racial and gender justice but also creating campus workplaces where all faculty and librarians are treated with dignity and respect. Broad diversity among faculty and librarians provides students with the variety of pedagogical and research perspectives they deserve, as well as an expansive set of models for who is authorized to produce and convey knowledge.

A commitment to equity and inclusion implies the full professional integration of all faculty and librarians at California's community college and UC campuses. Too often, contingent faculty members (who are disproportionately women and members of historically under-represented groups) are excluded from governance and professional development opportunities, leading to a two-tier system of haves and have-nots. Such hierarchies unacceptably shift the labor of education onto the most poorly compensated instead of distributing it equitably among all faculty, while simultaneously depriving contingent faculty of a voice in their workplaces and career advancement opportunities. Moreover, those most directly involved in educating students often suffer the most from reductions in state funding and other budget cuts, even as administrative and executive ranks swell.

**Professional Development.** We stress the importance of professional development opportunities for all faculty and librarians in recognition that our members are deeply committed to improving and progressing in their teaching, research, and service. Professional development covers a wide range of activities, including, but not limited to, attending conferences, developing syllabi, preparing and publishing manuscripts, training in one's field of expertise, obtaining principal investigator status, and winning grants and other funding.

**Shared Governance.** Representation in shared governance bodies, such as academic senates, is often off limits to contingent faculty and librarians. It is especially important that those who work most closely with students have a voice in curriculum and policy decisions that affect what happens in the classroom and elsewhere on campus.

***The California Federation of Teachers supports:***

- 4.3.1 Creation of opportunities for more diverse faculty and librarian employees and members
- 4.3.2 The vigorous enforcement of all current state and federal anti-discrimination laws, especially Title IX, as well as their development and expansion to protect faculty and librarians from intentional and unconscious bias
- 4.3.3 Professional development funding and opportunities for contingent faculty and librarians that equals those offered to tenure-track faculty
- 4.3.4 Access to shared governance structures for contingent faculty and librarians, including representation for contingent faculty in academic senates
- 4.3.5 Compensation and recognition of contingent faculty members who do service work
- 4.3.6 Closing of the gender- and race-related pay gaps at all college and university campuses

- 4.3.7 Equal pay for equal work among contingent and tenure-track faculty
- 4.3.8 Health, welfare, and retirement benefits for contingent faculty and librarians that are equal in quality to those received by tenure-track faculty
- 4.3.9 Housing and child care assistance for contingent faculty and librarians that is equal in quality to that received by tenure-track faculty
- 4.3.10 Access to private office space for contingent faculty and librarians
- 4.3.11 Reduced contingency among faculty achieved by making full-time, ongoing appointments the hiring norm
- 4.3.12 Protection of academic freedom for all contingent faculty and librarians

*The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 4.3.13 Use of contingent faculty with temporary and part-time contracts as a means for keeping wages low and avoiding the expense of providing health, welfare, and retirement benefits
- 4.3.14 Use of heavy teaching loads for contingent faculty to effectively subsidize the research activities of tenure-track faculty
- 4.3.15 Exclusion of contingent faculty from professional development and shared governance opportunities

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## **4.4 Accreditation**

The purpose of accreditation is to apply a common set of standards to all institutions of higher education while also encouraging schools to be the best they can be. Institutions earn accreditation through accrediting bodies, such as the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC). Those private, non-governmental organizations have been created specifically to review higher education institutions and programs and are reviewed for quality by entities such as the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or the United States Department of Education (ED). Further, accreditation helps to boost public trust and confidence by ensuring that schools and degree programs are accountable, and that students and employers can trust the quality of the education received. The federal government demonstrates its belief in the accreditation process by extending federal loans or grants only to students attending accredited schools.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 4.4.1 Fair accreditation for all California community colleges
- 4.4.2 Educational quality as the most important criteria in accreditation
- 4.4.3 A more collegial, rather than punitive, accreditation model for improvement of colleges
- 4.4.4 An accreditation system free of blatant conflicts-of-interest

- 4.4.5 Accreditation that is consistent, transparent, and free of arbitrary and capricious decisions
- 4.4.6 Greater faculty voice on accreditation teams
- 4.4.7 Non-interference of accreditors with locally bargained collective bargaining agreements
- 4.4.8 A fair and transparent peer review process

