



# Unified Association of Conejo Teachers

100 E. Thousand  
Oaks Blvd. Ste 124  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

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## UACT AND DISTRICT AT ODDS ON BUDGETING

UACT entered into negotiations for this school year (2014/15) in December. Typically, we would have been negotiating for months by the time we reached December, but UACT made an agreement that we would hold off until after the November election. This would give us all the needed time for the passage of the bond. To be clear, the money for the bond cannot be used for salaries. It can only be used for the items delineated in the bond proposal.

The items being discussed at negotiations are:

- Evaluation
- Peer Assistance and Review (PAR)
- Class Size
- Work Day (meetings)
- Salary

Negotiations to date have been productive and we have accomplished quite a bit. There has been a difference of opinion about the health of the district's budget. The district creates a budget in July and then amends it throughout the year. In December, it was amended. In this version of the budget, there is no money set aside for raises for employees. What is set aside is every dollar of the increased funding from the state (\$8.6 million) to pay for items other than employees. UACT has taken issue with these numbers.

Our position is:

- a) There has never been an increase in spending on items other than employees like this;
- b) It speaks volumes that employees were not considered a high enough priority to budget an increase (just to keep up with inflation). The district did make a salary increase offer of 1% and we have been told there is another offer.

We have two future negotiations dates: February 5 and 25. We will update you as negotiations progress.

*For CTA scholarship information, go to [cta.org/scholarships](http://cta.org/scholarships). Find scholarships for members, dependent children and student CTA members. Due Feb. 6, 2015.*

***UACT scholarship information is available on the UACT website . They are due 4 PM, March 13, 2015.***

### Call for Declarations of Candidacy for NEA RA Deadline Friday, Jan. 30.

The 2015 NEA Representative Assembly (RA) will be held in Orlando, Florida from June 30 to July 7. Delegates are expected to attend all meetings of the California Caucus and all sessions of the RA. All expenses will be paid.

**Declarations for CA State Representatives** are due to the Oxnard RRC office no later than Fri., Jan. 30, 2015 no later than 4:30 PM. You may fax the completed form to 805-485-1658, or scan and email to [shiga@cta.org](mailto:shiga@cta.org). If you have questions, call Sharon at 805-485-1706.

**Declarations for UACT Representatives** are due to the UACT office no later than Friday, January 30, 2015 by 4:30 PM. They may be faxed to 805-497-1458, emailed to [uact@verizon.net](mailto:uact@verizon.net), or sent through school mail. The forms are at [www.conejoteachers.com](http://www.conejoteachers.com).



## MARCH 2 IS READ ACROSS AMERICA.

Read Across America is a national day celebrating reading — this year on Monday, March 2, 2015 — sponsored by the National Education Association and California Teachers Association, along with many of the country's leading literacy and youth groups. The more children read, the better they read. And the more they read outside of school, the better they do in school. Therefore,

the Read Across America committee has launched "California Reads" (<http://www.cta.org/Parents-and-Community/Read-Across-America/California-Reads.aspx>) to expand our current day of read-

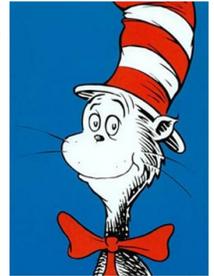
ing celebration to a yearlong promotion of reading for all ages. Rather than just one day and just one book, California Reads offers teacher-approved quarterly book recommendations for four age groups.

One of the goals of the California Reads program is to involve our local communities in reading events, and there are many ways to celebrate! Invite police officers and firefighters to read their favorite books to your school. Parents can volunteer to read in their child's classroom. Librarians can arrange special story hours. Practice dramatic readings with your students. Invite a local news anchor or even your mayor to read to your class.

UACT will be joining with the Thousand Oaks and Newbury Park Libraries to present an afternoon of stories and crafts from 3:30-5:30. **We are looking for readers for 15 minute shifts or someone to serve as a host at the library.** Please contact Kristin at 805-497-8220 to sign up for a time.

You're never too old, too wacky,  
too wild, to pick up a book and  
read to a child.

-Dr. Seuss



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## Congress Extends Educator Tax Deduction—For Now

The Senate passed the House-approved bill that extends the \$250 tax deduction for educators who purchase classroom supplies and instructional materials. The good news is that educators will be able to take the deduction in 2014. The bad news is the measure expires on December 31, and Congress will have to debate the issue again to renew the deduction for 2015 and beyond.

Educators across the country are [speaking out](#) on the importance of this tax deduction, which helps offset the collective \$1.6 billion that educators spend over the course of a school year, according to the most recent data of the National School Supply and Equipment Association.

Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle care about this issue, too. The educator tax deduction was instituted in 2002 in recognition of educators' generosity, and has had bipartisan support. In the House, Rep. David Reichert (R-WA) has introduced the Teacher Tax Relief Act of 2014 (H.R. 5504), which would make permanent the educator tax deduction for qualified expenses and expand it to include some professional development expenses.

Reichert and the bill's four other sponsors (Jim McDermott (D-WA), Aaron Schock (R-IL), Pat Tiberi (R-OH), and Bill Pascrell (D-NJ)) said in a statement: "Too often teachers spend their own hard-earned money in order to provide their students with basic school supplies. Our bill will alleviate some of the financial burden placed on today's teachers while also making a significant investment in the education and the futures of America's children."

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## JOB SHARES

If you wish to Job Share for the 2015-16 school year, proposals are March 1. If you are looking for a job share partner, Kristin Cook, our office manager, is keeping a list of prospective partners. Contact her at [uactsec@aol.com](mailto:uactsec@aol.com) or 805-497-8220.

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## NEA RESOURCES FOR YOUR CLASSROOM

NEA has free lesson plans, films, and other great resources for use in your classroom.

For **Groundhogs Day** find lesson plans on the math and science of shadows, art lessons, songs, on line activities and background videos and other resources at <http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/groundhog-day-for-the-classroom.html>

**Ten Free Things for Valentine's Day** at <http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/10-free-things-valentines-day.html> with activities K-12.

**Teaching about the Selma to Montgomery March** at <http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/61293.htm> for resources for K-5 and 6-12.

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## CalSTRS Workshop

Thursday, March 5

3:45-5:15

at the District Office Board Room  
1400 E Janss Road



# Declaration of UACT Candidacy

For UACT Delegate to the 2015 NEA Convention in Orlando  
(UACT will be sending three Delegates)  
Elected by UACT Members

June 30 – July 7, 2015

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Day Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ CTA Mem. # \_\_\_\_\_ Gender \_\_\_ M \_\_\_ F

School \_\_\_\_\_ I am a member in good standing \_\_\_ CTA \_\_\_ NEA

The following information is needed to complete delegate reporting forms to the NEA:

Educational Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher – NEA Active (Non-Supervisory) Member

Ethnic Grouping:

\_\_\_\_\_ American Indian/Alaska Native \_\_\_\_\_ Asian \_\_\_\_\_ Caucasian

\_\_\_\_\_ African American \_\_\_\_\_ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander \_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic

Please give a brief biographical sketch of no more than 25 words. (If more words are used, the information that accompanies ballots will include only the first 25 words.) If you wish your ethnic grouping to be listed, this will not count as part of the 25-word limitation.

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**\*\*THIS FORM MUST BE RETURNED TO THE UACT OFFICE (100 E. THOUSAND OAKS BLVD., SUITE 124, THOUSAND OAKS, CA 91360) NO LATER THAN FRIDAY , JANUARY 30, 2015 BY 4:00 P.M.**

Delegates will be expected to attend all days and all business sessions.