*The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 4.4.9 The use of accreditation as a vehicle to implement Draconian economic and educational policies

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## 4.5 Academic Freedom

Academic freedom is the ability of teachers, students, and academic institutions to pursue knowledge wherever it may lead, without undue or unreasonable interference. At the minimum, academic freedom allows every individual to engage in the entire range of activities involved in the production of knowledge, including choosing a research focus, determining what to teach in the classroom, presenting research findings to colleagues, and publishing research findings. Still, academic freedom has limits. In the United States, for example, according to the widely recognized "1940 Statement on Academic Freedom and Tenure," teachers should be careful to avoid controversial matter that is unrelated to the subject. When they speak or write in public, they are free to express their opinions without fear from institutional censorship or discipline, but they should show restraint and clearly indicate that they are not speaking for their institutions. Academic tenure protects academic freedom by ensuring that teachers can be fired only for causes such as gross professional incompetence or behavior that evokes condemnation from the academic community itself.

Four institutional factors are critical to protect the academic freedom of faculty: 1) shared governance; 2) tenure; 3) peer review; and 4) intellectual property rights.

***Academic Freedom and Shared Governance.*** Shared governance is the set of practices under which college faculty and some staff members participate in significant decisions about the operation of their institutions. Shared governance practices differ from campus to campus, but typically the work of shared governance is undertaken by elected faculty committees working with the administration. On CFT/AFT campuses, the union contract often guarantees shared governance rights, and the union may play a role in implementing shared governance. Shared governance is democracy in action, intended to ensure that academic decisions are made for strictly academic – not political, commercial, or bureaucratic – reasons.

***Academic Freedom and Tenure.*** Tenure simply means that a college or university cannot fire a tenured professor unless it presents compelling evidence that the professor is incompetent or behaves unprofessionally, or that the institution is in grave financial distress. Tenure is not a lifetime job guarantee – it is a guarantee of due process that enables tenured professors to do

their work without being subject to removal because of shifts in the political winds, institutional favoritism, or the misfortune of crossing the "wrong" student, trustee, colleague, or supervisor.

Tenure promotes accountability and quality in higher education. It ensures that the institution's curriculum, teaching, research, and other academic programs will be framed and developed by trained and motivated professionals who possess a deep, lasting commitment to the institution. It gives faculty the independence to speak out about contentious matters and to challenge the administration on issues of new curriculum and quality without putting their jobs on the line.

***Academic Freedom and Peer Review.*** One of the critical principles in protecting academic freedom is using the peer review process rather than review by management. This assures that all performance reviews are based on academic grounds.

***Academic Freedom and Intellectual Property Rights.*** Assuring faculty members of the intellectual property rights to the works they produce promotes free expression of ideas, increased sharing of teaching methodologies, and a richer learning environment for students. The only exception is when the college pays a faculty member, separate from his or her salary, for a specific work product (e.g., a faculty handbook).

***The California Federation of Teachers supports:***

- 4.5.1 Faculty as the primary agents of curriculum development, including their participation in statewide meetings that address curriculum issues
- 4.5.2 Language in local contracts to guarantee academic freedom for faculty
- 4.5.3 The rights of contingent faculty, particularly on job security, academic freedom, and a role in shared governance
- 4.5.4 Increases in the ranks of tenure-track faculty
- 4.5.5 Collaboration with other higher education groups, student groups, and civil liberties groups to protect the free exchange of ideas
- 4.5.6 Protection of ideas, lectures, presentations, and materials developed by faculty from exploitation by employers or management
- 4.5.7 Contractual recognition and clarification of faculty members' ownership of their own work

***The California Federation of Teachers opposes:***

- 4.5.8 Any legislation that seeks to abolish or severely limit tenure
- 4.5.9 Any attempt to use student success measures for individual performance review

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## 4.6 Adult Education

CFT supports adult education and believes it is vital for many citizens who are struggling to achieve their version of the American dream. Every adult should be able to access the education that aligns with his or her goals, whether the need is preparation for citizenship and life in the United States, a second chance to obtain a high school education, or training that opens the door for family-sustaining wages, new career opportunities, and greater contributions to communities.

Adult education gives adults who have not finished high school the opportunity to earn high school diplomas or high school equivalency certificates, as well as helps disabled adults and those with low skills to become career ready. Career Technical Education programs and other adult education opportunities enable adults at all career stages to update and build on their existing skills and prepare for new opportunities in the workplace.

Adult education should be a seamless pathway that articulates between programs in both the TK-12 and community college systems and should respond to changes in job markets, employer demands, and community needs. Those qualities require dedicated and adequate funding sources and continued new funding for restoring, maintaining, and creating programs.

### *The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 4.6.1 A system that serves all Californians who can benefit from adult education
- 4.6.2 Career Technical Education (CTE) as an essential part of the adult education system
- 4.6.3 Access to quality career and life counseling that can lead students from basic skills to a high school diploma or equivalent, higher education, and career readiness
- 4.6.4 Use of adult education funds primarily for instruction
- 4.6.5 State-of-the-art equipment that reflects the requirements of students' future jobs
- 4.6.6 An employment status and career path for teachers in adult education programs that provide a reasonable and dependable income and benefits
- 4.6.7 Tenure rights for all adult education teachers, including CTE teachers
- 4.6.8 Paid time for adult education teachers to prepare for class
- 4.6.9 Inclusion of adult education teachers' unions, the academic senate, students, and other stakeholders in the decision-making processes of schools, districts, and regional consortia
- 4.6.10 A secure, dedicated, and adequate funding source for adult education
- 4.6.11 Pay, hours, and teaching loads for teachers of non-credit classes in adult education programs at community colleges that equal those of teachers in the credit programs
- 4.6.12 A cost-of-living adjustment for adult education programs
- 4.6.13 Support for retaining adult education programs

- 4.6.14 Equal professional development for adult education teachers
- 4.6.15 Investment in raising the visibility of adult education and career-technical education
- 4.6.16 Reciprocal acceptance of qualifications by both TK-12 districts and community colleges for teachers who teach comparable classes
- 4.6.17 Acknowledgement of the importance of adult education to California's economy
- 4.6.18 Equitable educational opportunities for adults, regardless of their race, geographical condition, socio-economic status, gender, age, or disability
- 4.6.19 Research, discussion, and implementation policies and practices in the areas of adult education to ensure high quality

*The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 4.6.20 Excessive administrative costs associated with Adult Education Block Grant consortia
- 4.6.21 Education focused solely on preparation for employment
- 4.6.22 Top-down non-collaborative decision-making about adult education programs
- 4.6.23 Student screening and placement that rely excessively on standardized tests, such as the Tests for Adult Basic Education (TABE), especially when such tests unnecessarily create barriers to student progress along pathways

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## **4.7 Part-Time Faculty**

The faculty of the California Community College System is made up of roughly 75 percent part-time faculty. The laws that cover part-time faculty allow for less than pro rata pay, fewer benefits, and little job security. Additionally, many part-time faculty teach years or decades in the same department, within the same district, and even sometimes on the same campus without achieving permanent full-time status.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 4.7.1 A single system in which all California community college instructors are considered members of the faculty and are placed on a single salary schedule, with the same salary, health and other benefits and the same non-teaching responsibilities as full-time faculty, paid on a pro rata basis, proportional to hours taught
- 4.7.2 Secure employment for non-tenured faculty, including UC lecturers and part-time faculty
- 4.7.3 Paid office hours for part-time faculty
- 4.7.4 Promotion of qualified, experienced temporary part-time faculty to full-time regular status to build a career path for qualified temporary part-time instructors who desire to work full-time
- 4.7.5 Part-time community college faculty allowed to serve as full faculty senate members



- 4.7.6 Part-time faculty to teach a coursework load of up to 80 percent of a full-time load in one district

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## 4.8 Online Education and Technology

Dramatic growth in online education has ushered in a new era of teaching and learning in higher education. Institutions are increasing online course offerings in response to student demand. Currently, over 90 percent of higher education institutions offer internet courses. Distance education can make education more convenient and accessible, since learning can occur anytime, anywhere, anyplace. While this promise is impressive, it is not without unintended negative consequences. For many institutions, online education is creating an interesting paradox: growing demand and enrollment coupled with higher withdrawal and failure rates. Institutions of higher learning, particularly community colleges, report that withdrawal rates in online courses are significantly greater than those of traditional courses. As online education continues to advance, issues specific to this instructional modality, such as technologically preparing students while maintaining course rigor and quality, resonate throughout higher education.

### *The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 4.8.1 An appropriate level of direct faculty-student interaction in all online courses
- 4.8.2 The most up-to-date technology for online education at every college
- 4.8.3 Access to broadband or wireless internet for all students
- 4.8.4 Continual professional development to prepare faculty for changing technology
- 4.8.5 Equal access to online education across the full diversity of college students
- 4.8.6 Voluntary assignment of faculty to teach online classes
- 4.8.7 The availability of technology in traditional classrooms (e.g., smart classrooms) for those faculty who want to utilize them
- 4.8.8 Safeguards to reduce any negative health impacts of technology used by employees
- 4.8.9 Assessment and updating of technology plans based on demonstrated effectiveness and academic research

### *The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 4.8.10 The practice of increasing workload associated with teaching online classes without corresponding compensation
- 4.8.11 The use of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)
- 4.8.12 A single statewide community college that is solely online
- 4.8.13 The over-reliance and exploitation of part-time faculty to teach online courses
- 4.8.14 Colleges contracting out the teaching and/or services of online education

## 5. Retirement

The California Federation of Teachers is committed to ensuring that all CFT members have a safe source of retirement income. To achieve this goal, the California State Teachers' Retirement System (CalSTRS) and the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) must ensure that they manage the pension contributions of CFT members in their best interests. The top priority in managing these contributions is ensuring adequate funds will be available in the future to provide for the retirement income promised to CFT members.

In addition to ensuring a secure retirement for CFT members, CFT encourages both pension systems to consider environmental, social, and governance (ESG) criteria when making their investment decisions.

### *The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 5.1.1 Adoption by the CalSTRS board of an investment belief that aligns the actions of the outside investment managers hired by CalSTRS with the interests of CalSTRS members
- 5.1.2 A requirement that all charter schools participate in CalSTRS and CalPERS
- 5.1.3 A requirement that the University of California allow part-time faculty to participate in Social Security
- 5.1.4 A requirement to allow part-time community college faculty the option of participating in Social Security
- 5.1.5 Cancellation of the Windfall Elimination Provision and/or the Government Pension Offset provisions of Social Security
- 5.1.6 Allowing the reporting to CalSTRS of sick leave balances earned by community college part-time faculty in several different districts to be done by each of the individual districts
- 5.1.7 Exemption of community college part-time instructors from the CalSTRS requirement that retirees wait 180 days before returning to teaching
- 5.1.8 A requirement that the death benefit paid by CalPERS to classified staff be the same as that paid to other CalPERS members
- 5.1.9 A requirement that the retiree board member on the CalSTRS board be an elected position rather than appointed by the governor
- 5.1.10 A requirement that both the California State Teachers' Retirement System and the California Public Employees' Retirement System completely divest from all companies that manufacture or sell assault-style weapons
- 5.1.11 A requirement that both CalSTRS and CalPERS either divest from all companies involved in the production of fossil fuels or use their ownership stake in fossil fuel companies to require that these companies start transitioning into green energy production

- 5.1.12 A broader definition of fiduciary responsibility that allows the boards of CalSTRS and CalPERS to take environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues into account more fully when making investment decisions

*The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 5.1.13 All attempts at the state and federal level to convert members' defined-benefit pensions into defined-contribution savings plans
- 5.1.14 Increased contribution rates for members and districts to meet the goal of a 100 percent funding ratio by 2046

## 6. Civil, Human, and Women’s Rights

The CFT is committed to the universal rights of all human beings. Therefore, we work to protect and advance the civil and human rights of all our members and students, as well as all members of the communities we serve. We also recognize that advancing the rights of our members, students, and communities requires us to address those same issues within the CFT organization and across all segments of the education system, as well as in the broader context of our nation and world. Therefore, the CFT stands against social injustice, economic inequities, and all forms of discrimination.

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### 6.1 Civil Rights

Every American has the right to equal treatment under the law and freedom from discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and social, political, or economic status.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 6.1.1 Achieving the goals of AFT’s *Reclaiming the Promise*
- 6.1.2 Achieving the goals of CFT’s *Reclaiming the Promise of Racial Equity for Black Males in California*
- 6.1.3 Equitable efforts to eliminate the ethnicity gap in student performance and achievement
- 6.1.4 A diverse workforce of teachers, faculty, and classified staff
- 6.1.5 Educational opportunity for individuals with disabilities
- 6.1.6 Freedom of religion
- 6.1.7 Protection of Native American treaty rights
- 6.1.8 The Voting Rights Act
- 6.1.9 Freedom of speech and inquiry for school employees and students
- 6.1.10 LGBTQ Rights
- 6.1.11 Black Lives Matter
- 6.1.12 A single-payer health insurance system established at either the state or national level
- 6.1.13 The rights of farm workers to a living wage and safe working conditions
- 6.1.14 Equitable, tuition-free access to pre-school and higher education
- 6.1.15 Quality, free public education as a constitutional right

*The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 6.1.16 Voter suppression, including voter identification laws, purging of voter rolls, and inaccessible polling places

- 6.1.17 Policies that build and perpetuate the school-to-prison pipeline
- 6.1.18 The exploitation of workers by corporate entities
- 6.1.19 The outsourcing of jobs to other countries
- 6.1.20 The militarization of our schools and police
- 6.1.21 The merger of corporations and government
- 6.1.22 Private prisons

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## **6.2 Human Rights**

No individual or organization has the right to gain power, wealth, and privilege through decisions and actions that threaten the lives, health, and liberties of others.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 6.2.1 Efforts to end poverty, hunger, and homelessness
- 6.2.2 Clean water for all and protection of the environment
- 6.2.3 Mandated employment leaves for eldercare, pregnancy, maternity, and paternity
- 6.2.4 California as a sanctuary state for immigrants
- 6.2.5 The rights of all undocumented workers and students, regardless of eligibility for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), to an education, work, and a path to U.S. citizenship
- 6.2.6 The Dream Act
- 6.2.7 Justice for the families of the disappeared students of Mexico

*The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 6.2.8 The exploitation of workers in the United States and abroad
- 6.2.9 High-stakes testing in public schools in the United States and other countries
- 6.2.10 The privatization of education
- 6.2.11 The murder of ethnic minorities by police
- 6.2.12 Travel bans or travel restrictions placed on immigrants, especially students, who are legally traveling to and from the United States
- 6.2.13 The border wall between the United States and Mexico
- 6.2.14 The assassination of trade unionists in Latin America
- 6.2.15 Unjust wars
- 6.2.16 Use of torture

- 6.2.17 The presence in public schools and colleges of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Homeland Security without judicial warrants
- 6.2.18 Abridgment of individuals' rights, as well as imprisonment and execution, based on religious beliefs

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### **6.3 Women's Rights**

Women have the right to safety and equality in their workplaces, professions, and communities. Threats of violence must be eliminated, and disadvantages stemming from gender or family obligations must be minimized.

*The California Federation of Teachers supports:*

- 6.3.1 Reproductive rights
- 6.3.2 Elimination of the gender wage gap and gender barriers to educational opportunity
- 6.3.3 Vigorous efforts to end violence against women (verbal abuse, sexual assaults, rapes, and domestic violence)
- 6.3.4 The #MeToo movement's efforts to end sexual harassment
- 6.3.5 Aggressive action to eradicate human trafficking/sex slavery

*The California Federation of Teachers opposes:*

- 6.3.6 The defunding of Planned Parenthood
- 6.3.7 Any erosion in the reproductive rights of women established by Roe v. Wade
- 6.3.8 Any changes in Title IX that erode the rights and due process of women

## V. CONCLUSION

This first edition of the *CFT Policies and Positions Handbook* is presented as a guidepost for CFT’s advocacy at the local, state, and federal levels on issues that affect California’s students, schools, employees, and communities. As we – rank-and-file members, local and state leaders, and staff – advocate for education workplace rights, academic freedom, legislative solutions to educational policy issues, and full access to quality education for our students, we will use this resource to help us in clearly articulating the important issues and our collective organizational positions on those issues. This document provides language to help us formulate our written and spoken responses when issues come to the forefront or opportunities for advancing CFT’s agenda arise. This handbook will be our springboard for starting, or engaging in, needed policy conversations in our communities and our framework for planning targeted advocacy activities.

Our committees, division councils, and locals will treat this handbook as a living document. They will continue working to incorporate the ideas of our rank-and-file members and will sustain the rich policy discussions that contributed to this document.